

INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE POWER SEIZURE:  
A STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF  
THE BOLSHEVIK AND CHINESE COMMUNIST  
MODELS OF REVOLUTION

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements of the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

A. P. O'MEARA, Jr., MAJ, USA  
B.S., United States Military Academy, 1959  
M.S., University of Wisconsin, 1968

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
1970

**DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4**

**1 9 9 9 0 4 1 3 1 6 8**

**REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE**Form Approved  
OMB No. 074-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)

2. REPORT DATE

3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED

Master's Thesis August 1969 - June 1970

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Infrastructure And Power Seizure: A Structural Function Analysis Of The Bolshevik And Chinese Communist Models Of Revolution

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S)

O'Meara, Andrew P., Jr., MAJ, USA

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

U.S. Army Command and General Staff  
College  
250 Gibbon Ave.  
Fort Leavenworth, KS66027-2314

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION  
REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

10. SPONSORING / MONITORING  
AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited

12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE

A

13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 Words)

Examines U.S. Army doctrine, as expressed in FM 31-23, to evaluate its adequacy for application to Communist inspired Wars of National Liberation. Concludes that addition conceptual tools, or definitions, are required to assist military personnel who are engaged in combating Communist inspired revolutionary movements. Proposes two models of such movements: explosive revolutions patterned upon the Bolshevik Revolution, and implosive, patterned upon the Chinese Communist revolution. The explosive model is defined as a movement which captures the government and then expands to capture the state. The implosive model is defined as a movement which captures the state through mobilization of the rural population which is followed by a massive attack to destroy the central government. Includes an examination of efforts to attack communist village level infrastructure in Vietnam.

14. SUBJECT TERMS

Revolutions; China; Russia; Bolshevik Revolution; Vietnamese War;  
Communist insurgency

15. NUMBER OF PAGES

180

16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION  
OF REPORT

U

18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION  
OF THIS PAGE

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19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION  
OF ABSTRACT

U

20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT

U

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

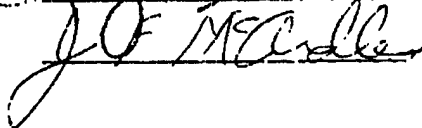
Name of Candidate Andrew P. O'Meara Jr., MAJ, Armor

Title of Thesis Infrastructure and the Power Seizure: A Structural  
Functional Analysis of the Bolshevik and Chinese Communist Models of  
Revolution

Approved by:

 Research and Thesis Advisor

 Member, Graduate Research Faculty

 Member, Graduate Research Faculty

Date: 10 July 1970

The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author and do not necessarily represent the views of either the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

In this study the author examines U.S. Army doctrine to evaluate its adequacy for application to communist inspired Wars of National Liberation. The definitions of revolution from above and revolution from below, which appear in FM 31-23, are utilized by the author as a statement of current Army doctrine. Through an examination of the Bolshevik, Chinese Communist, Viet Minh, and Viet Cong revolutions the author demonstrates the need for additional definitions in order for the doctrine to demonstrate the characteristics of the four revolutions examined.

As a result of his analysis, the author concludes that additional conceptual tools, or definitions, are required in order to assist military personnel who are engaged in combatting communist inspired revolutionary movements. These definitions are seen as fundamental requirements for commanders and their staffs to understand the complex and sophisticated methodology utilized to implement the communist revolutionary movement. The current definitions of revolution from above and revolution from below are seen as useful concepts, but a need is seen for them to be augmented by specific doctrine geared to explain communist inspired revolutionary movements.

In order to assist military personnel in understanding communist inspired revolutionary movements and the environments in which they occur, the author proposes two definitions. Those communist inspired revolutions patterned upon the Bolshevik Revolution are entitled explosive models of revolution. Those communist inspired revolutions patterned upon the

Chinese Communist Revolution are entitled implosive models of revolution. Both definitions examine significant characteristics of the revolutionary models and address the power seizure in terms of the government and the state. The explosive model of revolution is defined as a revolutionary movement which captures the government and then expands to capture the state. The implosive model of revolution is defined as a revolutionary movement which captures the state through mobilization of the rural population which is followed by a massive attack to destroy the central government.

The author's method of analysis is based upon an examination of the organizations (structures) and their missions (functions) in the revolutionary movements. The study includes an examination of efforts to attack communist village level infrastructure in Vietnam. As a result of this field study in Vietnam a model of communist infrastructure at village level has been proposed for implosive models of revolution. The model of communist infrastructure at village level is included in the study.

Dedicated to the memory of the Fallen Fighters of the 11th  
Armored Cavalry Regiment.

May we the living prove equal to the task of leading,  
serving, and dying in the tradition established by our fellow  
Americans, who served in the Regiment and died in the service  
of our country. Men, young and old, perished with bravery and  
devotion. Their generous sacrifices are proof that the heroic  
traditions of our country, established two centuries ago,  
remain real and vital today. Bless them, Almighty God, and  
help us to carry on in the face of the threats of today.

Give us, Lord, the courage to be proud before the cynic,  
humble before Thee and before the rank and file of this nation,  
and true to the idealism, which still emanates from each com-  
munity in the nation. Give us the vision to serve faithfully,  
and the strength for each new step until we rejoin the ranks  
of the brave men of the Regiment, who have gone before us.

Andrew P. O'Meara Jr.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The initial groundwork for this study was laid seven years ago, while the author served as an advisor with the South Vietnamese Army. A major problem confronting the Vietnamese Army at that time was the difficulty in identification of the furtive opponent, who was attempting to gain control of the countryside. Following his return from Vietnam, the author studied the communist methodology for waging revolutionary warfare as a student at the Armor School and at the University of Wisconsin. The conclusions reached through these studies were tested when the author returned to Vietnam as the intelligence officer of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) in June of 1968. Following his tour with the 11th ACR, the author attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. This study has drawn upon the earlier research of the author, his field experience with the 11th ACR, and his research at the Command and General Staff College.

The author wishes to take this opportunity to express his gratitude to the many individuals who have assisted and encouraged his efforts. He wishes to express his thanks particularly to Professors Orville Cope and Belden Paulsen of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, COL George S. Patton III, former commander of the 11th ACR, Major Harry G. Summers of the faculty of the Command and General Staff College, Professor Anthony Frederici of Illinois State University, and Professor William O'Brien of Georgetown University. Finally the author acknowledges his indebtedness to his wife, Eleanor, who has generously proofed his work and provided continuous encouragement.

Andrew P. O'Meara Jr.  
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas  
June 1970

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study has been to examine current U.S. Army definitions and doctrine concerning communist subversive insurgency. The definitions and doctrine have been examined in the light of the historical record in order to determine their adequacy in accurately portraying the revolutionary structures and functions evolved during specific revolutionary movements. In addition, the study has attempted to determine the adequacy of current doctrine to explain the dynamics of the revolutionary movements. To the extent that the study has been able to identify inadequacies in the definitions and doctrine, an attempt has been made to suggest more specific definitions or concepts to explain the functions, structures, and dynamics of the major communist revolutionary movements.

Based upon a structural functional analysis of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chinese Communist Revolution, the Viet Minh Revolutionary Movement and the Viet Cong Revolutionary Movement, this study has determined that two distinct models of revolution have emerged as a result of communist revolutionary experience. These two models have been designated as the explosive model of revolution and the implosive model of revolution. The explosive model captures the government in order to capture the state. The implosion model captures the state in order to destroy the government. In both cases the power seizure is accomplished through mobilization of the body politic in order to attack the existing

political system. These findings are at variance with existing U.S. Army doctrine and definitions.

U.S. Army doctrine on the subject of subversive insurgency has not been static, but has been continually changing in order to reflect the changes in thinking which have occurred as experience has been gained by military units in the field, and in order to reflect the progress which has been made by the academic community in the understanding of revolutionary development. Therefore, it is necessary to specify the time period concerned, when addressing the question of Army doctrine on the subject of subversive insurgency. The definitions and doctrine which have been examined in this study are those reflected in Department of the Army Field Manual No. 31-23, Stability Operations-U.S. Army Doctrine, dated 8 December 1967.

The final test of the effectiveness of the definitions and doctrine arrives when US military personnel attempt to apply the definitions to a specific internal defense (counterinsurgency) situation. In their attempts to understand their foe in order to close with and destroy the enemy, the commander and his staff draw upon the tools of definitions and doctrine. The commander uses these tools in order to prepare his men for engagements with the enemy. His soldiers must be able to locate and identify a furtive opponent. His intelligence officer (S-2) and interrogators must understand the organization of the revolutionary movement and its methods of operation, if relevant questions are to be asked of suspects and if the suspect's answers are to be understood. Exploitable vulnerabilities of the enemy must be recognized and then be

translated into operational plans by the remainder of the staff. In short, to pass the final test of effectiveness the definitions and doctrine must identify the organizational structure and operational methods of the enemy.

In addition to the question of how to combat the insurgent, there is the question of when (or if) to combat the insurgent. Effective doctrine should be able to provide an answer to the question of when military forces should be employed against the insurgent, or conversely, when the task should remain in the hands of police authorities. Finally the definitions and doctrine should provide the staff officer and the commander with an appreciation of when an insurgency has progressed to the point that the commitment of combat units can no longer be expected to reverse the expansion of a successful communist revolutionary movement. Knowing when not to fight an insurgency could one day prove to be as valuable as knowing when and how to fight the insurgent.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY DOCTRINE

The development of theory and military doctrine to assist in the fight against subversive insurgency has been hampered by a multitude of problems that have effectively restricted the exchange of ideas and lessons learned through earlier efforts to combat subversive insurgency. As a result of these restrictions, a body of theory to explain the development of revolutionary movements, and doctrine to assist in combating insurgencies have been slow in developing. Several of the

problems that have restricted the free flow of ideas, and have consequently restricted the study of the subject of insurgency, have been: (1) the clandestine nature of the revolutionary movements; (2) the non-availability to the student of revolutionary development of the records of military and civil intelligence agencies who have combated the revolutionary forces; (3) the national forces combating internal subversive insurgency have frequently not been allied with each other within the larger environment of international politics; and (4) the failure of students of the revolutionary movements to correctly analyze the limited information available. In view of the problems involved in research on the subject, it is not surprising that recognition of the unique character of communist inspired revolutionary warfare has been relatively recent.

#### Review of the Literature

Some of the first studies of subversive insurgency were made by the police of Tzarist Russia. Unfortunately, these studies are not available to the researcher today. Of the records of the Bolshevik revolution available in the West, the best have been those compiled by William Henry Chamberlin in Russia following the Civil War. In the period following Chamberlin's research occurred the inter-party struggles for leadership and the subsequent purges of the Party by Stalin. During this period the historical records were altered, major personalities of the revolutionary period disappeared from the history books, and

1  
censorship was imposed.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in addition to the problems previously mentioned, new problems were introduced to restrict the efforts of the student of the Russian Revolutionary Period.

In the years that followed the Bolshevik power seizure in Russia, communist parties waged a series of wars in the Far East and the West. Each failure and success was closely examined by the Comintern in order to provide lessons, which would strengthen and prepare the communist movement for future campaigns. Few of the records of the communists and of those who fought the communists in the early years are available to us today, and we are unable to follow the evolution of the communist parties in detail. Since 1937 the volume of information available on the communist revolutionary movements in Asia increases significantly, as a result of the efforts of foreign observers in China and the records (later captured) of the Imperial Japanese Army fighting in China during World War II.

In the wake of World War II there occurred a series of communist power seizures and communist inspired revolutionary movements in Eastern Europe and the Far East. Despite the reluctance of some of the allied powers to make public classified information compiled during the fight against the revolutionary movements, the increased presence of foreign observers and the growing awareness of the significance of the revolutionary movements insured wider discussion and study of the revolutionary experiences. The most important of the revolutionary movements, which

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<sup>1</sup>William Henry Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1935), pp. v-vi



culminated during this period was the Chinese Communist revolutionary movement. Closely following the Chinese Communist revolutionary movement in importance have been the Vietnamese Communist revolutionary movements. The reasons for their importance have been examined in detail in the course of this study. Suffice it to say at this time that these revolutionary movements have been considered by communist parties to be examples of effective revolutionary activity to be emulated by other communist parties faced with similar revolutionary situations. Because of their importance in the eyes of the communist world as examples of effective revolutionary activity, the Bolshevik, the Chinese Communist, and the Vietnamese revolutionary movements have been utilized in this study in order to evaluate the effectiveness of relevant US Army definitions and doctrine.

Among the primary sources available to the researcher on the Chinese Communist and Vietnamese revolutions have been: declassified intelligence reports written by US military advisors to the Chinese Communists during the fight against the Japanese, the previously mentioned records of the Imperial Japanese Army in China, the records and accounts of diplomatic personnel stationed in Viet Nam and China during the revolutions, records compiled by participants in the revolutions, and eye witness accounts written by students and correspondents. Some of the authors of significant primary works currently available in the West on China and Viet Nam have been Mao Tse-tung, Edgar Snow, O. Edmund Clubb, Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, Hoang Van Chi, Douglas Pike, and Bernard Fall. Many other authors and students of the two revolutions have sifted

through the available facts and produced significant interpretive works of the revolutionary periods. However, not all of the students and researchers, who have stirred the soup composed of the available information derived from primary sources, have contributed to an increased understanding of the revolutions. And of the authors of the primary sources on the revolutions, some have not possessed the sophistication to permit them to perceive and record the complex organizational structure, the functions of the political structures, and the dynamics of the revolutionary movements.

#### U.S. Army Doctrine

Current US Army doctrine has defined two principal forms of revolution: revolution from the top and revolution from the bottom. A third form of revolution which combines revolution from the top with revolution from the bottom has also been identified. Broad definitions have been provided in FM 31-23 for revolution from the top and revolution from the bottom in terms of characteristics of the leaders of the revolutions, the targets of the revolutionary movements, and the prerequisites of successful revolutionary activity. These definitions have been offered as applicable to all forms of revolution from Latin America, to the Soviet Union, and to Southeast Asia.

To distinguish between the two principal types of revolution, coup d'etat and subversive insurgency, the illegal acquisition of governmental power may be considered to be of two types: revolution from the top, and revolution from the bottom. In a revolution from the top (coup d'etat) a small group tries to obtain control of or neutralize the armed forces and other governmental agencies, usually with little or no violence and rarely seeking popular support until after the coup, has been initiated or has succeeded. The instigators of the coup, normally men in top echelons of government or the

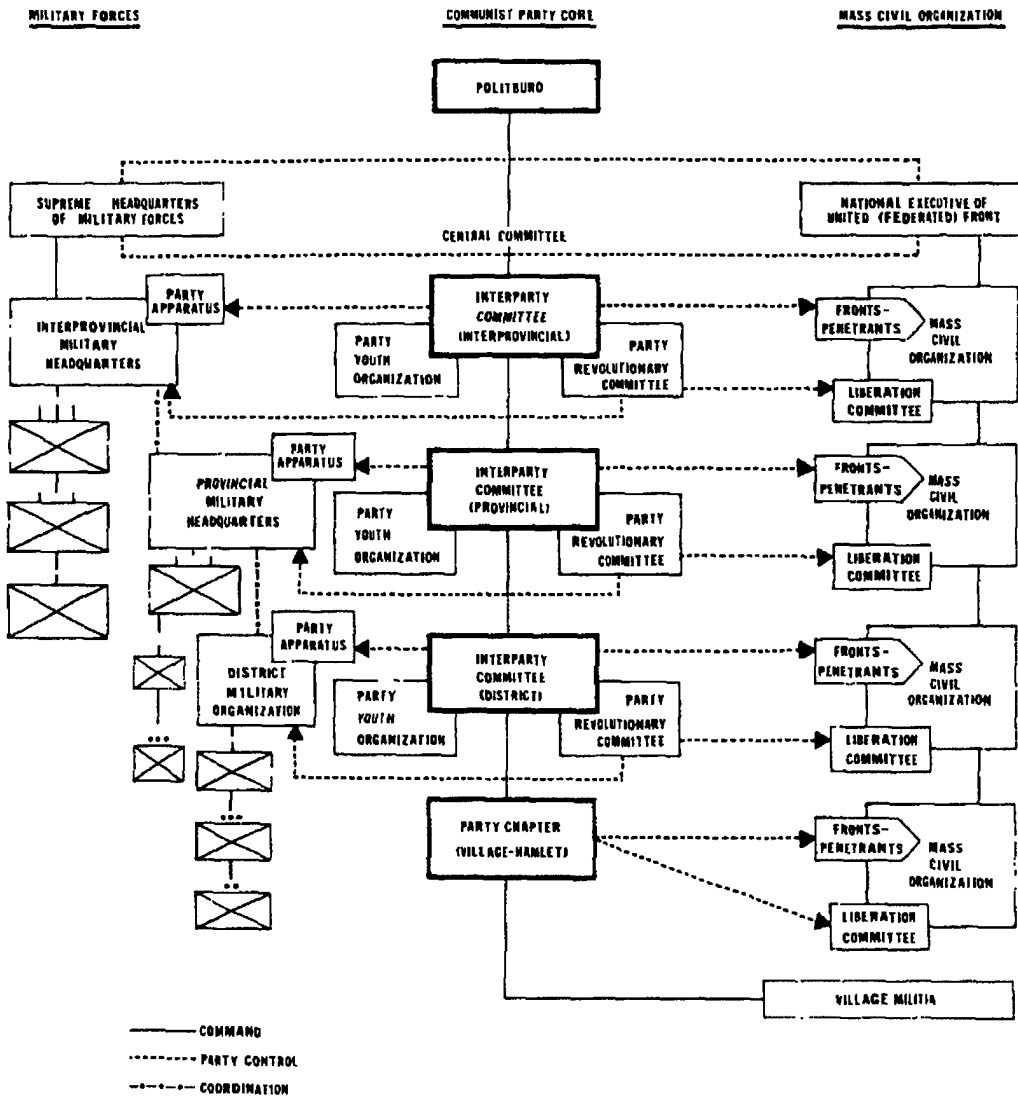
armed forces, seize the instruments of power such as mass-communications media, military material, transportation facilities and power stations, and, finally, the symbols of power such as administrative and legislative buildings in the capital city. On the other hand, revolution from the bottom (subversive insurgency) involves more violent seizure of power and largely is the result of social disorganization and unrest. A mass movement, encouraged or directed by a hard insurgent core, develops slowly in a long evolutionary process until armed fighting occurs through a precipitant event. Since mobilization, organization, and manipulation of a sizeable segment of the population are prerequisites for successful revolution from the bottom, it is known as subversive insurgency. The Communists refer to such revolutions as "wars of national liberation."<sup>2</sup>

The broad scope of these definitions has enabled them to demonstrate general characteristics of many revolutionary movements. Unfortunately they have not been precise enough to clarify the dynamics of specific revolutionary efforts. Figure 1 shows the "type communist insurgent organization". It has been the only model of organizational structure provided in FM 31-23 to demonstrate the structure of all communist revolutionary movements.

The scope of this research has been limited to an examination of political structures and their political functions. No attempt has been made to examine the social, economic, and political conditions associated with revolutionary political changes that are not directly concerned with the political structures and their functions. As utilized here the term structure has a rather broad meaning. It has been considered to be the regularized activities that make up the political system. For the purpose of this study the more differentiated activities, occasionally

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<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of the Army, Stability Operations - U.S. Army Doctrine, FM 31-23, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 13.



This chart portrays the interlocking structure which enables the Communist party (CP) to control an insurgent organization

Figure 1 *Tupai Communist insurgent organization*

referred to as subsystems of a political system, have also been considered to be included within the term structures. Therefore, political parties, governmental organizations, and military organizations have been considered to be structures. Political structures, therefore, have included all structures which perform a political function. A military organization could be considered a political structure for the purpose of this study, if it were instrumental in the mobilization and manipulation of the population for political purposes.<sup>3</sup>

For the purpose of this study, the state has been defined as a "... geographically delimited segment of human society united by common obedience to a single sovereign."<sup>4</sup> The government has been defined as a "... group of individuals sharing a defined responsibility for exercising power."<sup>5</sup>

No attempt has been made in this study to relate the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chinese Communist Revolution, the Viet Minh Revolutionary Movement, and the Viet Cong Revolutionary Movement to all other forms of revolutionary political development. In addition, the nature and

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<sup>3</sup>For a further discussion of structural-functional theory see Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston, 1966), pp. 16-72.

<sup>4</sup>Frederick M. Watkins, "State: The Concept," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (1968), Vol. 15, p. 150.

<sup>5</sup>David E. Apter, "Government," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (1968), Vol. 6, p. 214.

direction of political development following the power seizure by the revolutionary movements have been considered to be beyond the scope of this study.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

The Bolshevik Revolution was the second phase of the Russian Revolution of 1917. The first phase, known as the March Revolution, resulted in the abdication of the Tsar and the formation of the Provisional Government. The purpose of the Provisional Government was to rule the country until a constituent assembly could be convened and a constitution written, which presumably would establish the basis for a democratic system of government. Following the March Revolution there occurred a second revolution, known as the Bolshevik or October Revolution. The October Revolution overthrew the Provisional Government, preempted the constituent assembly, and established a "dictatorship of the proletariat."

Of the two revolutions that occurred in Russia in 1917 we are primarily concerned with the October Revolution. The March Revolution was neither led by the Bolsheviks, nor did it establish a communist form of government. The October Revolution, however, was a product of communist organizational efforts and it produced a communist form of government. In this chapter we will examine the political structures of the Bolshevik revolutionary movement and their functions, during the October Revolution. The political structures which emerged from the earlier March Revolution, and which comprised the Provisional Government, will be briefly examined also, inasmuch as they constituted the target of the Bolshevik revolutionary movement.

## THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

The Provisional Government had been an attempt to establish a republican form of government based upon a limited franchise. It was composed of an elected assembly, the Duma; a cabinet directed by a premier; and various executive agencies inherited from the former Tsarist Government, such as the bureaucracy, the Police, the Army and the Navy. In the period of the March revolution additional political structures emerged which initially lent their support to the Provisional Government. The most significant of these structures were the Soviets, which will be examined in subsequent sections of this chapter.

The uprisings which culminated in the March Revolution and resulted in the abdication of the Tsar were a massive expression of the discontent of the population with the mismanagement of the war and its excessive casualties, the food shortage which existed in the capitol, the rising inflation, and the apparent corruption in the Tsarist Government. Hastily formed by representatives of the Duma, the Provisional Government represented primarily the propertied classes. The vast majority of the population consisted of peasants and laborers, neither of which had their share of representation in the Duma. Unaccustomed to participation in government in any form, the majority failed to recognize their rights and secure effective representation in the Provisional Government. Following the abdication of the Tsar, the Provisional Government continued the unpopular war policy and attempted to protect the interests of the property owners. Thus, the Provisional Political



System was responsive to only a narrow segment of the total population and the demands of the masses were left unanswered, leaving the ground work for further political instability.

#### Political Development and the Revolution

Political development has been viewed by contemporary political scientists as the refinement of existing roles and structures within the political system. Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell have used this approach to explain the progression of political development. Almond and Powell have stated:

Development results when the existing structures and culture of the political system is (sic) unable to cope with the problem or challenge which confronts it without further structural differentiation and cultural secularization.<sup>6</sup>

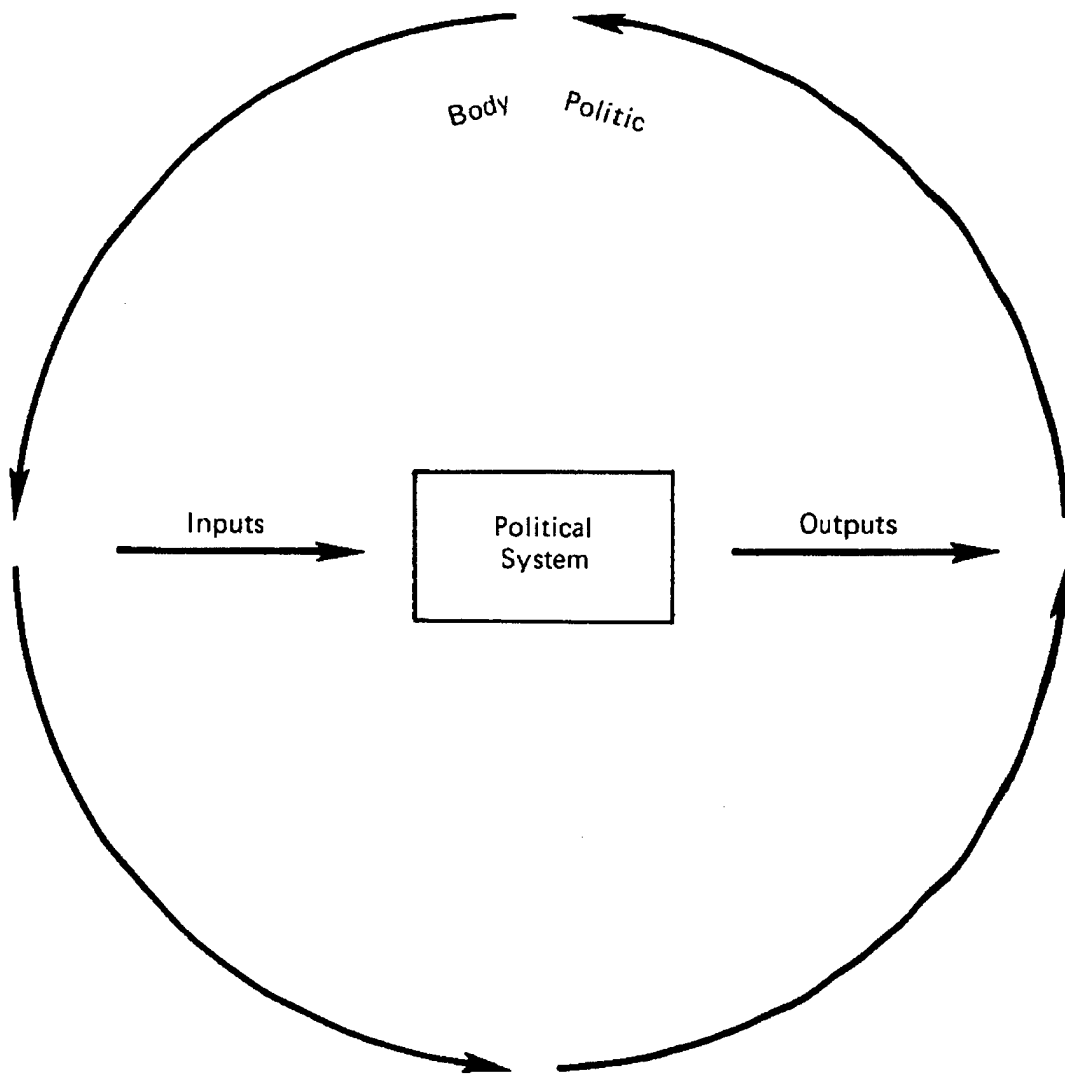
The political system consists of both informal and formal political structures, the most important of which normally constitute the government of the society. The governing process consists of the generating of demands or inputs into the political system from the body politic or from within the political system itself; the conversion of these inputs within the system; and finally the production of outputs (in response to demands), which are then fed back into the body politic.<sup>7</sup> Figure No. 2 is a schematic representation of such a political system.

In order for the political system to be stable, there must be no rivals for authority within the society and the government should ideally

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<sup>6</sup>Almond and Powell, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 25.



*Figure No 2 . The Political System as described by Almond and Powell.*

be responsive to all sectors of the population. If the existing government is not recognized as the sole authority within the society, conflict and instability ensue. Moreover, the failure of an existing political system to effectively respond to the needs of the entire population invites extralegal opposition to develop. Viewed within this context the weakness of the Provisional Government becomes apparent. The Provisional Government was acting on the demands or inputs of a small minority within the Russian population. The demands of the peasants and the workers remained unanswered. Predictably, opposition and political instability were not long in forming. The eventual leader of the opposition was a Bolshevik named Vladimin Ilyitch Lenin. The culmination of Lenin's leadership of the opposition to the Provisional Government was the October Revolution.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL STRUCTURES

The October Revolution was carried out through the mobilization and direction of the disenfranchised population by six revolutionary political structures: the Bolshevik Party, the Soviets, the Factory Committees, the Red Guards, the Soldiers' Committees, and the Military Revolutionary Committee. Of these political structures, the most important was the Bolshevik Party. Under the leadership of Lenin, the Party successfully guided the revolutionary forces. The Party members organized or captured the other five political structures. They rallied the population of Petrograd behind these political structures with widespread and highly effective propaganda campaigns which mobilized and harnessed

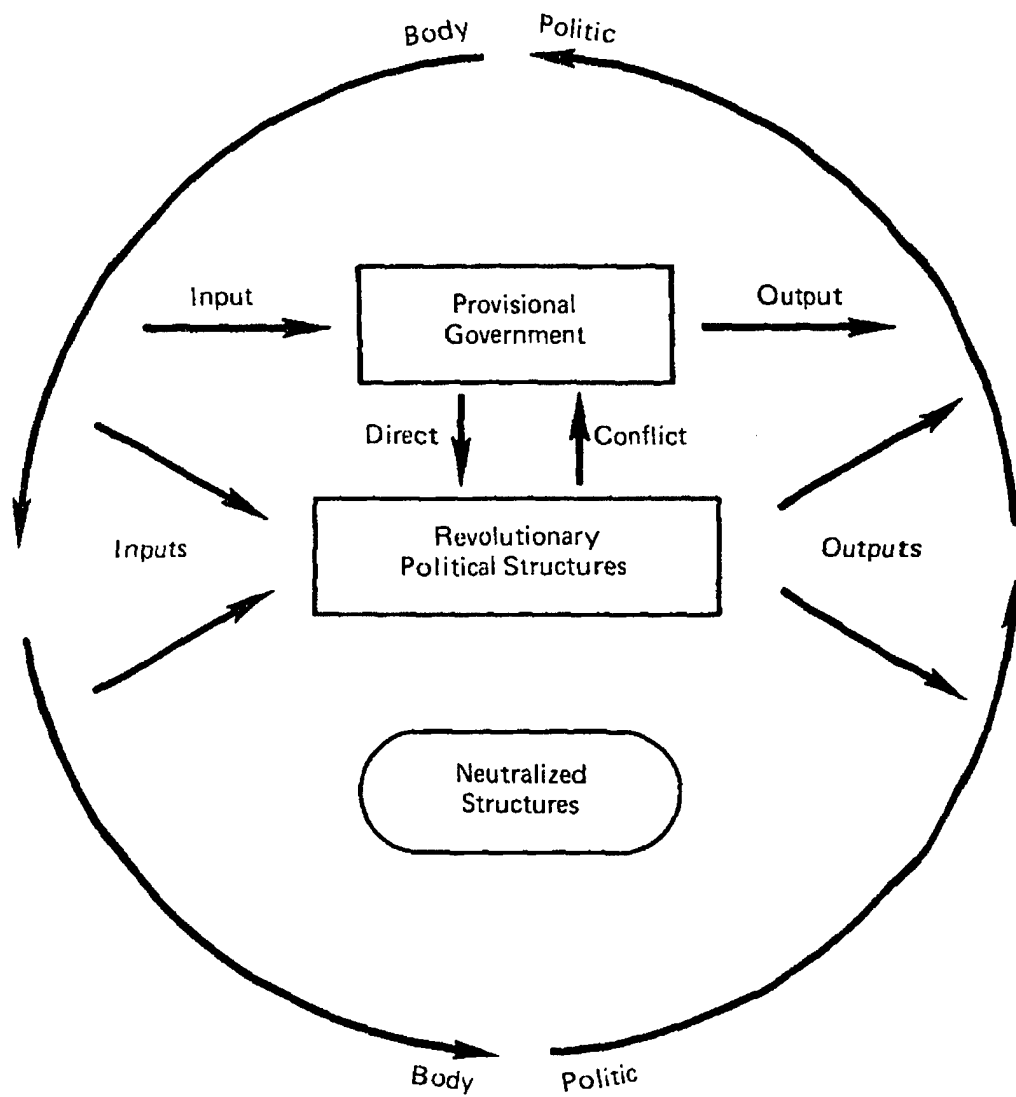


Figure No. 3 The Unstable Political System Prior to the October Revolution.

the latent discontent of the population. Following the mobilization of the population the Party directed the actions of each of the revolutionary political structures in order to capture or destroy the political structures of the Provisional Government.

The Bolshevik Party. The Bolshevik Party was a highly centralized political organization, whose membership was composed of professional revolutionaries. The party was guided by a small Central Committee, which was elected by the Party Congress. The directives of the Central Committee carried the force of law within the Party. The discipline existing within the ranks of the party gave it the appearance of a clandestine military organization rather than that of a political party. The organization of the Party had evolved during the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Tsarist Police. Intolerance of political opposition by the Tsar and the effectiveness of his secret police destroyed much of the political opposition in Russia. That which it was unable to destroy was effectively radicalized. The Bolsheviks survived the attacks of the Russian secret police through the adoption of a tightly knit underground organization. Speaking of the desired characteristics of the Party prior to the Revolution Lenin said:

- (1) That no revolutionary movement can endure without a stable organization of leaders that maintain continuity;
- (2) that the wider the masses spontaneously drawn into the struggle, forming the basis of the movement and participating in it, the more urgent the need of such an organization, and the more solid this organization must be . . .
- (3) that such an organization must consist chiefly of people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity;
- (4) that in an autocratic state the more we confine the membership of such an organization to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the part of combating the

political police, the more difficult will it be to wipe out such an organization; and (5) the greater will be the number of people of the working class and of other classes of society who will be able to join the movement and perform active work in it.<sup>8</sup>

The Soviets. In order of priority the Soviets were probably the next most important political structure in the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. The Petrograd Soviet was formed on March 12 by representatives of workers and soldiers. Calling itself the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, it assumed the duties of patrolling the streets and feeding the troops of the Petrograd Garrison, following the collapse of the police and the Tsarist authorities in the city.<sup>9</sup> The formation of the Petrograd Soviet was soon followed by the formation of Soviets in other major cities of the country. Communications between the Soviets and the character of the massive support of the Soviets by the population led to a gradual expansion of the powers of the Soviets. As the conservative character of the Provisional Government became apparent, the popularity and authority of the Soviets increased until it presented a challenge to the authority of the Duma. Lenin recognized the clash of power as the existence of "dual power" in the country, "...the fact that by the side of the Provisional Government, ...there has developed another,

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<sup>8</sup>V. I. Lenin, "What is to be Done?" Selected Works, IV (New York, 1943), p. 456.

<sup>9</sup>Samuel Hendel, The Soviet Crucible, (Princeton, 1964), p. 200.

as yet weak, embryonic, but undoubtedly real and growing government - the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."<sup>10</sup>

The Factory Committees. The political structure that provided the direction to the workers and implemented their mobilization was the factory committee. Organized within each factory by direct election of members from the ranks of the workers, the factory committees tended to be as radical as the demands of the workers. Bolshevik organizational efforts were directed at both the expansion and infiltration of the committees. Bolshevik propaganda was aimed at the radicalization of the workers and their factory committees. The factory committees "...accustomed the more energetic workers who naturally pushed to the fore in the factory committees to the idea of giving orders instead of taking them. Not a few commanders of the Red Army, not a few future 'red directors' of Soviet Industry came out of the training school represented by the factory committees in 1917."<sup>11</sup>

The Soldiers' Committees. Soldiers' committees began appearing in Russian Army units at the time of the March Revolution. They were subsequently authorized by the Petrograd Soviet through the publication of its Order Number One. Although the beginning of the disintegration of the Russian armed forces predates the formation of the soldiers' committees, the publication of Order Number One destroyed much of the remaining

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<sup>10</sup>Fainsod, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>11</sup>Chamberlin, op. cit., p. 273.

authority of the officer corps and contributed to the eventual collapse of both the Russian Army and Navy. Order Number One called for the formation of soldiers' committees in naval and army troop units, the control of fire arms and armored cars by the committees, the abolition of certain traditional customs and courtesies within the armed forces, and for military units to obey the orders of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.<sup>12</sup>

#### ORDER NUMBER ONE

March 1 (14), 1917.

To the garrison of the Petrograd District. To all the soldiers of the Guard, army, artillery and fleet for immediate and precise execution, and to the workers of Petrograd for information.

The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has decided:

1. In all companies, battalions, regiments, depots, batteries, squadrons and separate branches of military service of every kind and on warships immediately choose committees from the elected representatives of the soldiers and sailors of the above mentioned military units.
2. In all military units which have still not elected their representatives in the Soviet of Workers' Deputies elect one representative to a company, who should appear with written credentials in the building of the State Duma at ten o'clock on the morning of March 2.
3. In all its political demonstrations a military unit is subordinated to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and its committees.
4. The orders of the military commission of the State Duma are to be fulfilled only in those cases which do not contradict the orders and decisions of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.
5. Arms of all kinds, as rifles, machine-guns, armored automobiles and others must be at the disposition and under the control of the company and battalion committees and are not in any case to be given out to officers, even upon their demand.

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<sup>12</sup>Hendel, op. cit., p. 202.



6. In the ranks and in fulfilling service duties soldiers must observe the strictest military discipline; but outside of service, in their political civil and private life soldiers cannot be discriminated against as regards those rights which all citizens enjoy.

Standing at attention and compulsory saluting outside of service are especially abolished.

7. In the same way the addressing of officers with titles: Your Excellency, Your Honor, etc., is abolished and is replaced by the forms of address: Mr. General, Mr. Colonel, etc.

Rude treatment of soldiers of all ranks, and especially addressing them as "thou," is forbidden; and soldiers are bound to bring to the attention of the company committees any violation of this rule and any misunderstandings between officers and soldiers.

This order is to be read in all companies, battalions, regiments, marine units, batteries and other front and rear military units.

[SIGNED] THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES<sup>13</sup>

The Red Guards. The Red Guards were armed militia. The Red Guard units were composed of workers and they were formed in the factories. Together with the factory committees and the soldiers' committees of the units of the Petrograd Garrison they provided a political structure for the mobilization of armed revolutionary forces and the direction of the power seizure. While the Red Guards were rude military organizations, they possessed an effective chain of command and centralized direction. These desirable characteristics were coupled with their strength in numbers and the strong emotional commitment of the workers to the revolution, which made the Red Guards more effective than the few military forces remaining loyal to the Duma at the time of the uprising. The smallest Red Guard units numbered thirteen men, while a battalion

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<sup>13</sup>Chamberlin, op. cit., pp. 429-430.

numbered between five and six hundred. Organized under the direction of the Soviet, the purpose of the Red Guards was defined as follows: "The workers' Red Guard is an organization of the armed forces of the proletariat for struggle with counterrevolution and defense of the conquests of the proletariat."<sup>14</sup>

Prompted by Bolshevik propaganda demanding peace, bread, and land, the allegiance of the soldiers and workers shifted further and further to the left. The Provisional Government had attempted to carry out the treaty obligations of the former Tsarist Government. In so doing it was forced to pursue the unpopular war policy and prolong the conditions which had precipitated the revolt in March. In rural areas the general conditions of unrest during the summer of 1917 exceeded the unrest which had occurred during the March Revolution. The peasants recognized the inability of the government to maintain internal control, and confiscation and destruction of the property of the landowners was widespread. At the same time peasant unrest spurred desertion in the army by the peasant soldiers who wanted their share of the spoils.

On the eve of the March Revolution the Bolshevik Party had numbered 23,000 members. By the time of the Party's sixth congress (8-16 August) the party totaled 200,000 members distributed in 62 organizations.<sup>15</sup> Backed by the increasing sympathy and support of

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>15</sup>Fainsod, op. cit., p. 68.

soldiers, sailors, peasants and workers the Bolsheviks finally succeeded in capturing the majority in the Petrograd Soviet on 17 September 1917. On the following day the Moscow Soviet "went Bolshevik."<sup>16</sup>

The Military Revolutionary Committee. The final political structure destined to play a significant role in the seizure of power was the Military Revolutionary Committee of Petrograd. The proposal for the formation of the committee was introduced in the Soviet by the Mensheviks, as a committee to cooperate with the General Staff of the Army in the defense of Petrograd. The Bolsheviks seized upon the idea and expanded it into a staff capable of planning and coordinating the revolution. The Bolshevik control of the Soviet ensured Bolshevik control of the Military Revolutionary Committee. The specified tasks of the Military Revolutionary Committee were: (1) to decide which forces of the Petrograd Garrison could be withdrawn from the city, (2) to register personnel of the garrison and neighboring towns, (3) to plan for the defense of the city, and (4) to account for supplies available for units of the garrison.<sup>17</sup>

Under the control of the Bolshevik members of the Soviet, the actual purpose of the committee became the direction of the October Revolution. Concealed behind the committee and acting in the name of the Petrograd Soviet, the Bolsheviks were able to obtain the cooperation and

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Chamberlin, op. cit., p. 299.

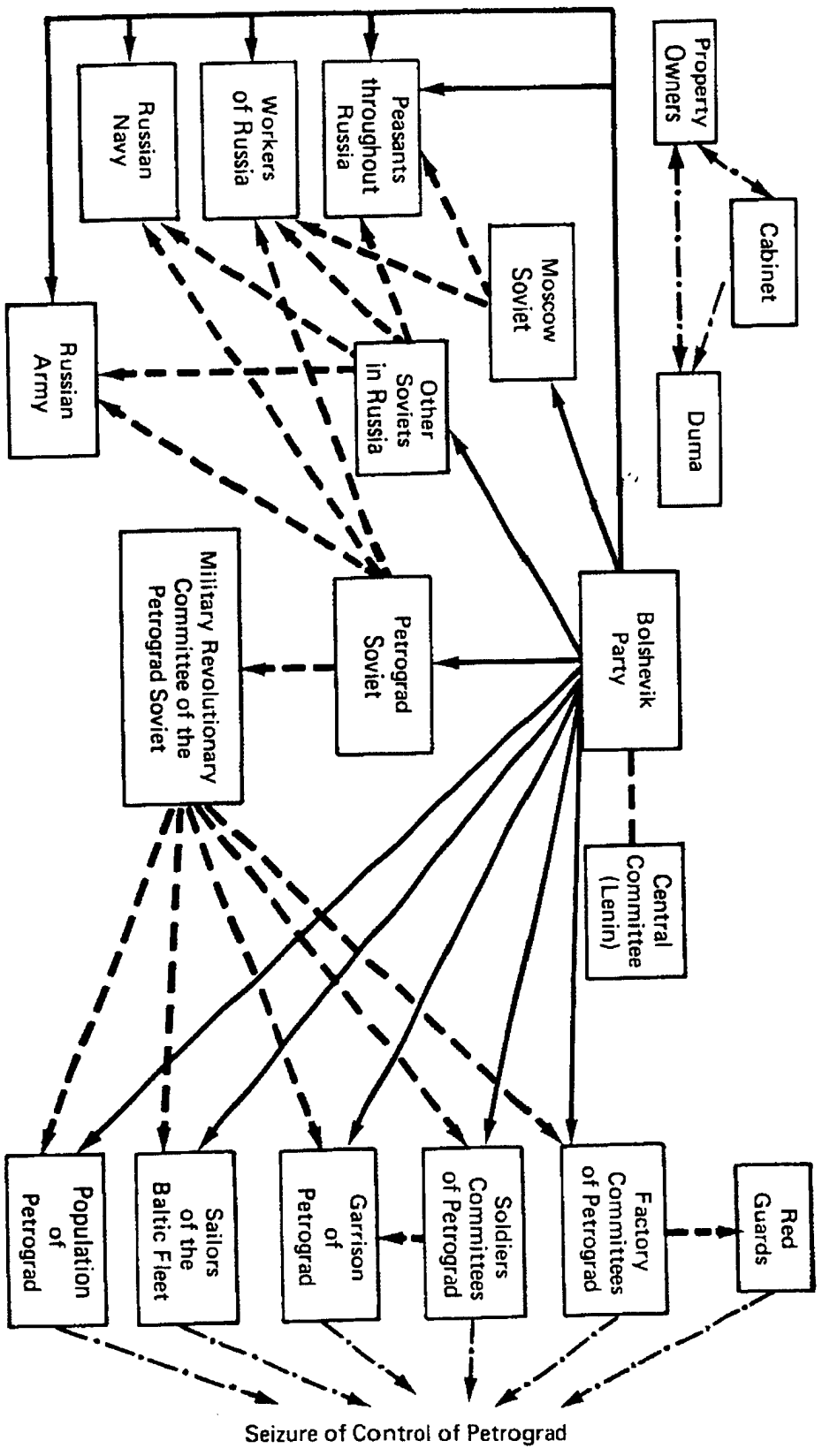


Figure No. 4. Interaction of Political Structures in the October Revolution.

support of forces, which otherwise would not have cooperated with the Bolsheviks in their bid to seize power. The Military Revolutionary Committee established a controlling headquarters; lined up support for the seizure of Petrograd within the Petrograd Garrison; assigned objectives to individual units; and established communications linking the Red Guards, the factory committees and the supporting units of the garrison. These actions were taken under the pretext of "defending the conquests of the Revolution."<sup>18</sup>

Despite the fact that the Provisional Government was able to observe the preparations of the Bolsheviks, they were powerless to stop them. The policies of the Duma and the government had been largely discredited in the eyes of the people. They had failed to cultivate mass support within the population. And they had failed to organize any political structures capable of mobilizing the population in its own support. The final hours of the Provisional Government found its leaders alone, aware of the impending threat, and nearly powerless to act. Kerensky's last night at Premier was "long and painful," and was spent in the Winter Palace attempting to locate and line up forces to come to the aid of the Provisional Government - those he was able to reach never arrived.<sup>19</sup> The revolutionary forces, riding a high tide of enthusiasm, seized control of the city during the night of 6 and 7 November 1917.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 312.

Supported by telegraph and railroad workers, who helped to isolate the capitol from assistance, the principal centers of resistance were captured with little bloodshed.

The power seizure was accomplished through the capture of the political structures of the Provisional Government. The captured political structures were either destroyed or utilized to further mobilize the population in order for the Bolsheviks to capture the state. The Tsarist Bureaucracy, the Soviets, the Factory Committees, the Soldiers' Committees, and the Red Guards were utilized to mobilize and control the population of Russia. To these structures was added the Red Army, which was organized by Trotsky in January of 1918. The Tsarist Army and Navy were destroyed by the expanding revolutionary forces. Thus, the dynamics of the power seizure can be compared to an explosive generation of power, beginning at the center of authority and expanding to occupy the state.

In his study of techniques of revolution, Curzio Malaparte provides an examination of the October Revolution, in which he concludes that the Bolsheviks captured the state and then went on to capture the Provisional Government.<sup>20</sup> Malaparte's analysis is based upon the early take over of the utilities in Petrograd by the Military Revolutionary Committee prior to the attack of the Winter Palace. Malaparte's analysis fails to recognize the state as the entire territory and the population of Russia, and not merely the city of Petrograd. Malaparte's study is

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<sup>20</sup>Curzio Malaparte, Coup D'Etat: The Technique of Revolution, (E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York, 1932), pp. 13-55.

revealing, but it overlooks the significance of the captured political structures and their role in marshalling the population of Russia. Moreover, it confuses the tactical objectives of the revolutionary forces in Petrograd with the state.

#### APPLICABILITY OF U.S. ARMY DOCTRINE

FM 31-23 has identified the Bolshevik Revolution as a revolution which includes a "...movement from below ...combined with a communist coup at the top."<sup>21</sup> If this statement is true, the characteristics of both forms of revolution could be expected to apply to the Bolshevik experience. Examination of the definitions has revealed that in some areas both appear to apply; however, both definitions have failed to apply in other areas. The definition of revolution from the top has stated that a small group tries to obtain control. Was the Bolshevik Party numbering 200,000 members a small group? Unless it is argued that only the Central Committee tried to obtain control, the definition does not apply. This explanation, however, has ignored the fact that the Central Committee was an elected body of a political structure which had been organized for the expressed purpose of seizing power. The entire membership of the party was recruited for the purpose of engineering the revolution. Therefore, the Bolshevik Party must be considered the leader of revolt, not merely its elected central committee.

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<sup>21</sup>FM 32-23, op. cit., p. 13.

Thus, the October Revolution can not be considered a revolution from the top, since a relatively large group tried to obtain control.

Examination of the definition of revolution from below has revealed the following contradictions: (1) "the revolution... involves more violent seizure of power," and (2) "...mobilization, organization, and manipulation of a sizeable segment of the population... is involved".<sup>22</sup> The definition has failed here because the revolution was relatively bloodless, and while the population numbered 150,000,000 the Bolsheviks controlled only significant blocks of forces in isolated urban areas. The remainder of the population had been neutralized through Bolshevik propaganda. The Bolsheviks controlled neither the peasants nor the army at the time of the October Revolution. On the contrary, the Bolsheviks attempted to destroy the former Tsarist army, and attempted to build an entirely new army. The formation of the new Red Army did not begin, however, until after the power seizure. Thus, to argue that the Bolsheviks mobilized a sizeable segment of the total Russian population is at variance with the facts. Based upon these contradictions the definition of revolution from below can not be made to apply to the experience of the Bolsheviks in Russia.

It is interesting to note that the definition of Almond and Powell concerning political development has also failed when applied to the October Revolution. The development of the dictatorship of the proletariat was not achieved simply through the refinement of the existing roles and

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.



structures of the political system. The bureaucracy was refined and retained by the Bolsheviks, as were the Soviets. The Duma, the provisional Government, the Army, the Trade Unions and the Navy were destroyed, however. Thus, Almond's and Powell's definition of political development is at best only partially correct.

#### CONCLUSIONS

In order to be accurately applied to the Bolshevik Revolution, more specific Army doctrine and definitions are required. We have seen that the revolution captured and refined certain political structures, while simultaneously destroying other political structures. Those political structures that were required to construct the new socialist order were retained, while those political structures that were controlled by the bourgeois class and the landowners were destroyed.

The motive force behind the revolution was primarily the industrial workers. Thus, it can be argued that the Bolshevik model applies to capitalist countries, or to countries in which significant enclaves of industrial workers have emerged. This characteristic appears to be of singular importance in identifying the character of the revolution. In view of the significance of this characteristic, attempts to recreate the successful October Revolution could well be identified as proletarian models of revolution.

Other significant characteristics of the Bolshevik Revolution have been that no underground government developed which independently controlled segments of the population. The Bolsheviks mobilized segments

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of the dissident population in order to acquire the forces necessary to capture the political structures of the Provisional Government. And although we have been able to identify specific political structures which have emerged from the October Revolution, the dependence of the Bolsheviks on the dissident population suggests that no attempt should be made to define the Bolshevik model of revolution in terms of specific political structures, such as the Soviets or the Red Guards. As the dissident elements of the population vary, the political structures of future revolutionary efforts can be expected to vary also.

Explosive Model of Revolution. Based upon the examination of the Bolshevik Revolution and the attempt to apply U.S. Army doctrine to the October Revolution, it appears a new approach is required to identify the idiosyncracies of communist revolutionary efforts patterned upon the October Revolution. In view of the characteristics identified in his research, the author offers the following definition: The explosive model of revolution is a pattern of communist inspired revolutionary activity directed at the capture and destruction of the political structures of an existing political system. The captured political structures, of the former government, are then utilized in order to capture the state. The explosive model of revolution is characterized by the mobilization of dissident sectors of the industrial labor force. It is applicable to industrialized countries, or to emerging nations with an industrial labor force. The explosive model of revolution does not attempt to establish an underground government, nor can specific

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political structures be expected to emerge. The communist party can be expected to mobilize the labor force and other dissident elements of the population utilizing existing political structures or by organizing political structures that reflect the political culture of the dissident sectors of the body politic.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE CHINESE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

The path to power of the Chinese Communists provides some strong contrasts when compared to the Bolshevik experience during the October Revolution. The Chinese Communists waged an extended power struggle in terms of the vast geographical areas involved in the conflict, and in terms of the prolonged time period of the conflict. A significant difference between the two revolutions is that the Civil War in Russia followed the Bolshevik's power seizure, whereas the Chinese civil war preceded the final seizure of power in 1949. Other differences between the two communist revolutions are the class differences between the two revolutionary forces, the economic differences between the two countries, the different political structures used by the revolutionary elites to mobilize the populations, the different roles played by the political structures of the two revolutionary movements, and finally the different techniques used by the two revolutionary movements to obtain the support of the populations.

Based upon these differences it has been argued that the Chinese Communist Revolution constitutes a distinctive revolutionary model applicable to the former colonial countries of Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America. In 1951, Lu Ting-i, a Chinese Communist ideologue, specifically claimed: "The classic type of revolution in imperialist

countries is the October Revolution. The classic type of revolution in colonial and semicolonial countries is the Chinese revolution."<sup>23</sup>

Similar claims have been made by Lin Piao and Liu Shao-chi. These claims have constituted a threat to Moscow's leadership of the worldwide communist revolutionary effort, especially in the underdeveloped areas of the world. The Russians have resisted these claims. Whether the Chinese Communist Revolution should constitute a unique model for communist revolutionary development within the framework of Marxist-Leninist theory is beyond the scope of the study. The purpose of this examination of the Chinese Revolution is to again evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. Army doctrine, and to determine if additional definitions are required to provide adequate conceptual tools in order that U.S. military students of the revolutionary process may better understand the revolutionary movement. The fact that substantial differences exist between the Bolshevik and Chinese Communist revolutionary movements does suggest that specific doctrine and definitions may be required to enable the Western military student of the revolution to perceive the structure and dynamics of the revolutionary movement. In this chapter the political structures of the Chinese Communist revolutionary movement, the functions of the political structures, and significant differences between the Bolshevik and the Chinese Communist revolutionary movements will be examined, and the adequacy of U.S. Army doctrine will again be evaluated.

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<sup>23</sup>Lu Ting-i, July 1, 1951, cited in Donald S. Zagoria, "Some Comparisons Between the Russian and Chinese Models," Communist Strategies in Asia, ed. A. Doak Barnett (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963), p. 17.

## ADAPTATION OF THE MODEL OF REVOLUTION

On the eve of the Chinese Revolution, China was in a restless mood. Dissatisfaction existed in almost all quarters of the population. The once mighty Chinese Middle Kingdom had been humiliated by Western colonial intervention, and by Japanese and Russian encroachments on traditional Chinese territory. The Manchu Government had attempted to defeat the military forces of the foreign powers; however, the modern weapons and technology of China's opponents had resulted in the rapid defeat of the Manchu forces. The inability of China to effectively respond to the claims and demands of the militant colonial powers resulted in unequal treaties, loss of territories, and the eventual collapse of the Manchu Dynasty in 1911.

The overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty was followed by an extended period of internecine warfare among warlord factions and various political groups. The need for modernization and a strong central government in China had been widely recognized. Agreement could not be reached on who should lead the new China, however, nor on the methods by which China was to modernize and regain her rightful position as the center of the world, the Middle Kingdom. The fall of the Manchu Dynasty had been precipitated by revolutionary activity initiated and directed by Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Unfortunately, Sun was unable to unite China and forty years of political maneuvering, civil war, and anti-colonial warfare ensued. This protracted period of conflict resulted in tremendous suffering and loss of life for the population. Civil war, famine, political and economic instability, and foreign invaders ravaged the country. The restless mood of China

that had ushered in the revolution of 1911 and the downfall of the Manchus gradually became a mood of despair as the conflict continued. Eventually the mood of China became one of explosive discontent that was to finally find expression under communist leadership.

The remainder of this section of Chapter III will examine the organizational efforts of the Chinese Communists from 1921 until 1949. During this period China was engulfed in four major conflicts. These conflicts were the First Revolutionary Civil War (1924-1927), the Second Revolutionary Civil War (1927-1937), the United Front Period (1937-1945), and the Third Revolutionary Civil War (1945-1949). The First Revolutionary Civil War and the United Front Period found the Chinese Communists allied with the Chinese Nationalists against first the Warlords and then the Japanese. During the Second and Third Revolutionary Civil Wars, the Chinese Communists fought the Chinese Nationalists for the right to govern China. Almost throughout this prolonged conflict, another conflict raged within the Communist Party. The conflict internal to the Party has been largely unrecorded, and the available evidence indicates that it still continues at the time of the writing of this chapter. The internal Party conflict concerned the question of borrowing from the earlier Bolshevik experience. Initially the Party attempted to apply the lessons of the October Revolution and to capture control of the Nationalist revolutionary movement. Eventually the policy of following the precedent set during the October Revolution was challenged by Party members who espoused a policy of deviation from the Bolshevik model and the development of a new

model of revolution, which would more effectively address the unique problems faced by the communists in China.

#### Marxist-Leninist Theory and the Revolution

The experience of the Soviet Union following the October Revolution had created a most favorable impression upon Chinese intellectuals. The Soviet renunciation of territorial claims against China and their verbal attacks upon both imperialism and capitalism were warmly received by the Chinese intellectuals, who had felt shame and embarrassment over China's inability to respond more effectively to the encroachments upon China's sovereignty by foreign imperialist powers. Dr. Sun Yat-sen called the new Russian policy a ". . .policy of peace. This new policy not only harbors no wild design of world aggression; it aims to check the strong and to help the weak; it advocates justice."<sup>24</sup>

Following the formation of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1921, the CCP was to merge with the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang-KMT). The CCP hoped to infiltrate and capture the nationalist movement. Based upon their analysis of the Chinese society, the Chinese Marxists saw the need for both a bourgeoisie revolution and a socialist revolution in order to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. According to this analysis the first task of the revolutionary forces was to unite with

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<sup>24</sup>Sun Yat-sen, San Min Chu I, The Three Principles of the People. (Chungking, 1943), p. 17.



the nationalist forces against the warlords and imperialists in order to hasten the bourgeoisie revolution.<sup>25</sup> Hence, the move to merge the CCP and KMT.

In the spring of 1921 a Comintern representative, Maring, had met Sun Yat-sen in Kwangsi province. Maring subsequently recommended that the Comintern cooperate with the Kuomintang (KMT) or Chinese Nationalist Party.<sup>26</sup> At the Second Congress of the CCP in 1922, the question of an alliance with the KMT was raised. It was decided to form a "bloc within" as opposed to an alliance. Accordingly, the CCP members began to join the KMT in order to form the bloc within.<sup>27</sup> In return for the KMT cooperation with the Comintern, China received Soviet (USSR) military advisors and assurances of Soviet support for Chinese reunification. With the Soviet assistance the KMT was reorganized along the "democratic centralism" lines of the Communist Party of the USSR.

Under the direction of the Comintern, many newly recruited party cadres of the CCP were educated in the Soviet Union, and the overall objectives of the CCP were established. The policy of the CCP became one of cooperation with the KMT in order to capture control of the nationalist

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<sup>25</sup>"First Manifesto of the CCP on the Current Situation," A Documentary History of Chinese Communism, eds. Brant, Schwartz and Fairbank (Cambridge, 1952), pp. 54-63.

<sup>26</sup>Hugh Seton-Watson, From Lenin to Khrushchev The History of World Communism (New York, 1960), p. 138.

<sup>27</sup>John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig, East Asia The Modern Transformation (Boston, 1965), p. 679.

movement, while continuing the independent organization of the labor movement in China. Early efforts toward the organization of the labor movement were centered in the coastal cities of China. In the large coastal cities were located the majority of the relatively small industrial labor force as well as a large portion of the transportation workers of the country.

The subsequent failure of the urban oriented organizing efforts eventually gave rise to the split or internal conflict of the CCP. A number of communist cadres, working as members of the KMT, enjoyed considerable success in mobilizing the peasant population. Among these cadres was Mao Tse-tung. Mao recognized the revolutionary potential of the peasants and provided leadership to those CCP members advocating a deviation from the Bolshevik model. Under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung, organizational efforts were gradually shifted from the urban industrial workers to the massive peasant population of rural China. The failure of the urban revolutionary efforts and the success enjoyed by the CCP in organizing the peasants was to eventually establish Mao Tse-tung as the leader of the CCP. Writing in the Kiangsi Soviet and later in Yenan, Mao attempted to rescue the Party doctrine from the dilemma posed by the shifting of the Chinese Communist revolutionary effort to rural bases.

In his writings Mao did not contradict the earlier writings of Lenin and Marx. Lenin had conceived of the revolution in two stages. According to Lenin, during the first stage of the revolution (the bourgeoisie revolution), all of the peasants would unite with the workers in an attack upon the land owners (feudal elements of the society). During the

second stage of the revolution (the socialist revolution), Lenin concluded that only the poorest peasants would unite with the workers in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie regime and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.<sup>28</sup> Thus, Lenin saw the workers as the principal motive force of the revolution. Continuing where Lenin had left off, Mao provided the dialectic transition from the writings of Lenin to the tactics of the Chinese Communists in the Kiangsi Soviet. Mao's works became the doctrinal base that augmented the earlier works of Lenin and Marx, and provided an explanation of the role of the peasants as an additional motive force in a revolution, leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Mao theorized that as a result of the control of the land by the land owners, and as a result of the influence of the foreign colonial powers, China had been reduced to colonial, semi-colonial, and semi-feudal status. Mao identified four contradictions, which existed within the oppressed society and which provided the basis for revolution: (1) the contradiction between the Chinese Nation and imperialism, (2) the contradiction between the people and feudalism (landowners), (3) the contradiction between the workers and bourgeoisie, and (4) the contradiction between the various elements of the ruling classes (war lord factions).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>V. I. Lenin, September 14, 1905, "The Attitude of Social-Democracy Toward the Peasant Movement," Selected Works, Volume III (New York, 1943), pp. 145-146.

<sup>29</sup>Mao Tse-tung, December 1939, "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," Mao Tse-tung Selected Works, Volume III (New York, 1954), p. 81.

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Mao further theorized that the traditional Chinese society was composed of six classes: (1) the landlords, (2) the bourgeoisie, (3) the petty bourgeoisie, (4) the peasantry, (5) the workers, and (6) the vagrants. Mao concluded that the motive force for revolution in China was composed of the exploited classes, which were the peasants, the workers and the petty bourgeoisie.<sup>30</sup> Based upon this analysis of the class struggle, the Chinese Communists could justify their tactics exploiting the conditions existing in China through the organization of peasants, students, and sympathetic members of China's newly emerging middle class, in addition to the workers of the urban areas.

#### The First Revolutionary Civil War (1924-1927)

In July, 1926, the KMT launched a major military campaign, under Chiang Kai-shek, in order to reunify China. Known as the Northern Expedition, the campaign was launched from Canton and succeeded in overcoming opposition in central China and establishing the new capitol of the country at Nanking. The communist and KMT political cadres preceded or accompanied the March of the KMT military forces. These cadres attempted to rally the support of the local populace in the areas through which the expedition passed. In addition they sought to subvert the military opposition through nationalist revolutionary appeals. During the course of the march to the Yangtze, 34 warlord armies were absorbed by the Nationalist armies.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 88-95

<sup>31</sup>Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, op. cit., p. 679.

Throughout the expedition the communist and left KMT cadres enjoyed wide and enthusiastic support from among the peasants. Using the appeal of land reform and anticolonialism, these cadres successfully organized peasant uprisings along the route of march of the KMT armies. Following the termination of the Northern Expedition, the left wing of the Nationalist forces, composed of the CCP cadres and leftist leaning members of the KMT, established themselves at Wuhan.

Antagonisms between the rival wings of the KMT finally surfaced during this period. Doctrinal rigidity that had caused the CCP to closely follow the earlier Russian experience was to now place the CCP in a most precarious position. While the communist cadres had established themselves within the labor movement and had successfully initiated a peasant movement, they were seriously lacking in military forces. Moreover, the right wing of the KMT was aware of the CCP "block within" and their plans to capture the nationalist movement.

During the Wuhan period, it (KMT) was controlled by an uneasy coalition of politicians and generals who were, however, determined to maintain their own power, who were quite well aware of the Comintern's plans for establishing "proletarian hegemony" and quite determined to prevent this from happening. It is one thing for a Communist party to gain control of a loosely organized, democratic organization which is not aware of what is happening. It is quite a different matter for it to gain control of a centralized machine organized along Leninist lines which is quite aware of what is happening and determined to prevent it.<sup>32</sup>

Marshalling the support of the right wing of the KMT and the majority of his military forces Chiang turned on the communist forces in

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<sup>32</sup>Benjamin I. Schwartz, Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 67.

the spring of 1927. Purging first the KMT party organization of communist members and then attacking the communist oriented segment of the labor movement, Chiang decisively defeated the communists. Following this defeat, the CCP attempted to seize control of Wuhan, utilizing the peasant organizations formed in Hupeh and Hunan provinces. However, Chiang's decisive defeat of the CCP in the coastal cities had been persuasive enough to win him the hearts and minds of the left wing of the KMT at Wuhan. The CCP found itself isolated. Recognizing the failure of the policy of subverting the KMT, the CCP called for the peasant forces in central China to attack the cities in order to gain control of urban areas. Under the leadership of political cadres such as Mao Tse-tung, poorly organized peasant armies, and a smattering of allies from among the workers and soldiers, launched attacks at Changsha. In so doing, a poorly armed and poorly organized peasantry was committed against the armed forces of the KMT. The attacks ended in another failure for the communists. The improvised tactics of subordinating the newly organized peasant movement to a workers revolution in the urban areas proved to be a failure.<sup>33</sup> With the defeat of the CCP at Changsha, the total reliance of the CCP on the October Revolution was brought to an end, and the emergence of a unique Chinese model of revolution had begun.

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<sup>33</sup>Roy Hofheinz, Jr. "The Autumn Harvest Insurrection," China Quarterly, No. 32 (October-December, 1967), pp. 72-75.

The Second Revolutionary Civil War (1927-1937)

Following the failure of the First Revolutionary Civil War, the leadership of the CCP was purged from within and a visible split occurred among the rank and file of the party. Chen Tu-hsiu, the founder of the CCP, was condemned by the Comintern for his "right deviation" and the purged leadership of the CCP was condemned for "...constant vacillation, their false unrevolutionary theories in complete contradiction to the resolutions and instructions of the Comintern ... in reality betrayed the revolution."<sup>34</sup>

The surviving membership of the CCP split over the lessons to be learned from the failures of 1927. Li Li-san, the new secretary of the CCP, continued to follow the Comintern line and concluded that the CCP must turn away from the peasantry and must concentrate renewed efforts on the organization of the urban proletariat of China. Writing in Red Flag in 1929, Li Li-san wrote:

The villages are the limbs of the ruling class. The cities are their brains and heart. If we cut out their brains and hearts, they cannot escape death; but if we simply cut off the appendages, it will not necessarily kill them.<sup>35</sup>

Those members of the CCP that had enjoyed the brief initial successes in the organizing of the peasant movement sensed the immense revolutionary potential that existed among the peasants who awaited

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<sup>34</sup>John K. Fairbank, The United States and China (New York, 1958), p. 230.

<sup>35</sup>Schwartz, op. cit., p. 138.

leadership and effective organization. Mao was foremost among those who looked to the peasantry as a motive force in the revolutionary movement. After the failure of the attack on Changsha, Mao Tse-tung had fled with a following of 1,000 peasants into the mountainous region along the Hunan-Kiangsi border where he joined forces with Chu Teh in May of 1928.<sup>36</sup> From the Kiangsi base area, Mao and his followers launched a campaign to mobilize the latent strength of the peasantry, contrary to the CCP directives.

Under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, the KMT attacks on the CCP continued. The KMT strength was centered in the large coastal cities of China. Following the KMT attacks, the CCP efforts to organize the workers in these cities met with repeated failure. In 1927 the peasant and worker union movement had numbered 13,000,000. By 1930 it had been reduced to 64,000. Of the 64,000 remaining members of the movement in 1930 only 5,700 were workers in the principal cities.<sup>37</sup> From his position of strength in the coastal cities, Chiang continued his attack of the CCP organization in the urban areas, and in 1930 he simultaneously launched the first of five Bandit Extermination Campaigns designed to destroy the CCP peasant movement, especially the Kiangsi Soviet base of Mao Tse-tung.

The first campaign saw 100,000 troops launched against the Kiangsi base area. Using mobile tactics and exploiting their knowledge of the

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<sup>36</sup>Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, op. cit., p. 688.

<sup>37</sup>U.S. War Department, Report of the Military Intelligence Division, The Chinese Communist Movement, 5 July 1945 (Washington, 1945), p. 2322. Cited hereafter as the Report of the Military Intelligence Division.



mountainous terrain, as well as their support by the local populace, the communist peasant armies soundly defeated the KMT troops. The KMT launched four successive campaigns, each of which mobilized larger military forces, and each of which ended in failure. During these campaigns the KMT forces were forced to conduct their operations on exterior lines against a more mobile foe, who practiced a denial of food supply policy that forced the KMT to bring food into the Kiangsi base area to feed their troops. The result was that numerous lengthy supply lines were continuously exposed to attack by the light, mobile forces of Mao Tse-tung. From their interior position the armies of Mao and Chu Teh concentrated upon and defeated one after another of the invading KMT Divisions.

In his preparations for the Fifth Bandit extermination campaign, Chiang changed his tactics. Concentrating 900,000 troops around the Kiangsi base area, Chiang began constructing lines of communications (LOC), which were protected by barriers and mutually supporting bunkers. As the construction of the fortified LOC's pushed deeper into the Kiangsi base area, the communist base was bisected by barriers and fortified positions. The light mobile armies of the CCP bled themselves through repeated, and relatively ineffective, attacks on the fortified LOC's. As the KMT penetrated deeper into the base area the population was moved out, depriving the communist forces of their logistical support, i.e. food, clothing and recruits. Forced to engage in positioned warfare, the Red Army proved to be no match for the heavier equipped forces of the KMT.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Samuel B. Griffith II, The Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (New York, 1967), pp. 43-44.

On 16 October of 1934 the Red Army abandoned their defense of the Kiangsi Soviet base area and with 90,000 men they began the Long March. Marching a distance reputed to be the equivalent of 6,000 miles, the force reached the remote communist base in Shensi, northern China, one year later. Of the force of 90,000 men, who commenced the march, 20,000 reached Shensi.<sup>39</sup> The Red Army was pursued during the march, forcing them to fight repeated rear guard actions while attempting to deceive their pursuers through ruse and feint as to the destination of the march.

Despite the adverse circumstances encountered during the march and the defeats suffered during the Fifth Bandit Extermination Campaign, circumstances were occurring both within the CCP and internationally, which were to exert tremendous influence upon the future of the revolutionary movement and were to reverse the high tide of counter-revolution in China. In recognition of the rise of Facism, and the threat posed by the Anti-Comintern Pact to the security of the Soviet Union, the Comintern called for a united front with the capitalist democracies against Facism. Reflecting this new line, Mao proposed in January of 1936 that the KMT and the CCP form a United Front in order to oppose the Japanese conquests in Manchuria. Strong sentiment existed in China at this time for an end to civil war and for united opposition to the Japanese conquests in Manchuria.

Initially Chiang Kai-shek rejected the Communist offer, which appeared to be an indication of the weakness of the CCP position. Instead, Chiang prepared for a Sixth Bandit Extermination Campaign. Chiang flew to

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 2327.

the headquarters of Manchurian Marshall, Chang Hsueh-liang, in Sian, in order to commence preparation for the Bandit Extermination Campaign. There he was confronted by Marshall Chang, who supported the CCP proposal. Chiang again rejected the proposal. On December 12, 1936, Marshall Chang arrested Chiang Kai-shek. Through joint negotiations, which saw the CCP and Marshall Chang opposing the KMT, Chiang Kai-shek was forced to agree to a united front.<sup>40</sup>

Throughout the fight for the Kiangsi Soviet and the subsequent Long March the internal Party conflict had continued. During the conduct of the Long March, a CCP Central Committee conference had been conducted at Tsunyi. The conference brought to a head the split within the CCP, and bitter debate ensued over the questions of the leadership and tactics of the Party. Mao emerged as the victor and was named chairman of the Central Committee.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the end of the Second Revolutionary Civil War saw the CCP united under Mao Tse-tung's leadership and the immediate threat of the KMT attacks eliminated. By the time of the Japanese invasion of northern China, Mao was established as the leader of the CCP; the Red Army and its tactics had been tested in combat; and more important, from the standpoint of the revolution, was the fact that the CCP had discarded the Bolshevik model of revolution. A new model was emerging that enabled the party to capture the allegiance of the peasantry and to mobilize them in order to wage the power struggle.

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<sup>40</sup>U. Edmund, Clubb, Twentieth Century China (New York: 1964), pp. 207-208.

<sup>41</sup>Jerome Ch'en, "Resolutions of the Tsunyi Conference," The China Quarterly, No. 40 (October-December, 1969), p. 36.

The United Front Period (1937-1945)

The terms of the United Front agreement between the KMT and the CCP were announced in March of 1937 following Chiang Kai-shek's return to Nanking. The KMT demanded: (1) the abolition of the Red Army and its incorporation in the KMT forces, (2) dissolution of the Soviet Republic, (3) cessation of communist propaganda, and (4) suspension of the class struggle. The terms were accepted by the CCP on March 15, 1937. As a result of the agreement, the CCP obtained a let-up from the attacks of the KMT. The concessions made by the CCP proved to be meaningless, however, since the KMT was unable to either supervise CCP compliance or enforce the terms agreed upon. While the Red Army was redesignated the Eighth Route Army, the Red Army commanders and commissars remained firmly in control.<sup>42</sup>

The results of the Japanese invasion of China contrasted sharply as far as the impact it made upon the CCP and KMT. Japanese occupation of the coastal cities, the railroads, and the major cities of the Yangtze plain deprived the KMT of its established economic base and forced Chiang to establish his war capitol in the winterland at Chungking. Isolated from the outside world and from most of China, the KMT began a slow process of emasculation. The nationalist armies were forced to engage the Japanese in positional warfare, sustaining heavy losses. As the war progressed, the effects of isolation, inflation, and the inability of the conservative KMT forces to provide badly needed land reforms, produced stagnation and

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<sup>42</sup>Report of the Military Intelligence Division, op. cit., p. 2331.

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finally bureaucratic corruption. With the gradual disappearance of the vitality of the KMT went the sympathy of the people, and eventually the Mandate of Heaven.

For the CCP the Japanese invasion was a windfall. First the KMT forces were diverted from their attacks on the communists, and then vast areas of the country were opened by the Japanese to CCP infiltration. Under the pressure of the Japanese invasion, the KMT and its allies fled into the interior of China. The Japanese armies occupied the cities, and they maintained forces to secure their lines of communications. However, the countryside was not occupied. As a consequence, thousands upon thousands of villages in northern and central China were abandoned by the central authority, and provided no security or new authority by the Japanese. Into this vacuum moved the CCP. Thus, the Japanese invasion effectively robbed the KMT of its economic base, while simultaneously opening extensive areas to the CCP.

During the United Front Period the CCP concentrated its efforts on the mobilization of the rural population of North and Central China. No serious efforts were made to drive out the Japanese; instead, the CCP worked to expand and secure its control of the population. With the entry of the United States into the war against Japan, the war effort of both the CCP and the KMT became generally static. Neither of the two parties wished to jeopardize their armies, in view of the impending power struggle for control of China, following the defeat of Japan.<sup>43</sup> By the

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<sup>43</sup>Griffith, op. cit., p. 74.

end of the United Front Period, General Chu Teh commanded a Red Army of 910,000 officers and men. In addition to the Red Army, the CCP could call upon the aid of nearly two and a quarter million militia-men.<sup>44</sup>

#### The Third Revolutionary Civil War (1945-1949)

The final period of the power struggle involved the application of tactics and strategy, which had been developed by the CCP during the previous three periods of conflict. Since the final period of the revolution gave rise to no significant new developments in the model of revolution of the Chinese Communists, it is largely beyond the scope of this study. It is relevant, however, insofar as it contains the final drive of the CCP in its struggle for power.

Following the surrender of the Japanese, it became apparent that civil war was again about to engulf China. U.S. mediation efforts which attempted to bring about a compromise solution were to no avail. The Soviet Union also attempted to prevent the renewal of civil war. Stalin attempted to force the CCP to return to the Bolshevik Model and renew its efforts to merge with the KMT.<sup>45</sup> Mao again rejected Stalin's advice and continued to follow the new model of revolution, which had now proven itself in China. Open warfare ensued as the two sides rushed to occupy Manchuria and the major cities held by the Japanese in Northern China.

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Mao Tse-tung, Speech to the 10th Plenary Session of the Eight Central Committee, Sept. 24, 1962, as cited in "Excerpts From Confidential Speeches, Directives and Letters of Mao Tse-Tung," The New York Times, March 11, 1970, p. 26.

With U.S. assistance the KMT was able to occupy major cities in both areas. The CCP once again took possession of the countryside.

Again applying the tactics pioneered in the Kiangsi Soviet, the CCP mobilized the peasantry in the newly acquired areas and then began an attack upon the vulnerable, extended lines of communications of the KMT forces. One at a time, the prized cities of Manchuria and North China were isolated, surrounded by superior forces, and captured. The control of the countryside and the lines of communications by the communists prevented the movement of adequate reserves to enable the Nationalists to reinforce the threatened cities. By 1948 the end of the revolution was in sight. On the first of October 1949, the new Central People's Government of the Chinese People's Republic was formally installed in Peiping.<sup>46</sup>

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL STRUCTURES

The base areas of the CCP were situated in remote or inaccessible areas. These base areas provided a safe haven in which to establish the political structures of the Chinese Communist political system, and from which to expand in order to eventually contest the control of the countryside. The boundaries of the provinces of China follow natural terrain barriers. The CCP preferred to establish its base camps along these terrain barriers, be they mountains, swamps or rivers. The "border regions" suited the rather primitive needs of the CCP and provided a passive defense through their natural terrain barriers to the motorized units of

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<sup>46</sup>Clubb, op. cit., p. 297.

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the Japanese Army and the KMT. The border regions were suitable for foot traffic and for the pack animals of the Red Army, but they constituted a complex series of obstacles to invading armies. In addition, the selection of base areas along Province boundaries complicated the attack of the base area by provincial officials, while permitting access by the communists to the "political-economic cores" of several provinces.<sup>47</sup>

A fully developed border region was organized through the mobilization of the population by four political structures: the CCP, the Border Region Governments, the People's Forces, and the Red Army. Politically, each border region was subordinated to the Central Committee of the CCP in Yen-an. Economically, each border region attempted to be self sufficient. The organization of each base area, or border region, usually began upon the arrival of the Red Army in the area. The CCP accompanied the Red Army, since the CCP structure was contained within the Red Army. Following the Kiangsi Soviet Period and during the Long March almost the entire effective strength of the CCP functioned as commissars in the Red Army. The arrival of the Red Army in the selected base area was followed by the organization of People's Forces. Once the population had been organized and mobilized through the People's Forces, a border region government was then established. As the military potential and the political leadership of the area were harnessed, the new border region would begin providing men to the Red Army, and candidates would be accepted into the CCP.

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<sup>47</sup>Robert W. McColl, "A Political Geography of Revolution: China, Vietnam, and Thailand," Conflict Resolution, Volume XI, Number 2 (June, 1967), p. 157.



### The People's Forces

The People's Forces was a general term used to describe the mass organizations that were utilized to harness the collective productive potential of the rural population. A variety of mass organizations were formed that attempted to enlist the support of both sexes, all occupations, and all productive age groups. The titles of the mass organizations and the grievances exploited by the organizing cadre varied during the course of the revolution. Typical mass organizations were the Youth Vanguard, the National Salvation Associations, Model Detachments, Red Guards and various self-defense detachments. Figure No. 5, the Principal Political Structures of the Chinese Communist Revolutionary Struggle, depicts the People's Forces common during the United Front Period.<sup>48</sup>

During the First and Second Revolutionary Civil Wars the major appeal of the CCP peasant movement had been land reform. During the United Front Period the CCP shifted to a rent reduction line and dropped the land reform line. In addition it appealed to all classes to unite in order to save China from the Japanese invaders. These more moderate appeals proved highly successful in mobilizing the people behind the CCP directed war effort. During the Third Revolutionary Civil War the CCP again returned to the theme of land reform in order to provide the radical demands necessary to further mobilize the peasants for the final struggle against the KMT. A leaflet prepared by the CCP-dominated Shansi Sacrifice League, which was captured by the Japanese in 1938, demonstrates the

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<sup>48</sup>Report of the Military Intelligence Division, op. cit., Chart 1.

approach taken by the CCP during the United Front period:

Comrades! Japan has invaded our Shansi, killed large numbers of our people, burned thousands of our houses, raped our women in countless numbers, robbed us of our ancestors, forced our wives and children to flee, destroyed our famous places, ... and made the joy of peace impossible ... Everybody! Rise up and join a guerrilla self-defense unit! Exterminate the Peace Maintenance Committee<sup>49</sup> which sells out the nation! Defend our anti-Japanese patriotic people's government! Assist the all-out resistance of Commander Yen (Hsi-shan)! Act in unison with Army and people to overthrow Japanese imperialism!<sup>50</sup>

The activities of the People's Forces differed depending upon the proximity of enemy forces. In war areas, those areas not physically occupied by the enemy, the People's Forces provided a base for the war effort. The activities of the people in the war area included construction, food production, treatment of the wounded, and guide duties.<sup>51</sup> In the areas designated as guerrilla areas, which were physically occupied by the enemy, emphasis was placed upon combat duties. Combat of the People's Forces was conducted through tactics designed to minimize the limitations of the guerrilla and to simultaneously exploit the unique qualities of the local forces, i.e. through the use of mines, tunnel warfare, ambushes, blockades, and limited attacks upon enemy lines of communications.

In combat, the militia would gather or disperse suddenly, appearing now here now there, "making a feint to the east but attacking in the west," mysteriously appearing and disappearing behind the enemy lines. In this way, the enemy could find neither a target for attack nor a

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<sup>49</sup>Pro-Japanese groups formed by the Chinese puppet government at Nanking to augment Japanese occupation strength.

<sup>50</sup>Chalmers Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power (Stanford, 1962), p. 4.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

well-defined battle front. He was constantly being caught unawares and reduced to such a plight as if he were surrounded on all sides by hostile forces. Being local people, the militia were familiar with the local inhabitants and the layout of their districts. They were able to penetrate deep into and reconnoiter the enemy's fortified places and they could post sentries right up to the walls of enemy fortresses. They kept the people's army well informed and by preventing the enemy from getting information kept him "deaf and blind."<sup>52</sup>

### The Border Region Governments

The Border Region Governments were developed in order to provide an administrative capability within the base areas. The Border Region Government performed the function of taxation, maintenance of records, local security, and education. The Village Government Committee (Figure No. 5) constituted a staff, which performed each of these functions of village administration.

At each level of government there was formed a congress, which elected members to sit on the congress at the next higher level of government. In addition, the Village People's Congress elected the members of the Village Citizen's General Assembly, and the Border Region People's Congress elected the members of the Border Area Council.<sup>53</sup> The Central Committee of the CCP specified that one-third of the seats within the elected assemblies would be held by CCP members.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Liu Yun-cheng, "The Militia in Chinese People's Revolutionary Wars" in Peking Review VII (Peking, 1964), No. 34, p. 23.

<sup>53</sup>Report of the Military Intelligence Division, op. cit., p. 2335.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 2402.

The congresses provided a sounding board for public opinion; however, they exercised little or no legislative powers. The Central Committee of the CCP in Yanan directed the Border Region Governments through the CCP members in the representative assemblies, who submitted the policies of the CCP to the assembly for a vote. Direction of the Border Region Governments was controlled by the CCP through retention of key positions at each level of government. Nonparty members were permitted to participate in the Border Region Governments; however, no effective opposition to the CCP was permitted. The complete control of the news media, mass organizations and educational activities by the CCP ensured popular support for the CCP policies in the Border Region. By the end of 1944 sixteen anti-Japanese base areas had been established by the CCP. The status of the governmental structure of the sixteen base areas at the end of 1944, was as follows: five had fully developed Border Region Governments; eight had "Administrative Committees" in which the governmental structure had not yet fully developed; and three were designated "military regions" and were governed by the CCP, Red Army, and People's Forces in the region.<sup>55</sup>

#### The Red Army

The Red Army fought a war of attrition in the majority of its campaigns against both the KMT and the Japanese. During these struggles, they perfected tactics based upon the use of highly mobile operations. Tactical operations were usually centered around defense of established bases utilized by the communist forces, or around the expansion into new

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 2400.

areas that had been either abandoned or that were weakly held. Expansion of the population base upon which the communist forces could further mobilize and expand their military forces became the strategy behind the tactical operations.

In the expansion of base areas the Army acted under Party direction. After the Army received the decision of the CCP to expand into a new area, the Army Political Department would determine the method to be utilized in order to execute the planned expansion. Several methods were utilized. Stay behind groups of political cadres were utilized when the Red Army had the opportunity to move through the area. Another method involved sending a column or military unit into the new area in order to accompany the political cadres and provide security for them. The third method required that political cadres be trained who were natives of the new area. The newly trained cadres would be infiltrated back into the target area and then begin the task of organizing and recruiting, without military assistance. The political cadres were thoroughly prepared prior to entering the area. They were expected to know the language or dialect. In addition, they obtained detailed knowledge of the economy, local political issues, social conditions and grievances of the people. Cadres were cautioned to talk and dress like the peasants, and "...to pay attention to the problem of local superstitions."<sup>56</sup>

The significance of the political objectives of the Red Army are best described by Mao Tse-tung.

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<sup>56</sup>Johnson, op. cit., p. 87.

The Chinese Red Army is an armed body for carrying out the political tasks of the revolution. Especially at present, the Red Army should certainly not confine itself to fighting; besides fighting to destroy the enemy's military strength, it should shoulder such important tasks as doing propaganda among the masses, organizing the masses, arming them, helping them to establish revolutionary political power and setting up Party organizations. The Red Army fights not merely for the sake of fighting but in order to conduct propaganda among the masses, organize them, arm them, and help them to establish revolutionary political power. Without these objectives, fighting loses its meaning and the Red Army loses the reason for its existence.<sup>57</sup>

The functions of the Chinese Communist Red Army as far as military operations are concerned are also described by Mao Tse-tung. The tactics were simple, direct, and geared to the limited education and training of the large Chinese Communist peasant armies. Mao enunciated the tactics of the Red Army in "The Ten Major Principles of Operation."<sup>58</sup>

(1) Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later.

(2) Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later.

(3) Make wiping out the enemy's effective strength our main objective; do not make holding or seizing a city or place our main objective. Holding or seizing a city or place is the outcome of wiping out the enemy's effective strength, and often a city or place can be held or seized for good only after it has changed hands a number of times.

(4) In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy forces completely strive to wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. In special circumstances, use the methods of dealing the enemy crushing blows, that is, concentrate all our strength to make a frontal attack and an attack on one or both of his flanks, with the aim of wiping out one part and routing another so that our army can swiftly move its troops

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<sup>57</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party," Selected Works, Vol. I (December, 1929), p. 106.

<sup>58</sup>Mao Tse-tung, Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung (Peking, 1963), p. 347-348.

to smash other enemy forces. Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or only break even. In this way, although inferior as a whole (in terms of numbers), we shall be absolutely superior in every part and every specific campaign, and this ensures victory in the campaign. As time goes on, we shall become superior as a whole and eventually wipe out all the enemy.

(5) Fight no battle unprepared, fight no battle you are not sure of winning; make every effort to be well prepared for each battle, make every effort to ensure victory in the given set of conditions as between the enemy and ourselves.

(6) Give full play to our style of fighting--courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting (that is, fighting successive battles in a short time without rest).

(7) Strive to wipe out the enemy when he is on the move. At the same time, pay attention to the tactics of positional attack and capture enemy fortified points and cities.

(8) With regard to attacking cities, resolutely seize all enemy fortified points and cities which are weakly defended. At opportune moments, seize all enemy fortified points and cities defended with moderate strength, provided circumstances permit. As for strongly defended enemy fortified points and cities, wait till (sic) conditions are ripe and then take them.

(9) Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the personnel captured from the enemy. Our army's main sources of manpower and material are at the front.

(10) Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should not in general be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space.

The regular forces of the Red Army during the United Front Period consisted of the Field Forces of the Eighth Route Army (later remained the Eighteenth Group Army) and the New Fourth Army. Local forces, specifically guerrilla units, were usually included for reporting purposes in the regular forces. The People's Forces on the other hand consisted of the

militia and the mass organizations for self-defense. In October of 1944, the strength of the Field Forces was reported at 475,000. By 17 May of 1945, the Field Forces were reported to number 910,000.<sup>59</sup>

The Field Forces and the Local Forces were organized into similar military organizations. The major differences in the forces was the state of training and equipment. Regiments of both types of forces were classified as either class A, B, or C Regiments. The Class A Regiment numbered 1,763 officers and men. The Class B Regiment numbered approximately 1,200 officers and men. The Class C Regiment numbered 866 officers and men.<sup>60</sup>

#### The Chinese Communist Party

As in the case of the Bolshevik power seizure, the Chinese Communist Party played the key role in the direction of the revolution. In a very real sense the Party was the revolution. Party members held the key direction and leadership positions in all of the political structures and organizations that played a role in the revolution. Thus, a few men in the Central Committee of the CCP were able to direct the tremendous apparatus of the Party organization, and at the same time they were able to direct the functioning of all of the other structures of the revolutionary effort. In some areas and during some periods of the revolution the Party became closely identified with one or more of the subordinate structures. This was particularly true of the Red Army. During the Long March, the effective Party organization that survived the Fifth

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<sup>59</sup>Report of the Military Intelligence Division, op. cit., p. 2313.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 2449-2450.



Bandit Extermination Campaign was contained mainly within the Red Army. During this period, the Party members functioned as commissars and commanders of the Red Army.

The CCP organizational structure was built upon a foundation of cells. During the initial stages of organization of the structure, and during the recruiting in urban areas, the process resembled the recruiting efforts of the Bolshevik Party prior to the October Revolution.

In a school or factory or particular locality in which there is a "cell" (hsiao tsu, literally a "small organization"), a person who is sympathetic to the ideas and ideals of Communism will begin to associate with and become known to others of the same general trend of thought. When such a person has come to have a firm acquaintance with several members of a cell, and they are sure of his sincerity, he will be informed of the cell's existence and, if he wishes to join, he will be supplied with an application blank on which he will enter his name, his status in society, the condition of himself and his family, etc. His application is then presented to a meeting of the cell, and a resolution is proposed and passed (or rejected) to the effect that he is admitted to membership in the Party.<sup>61</sup>

The average urban cell numbered approximately 20 persons. It was directed by a secretary, who was assisted by a director of propaganda and a director of organization. When the cell became too large, it split into two or more cells. No attempt was made to build the cell membership round specialized trades or skills; thus, cell members represented several trades or a number of skills within the same locality or factory. Cell members seldom had knowledge of the Party organizational structure, in order to provide a measure of security to the organization. Liaison between cells was accomplished through officers appointed by the Party. Officers within

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<sup>61</sup>Report of the Military Intelligence Division, op. cit., p. 2398.

the cell were appointed by the next higher committee, usually the Hsien (country) Committee. All Provincial Committees were appointed by the Central Committee of the CCP in Yen-an.<sup>62</sup> Figure No. 5 shows the CCP chain of Command during the United Front period. The chart also demonstrates the parallel structuring of the Party, the Red Army, the People's Forces, and of the Border Region Governments.

The Party expanded rapidly during the United Front Period. From the small nucleus of veterans of the Long March and the members of the Soviet in Shensi, the CCP expanded into North and Central China. Although small communist organizations still existed in South China, and scattered groups which had survived the KMT purge still operated elsewhere in China, the major elements of the Communist Party were found in the areas opened to the CCP by the Japanese invasion. In May of 1945, Yen-an radio announced that the CCP numbered 1,200,000 members.<sup>63</sup> Following the United Front the CCP expanded throughout mainland China, as the successive offensives of the Red Army overwhelmed the forces of the KMT.

#### APPLICABILITY OF U.S. ARMY DOCTRINE

Examination of the definitions of subversive insurgency, or revolution from the bottom, in FM 31-23 reveals that the definitions correspond relatively closely to the realities of the power struggle of the CCP. Subversive insurgency is defined as an "...attempt by a dissident

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 2399.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

element to organize and incite the population of a country into forcibly overthrowing its existing government."<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, the Field Manual states that revolution from the bottom, "...involves more violent seizure of power (than revolution from above) and is largely the result of social disorganization and unrest." The definition also specifies that such revolutions are, "a mass movement, encouraged or directed by a hard insurgent core," which develop "...slowly in a long evolutionary process until armed fighting occurs through a precipitant event."<sup>65</sup>

With the possible exception of the last portion of the definition, which suggests that armed fighting does not occur until after a long evolution of the mass movement, the definition appears to fit the revolution of the Chinese Communists. The major objection to the definitions provided by FM 31-23 is that more specific information is necessary to fully understand the Chinese Communist revolutionary experience. The concepts of revolution from above or below are of doubtful value, since they do not reveal revolutionary style, or the techniques utilized in order to mobilize the population of the country. Moreover they fail to provide adequate information in order to permit effective counteraction.

Figure No. 1 (Chapter I) shows the Type Communist Insurgent Organization (taken from FM 31-23), which is a model demonstrating communist organization for revolutionary warfare. This model of communist organization is unsatisfactory for several reasons. The model is

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<sup>64</sup>FM 31-23, loc. cit.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

complex to the point that students of the revolution are unable to identify the simple relationship that exists between the principal political structures of the revolution. More important still is the fact that the model identifies only three of the four major political structures of the Chinese Communist Revolutionary Movement.

The existence of the four principal political structures of the Chinese Communist Revolutionary movement was no fluke or temporary arrangement of political and military forces. The four political structures were the trade mark of the revolutionary movement, and the coalition of political structure continued in the political system of China following the civil war. Figure 6 demonstrates the political system composed of the four primary political structures, which initially evolved following the power seizure.<sup>66</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS

As in the case of the October Revolution, the definitions of FM 31-23 appear inadequate, when applied to the Chinese Communist Revolution. To provide an adequate definition of massive class oriented revolutions such as that of the Chinese Communists, emphasis must be placed on the social composition of the revolutionary movement. In addition, it is necessary to specify the revolutionary style and the mobilization techniques of the revolutionary movement. Without such basic information

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<sup>66</sup>Floyd L. Singer, "Control of the Population in China and Vietnam: The Pao Chia System Past and Present," U.S. Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake, California, November 1964, p. 38.

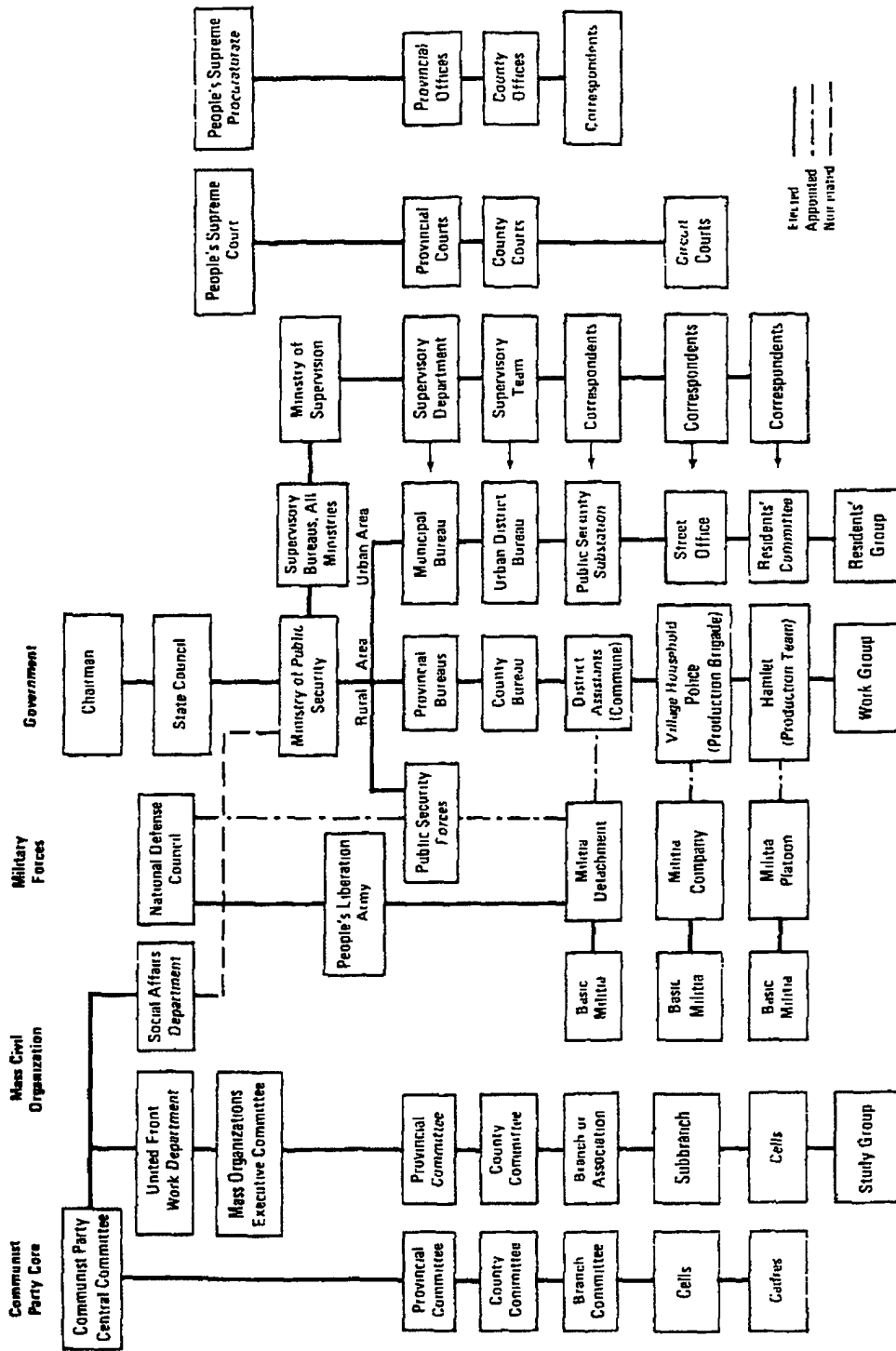


Fig. No. 6 Public Structure of Communist Party

the military analyst and the interrogator are handicapped in their efforts to understand the complex events of the revolution. Failing to understand the events of the revolution, it is impossible to produce useful studies or to ask relevant questions during an interrogation.

Unlike the October Revolution, the Chinese Communist Revolution did not capture political structures during the revolution. Instead of capturing political structures, the CCP under Mao Tse-tung's leadership turned to the massive rural population of China and created an independent rival political system. The political system of the Chinese Communists entered a protracted conflict with the KMT in order to determine which political system would unite and govern China. As the communists grew in power they systematically destroyed the rival political structures of the KMT.

Accommodation between the two rival political systems was not possible. U.S. mediation efforts following World War II were destined to fail. The KMT drew its economic and political support from the land owners, from the industrialist of China, and from foreign trade. The power of these economic and political sectors of the country demanded the retention of the traditional prerogatives of the landowners and prevented land reforms by the KMT. On the other hand, the power of the Chinese Communists was derived from the massive support of the peasants of rural China. The aspirations of the peasants were not negotiable with the demands of the landlords. Not only was the weight of tradition opposing compromise, but the ideology of the communists made bourgeoisie reforms anathema. Unable to understand the nature of the conflict, the U.S. sought

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to establish a coalition government. Even had such a coalition government been pieced together, it would only have provided another milestone and a brief interlude along the path to the final power struggle.

The Chinese Communist Revolution consisted of both direct and indirect attacks on the government (KMT) during a protracted civil war. The direct attacks were intended to destroy the formal political structures of the rival political system. The indirect attack on the KMT was a population mobilization drive that was intended to capture control of the state. Thus, the Chinese Communist Revolution was a protracted revolution that mobilized the body politic in order to capture the state and in so doing enabled the revolutionary forces to destroy or drive out of China the rival political structures of the KMT government.

The study of the Chinese Communist Revolution revealed that four primary political structures were instrumental in mobilizing the peasantry and attacking the political system of the KMT. These political structures were the Communist Party, the Border Region Governments, the Red Army, and the People's Forces. The effectiveness of these political structures in waging the power struggle suggest that they may be copied when social and economic condition permit, by other revolutionary movements. Assuming that such borrowing has or shall take place from the experience of the Chinese Communist revolutionary movement, the movement then emerges as a model for future revolutionary conflicts.

The Implosive Model of Revolution. Based upon the examination of the Chinese Communist Revolution the following definition is proposed for

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revolutionary activity patterned upon the Chinese Communist experience: The implosive model of revolution is a communist led revolutionary effort directed at the mobilization of the rural population in order to gain control of the state. The acquisitions of control of the state, in a decentralized power struggle, culminates in an highly centralized attack to destroy the existing political structures of the government and to formally seize power. It is further characterized by the establishment of an extra legal and independent political system composed of four primary political structures: the communist party, the red army, the regional government, and mass organizations. The implosive model of revolution is applicable to countries reliant upon agrarian economies and whose rural population is not mobilized through existing modern organizational structures. The mobilization of the population is achieved through the appeal of land reform to the peasantry and the exploitation of additional appeals attractive to other dissident elements within the population.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE VIET MINH REVOLUTION

The purpose of Chapters II and III has been to identify the political structures, and the functions of the political structures of the Bolshevik and Chinese Communist revolutionary movements, in order to test U.S. Army doctrine. Following the successful seizure of power in Petrograd and on the Mainland of China, both the Bolshevik and the Chinese Communist revolutions became models for subsequent revolutionary movements. In Chapter IV the subsequent Viet Minh Revolution will be examined in order to again test U.S. Army doctrine. In addition the conclusions reached in Chapter III will be examined to test their validity, in an environment germane to current U.S. Army operations.

#### The Historical Setting

The Viet Minh Revolution capped almost a century of conflict between French Colonialism and Vietnamese Nationalism. The French conquest of Vietnam began with the occupation of Tourane in 1858, and was completed with the occupation of North Vietnam in 1884. The period of Vietnamese resistance to the French intervention and subsequent colonial rule was virtually unbroken from 1858 until the withdrawal of France from the country following their defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The causes of the Vietnamese resistance and the subsequent Viet Minh Revolution have been legion. The French presence in the country was a violation of Vietnamese sovereignty. Harsh laws and repressive law enforcement by French

police and military forces maintained the French Colonial Administration in power, and permitted the natural resources of the country to be plundered by the citizens of France (colons). In order to understand the reasons for the success of the Viet Minh, it is necessary to briefly examine these harsh conditions, under which the Viet Minh were to flourish.

The major grievances of the Vietnamese were the oppressive tax laws, the working conditions of the Vietnamese peasant under the French colons, and the continual police repression of Vietnamese opposition. The nature and extent of these grievances has often been concealed by French writers and apologists for the French colonial administrations. The effectiveness of these apologists has created a situation in which later students of the fighting in Indochina were unable to explain the popular strength of the revolutionary movement. Both the colonial administration and the French Government in Paris spoke expansively of the "work of civilization and reforms undertaken by France," and of the "...traditional principles of French policy based on the spirit of generosity, solidarity, and justice toward loyal populations."<sup>67</sup>

The "work of civilization" appeared in a somewhat different perspective to the Vietnamese nationalist and peasant. Roads and ports were built by peasant labor and with taxes taken primarily from the peasants. A head tax forced the peasant and his family to pay the same tax as the French plantation owner or mine owner. A salt tax forced the

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<sup>67</sup>Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled (New York, 1967) p. 218.

peasant to pay a prohibitive price for his basic needs. Moreover the French monopoly and taxation of opium and alcohol had a debilitating effect upon the country.<sup>68</sup> In order to boost the revenue obtained through these monopolies, quotas of alcohol were assigned to the villages by the French Administration. Finally, the brutal working conditions of the Vietnamese laborer, especially of those workers recruited in Tongking and sent to work the rubber plantations in Cochin China, contributed to the grievance of the native population.<sup>69</sup>

In order to hold the lid on a potentially explosive internal situation, political opposition to the colonial administration and its policies was held to be illegal. As a result, Vietnamese nationalists and their political parties were forced to operate underground or in exile. Perhaps more serious was the fact that no political machinery existed, which would have permitted peaceful change to take place within the country. An ironic tribute to the effectiveness of the French secret police is that they were able to crush or force into exile all of the many Vietnamese nationalist parties except one, the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP). In so doing the French succeeded in ensuring Communist leadership for the revolution, which was to follow.

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<sup>68</sup>It is interesting to note that the sale of opium was prohibited by law at this time in France.

<sup>69</sup>For a detailed discussion of the taxation and labor problems in Vietnam during the French Colonial Period see Buttinger, op. cit., pp. 3-110.

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## ORIGINS OF THE VIET MINH

The formation of the Viet Minh in 1941 was preceded by sixteen years of communist organizational efforts in Viet Nam and South China. The first communist organization to be formed was the Viet Nam Thanh-Nien Cach-Menh Dong-Chi Hoi (The Association of Vietnamese Revolutionary Young Comrades).<sup>70</sup> Referred to as the Thanh-Nien, it was formed in 1925 by a young communist cadre assigned to the Soviet Consulate (USSR) under Michael Borodin in Canton. The name of the cadre was Ly Thuy. He was also known at other times under several other aliases, the most widely known of these were Nguyen Ai Quoc and Ho Chi Minh. Ly Thuy, or Ho as he is known today, had studied in France, where he became a socialist and later a communist. He later studied in Moscow at the Eastern Workers University, where he received formal training in Marxism-Leninism.<sup>71</sup> He was subsequently assigned by the Comintern to Canton, as a translator for Borodin. In this capacity he began the task of organizing a Vietnamese Communist Party.

He conducted a training course for the members of the Thanh-Nien. The course covered Marxism-Leninism, revolutionary techniques, propaganda, conduct of mass meetings, as well as conduct of workers' strikes. The course took six months to complete. After completion of the course, the

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<sup>70</sup>Hoang Van Chi, From Colonialism to Communism (New York, 1964), p. 42.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 40

majority of the members returned to Viet Nam in order to begin organizing the clandestine structure of the Party within the country. Several of the best students, however, remained with Ho in order to form the central committee of the Thanh-Nien, which was to remain in Canton.<sup>72</sup>

When Chiang Kai-shek began his purge of the Chinese Communist Party in China, Borodin and his staff were forced to flee Canton. First they attempted to reach an agreement with Wang Ching-wei, which would have permitted them to remain in Wuhan and continue active support to the CCP. Eventually Wang supported Chiang Kai-Shek and Borodin was forced to return to Russia. Ho Chi Minh accompanied him.<sup>73</sup>

Soon after Ho was forced to leave Canton, divisions began to appear in the leadership of the Thanh-Nien. Ho had appointed Ho Tung Mau as his successor. Mau was arrested by the KMT the following year. Lam Duc Thu then took over the leadership of the Party. Disillusionment over Lam Duc Thu's leadership and his bourgeois way of life produced a split in the Party that produced three factions, each of which took the title of Communist. They were: the Indochinese Communist Party, the Annamese Communist Party, and the Indochinese Communist Union.<sup>74</sup> The three factions were eventually reunited after Ho Chi Minh's return, at a conference held in Hong Kong in 1930. It was at this time that the entire party formally

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-44.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

took the name of the Indochinese Communist Party, in order to be recognized as a national section of the Third International.<sup>75</sup>

A combination of factors resulted in a significant increase in the size of the ICP in the late 1920's and 1930. The world-wide economic depression of 1929 had its effect upon the Vietnamese economy. Prices dropped disastrously. Unemployment jumped. Farmers were unable to sell their produce. In some areas bad harvests accompanied the drop in the market. The result was starvation, particularly in Annam and Tongking. These conditions closely followed a period of violent suppression by the French authorities of the Vietnamese Nationalist Party, the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (VNQDD). The adverse economic conditions, coupled with the suppression of the VNQDD, served to strengthen the ICP. By 1931 the ICP numbered 1,500 members, with an additional 100,000 peasants affiliated with the Party sponsored peasant organizations.<sup>76</sup>

Encouraged by these developments the ICP decided to organize a peasant uprising in order to overthrow provincial authorities and establish peasant Soviets. Accordingly, demonstrations were initiated on a large scale. The provincial governmental machinery was destroyed in Nghe An, Ha Tinh, and Quang Ngai Provinces and local Soviets were established. The movement later spread into Cochin China. Because of the magnitude of

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<sup>75</sup>Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina 1940-1955 (Stanford, 1966), p. 82.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

the threat and its relatively remote center of strength, the response of the French authorities was slow in materializing. As a result some of the newly created Soviets were able to maintain themselves for a number of months.<sup>77</sup>

The French response was based upon the large scale employment of military units in the provinces in revolt. The mounting of this military campaign created a period of delay in the French response. The severity of the repression which followed overshadowed the earlier attacks on the VNQDD. Utilizing aircraft, artillery and infantry, the areas in revolt were devastated. In many cases, the population was the target of attack. Even the French Colonial Press, which was enured to the periodic repressions, was embarrassed by the brutality of these "military operations." On March 15, 1931, Le Petit Populaire du Tonkin reported:

The behavior of the troops, and in particular of the Legion, is one of odious brutality. An unchained soldiery, free to indulge all their instincts ... now terrorized the entire country. They steal, rape, condemn, and execute as they please. Legionnaires enter houses, grab what they like, and violate the women and the young girls. For no reason at all, without any evidence men and young people are arrested, and shot in cold blood and without trial. A veritable troop of pirates in uniform has been let loose upon the entire country.<sup>78</sup>

Ten thousand persons were reported to have been killed and fifty thousand Vietnamese were deported. As a result, the Soviets were dismembered. The revolt was crushed, and "normal order" was reestablished.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 217.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

Unlike the earlier suppression of the VNQDD, however, much of the clandestine structure of the ICP survived. The Party had paid a bitter price to learn that they were, as yet, no match for the French. It was a decade before the ICP attempted another armed contest of strength with the French.

The ICP suffered another serious blow at this time. Ho Chi Minh, then known as Nguyen ai Quoc, was arrested by the British in Hong Kong on June 6, 1931. Some time later it was reported in the Daily Worker that Ho had died of tuberculosis in a Hong Kong prison. However, it appears that Ho actually fled to the Soviet Union after release from prison, where he remained until his reappearance in 1941.<sup>80</sup> After the disappearance of Ho, the ICP was placed under the control of the leader of the French Communist Party, Maurice Thorez.<sup>81</sup> This abrupt change in the leadership of the Party reflected the Comintern's distrust of peasant revolutionary movements. Disillusioned with the apparent failure of the Chinese Communist efforts of the time, the Comintern attempted to reorient the ICP toward organization of the urban workers. They chose Thorez, seeing him as a more orthodox Marxist, who could be depended upon to carry out the organization of the ICP under the direction of the Comintern. This change of leadership and the new position of the Party temporarily hurt the ICP. The Party was forced to shift from its anti-French orientation to a dogmatic anti-capitalist position. During this period the Party lost some of its popularity, especially among the intellectuals of the country.

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<sup>80</sup>Hoang Van Chi, op. cit., p. 50-51.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 52.



During the period of the Popular Front in France, the Vietnamese hoped to obtain reforms from France. These reforms did not come about. The Leftist Government in France proved to be as interested in retaining the status quo in the French colonies, as had the former French Governments. During this period, however, Vietnamese Socialists and Communists enjoyed a brief period of relative freedom that permitted them to publish and organize more openly. With the fall of the Popular Front in France, these movements were again forced to go underground. Following this return to clandestine activity, the ICP did attempt several significant insurrections. Insurrections against the French occurred in 1940 at Lang Son (Tongking), Do Luong (Annam), and My Tho (Cochin China). The Japanese, who had by this time occupied Viet Nam through agreements with Vichy France and the colonial officials, stood aside and allowed the French to put down the insurrections. The revolts were crushed with great bloodshed. The fighting and arrests that followed badly hurt the communist organizations in these areas.<sup>82</sup>

In May of 1941, Ho Chi Minh returned to Vietnam. At a meeting of the ICP Central Committee in a small village on the Chinese border the Viet Minh was formed.<sup>83</sup> It was destined to play a major role in the revolution and in the history of Viet Nam. Ho Chi Minh was named as the

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<sup>82</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 225, and Hammer, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>83</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 226.

General Secretary of the Viet Minh, and the declared purpose of the new organization was to fight both Japan and France in order to obtain the independence of Viet Nam.<sup>84</sup>

#### THE VIET MINH REVOLUTION

Since September 1940, the alliance between Vichy France and Japan had saddled the Vietnamese people with a second colonial master. Japanese troops occupied the country, utilized bases furnished by the French, and redirected the exports of Viet Nam into the Japanese war effort. The collaboration between the French in Viet Nam and the Japanese continued until March of 1945, when the Japanese overthrew the French administration. During the period of the French-Japanese collaboration, the French administered and policed the country while the Japanese forces directed their efforts toward the military operations in Malaya and Burma. The alliance served to provide an important base and vitally needed supplies to the Japanese, and it provided the French with the means whereby they were able to retain control of their colonial holdings in the area.

During the war years the Viet Minh concentrated their efforts on organization building. The objectives defined by the 8th session of the Central Committee directed the major efforts of the Party upon expansion of the existing organization, creation of new Party structures, as well as on propaganda and recruiting efforts. Armed attacks upon the French and the Japanese were relatively infrequent. As the only organized force

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<sup>84</sup>Hammer, op. cit., p. 95.

offering resistance to the Japanese in the country, however, their cooperation was sought by the Chinese Government (KMT) and the U.S. representatives of the CBI Theater of Operations. The Viet Minh supplied the Allies with intelligence and with assistance to American pilots. The extent of the Viet Minh organization permitted them to provide the Allies with an extensive picture of Japanese operations in the country, as well as to rescue American fliers shot down as a result of combat sorties flown against the Japanese in the area. In return for this intelligence and assistance the Viet Minh received some logistical support from the United States.<sup>85</sup>

The reaction of the Chinese to the Japanese-French collaboration was to harden the existing Chinese opposition to the French colonial policy in Asia. As a result, the Chinese supported a policy aimed at the elimination of the French from the area. In line with this policy, the Chinese sponsored a series of conferences, which were held at Liuchow in Southern China in order to mobilize the anti-French forces in Viet Nam and in order to form a resistance government aimed at the overthrow of the existing French colonial administration. In order to achieve these ends the Chinese attempted to work through the Vietnamese nationalists, who were in exile in Southern China. The Viet Minh participated in the

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<sup>85</sup>Currently available sources are unable to provide an estimate of the extent of the assistance rendered to the Viet Minh by the U.S. The French strongly objected to the support of the Viet Minh by U.S. forces in the CBI Theater, and it appears that the French destroyed an undetermined number of U.S. aircraft attempting to make deliveries of supplies to the Viet Minh. Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet Nams (New York, 1967), p. 71.

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conferences as one of ten political parties claiming to represent anti-French nationalist groups in Viet Nam. Because of the strength of their position as the only party with an active organizational base at work in Viet Nam, the Viet Minh emerged from the series of conferences as the sole representative of a native Vietnamese government-in-exile, which maintained contact with the Vietnamese people. Acting in the somewhat unique capacity of the representatives of the Allied forces within Viet Nam, and also as the sole spokesman of the new revolutionary government, the prestige of the Viet Minh rose considerably in the eyes of the Vietnamese people.<sup>86</sup>

Although the Chinese Government shared the anti-French and the anti-Japanese sentiments of the Viet Minh, they recognized the Communist control of the organization. As a result of their previous experience with the communists, the Chinese Nationalists were reluctant to see the Viet Minh gain control of the Vietnamese nationalist movement. Accordingly, the Chinese attempted to strengthen the position of the other nationalist groups in China, particularly the VNQDD, at the expense of the Viet Minh through the conferences at Liuchow. In addition, Ho Chi Minh was imprisoned, while he was in China. However, Ho was released thirteen months later and named chief of the Viet Nam Cach Dong Minh Hoi (Viet Nam Revolutionary League). Known as the Dong Minh Hoi, it was intended to unite the Vietnamese nationalist groups and provide the Chinese with effective intelligence. Once it became apparent that only the Viet Minh were

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<sup>86</sup>Hammer, op. cit., pp. 96-97.

capable of providing this intelligence, the Chinese were forced to release Ho and permit him to assume the leadership position of the organization.

In October of 1944, Ho Chi Minh returned to Viet Nam from China in order to lead the organization and mobilization of the Party. Shortly after the time of his return the pace of the revolutionary movement was accelerated. The ultimate outcome of the war was apparent by this time. The tide of the Allied offensives in both Europe and the Pacific revealed that the Japanese presence in Viet Nam was destined to be terminated in the near future. Aware that the reverses suffered by the French during the war had seriously weakened France, and conversely had strengthened the hand of the Vietnamese revolution, the ICP saw that the optimum period for the insurrection against the French lay in the not far distant future. The first significant break came on March 9, 1945, when the Japanese overthrew the French Colonial administration. The majority of the French troops were interned by the Japanese until the end of the war. Those French troops who chose to resist were either annihilated or forced to fight their way to China.<sup>87</sup> In one massive stroke the Japanese eliminated the French Administration, the French Army, and the French security police. The instruments of French power, which had frustrated Vietnamese nationalism for two generations, were abolished. The revolution for which the Viet Minh had been preparing appeared to be a fait accompli.

The day after the Japanese moved against the French it was announced that independence was to be granted to Viet Nam by the Japanese.

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<sup>87</sup>Fall, op. cit., pp. 55-59.

A provisional government was formed under the leadership of Tran Trong Kim. Utilizing the governmental structures developed under the French administration, the Tran Trong Kim administration attempted to take over the task of directing and running the country. French administrators were replaced by native Vietnamese. In so doing the new Vietnamese government soon found itself in a similar position to that which the previous French administration had held during the war. They administered the country for the Japanese, who continued to profit from the resources of the country. Indeed the position of the Tran Trong Kim Government was worse than that of the French, for they possessed no police, no army, inadequate means of communication within the country, and were forced to operate with an incomplete and largely untrained administration.<sup>88</sup>

The elimination of the French authorities in rural areas was not followed by the stationing of Japanese troops in the areas concerned. The Tran Trong Kim Government continued the use of the former French administrative machinery existing in the country; however, the Viet Minh were able to exercise uncontested control of extensive rural areas, particularly in Northern Tongking.<sup>89</sup> In addition to this development, which strengthened the Viet Minh position, the Tran Trong Kim Government released the political prisoners of the French. The release of the prisoners significantly increased the ranks of the ICP political cadres available to assist in the mobilization of the revolution. Those prisoners

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<sup>88</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., pp. 290-291.

<sup>89</sup>Hammer, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

released, who were not former ICP members, frequently supported the Viet Minh as the only nationalist party working in Viet Nam for the liberation of the country from the Japanese occupation.

The Viet Minh lost little time in denouncing the new government as a Japanese puppet and in calling for a revolution against the Japanese occupation.

In overthrowing the French yoke, the Japs plan to occupy our country and turn it into a Japanese colony where they will reserve to themselves the monopoly of plundering our people, abusing our women, slaying our patriots. They are not here to liberate our people, they are here to seize our rice stocks, our cotton, our oil; they will arrest all our young men and turn them into Japanese cannon-fodder...

Organize demonstrations, processions and strikes; close down all the markets and hinder, through boycott and other means, the enemy's last desperate effort. Destroy all communication and transport facilities; tear down all telegraph wires and destroy their ammunition dumps and foodstores; launch surprise attacks on their isolated outposts and ambush their patrol units in order to prevent them from turning against our population.<sup>90</sup>

People's Committees and Liberation Committees were formed in the Viet Minh controlled areas in order to perform the tasks of administering and directing the population. Militia units were formed throughout the Viet Minh area of influence. In April an "insurrection preparatory plan" was established and the High Command of the North Viet Nam Liberation Army was formed. In June the Viet Minh officially proclaimed the formation of a "free zone" composed of six provinces in Northern Tongking, which were under the control of the Viet Minh.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Truong Chinh, Primer For Revolt (New York, 1963), pp. 10-11.

Despite the accelerated pace of the Viet Minh efforts to organize and direct the revolutionary movement, they appeared to have been taken by surprise by the speed of the developments as the war came to a close. On the 7th of August the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. On the 10th of August Japan capitulated. Ho Chi Minh responded by calling an immediate meeting of the ICP Central Committee. The meeting was held on the 13th of August. It called for "a general insurrection and an immediate call to action." On the 16th of August a "People's Congress" was convened at the village of Tran Trao located north of Hanoi. It was composed of sixty members and was presided over by Ho. The People's Congress created the "National Liberation Committee of Viet Nam," which was to act in the capacity of a provisional revolutionary government for the Viet Minh.<sup>92</sup>

The Tran Trong Kim Government had recognized its failure as a popular government and resigned on the 7th of August. Shortly thereafter, the Japanese accepted the Allied surrender terms. August 15, 1945, was declared V-J Day. With the surrender of Japan the Vietnamese found themselves with no national government. The Viet Minh moved quickly to fill the vacuum. The first units of the Viet Nam Liberation Army entered Hanoi on the 16th. Viet Minh cadres moved as rapidly as possible to form Liberation Committees in areas formerly controlled by the Japanese and the Tran Trong Kim Government. In many areas the Viet Minh led attacks, which virtually destroyed the existing political structures of the former government. The members of the Councils of Notables and the administration

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<sup>92</sup>Buttinger, *op. cit.*, p. 295.



were the targets of the attacks. These attacks coupled with the seizure of some French property produced fairly widespread bloodshed. However, clashes with the Japanese troops in the country were few and relatively minor. The Japanese, whose surrender to the Allies was not far off, were able to observe the strength of the Viet Minh and were not interested in contesting power.<sup>93</sup>

The Vietnamese people welcomed the Viet Minh as a truly national revolutionary force. Throughout the country demonstrations took place in support of the Viet Minh. On 25 August Emperor Bao Dai resigned in favor of Ho Chi Minh. On this same day a Provisional Executive Committee to direct the Viet Minh administration was formed in South Vietnam. On the 29th of August Ho Chi Minh declared the formation of a new government, which was in turn based upon the National Liberation Committee formed by the People's Congress on 16 August. On the 2nd of September Ho Chi Minh read the Proclamation of Independence to some 500,000 people assembled in Hanoi.<sup>94</sup> The "August Revolution" had placed the ICP and the Viet Minh in power.

#### THE RETURN OF THE FRENCH

At the Potsdam Conference it was decided that since the French were in no position to accept the surrender of the Japanese in their former colony of Viet Nam, the British would accept the surrender of the

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<sup>93</sup>Ibid., pp. 296-299.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

Japanese south of the sixteenth parallel and the Chinese Nationalists would accept the surrender of the Japanese north of the sixteenth parallel. With the arrival of the British in the South and the Chinese in the North, begins the long and complicated history of the Viet Minh struggle to consolidate and retain their control of the country. With British assistance the French were able to reenter Cochin China. The War of Liberation against the French began in the South when the French attacked the Viet Minh administration in Saigon on 24 September 1945. In the North the Chinese brought with them the VNQDD and the Dong Minh Hoi from exile in China. Although strongly anti-Communist, the Chinese Nationalists were sensitive enough to the cause of Vietnamese nationalism that they refrained from attempts to oust the Viet Minh. Instead they supported the demands of the Dong Minh Hoi and the VNQDD to share the reins of government. Accordingly, a coalition government was formed, which lasted until the withdrawal of the Chinese.

The French entered into negotiations with both the Viet Minh and the Chinese Nationalists in order to regain their control over the northern portion of their former colony. As a result of these negotiations, the Chinese withdrew and the Viet Minh were forced to permit the reintroduction of French troops into the North. In return the French recognized Viet Nam as a "free state with its own government, parliament, army, and finances." The French further agreed to the gradual withdrawal of all French troops over a five year period.<sup>95</sup> Once French troops were ashore

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<sup>95</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 369.

in North Viet Nam, however, they went about the military reconquest of Tongking, refusing in most cases to pay even lip service to the agreements they had signed with the Vietnamese.

The story of the bitter war that followed is beyond the scope of this study. The record of the French attempts at reconquest of Viet Nam is similar to the initial French conquest and the French administration that followed, in that it was to be characterized by harsh repression and brutality. If they accomplished little else the French did accomplish the final unification of the Vietnamese people behind the leadership of the Viet Minh. Even the millions of Vietnamese Catholics, to whom the French had looked for support, and the handful of Vietnamese who had profited by the French colonial administration were unwilling or unable to stem the tide of nationalism that eventually swept the French out of the country and returned the Viet Minh to power.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL STRUCTURES

The political structures of the Viet Minh revolution resemble the political structures developed by the Chinese Communists. The organization and control of the structures differ in some respects, as does the organization of the over-all structure of the political front presented by the Viet Minh movement. However, the extent of the similarities in the parallel structuring of the revolutionary political structures suggests that extensive borrowing took place by the Vietnamese from the lessons learned by the Chinese Communists in their earlier campaigns. Speaking of the debt of the Vietnamese to the Chinese Communists, Ho Chi Minh has

publicly acknowledged the efforts of the Vietnamese Communists to pattern the revolution upon the earlier successful experience of the Chinese Communists.

Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin are the common teachers for the world revolution. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has skillfully "Sinicized" the ideology of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, correctly applied it to the practical situation of China, and has led the Chinese Revolution to complete victory.

Owing to geographical, historical, economic, and cultural conditions, the Chinese Revolution exerted a great influence on the Vietnamese revolution, which had to learn and indeed has learned many experiences from it.

Thanks to the experiences of the Chinese Revolution and to Mao Tse-tung's thought, we have further understood the ideology of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin and consequently scored many successes. This the Vietnamese revolutionaries must engrave on their minds and be grateful for.<sup>96</sup>

The principal structures of the Vietnamese Communist or Viet Minh revolution were the Communist Party, the Government of National Union and Resistance, the Viet Nam Liberation Army, and the political fronts within which the other revolutionary structures operated. The political fronts were the Viet Minh, and the Lien Viet. As in the Bolshevik and Chinese Communist revolutions, the most important structure was the Communist Party in that it controlled and directed the other structures in the revolutionary movement.

The beginning of the Second World War found the Indochinese Communist Party in the position of the predominate nationalist political

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<sup>96</sup>Ho Chi Minh, "Report to the Second National Congress of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, February, 1951," as cited in Ho Chi Minh on Revolution Selected Writings 1920-66, Bernard Fall (ed.), (New York, 1967), pp. 207-208.

organization existing in Viet Nam. The effectiveness of the French emasculation of political opposition in the country had effectively destroyed the other illegal opposition parties existing in the country. The leaders of the other nationalist political parties were in exile, and their followers were scattered and without either organization or direction. Many of these opposition parties were anti-Communist in nature. Although unable to continue providing effective leadership to their followers, the numbers and zeal of the unmarshalled members of the now defunct political parties represented a considerable resource of latent political strength. Despite the fact that the communist political structure continued to function in the country, the ICP was unable to gain the support of the members of the other nationalist Vietnamese political parties. Lack of support for the Marxist philosophy among educated elites, French propaganda aimed at the ICP, as well as the previous leadership failures of the ICP, had caused many of the Vietnamese nationalists to reject the ICP.

The ICP had failed to heed the earlier advice of the Comintern regarding the formation of united fronts. Upon the return of Ho Chi Minh in 1941, the Central Committee of the ICP acted to correct the failure of the Party to form a united front. The League for the Independence of Viet Nam, Viet Minh, was formed by the Central Committee. Ho Chi Minh was named as the General Secretary of the new organization. The purpose of the Viet Minh was stated in broad general terms, which would appeal to the varied nationalists that the Party hoped to rally. Specifically the Party "...pledged themselves to fight both Japan and Vichy France for the



victory of the Allied Forces and the independence of a 'democratic Viet Nam!'"<sup>97</sup> The radical slogans of the Party in favor of land reform were set aside in favor of more moderate slogans: "Confiscation of the land owned by traitors for distribution to the poor farmers."<sup>98</sup> In addition the current objectives of the ICP in preparing for the "insurrection" were enumerated at the conference:

1. Develop and consolidate the organizations for national salvation.
2. Expand the organizations to the cities, enterprises, mines and plantations.
3. Expand the organizations to the provinces where the revolutionary movement is still weak and to the minority areas.
4. Steel the Party members' spirit of determination and sacrifice.
5. Steel the Party members so that they may have capacity and experience to enable them to lead and cope with the situation.
6. Form small guerrilla groups and soldiers' organizations..."<sup>99</sup>

By virtue of this decision of the Central Committee, the clandestine Party organization and the members of the ICP became the nucleus of the Viet Minh. Working behind a new name and with a more nationalistic and moderate program, the Party attempted to rally the population in a war of liberation against the two colonial masters of Viet Nam.

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<sup>97</sup>Hammer, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

<sup>98</sup>Fall, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>99</sup>Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War People's Army (New York, 1962), p. 77.

### The People's Organizations

The Viet Minh itself was nothing more than a grouping of mass organizations structured symmetrically with the Indochinese Communist Party. It had a General Committee on the national level which was presided over by Ho Chi Minh, acting in the capacity of General Secretary, and that was composed of members of the ICP. The General Committee directed the mass organizations, such as the Youth Vanguard and the National Salvation Associations. These mass or popular organizations were referred to as People's Organizations. They were intended to involve the entire population in the revolutionary effort. Through the People's Organizations the ICP gained an additional channel of communication to the people and a political structure which was capable of mobilizing all segments of the population in the revolution.

In time the term Viet Minh came to mean the entire revolutionary effort. As such, it is often utilized when referring to the Liberation Army or the Government of National Union and Resistance. Thus the term has come to have two generally accepted meanings: the original meaning of a united front of mass popular organizations, and the more commonly accepted meaning which includes the entire Government, Army, and popular organizations of the revolutionary effort. As originally planned by the ICP, the Viet Minh consisted of the General Committee and subordinate committees at interzone, province and district level. These committees directed the activities of the mass organizations, which functioned on the village level. It appears that almost the entire structure of the Viet Minh



People's Organizations was borrowed from the Chinese Communists. On his return to Viet Nam in 1941 Ho Chi Minh stopped at the CCP capitol at Yen-an in China. Perhaps it was at this time that Ho decided upon the formation of the Viet Minh. There was no question about the success of the "People's Forces" in China. The extent of Ho's borrowing from the CCP is reflected in the names chosen for the People's Organizations, which were organized soon after Ho's visit to Yen-an. Both the Youth Vanguard and the National Salvation Associations were the names of mass organizations of the CCP in China, and these same names were subsequently given to People's Organizations organized in Viet Nam.

Throughout World War II the Viet Minh enjoyed considerable success through the expansion of the popular base supporting the ICP and the national revolution. The Viet Minh had not succeeded, however, in attracting the political and religious groups, which the ICP desired to gather into the revolutionary effort. As a result a second united front was formed in May of 1946. It was called the Lien Viet, or Popular National Front. All groups active in Viet Nam at that time were pressured to join the Lien Viet. Those who were opposed to joining the Lien Viet were branded as enemies of the people. Both the VNQDD and the Dong Minh Hoi were eventually forced to enter the new Popular National Front.<sup>100</sup>

Since the central organs of the Viet Minh and later the Lien Viet were developed by the ICP, the ICP maintained exclusive control of them. As a result, the Viet Minh and the Lien Viet proved to be valuable tools for the ICP in the dissemination of propaganda. A variety of methods

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<sup>100</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 400.

were utilized to reach the people. Speaking of methods to be employed,

Truong Chinh urged in 1946:

We should strive to raise the people's political consciousness, enhance their patriotism and vigilance, and foster their fighting spirit. We should use diverse forms - newspapers, books, music, dances, operettas, plays, photographs, exhibitions, emulation, etc. to enable the people to grasp why we must fight, for what purpose we are fighting, how we will win victory - to help them to see that the resistance war is certainly hard, but that it will certainly be victorious.<sup>101</sup>

#### The Indochinese Communist Party

The Indochinese Communist Party was a clandestine structure, highly disciplined, and patterned upon the structure of the CCP (see Figure No. 7). It was built upon a foundation of cells. The cells were subordinated to executive committees, which were located at the district (huyen), province (tinh), and interzone (lien-khu) levels.<sup>102</sup> The cells on the village level were linked to the district by ICP liaison cadres. The cells were not linked directly and had no channel of communication with other cells in the same area of operation. The ICP maintained control of the political structures in the revolutionary effort through cells located within the other political structures, and through the retention of the critical leadership positions of these structures by ICP members. Thus members of the huyen Party Executive Committee occupied key positions within the huyen Liberation Committee, the People's Organizations, the regional troops, and the District Command. Since the ICP members were instrumental in the

<sup>101</sup>Truong Chinh, op. cit., p. 209.

<sup>102</sup>Fall, op. cit., p. 135.

organization of the other political structures, retention of significant or key positions presented the Party with no great problem. Non-Party members were permitted to belong to the Liberation Army, the Liberation Committees and the People's Organization; however, effective resistance to the Party was eliminated.

Party discipline was rigidly enforced. New recruits were indoctrinated with the rules as well as the program of the Party. When admitted into the Party the new member was required to take an oath that read: "I will accept punishment in accordance with the rules." These rules specified that the following violations were punishable by death: "(1) Going over to the enemy; (2) Acting without orders, thereby jeopardizing the security of one's comrades; (3) Disobeying orders; (4) Plotting the downfall of the Party; (5) Divulging Party secrets."<sup>103</sup>

#### The Government of National Union and Resistance

The basic structure of the Government of National Union and Resistance was constructed during World War II. It began with the formation of administrative committees on the village level. According to Truong Chinh two distinct types of committees were formed. People's Committees were formed in the areas controlled by the Viet Minh forces, and Liberation Committees were formed in the contested areas, or French administered areas.<sup>104</sup> The function of the committees in both areas was the same - the local

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<sup>103</sup>Louis Roubaud, Viet Nam: La tragedie Indochinoise (Paris, 1931), as quoted in Bullinger, op. cit., pp. 1231-1232.

<sup>104</sup>Truong Chinh, op. cit., p. 11.

government of the village in which it was located. The major difference was that the Liberation Committee was of necessity covert until the French administrative structure in the area could be eliminated. After the August Revolution and the initiation of open hostilities between the Viet Minh and the French, the administrative committees became known as Resistance Committees; however, their function and organization remained the same.

The administrative committees at the village level were composed of five members: "a president, a vice-president in charge of police, a secretary in charge of all paperwork, a committee member in charge of finances, and another in charge of public works and agriculture."<sup>105</sup> Liberation Committees were also located at the district, province and inter-zone level. The Liberation Committees located at the higher levels had larger and more specialized staffs to assist in the administration and direction of the affairs of the larger areas and populations concerned.

The highest echelons of the Government of National Union and Resistance were not formed until the final days of World War II. On August 16, 1945, the People's Congress of representatives from the Viet Minh controlled areas, which met at Tan Trao, appointed the first provisional government to replace the former governing structures of the French and the Tran Trong Kim governments. The new government was initially called the "Liberation National Committee of Viet Nam."<sup>106</sup> This committee was rapidly

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<sup>105</sup>Fall, op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>106</sup>Truong Chinh, op. cit., p. 13.

transformed into the ministries of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, once the Viet Minh took over the task of running the country. To this structure was later added the National Assembly.

#### The Viet Nam Liberation Army

The first military unit of the Viet Minh was established on 22 December 1944. It was a platoon sized unit. It was soon joined by a second platoon, known as the "propaganda unit" of the Viet Nam Liberation Army.<sup>107</sup> From its inception the mission of the Liberation Army was primarily political in nature. Its actions were geared to the organization and mobilization of the revolutionary effort. Political commissars were located at each level of command down to platoon level. General Giap states that the most important reason for the victory of the Liberation Army was "because it was organized and led by the Party of the working class; the Indochinese Communist Party, now the Viet Nam Workers' Party."<sup>108</sup> Both the military commander and the political commissar took their orders from the "Party Committee at the corresponding echelon."<sup>109</sup> Thus the Army was a tool of the Party, utilized in order to implement political objectives ultimately established by the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party.

The subordination of the military units to the political objectives of the Party and the direction of the political commissars did not, as a

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<sup>107</sup>Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War People's Army (New York, 1962), p. 50.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

rule, present the Liberation Army with discipline or unity of command problems. Since the Army was the creation of the Party, the political subordination existed from the time of its formation. In addition the majority of the officers of the Liberation Army were Party members. According to Giap 35 to 40 percent of the Liberation Army was made up of Party members. Within the officer corps the number of Party members exceeded 90 percent.<sup>110</sup>

The Liberation Army was composed of three types of military units: self-defense militia, regional troops, and regular units. During the course of the mobilization of the units, different names were frequently applied to the same size or type of unit. As a result, contemporary reference sources make reference to para-military units, guerrilla units, National Salvation units, and self-defense militia, when referring to military units organized at the village level. In addition the terms guerrilla troops and regional troops have been utilized interchangeably, when referring to the military units of the Liberation Army existing on the Provincial and District level. The terms brigade and platoon have also been utilized interchangeably when referring to units numbering approximately 40 men. These ambiguities resulting evidently from poor translations or lack of military background on the part of the Viet Minh cadres have created confusion on the part of students of the Viet Minh military organization.

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<sup>110</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

The terms utilized in this study to refer to village level organizations, and to District/Provincial level organizations are self-defense militia and regional troops respectively (see Figure No. 7).

The organization of the Viet Nam Liberation Army progressed from small detachments formed at the village level, to regional units found at district and province levels, and finally to the regular units controlled by the Inter Zone Commands and the General Staff. When the ICP cadres had successfully formed the Party and the Liberation Committee structures at the village level, the formation of the village self-defense militia soon followed. When the village militia had acquired adequate experience, equipment, and strength, the unit would be transferred to the control of the District Command. A portion of the unit would be retained at village level in order to continue providing local security as well as to continue organizing and mobilizing new units. The Province Command in turn called upon the regional troops available within the District Commands, of the Province, in order to form the Provincial Regional troops. In this manner units were formed in a decentralized system, which contrasts sharply with the highly centralized manner in which military units are organized today in the United States Army. Squads and platoons were being formed simultaneously throughout many of the 17,000 villages in the country.

The pace of development of the units depended upon many factors. One of the most important of these factors was the effectiveness of the political cadres and the extent of local grievances in the area. As a result, the system was unable to produce uniform or predictable results. Utilizing the local talent to a maximum the Viet Minh did succeed in

developing a large number of resourceful units. The greatest talent of many of these units was not their military expertise, but rather their ability to conceal themselves within the population. Retaliation by the French against the population that concealed the Viet Minh seldom succeeded in eliminating the enemy unit; instead, it served to fertilize the ground for the Viet Minh recruiter to reap a rich harvest in new supporters willing to fight the French. French attacks served to increase local grievances enormously. These grievances in turn became the political issues upon which the Viet Minh built their program and ultimately their organization.

In areas in which the Viet Minh were met with effective opposition other methods of organizing were utilized. In these areas the Viet Minh were forced to eliminate the opposition before the village level structures could be organized. In some cases a few well trained cadres would infiltrate the village and attempt to organize a cell. When the cell was strong enough it would initiate attacks on the government administrative structure.

Viet agents would infiltrate a village or an area and establish a cell, which became the center for counter-pacification, spreading propaganda and recruiting adherents to the Viet Minh cause among the population. Having once gained a foothold and won some support for the struggle against the French, the Viet Minh would proceed more aggressively. They often attacked and killed natives who attempted to cooperate with the French or to oppose Viet Minh penetration. These examples succeeded in terrifying the local people and proved a strong deterrent to pro-French activity in the area.<sup>111</sup>

In other areas entire Liberation Army units would occupy a village in order to provide the force necessary to eliminate the opposition to the

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<sup>111</sup>George K. Tanham, Communist Revolutionary Warfare (New York, 1961), p. 100.



Viet Minh organizing efforts. General Giap describes this method, similar to that utilized by the Chinese Communists, in which a battalion would enter an area and send one company to each of the villages which were to be opened as "popular bases." Although he does not describe the attacks upon the government structures in the area, he does provide an insight into the relationship of the Viet Nam Liberation Army with the population concerned.

Since popular bases were indispensable to the development of the guerrilla war, we dispersed the companies of each battalion and we permitted them the necessary liberty of action so that they could infiltrate different regions and cement their friendly relations with the local populace. Since the companies were relatively weak, they had no difficulty in understanding the necessity for firm popular bases. Thanks to their intimate acquaintance with the different regions, they easily won the support of the local population. Their close connection with the popular bases gave a strong impetus to the armed conflict. When the guerrilla units acquired enough experience, when the local militia became powerful enough, the dispersed elements of the companies in the different localities gradually regrouped themselves.<sup>112</sup>

The village militia were organized into two specific groups within the village concerned. The first of these groups was the Dan Quan. It was composed of persons of both sexes and all ages, who performed auxillary duties for the military forces operating in the local areas.<sup>113</sup> These duties included assisting with the feeding of troops, care for the wounded, providing intelligence, sentry duties, construction of local defenses, propaganda work and production of food, clothing and simple items of equipment needed by the Liberation Army.

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<sup>112</sup>Giap, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>113</sup>Tanham, op. cit., p. 46.

The second type of militia was called the Dan Quan du Kich, or simply Du Kich. It was composed of men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five.<sup>114</sup> The Du Kich were part time guerrillas, whose purpose was the defense of the Viet Minh base and the attack of ICP or Viet Minh opposition in the local area. It was from this group that volunteer squads and platoons were called upon to support the War of National Liberation by leaving their village to join regional troops at the district or province level. A third type of specialized civilian support for the Liberation Army was formed during the war against the French. This group was called the Dan Cong. It provided porters to support the regular units during the major campaigns of the war.<sup>115</sup>

The tactics of the Viet Minh were essentially defensive in nature, particularly in the early stages of the revolution and the subsequent War of National Liberation. The tactics of the self-defense militia or Du Kich were based upon the employment of mines, traps, tunnel warfare, and sniper fire in order to inflict maximum casualties on the enemy without sustaining casualties by the militia group. The Du Kich made maximum use of their intimate knowledge of the terrain in order to facilitate ambushes and attacks upon the enemy. These tactics were instrumental in severing control of the French government over the area, permitting the Viet Minh to have a free hand in constructing a popular base in the area. The militia also emphasized

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<sup>114</sup>Ibid.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

the destruction of bridges, roads, railroads, and communication facilities, since the French were dependent upon these facilities and the Viet Minh were not. Through these tactics large areas were gradually sealed off from French control and even from French access. The French could not enter a base, after the Viet Minh had had an opportunity to organize the area, without fighting and frequently sustaining numerous casualties. During many of these engagements against the local militia the French never even saw their assailants, who attacked from well camouflaged positions utilizing electrically detonated mines, and sniper fire.

The tactics of regional units and the regular units were designed both to protect the Viet Minh bases and to carry the war to the enemy. Based upon the excellent resources available to the Viet Minh in intelligence information, these units would execute ambushes and raids. Each operation was conducted after careful reconnaissance and preparations to include numerous rehearsals. The objective of each operation was to gain a victory through the employment of superior numbers on the battlefield. Faced with the problem of defending extensive areas the French forces were continually vulnerable to the selective attacks of the Viet Minh. Concealed by the terrain and the population from French attacks, the Liberation Army was able to select vulnerable targets and attack them with sufficient forces to virtually ensure a victory in the impending engagement. Lacking adequate intelligence, the French were in turn unable to bring their better equipped and better trained forces to bear against the Viet Minh except when the Liberation Army chose to stand and fight.

Building upon the small base established in 1944 and continually expanding the regular forces, the Liberation Army grew rapidly during the revolution and the War of National Liberation. The General Staff of the Liberation Army was formed in April of 1945.<sup>116</sup> By the time of the resumption of hostilities between the Viet Minh and the French in Tongking in 1946, the Liberation Army numbered approximately 100,000 men.<sup>117</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS

The period of the Viet Minh struggle from 1941 to 1945 resembles the Bolshevik revolution in several respects. The insurrection in both cases was preceded by an extended period of organization and mobilization of the revolutionary effort. In addition, neither the Bolsheviks nor the Viet Minh were responsible for the overthrow of the traditional government in the country, the Tsarist government and the French administration respectively. Relatively ineffective administrations replaced the traditional government in each case, which then permitted the revolutionary cadres to greatly expand mobilization efforts. In both the Bolshevik and the Viet Minh revolutions the insurrection was relatively bloodless, as a result of the absence of effective opposition. And finally, the October Revolution and the August Revolution were both followed by a war to consolidate the gains of the revolution and to defeat foreign intervention.

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<sup>116</sup>Truong Chinh, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>117</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 421.

The Viet Minh Revolution also resembles the Chinese Communist Revolution. Both revolutions were decentralized, in the sense that the revolutionary cadre operated throughout the rural areas in order to mobilize the populations. The attempts to seize power from the central government were preceded by the acquisition of local control of the populations throughout extensive regions of the state. Both the Viet Minh Revolution and the Chinese Communist Revolution were implosive revolutions, in which the capture of the state enabled the revolutionary forces to eliminate the rival central government. In both revolutionary efforts remarkably similar political structures were established, which constituted underground political systems. The similarities between the Viet Minh and Chinese Communist revolutions, and between the Viet Minh and the Bolshevik revolutions are more than coincidence. They are specifically the result of a determined effort to pattern the Vietnamese revolution upon the earlier revolutionary efforts of both Russia and China, as Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap and Truong Chinh have repeatedly testified.

The conflict between the Viet Minh and the French, during both the revolution and the War of National Liberation, tended to take two forms. The first form was the most obvious form: the direct conflict between the rival structures of the two political systems. This type of conflict took the forms of attacks by the Viet Minh forces upon the instruments and agencies of French control: the attack of regional troops upon a French post or patrol; destruction of French administrative offices by village self-defense militia; or the murder of key French officials. This direct

form of attack was characterized by the destruction of the agencies, political structures, and personnel instrumental in the exercise of control by the French administration.

The second form of conflict between the Viet Minh and the French was indirect conflict, or what might better be termed political attack. This form of conflict was exhibited through attempts to take control of the population. The gradual expansion of Viet Minh political structures into areas controlled by the French produced indirect conflict through competition for control of the population. The clandestine structure of the ICP permitted it to spearhead the expansion. The effectiveness of the Viet Minh propaganda, geared to the demand for independence as well as to the local grievances, and the effectiveness of the Viet Minh political structures in mobilizing the population eventually decided the issue. The Viet Minh indirect conflict also took the form of destruction of roads, railroads, and bridges, as mentioned earlier. This form of attack tended to further isolate the French from the rural population. By weakening French control, the indirect attack conversely fostered the Viet Minh hold on the areas concerned.

The French were not only unprepared to wage this form of indirect conflict, in large measure they failed to understand the significance of the indirect conflict. They were unprepared to compete with the Viet Minh in a test for popular support, because the French colonial policy was built upon retention of Viet Nam as a French colony, or the denial of the Vietnamese desire for national independence. Unable to compete on a popular

basis, the French were thus denied the opportunity to mobilize the population through genuine popular mass political structures in the area of indirect conflict with the Viet Minh. Denied effective means of competition in the indirect conflict for control of the population, the French were forced to rely solely upon direct attacks upon the Viet Minh revolutionary political structures. Faced with determined attacks on two fronts and able to reply effectively on only one front, the French were doomed to defeat.

The inability of the French to understand their vulnerability to indirect attack through the population is evidenced in the writings of numerous French writers of the period. French accounts describe the military engagements at great length, while largely ignoring the immense political campaign being waged by the Viet Minh in their midst. Bernard Fall attempts to explain the failure of the French in terms of the French reliance upon the employment of tanks and artillery, and by the French use of pillboxes. Fall advised, "The French will have to adopt Mao Tse-tung's advice and fight the war, with hit-and-run stabs."<sup>118</sup> These criticisms were often irrelevant. The Viet Minh scored success, not because of "hit-and-run stabs," but because they were able to gain control of and support from the population. This support produced intelligence information regarding the French military dispositions, which allowed the Viet Minh to execute their selective attacks against vulnerable French targets. This popular support also screened the Viet Minh from effective counter-action

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<sup>118</sup>Bernard Fall, "Indochina: The Seven-Year Dilemma," Modern Guerrilla Warfare, ed. Franklin M. Osanka (New York, 1963), p. 263.

by the French. Unable to obtain information from the people regarding the Viet Minh activities, the French were just as incapable of employing "hit-and-run" stabs as they were of finding suitable targets for their tanks and artillery. Fall's criticisms appear particularly naive when we observe the laborious efforts of the Viet Minh to obtain artillery for employment in the same difficult terrain where Fall advised against its use.

The French failure did not lie in the area of weaponry or tactics. They may have had some failings or weaknesses in this area; however, their complete inability to reply effectively in the political spectrum of the war was their greatest weakness. No weapons system and no new form of tactics could have placed victory within the grasp of the French, short of destruction of the population. The Viet Minh revolution was a political movement, that employed military force in the political struggle. The French replied to this essentially political threat with military force and security police. Once the Viet Minh mobilized the population, the French found themselves attacked on every side. It had become a "people's war," and the majority of the Vietnamese people of all ages, both sexes and almost all political and religious backgrounds, united behind the leadership of the ICP to defeat the French.

#### APPLICABILITY OF US ARMY DOCTRINE

Examination of the definition of revolution from the bottom in FM 31-23 reveals that the definition generally fits. The major shortcoming of the definition is that it is imprecise. The Viet Minh revolution

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was directed by an insurgent core, it resulted from social disorganization and unrest, and violent seizure of power was involved in the revolution. However, the definition fails to reveal the political structure of the revolutionary movement, the method by which the power seizure is accomplished, or the methods by which the insurgent organization mobilizes the population in order to wage the power struggle. In addition, the political structure of the Viet Minh bears little resemblance to the type communist organizational structure offered by FM 31-23. The type communist organizational structure fails to identify a governmental political structure and is unnecessarily complex. Figure 8 demonstrates the four principal political structures of the DRV which actually emerged from the revolution. Note the highly resolved governmental political structure.<sup>119</sup> In short, both the definition of revolution from the bottom and the organizational structure provided by FM 31-23 are inadequate for the purpose of illustrating the Viet Minh revolutionary movement.

#### The Implosive Model of Revolution

The definition of the Implosion Model of Revolution appears to apply, with perhaps one exception. The Viet Minh revolution was communist led, and directed at the destruction of a rival political system and the seizure of power. It was characterized by mobilization of the rural agrarian population in order to capture control of the state and to subsequently eliminate the rival central government. The political structure of the

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<sup>119</sup>Singer, op. cit., p. 48.

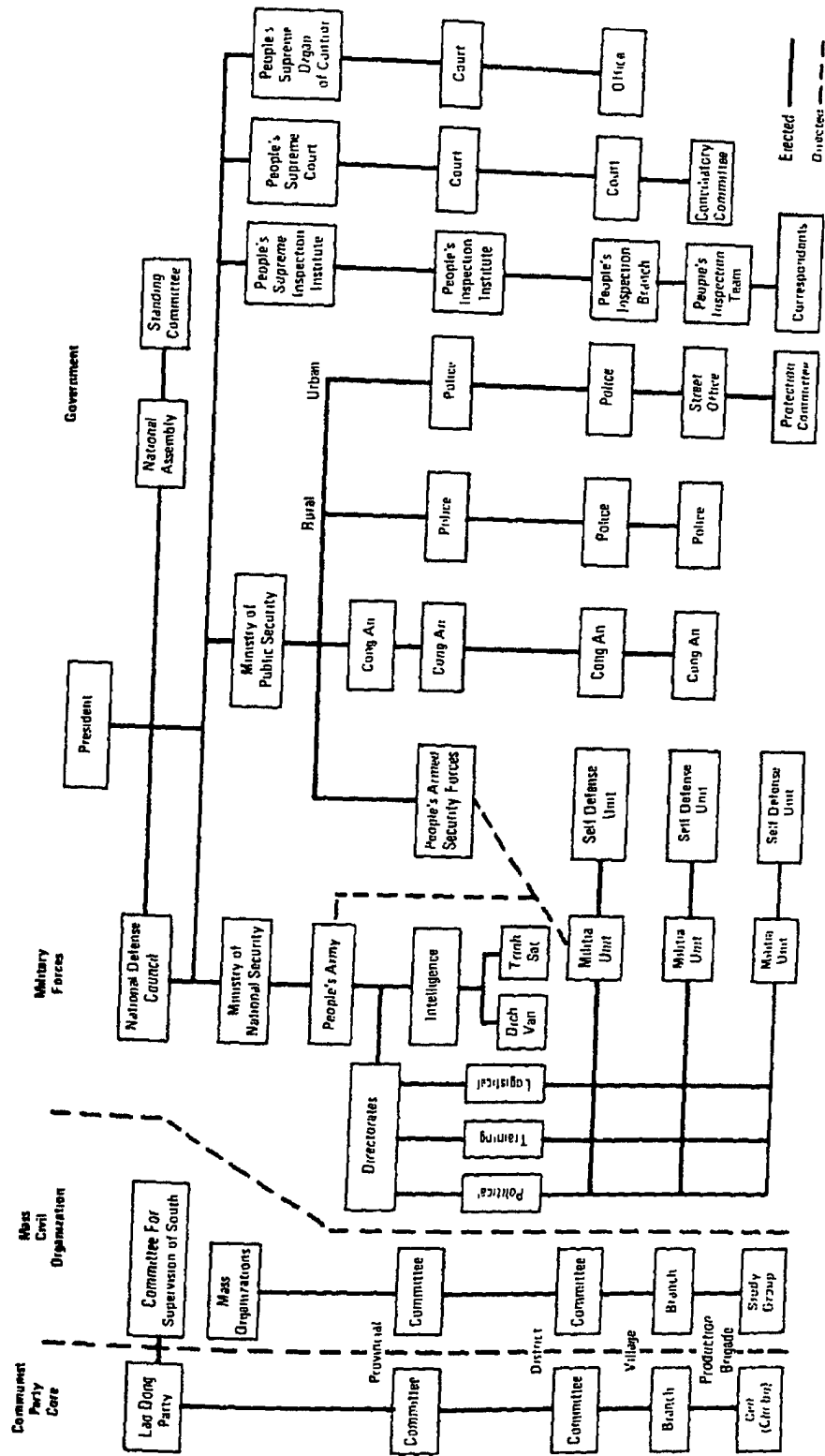


Fig. No. 8. Political Structures of the DRV

revolutionary movement was composed of the communist party, a red army, a government structure, and mass organizations. However, the definition does not appear to hold up regarding the question of the appeal utilized in order to achieve the mobilization of the population. The major appeal of the Viet Minh was anti-colonialism. Land reform was at best a rather poor second as far as its effectiveness in mobilizing the population is concerned. Thus, the definition of the Implosion Model of Revolution is seen to be substantially correct, but requiring at least minor modification in order to accommodate the Viet Minh experience.

## CHAPTER V

### THE VIET CONG REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

In Chapter V the structures and functions of the Viet Cong Revolution will be examined to determine the extent of borrowing from the earlier revolutionary models, to test U.S. Army doctrine and definitions, and to test those definitions formulated in this study. The examination of the political structures and their functions includes a recapitulation of operations conducted during the summer, fall and winter of 1968-1969 by the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR). These operations successfully neutralized Viet Cong infrastructure operating in northern Binh Duong Province. The author of this study participated in these operations as the Regimental Intelligence Officer.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL STRUCTURES

Based upon the study of the currently available unclassified sources of information on the National Liberation Front it appears that the revolutionary movement in South Viet Nam is composed of five separate political or military organizational structures: (1) the People's Revolutionary Party (Communist Party); (2) an administrative or governmental structure; (3) the front organizations; (4) the Liberation Army; and (5) the military forces of North Viet Nam (PAVN - People's Army of Viet Nam) supporting the revolutionary movement in South Viet Nam.

### The People's Revolutionary Party

The most important of the five revolutionary political structures in South Viet Nam has been the Communist Party. The Party in South Viet Nam had been known as the Lao Dong Party after the political separation of the country as a result of the Geneva Accords in 1954. The Party subsequently changed its name to the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) in December of 1961. The Communist Party, under the name of the Lao Dong Party, predates the other political structures of the revolutionary effort in South Viet Nam. Under the direction of the communist cadres the other structures were conceived, organized, and expanded through mobilization of the population. In this respect the Viet Cong Revolution has closely resembled the revolution and the subsequent War of National Liberation of the Viet Minh. Building upon the relatively highly developed Communist Party structure, which already existed in the South,<sup>120</sup> the communist cadre developed a system of revolutionary political structures patterned upon the political structures of the earlier CCP and the Viet Minh revolutions.

Organization of the revolutionary movement by the PRP cadres has been characterized by the formation of political structures that are intended to involve the people, of all ages and both sexes, in the

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<sup>120</sup>Following the exodus of personnel to North Viet Nam it is estimated that the Lao Dong Party maintained a base of approximately 10,000 members in South Viet Nam. Douglas Pike, Viet Cong (Cambridge, 1966), p. 75.

revolutionary movement in order to draw upon and utilize the untapped resources and latent strength of the population in the revolution. In addition, the revolutionary movement has been accompanied by an extensive terror campaign. Inasmuch as the revolutionary movement in South Viet Nam has not been assisted in the elimination of the traditional political administration in rural areas, as the Japanese did in both China and Viet Nam during World War II, it has been necessary for the PRP to both organize the population and simultaneously destroy the political opposition. The elimination of the opposition has been accomplished through terrorist activities, which are normally referred to as executions, assassinations or murders depending upon the political viewpoint of the source in question. These terrorist activities have been widespread, and have succeeded in destroying the GVN<sup>121</sup> administrative structure in some areas. The assassinations began in 1957 and have continued throughout the revolution. It has been estimated that as early as 1963 approximately 13,000 GVN officials had been murdered.<sup>122</sup>

The organization of the Communist Party in South Viet Nam was similar to the earlier ICP organization. Committees were established at each level of command from the Central Committee on the national level down to the district level. The Communist Party in South Viet Nam evidently extended the ICP organization to include a committee on the

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<sup>121</sup>GVN - The Government of South Vietnam.

<sup>122</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 983.

village level. In addition, a special chain of committees was established for urban areas, which provided executive committees at the "Special Zone," city, town or portion of city, street zone, and street branch levels.<sup>123</sup> At the lowest level existed the three man cell. In addition, "single-contact members," whose identity was unknown to the other members of the Party operating on the same level of command, existed at all levels or echelons. Their purpose was to act in the capacity of couriers or inspectors.<sup>124</sup>

The size of the staff found on the executive committees apparently depended upon the level of operation and the extent of development of the political structures in the area concerned. Douglas Pike has indicated that the district was probably the most important level for the overseeing of activities within the rural communities, while retaining considerable latitude in the direction of activities.<sup>125</sup> This writer has been unable to locate information on the composition of the district executive committee of the PRP. Douglas Pike has provided information regarding composition of the provincial executive committee. The provincial level executive committee consisted of eight to ten members, and it was headed by a presidium and individual section heads. The section heads were responsible for military activities, proselyting, agitation-propaganda, finance and economic production, liaison and

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<sup>123</sup>Pike, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 145-146.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., p. 147.

communication, and intelligence and counter-intelligence.<sup>126</sup> The district level PRP executive committee was presumably organized in a similar staff pattern.

The recruiting methods and the discipline of the PRP have been patterned upon the earlier experience of the CCP and the ICP. Party discipline has been based upon the principle of democratic centralism, which was defined as:

. . . decisions made at committee meetings by majority vote, which individuals must then obey . . . The minority obeys the decision of the majority . . . , the lower echelons obey the decisions of the upper echelons, all elements of the Revolution obey the Central Committee . . . There is one shout and a thousand echoes . . .<sup>127</sup>

The Presidium of the PRP Central Committee directs the revolution through the PRP structure. The PRP cadres implement the directives of the Presidium. Through the positions, which they occupy in the Liberation Army, the NLF organizations, and the government and administrative structure, these directives are translated into effective action.

#### The National Liberation Front Organizations (NLF)

It appears that the Communist Party in South Viet Nam has utilized mass popular or front organizations prior to the formation of the NLF. The Chairman of the NLF, Nguyen Huu Tho, stated in an interview that, "Although formally established in December of 1960 the Front had existed as a means of action but without bylaws or program since 1954 when we

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<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., p. 149.



founded in the Saigon-Cholon Peace Committee . . .<sup>128</sup> Thus, it would appear that the political structures, which had been organized or taken over by the Communist Party, were regularized and unified through the formation of the NLF. With the formation of the NLF in December of 1960 these political structures took four forms: (1) the front organizations of the NLF; (2) the administrative and government structure of the NLF; (3) the Liberation Army; and (4) the PRP itself. To these structures was added the fifth political structure of the Viet Cong revolutionary movement, the People's Army of Viet Nam (PAVN), of North Viet Nam, which began to appear in regimental and divisional size units in South Viet Nam in 1965.

The organization and mobilization of the revolution in South Viet Nam predates the formation of the NLF. According to Joseph Buttinger, the fighting produced by the expansion of the communist activities predated the formation of the NLF by as much as five years.<sup>129</sup> Most non-communist sources, however, tend to agree that the insurrection in the South had not reached a level of intensity that marked the beginning of revolutionary warfare until the end of 1958. Based upon statements later released by the NLF it is obvious that the communist revolutionary movement was well developed and the insurgency was significantly advanced by

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<sup>128</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>129</sup>Buttinger, op. cit., p. 980.

1960. The NLF made the following claim regarding casualties inflicted upon the GVN Forces during the year 1960:

...faced with the fierce resistance of our compatriots, the repression ended in crushing defeat; 6,000 Diemist troops killed, wounded or taken prisoner; 8,000 crossed over to patriotic movement; 73,000 local big-shots, security agents, and police pimps chased out by the people; 70 military posts destroyed.<sup>130</sup>

Discounting these figures by even as much as one-half, under the assumption that they are inflated propaganda claims, the size of the claim would still indicate that the GVN Forces were up against a well organized and well developed revolutionary movement as early as 1960. Thus, it would appear that the formal creation of the NLF in December of 1960 was an effort to provide additional political structures needed to expand the revolution through the mobilization of the population, as well as to regularize and to bring all of the political structures of the revolutionary movement under the direction of the Communist Party Central Committee. That it was the Communist Party that was behind the mobilization of the revolutionary movement has been borne out by the purpose, leadership, and structure of the revolution.<sup>131</sup> The nature of

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<sup>130</sup> Wilfred G. Burchett, The Furtive War (New York, 1963), p. 96.

<sup>131</sup> Philippe Devillers has stated without citation that the insurrection in South Viet Nam existed before the communists decided to join it, and that ". . . they [the communists] were simply forced to join in." This position, which has been a constant theme of Viet Cong and Hanoi propaganda, is at variance with the available evidence. Philippe Devillers as cited in Gettleman, Marvin E. (ed.) Viet Nam (Greenwich, 1965), p. 230.

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the NLF was most conclusively demonstrated by its formal origin in the Third Party Congress of the Lao Dong Party in Hanoi, North Viet Nam.<sup>132</sup>

As in the case of the formation of the Viet Minh in 1941, the front organizations of the NLF tended to be confused with the political organization, which founded it. Thus, the NLF is often incorrectly assumed to consist of the other political structures of the revolutionary movement. The NLF consists of the mass popular organizations utilized by the PRP to organize and mobilize the population. It serves to mobilize the people into the war effort and to conceal the communist leadership of the revolutionary movement. Thus, to refer to the Communist Revolution in South Viet Nam as the Revolution of the National Liberation Front is as much a misnomer as was the title of Viet Minh for the earlier revolution directed by the ICP. For this reason, it is more correct to refer to the revolution in South Viet Nam, directed by the PRP, as the Viet Cong or Vietnamese Communist Revolution.

The mass organizations of the NLF were formed primarily on the village level. The Farmers' Liberation Association, the Women's Liberation Association, the Workers' Liberation Association, the Youth Liberation Association, the Student Liberation Association, and the Cultural Liberation Association were the primary front organizations.<sup>133</sup> These organizations were intended to involve the entire population in the

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<sup>132</sup>George A. Carver, Jr., "The Faceless Viet Cong," Foreign Affairs, No. 3 (April 1966), p. 357.

<sup>133</sup>Pike, op. cit., pp. 166-193.

revolutionary struggle. Each organization was utilized to "educate" the people and direct the activities of the population into efforts which supported the revolution and isolated the GVN Government from the population. In addition to the Liberation Associations, the communist cadres have organized a host of political groups designed to appeal to specific interest groups within the population or abroad, such as the Families of Patriotic Soldiers' Association, the Former Resistant's Association, the Disabled Veterans' and Heroes' Council, the Young Patriotic Peace Lovers (overseas group of Vietnamese supporting the revolution), the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Committee (overseas link of the NLF to the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization in Cairo), the Patriotic Buddhist Believers' Association, National Liaison Committee of Patriotic and God-Fearing Catholics, the South Vietnamese Patriotic Teachers' Association, the Radical Socialist Party, and the Democratic Party of South Viet Nam.<sup>134</sup> Some of these organizations existed only on paper and never achieved an effective organization base. Others succeeded in attracting a following; however, their influence often tended to be restricted to specific communist controlled areas.

Members of each of the village level front organizations elect a representative to the Village NLF Association. Committee membership reflects the high concentration of PRP cadres, who occupy leadership

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<sup>134</sup> This list of NLF organizations represents only a portion of the total number of organizations with which the NLF has attempted to mobilize the population during the various periods of the revolution. Pike, Ibid., pp. 194-209.

positions in the village organizations of the NLF. However, captured documents indicate that the PRP has attempted to limit the number of party members within the Central Committees and NLF front organizations to below two-fifths of the total membership of the front organization or committee concerned in order to actively involve more of the people in the revolutionary effort.<sup>135</sup>

By virtue of its almost total control of the information received by the population, control of the leadership positions of the NLF organizations (through their organizing efforts), and through its elimination of opposition, the PRP has been able to direct the revolutionary movement. The various NLF organizations have formed committees at the district, province, and inter-zone levels. These committees have sent representatives to attend the National Liberation Front Congress. The NLF Congress has in turn selected a Central Committee, which is charged with the direction of the government of the liberated areas and the direction of the liberation or revolutionary movement through a Secretariat.<sup>136</sup> Actual direction of the Liberation Movement, control of the liberated areas, and control of the Secretariat has continued to be exercised through the PRP Central Committee and the Presidium of the PRP Central Committee. The value of the NLF Congress has rested upon the fact that it provides a powerful symbol to gain foreign sympathy and rallies the population in support of the revolutionary movement.

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<sup>135</sup>Carver, op. cit., p. 386.

<sup>136</sup>Pike, op. cit., p. 210.

It has also provided an additional means of direction of the revolution to the leaders of the PRP.

#### The Administrative and Governmental Structure

The Presidium has directly controlled the Liberation Army, the Secretariat and the Foreign Relation Committee. The Presidium has been composed of seven members: a chairman (also chairman of the PRP Central Committee), five vice-chairmen, and a sixth vice-chairman who has also acted as the Secretary-General (Director of the Secretariat).<sup>137</sup> Thus, the Chairman of the Presidium and the Secretary-General of the Secretariat have been the two most powerful figures in the revolutionary movement. The Secretary-General controlled and directed the activities of the NLF Organizations and the administrative and governmental structures. The latter have been composed of "Liberation Committees" at the village, district, province, and interzone levels. As was the case of the administrative committees of the Viet Minh revolutionary movement, there appears to have been some name changes of the administrative committees following the mobilization of the Viet Cong revolutionary movement. These name changes evidently reflect changes in organizational structure, or perhaps a shift in the tactics of the revolutionary movement. Captured documents have referred to the village administrative committee as the "Village Chapter Committee."<sup>138</sup> Other sources have

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> The Rand Corporation, Studies of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, File No. DT-87 (I) (Saigon, 1965), p. 2.

indicated that the "Liberation Committees" have been replaced by Central Committees, which are located on the same levels as the Liberation Committee and perform approximately the same function.<sup>139</sup> Still other sources indicate that the Farmers' Liberation Association may have replaced the Liberation Committees in some areas by assuming the village administrative function.<sup>140</sup> These conflicting reports appear to reflect that several changes have been introduced into the administrative and governmental structure. While the reason for these changes and the exact nature of the changes are unclear, the sources available to this writer indicate that the current administrative committee structures are designated either Liberation Committees or Central Committees.

The Secretariat, operating at the national level, has been divided into five sections: (1) the organizational activity section responsible for recruitment and organization building; (2) the permanent liberation association liaison section responsible for the management of the liberation associations and the appointment of personnel to the lower level central committees; (3) the agit-prop section responsible for the organization of the agitation and propaganda organs of the NLF; (4) the military proselyting section responsible for the binh van program (concerned with the destruction of the RVN military forces through non-military means); and (5) the headquarters administrative section

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<sup>139</sup>Pike, op. cit., p. 229.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 288.

responsible for budget-fiscal matters, intelligence, security, and communications.<sup>141</sup> Each of the Central Committees below the Secretariat appears to have maintained a staff, whose functions were patterned roughly upon those of the Secretariat. These staffs varied, based upon the level of development of the revolutionary movement in the geographical area concerned, and based upon the level of operation of the particular staff. Thus, Central Committee staffs in contested areas tended to be less resolved than those found in the Liberated areas; and higher level staffs tended to enjoy larger and better developed staffs than those found on the lower levels. The following examples of staff organizations were originally obtained from captured NLF documents and IPW (Interrogation of Prisoner of War) reports:

(a) provincial Central Committee - ". . . (1) an action against the masses' (dich van) section, devoted to social movement, organization and propaganda work; (2) a section dealing with agit-prop, cultural, and mass-media propaganda activities; (3) a section devoted to 'action against the military,' or the military proselyting section (binh van); (4) a section concerned with the training and indoctrination of members from lower echelons; and (5) the Liberation Army provincial staff headquarters which administered the violence program."<sup>142</sup>

(b) the "Village Chapter Committee" (Village Central Committee) consisting of six members - the committee secretary, the deputy

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<sup>141</sup>Ibid., pp. 214-215.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., p. 221.



secretary, head of the Village Military Committee, deputy head of the Village Military Committee, a finance cadre, and one member simply designated a member.<sup>143</sup>

#### The Liberation Army

Of the four political structures of the revolutionary movement, the most recent to evolve has been the Liberation Army. The evolution of the Liberation Army has been a slow process. This evolution has resembled the decentralized recruitment and training of the Viet Minh Liberation Army and the Red Army of the CCP. The local guerrillas have been recruited and organized from among the popular forces. Members of the Liberation Associations of the NLF have usually been assigned various duties to assist in the defense of the village. Gradually these duties would be expanded to include participation in guerrilla activities and the formation of a guerrilla unit. Direction of the local guerrilla activities has been the responsibility of the Village Military Affairs Committee. The Military Affairs Committees have been formed on the village, district, and Province level.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup>The Rand Corporation, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>144</sup>Presumably the Military Affairs Committees existed at one time on the inter-zone level and the national level. These latter two committees appear to have subsequently taken the names of the Inter Zone Command and the Liberation Army High Command respectively. The conversion of the Military Affairs Committees to Commands may now extend below the Inter Zone Command, and evidently reflects a significant reorganization of the structure of the Liberation Army. Douglas Pike indicates that prisoners and defectors have made reference to such headquarters or commands, although he had questioned their existence at the time of his study in 1966. Pike, op. cit., p. 219.

The Liberation Army consists of three types of military units: the regular army, or main force military units; the regional forces under the control of the province and district military affairs committees; and the local guerrilla units under the control of the village military affairs committee.

The Front's armed forces were of three types: self-defense guerrillas, regional guerrillas and regular army. Self-defense guerrillas are local village units, usually peasants by day and guerrillas by night. Their primary task is to defend their own village but also to carry out road destruction and neutralize enemy forces in the immediate vicinity of their village. They usually rely a good deal on rudimentary arms, including a great variety of traps. Regional troops are on a more permanent basis drawn from the region, perhaps a province or several provinces, which they are assigned to defend. Their job is to deal with enemy forces stationed in their regions; to pin them down, harness or frustrate their operations. The regular army, . . . was to deal with the enemy's mobile reserves and carry out military operations of their own, destruction of posts, counter "mopping up" operations and so on.<sup>145</sup>

The objectives of the Viet Cong Revolutionary movement have been to take control of the population of South Viet Nam and to destroy the political structures of the rival political system, the GVN administration. The Liberation Army has contributed to the attainment of both of these objectives through direct attacks upon the GVN administration structure and the armed forces, and through defense of liberated areas and contested areas. Operations within an area by units of the Liberation Army tend to further isolate the people from the GVN administration and increase the control of the area by the revolutionary movement. The Liberation Army

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<sup>145</sup>Wilfred G. Burchett, Vietnam Inside Story of the Guerrilla War (New York, 1965), p. 188.

has a primary role in the organization and mobilization of the revolution in those areas which have successfully resisted efforts of communist cadres to penetrate the area and organize the revolution. In these areas the Liberation Army has the mission of occupying the area or village concerned and destroying the opposition to the revolutionary movement, while providing protective cover for PRP cadres who commence the organization of the revolutionary structures in the area.

As in the case of the Liberation Army of the Viet Minh and the Red Army of the CCP, the Liberation Army of the Viet Cong revolutionary movement engages in political activities as well as military activities. The political struggle is composed of three types of political activities: (1) Dich van, political activity directed against the enemy or political opposition; (2) Dan van, political activity in liberated areas; and (3) Binh van, political activity directed at the troops of the enemy in order to win the support of the RVN military forces through defections to the Viet Cong.<sup>146</sup> The political action of the Liberation Army acts to reinforce the political activities of the PRP, the NLF organizations, and the administrative and government structure of the revolutionary movement.

The tactics of the Liberation Army are patterned upon those of the Viet Minh Revolution and the Chinese Communist Revolution. A general description of the tactics of the Liberation Army has been provided in heroic terms by the Peking Review:

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<sup>146</sup>Ibid., pp. 85-86.

The resounding victories of the liberation armed forces would appear to be a miracle at first glance. Yet they are in fact manifestations of the simplest of truths.

One of these truths is that the liberation armed forces represent the people. . . They are loved and supported by the 14 million South Vietnamese people and thereby acquire great and invincible might.

Another of these truths is that they follow a whole set of strategy and tactics of people's war . . . They rely closely on the people, give them weapons and develop diversified forms of struggle against the enemy. In this way every locality becomes a battlefield and every person becomes a fighter, and the whole land is turned into a tempestuous sea that engulfs the enemy.<sup>147</sup>

#### The Peoples Army of Viet Nam (PAVN)

The final structure of the Viet Cong revolutionary movement has been the PAVN forces which have invaded South Viet Nam from the DRV, or North Viet Nam. Since these forces are not indigenous to South Viet Nam, they will not be examined in this study. The need to commit these forces in South Viet Nam, which predates the commitment of U.S. combat units into the South, indicates that the Viet Cong revolutionary movement was unable to raise sufficient manpower to maintain the build-up of the Liberation Forces in order to expand the revolutionary movement. The introduction of the PAVN military units into South Viet Nam appears to constitute a deviation from the revolutionary antecedents. In neither the Chinese Communist Revolution nor the Viet Minh Revolution was the revolutionary struggle waged by forces which had not been raised from

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<sup>147</sup>"Salute Heroes Who Punctured the U.S. Paper Tiger" (message from the Chinese Ministry of National Defense to the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front), Peking Review, (February 18, 1966), Vol. IX, No. 8, p. 14.

among the people engaged in the revolutionary struggle. This deviation from the earlier models of revolution demonstrates that the Viet Cong have been unable to create a genuine people's war, contrary to the claims of Peking and Hanoi.

The examination of the political structures and their functions in the Viet Cong revolutionary movement reveals extensive borrowing from the CCP and Viet Minh experiences. The data collected to support this conclusion has been the result of research from primary and secondary sources. The formation of the organization of the principal political structures of the Viet Cong Revolution (figure number 9) has been the product of this research and inductive reasoning based upon knowledge of the political structure used during the antecedent revolutions. While this research and the conclusion reached are valuable, particularly in the absence of other comprehensive studies on the subject, primary sources to support the conclusions reached in this study are needed. The following section of this Chapter provides the result of field work in the identification of Viet Cong infrastructure operating at village level. This field work constitutes a primary source that substantiates the conclusions cited above.

#### ATTACK OF VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE BY THE 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT (ACR)

The successes enjoyed by the 11th ACR in neutralizing the Viet Cong village infrastructure were the result of the cumulative effect of numerous programs and operations being conducted simultaneously within

the Regiment's Area of Operations (AO). The scope and duration of these programs and operations was of such a magnitude that any explanation of the methods and techniques used by the Regiment to attack the infrastructure must also address the total environment of the AO. Most simply stated, the actions taken by the 11th ACR produced a chain of events that ultimately caused the communist organized infrastructure to disintegrate. Successful combat operations coupled with civic action programs created a loss of confidence by the local populace in the National Liberation Front. The loss of confidence in the NLF was accompanied by a willingness by the local people, former guerrillas, and captured main force troops to provide intelligence to the Allied Forces. The acquisition of the intelligence was soon followed by the apprehension of the Viet Cong cadres and organizers in the village. The following section of Chapter V addresses the chain of events leading up to the neutralization of the infrastructure and the findings of the Regiment's intelligence section regarding the infrastructure.

#### The Situation Confronting the Regiment

The Area of Operations of the 11th ACR was approximately 600 square kilometers in size. Approximately three quarters of the AO consisted of virgin jungle and secondary jungle growth. The remaining quarter was cultivated land, through which farm villages were scattered. The villages were concentrated in the southwest portion of the AO. The jungle covered terrain was unpopulated, with the exception of the Viet

Cong base camps. The entire region had been essentially Viet Cong controlled for a period of approximately five years, prior to the arrival of the 11th ACR during the summer of 1968.

The farm villages had been thoroughly organized and their populations had been well indoctrinated by the Viet Cong cadres. The villages provided rice, clothing, and recruits to the Viet Cong combatants. In addition, the homes of the villages provided a safe haven and resting place for the troops of the Viet Cong, when Allied units were not operating in the area. At the approach of Allied units the Viet Cong would withdraw into the less hospitable jungle, in which they had laboriously constructed numerous fortified base camps.

The average base camp consisted of numerous bunkers, interlaced with connecting trenches. Each bunker contained several firing ports, which also served as entrances to the bunker. The roofs of the bunkers were made of logs covered with approximately three feet of earth. Constructed from an ancient alluvial soil, composed of a mixture of sand, silt, and clay, the bunkers became a formidable and hardened fortification after the soil had had an opportunity to dry out. The entire base was constructed under the jungle canopy and usually within relatively close access to fresh water.

Each Viet Cong unit normally constructed multiple base camps, between which the unit could rotate in order to evade contact with Allied search operations. If surprised or forced to fight in its base camp, the Viet Cong unit was capable of stiff resistance. Armed with the Soviet assault rifle (AK-47), Chinese Communist machine guns, and

the Soviet RPG anti-tank rocket, the Viet Cong units initially were a formidable opponent. The heavily vegetated terrain restricted maneuver and control for the Allied combat formations. Moreover, the Viet Cong prepared the battlefield with mines, when they knew of an impending engagement. To add to the problem for the Allies was the inherent strength of one of these bunkered positions. The foliage tended to detonate artillery and bombs prematurely. Usually a direct hit was required to destroy each enemy position.

When assigned to the AO, the 11th ACR was given the missions of interdicting enemy infiltration through the AO, elimination of enemy combat forces operating in the AO, pacification of the villages in the AO, and the elimination of the threat of rocket attacks on the Bien Hoa Air Base by the large 122mm and 140mm Soviet rockets that were being fired from the southern edge of the AO. The assignment of the new AO and the new missions were greeted with mixed emotions by the staff of the Regiment. The AO was known to contain one of the enemy's best Regiments, composed of four battalions of infantry plus support troops. In addition, four companies of district guerrilla forces and numerous squads of village guerrilla forces were known to be operating in the AO. The immediate threats posed to the men of the Regiment were an ubiquitous mine threat to the armored vehicles, ambushes against re-supply convoys, and the possibility of an attack at any time by a regimental size force. Adding to the gravity of the situation was the knowledge that through the center of the AO traversed one of the major



infiltration routes used during the earlier attacks against Saigon, in February of 1968. One PAVN division had moved through the AO to attack Saigon at that time.

On the bright side of the picture were the composition and leadership of the Regiment. The 11th ACR usually had at least two highly mobile squadrons of armored cavalry, an air cavalry troop, attached engineers, and two additional battalions of infantry. The inherent mobility of these forces permitted them to be rapidly concentrated once contact was made with the enemy. More important, however, was the fact that the Regiment was commanded by a resourceful fighter and a truly professional soldier, Col. George S. Patton III.

Under Patton's direction the Regiment moved to the attack. It attacked on many fronts and with varied tactics. The attack continued without letup until Patton departed the Regiment in April of 1960, at which time the enemy's combat forces were exhausted and his political structures in each of the villages had disintegrated. Following Patton's departure the Regiment moved on to new and distant battlefields, where the enemy still posed a threat to the Allies.

#### The Conduct of Operations

The general concept of the operations of the Regiment was for combat operations to isolate and destroy the enemy's combat forces while civic action and psychological operations were aimed at the population by a combined U.S. and Vietnamese effort in order to gain support for the Government of the Republic of Vietnam. The operations were

complex and continually changing. They included relatively large scale search operations, continuous ambush patrolling, ground and aerial reconnaissance patrolling, conventional attack of Viet Cong base camps and troop units, clearing of jungle with engineer land clearing teams, road clearing and construction, medical aid to the local population, construction of schools and wells for the villages, and psychological operations. The combat operations tended to be concentrated in the jungle. The civic action and psychological operations were centered on the villages. While the civic action was largely a U.S. effort, the psychological operations were mainly a Vietnamese effort by the district officials to acquaint the people with the programs and reforms (particularly land reform) of the GVN.

All of the activities of the Regiment were focused upon intelligence collection. Intelligence permitted the Regiment to identify both the resupply routes transporting food and clothing from the villages to the base camps and the resupply routes bringing North Vietnamese troops, arms and ammunition from Cambodia to the base camps. Continual ambushing of these routes bled the enemy and provided new intelligence from the prisoners captured by the ambush patrols. Aerial reconnaissance (helicopter) by the scouts of the air cavalry troop was a constant source of good intelligence. Accepting great risk, the scouts conducted continual low level reconnaissance of the entire AO. They remapped the area in order to acquire new trails, determine which trails were abandoned and which were active, locate the base camps, and search for signs of recent activity. The enemy courier, Viet Cong squad, or base camp caretaker spotted by these scouts in the jungle was in

trouble. Working in pairs of one observation helicopter and one gunship helicopter, they were a deadly team. Covered by the gunship at higher altitude, the observation helicopter was free to roam unchallenged, to look for footprints along streams, to watch for the powdery dust that betrays recent movement along trails, and to seek out the enemy's base camps down inside the foilage of the jungle.

Reacting to the aggressive tactics of the Regiment, the enemy restricted his movement and attempted to avoid making contact with the Allied units. When the enemy attempted to stand and fight, the Regimental Commander immediately struck him with all of the fires that the Army artillery and the Air Force could provide. Simultaneously, ground combat forces were committed to the fight. Any unit of the Regiment that was not actually in contact with the enemy was considered to be in reserve. These highly mobile reserves were employed with devastating effect upon the enemy.

In the course of several months, the cumulative force of these operations began to produce a noticeable effect upon the people and the enemy. The population began to demonstrate a loss of confidence in the Viet Cong cadres and their North Vietnamese comrades (see Appendix I). The captured Viet Cong or PAVN soldier became more cooperative and usually demonstrated relief at being captured and finally being out of the war. Frequently these captured victims of the war recounted tales of being watched and informed upon for years by their cadre leaders in order to avoid defections and to maintain discipline. The effectiveness and teamwork of the Allied combat operations and the work of GVN district officials

had broken the confidence of the local people and the enemy troops in the long promised victory of the Liberation Front.

### The Village Infrastructure

One of the major objectives of the intelligence effort of the Regiment had been the identification of the Viet Cong infrastructure in the villages of the AO. The obstacles that inhibited this intelligence collection effort were the initial hostility of the populace and the reluctance of the Allies to accept the idea that the village infrastructure was composed of a multitude of committees and organizations. There appeared to be a general tendency among Allied personnel, with whom the author had direct contact, to underestimate the complexity of the village infrastructure. The generally accepted view of the infrastructure at the village level was that one committee was responsible for the organization and direction of the communist war effort within the village. This latter view, held by the Regimental intelligence collection personnel and the interrogators, shaped the questions asked of suspects as well as the conclusions drawn from the suspects' responses. The result was an unintended rejection of information, which indicated that a complex infrastructure existed at the village level.

In order to overcome the problem of underestimating the infrastructure, the interrogators and intelligence collection personnel were introduced to the village infrastructure previously utilized by the Chinese Communists and the Viet Minh. Moreover, they were encouraged to expect no pattern of organization, but rather to pick the brain of

each informer or suspect in order to explore for the existence of previously unknown political and military structures. The results produced by these efforts were an eye opener for the personnel involved in the intelligence effort. The combination of a more sensitive intelligence effort combined with a more favorable attitude of the populace toward the GVN and U.S. soldiers working and living among them, produced a quantum jump in the intelligence on enemy infrastructure.

#### Binh My Village

The first breakthrough in the intelligence available in infrastructure developed as a result of voluntary information provided by the people of Binh My village. The Regiment had constructed a school for the village and for the adjacent village of Binh Co. Armed propaganda teams of GVN troops lived and worked among the people in order to counter the effect of the earlier indoctrination the populace had received from the Viet Cong. Medical assistance from the surgeons and aid men of the Regiment was provided during regular visits to the villages. The defection of a Viet Cong Captain and a chairman of the Woman's Liberation Committee of Binh My enabled the Regiment's interrogators to pick the brains of two of the cadres that had helped to train and organize the communist infrastructure. The Captain, Bay Son, had been recruited by the Viet Minh in 1949, fought against the French, trained in North Viet Nam, and returned to fight in South Viet Nam. He had trained the guerrilla mortar squads of the district. Bay Son rallied and volunteered to lead the 3rd Squadron of the 11th ACR to

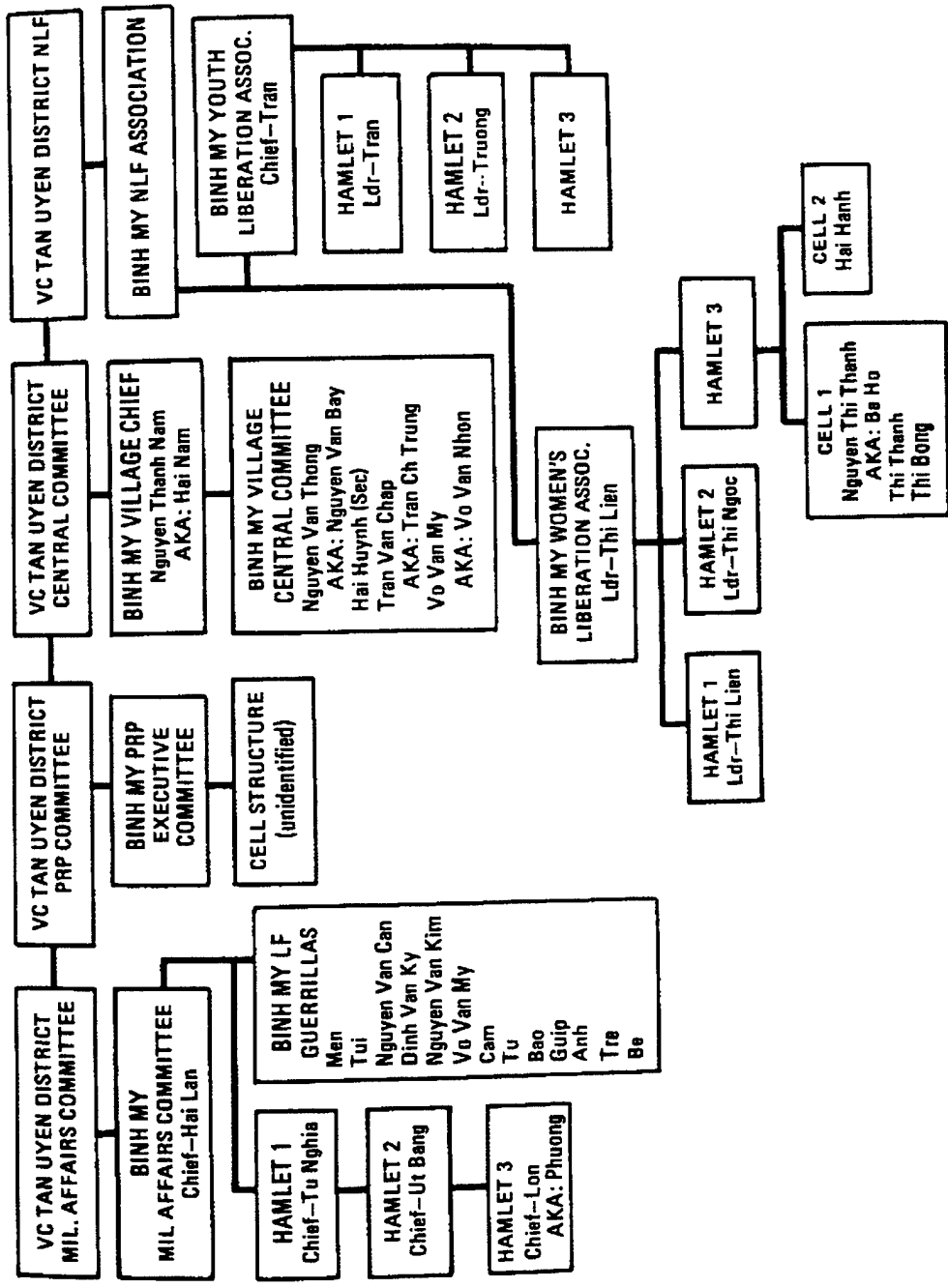
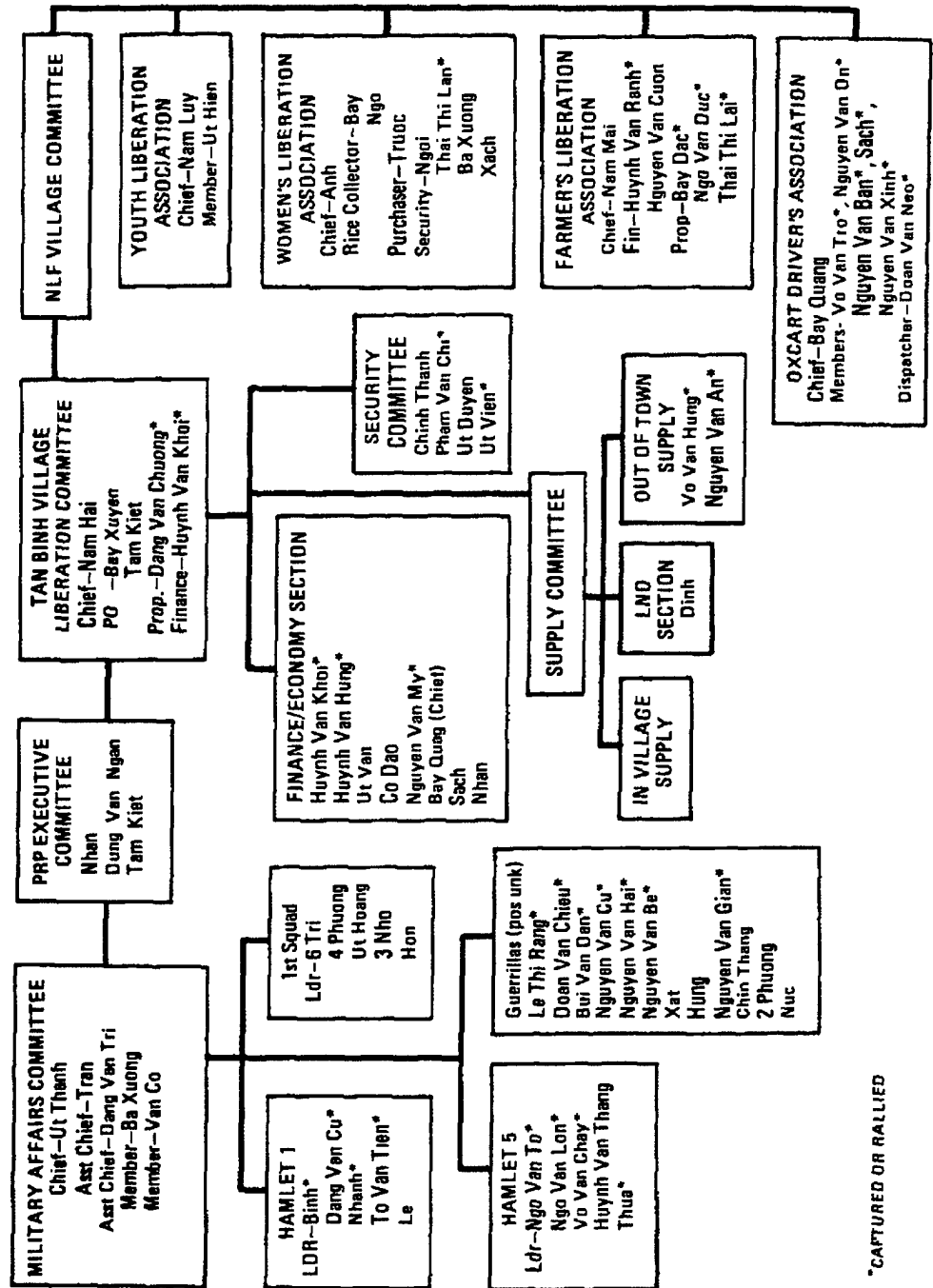


Fig No 10 Viet Cong political and military organization of Binh My village.

weapons, ammunition, and the individual guerrillas of the district. The woman organizer, who must remain unnamed, gave the Regiment the NLF organization of the village.

Each new informant was able to flesh out the organizational structure or confirm earlier reports. As the intelligence input increased, it produced even greater returns. It was discovered that once the veil of secrecy that had surrounded a village infrastructure began to crumble, it collapsed with startling rapidity. A similar sequence of events to that described above revealed the infrastructure of another village, Tan Binh, which had been a major resupply base for communist operations in the Regiment's AO. Figures 10 and 11 show the infrastructure of Binh My and Tan Binh villages. Based upon the experiences gained in these two villages, the Regiment published a chart depicting a sample village infrastructure. This chart (Figure 12) provided the intelligence personnel of the Regiment with a point of departure in their attempts to identify the organization and personalities operating in the remaining villages of the AO.

The experience of the 11th ACR had confirmed the existence of the four political structures of the Viet Cong revolutionary movement at the village level. Moreover, the experience of the 11th ACR and the many Allied Brigades involved in the pacification effort has indicated that effective pacification requires a combined attack to simultaneously neutralize all four of the revolutionary political structures. Whereas the attack of the enemy combat forces has necessitated a military response, the attack of the village level political structure has



\*CAPTURED OR RALLIED

Fig No 11 Viet Cong political and military structure in Tan Binh village



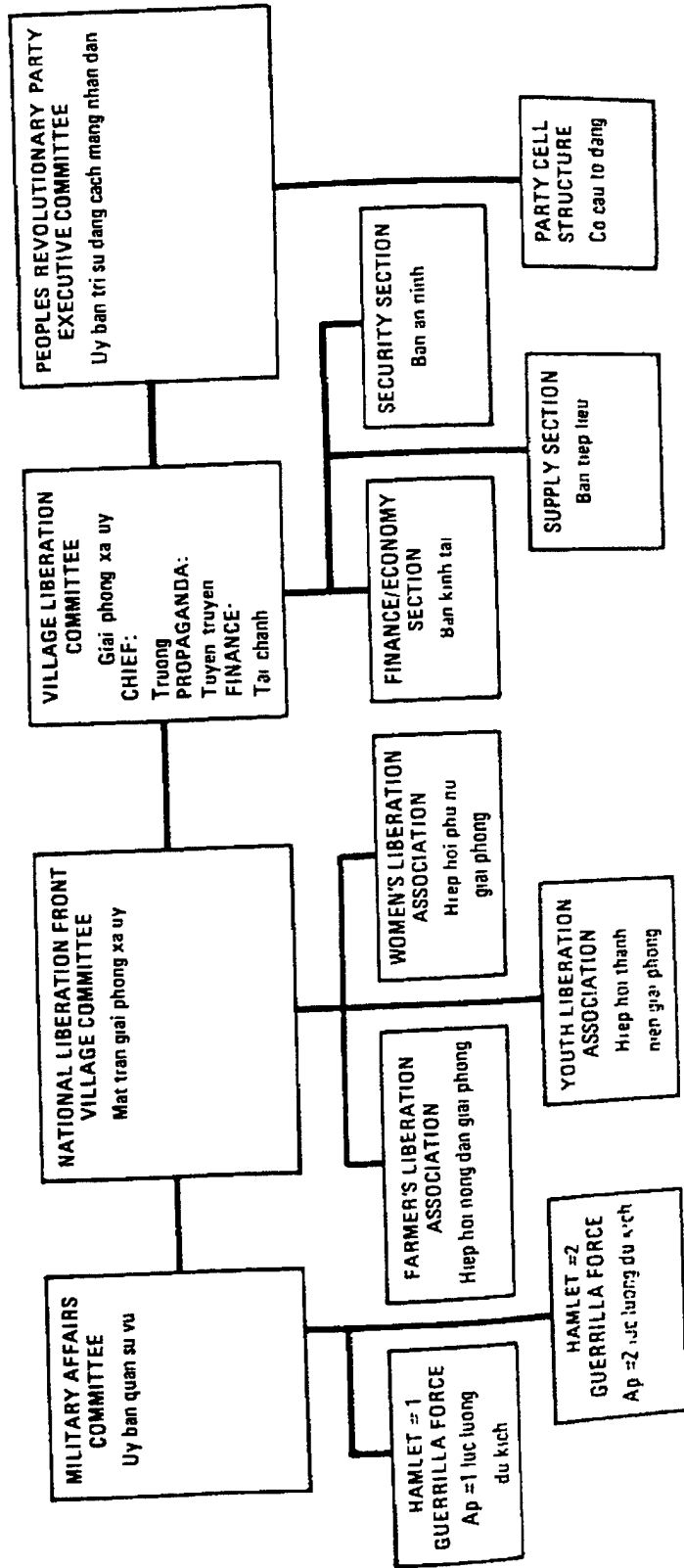


FIG. 12. Structure of the Revolutionary Party, showing the structure of the party cell.

necessitated a response that has combined political action (GVN), civic action, psychological operations with a large measure of humanitarian assistance. The current progress of the pacification effort has demonstrated that the neutralization of the village infrastructure is feasible.

The initial success of this experiment has confirmed the hopes of the planners, who first conceived the concept of pacification. The hazards involved in attempting to win the allegiance of a hostile population, organized and seeded with communist trained cadres, through the use of U.S. military forces together with Vietnamese military forces and administrators, gave rise to grave doubts. The concept rested upon the faith that the soldiers would be able to fight the guerrilla, accept the wounds inflicted on their unit by the civil population without striking back at the population, and go on to win the confidence, sympathy and loyalty of the people. During the period from 15 July to 15 December 1968, the 11th ACR lost 120 tracked vehicles destroyed by mines. Many fine soldiers died in those 120 vehicles. Although the men of the 11th ACR knew the mines had been planted by civilians concealed within the population, they did not strike back.

The self restraint of the long suffering and humanitarian soldiers won the respect of the local populace. In the end it was the people who turned in the cadres with the guerrillas, who had planted the mines. Although there have been relatively few large battles and the progress has been painfully slow, the final victory in the pacification effort has appeared to be in sight. Despite the failure of a few, which

allegedly produced the massacre at My Lai, the humanitarian victory of the millions of U.S., Korean, Australian, New Zealand, Thai, and Vietnamese soldiers in advancing the pacification of communist controlled populations should one day rank as one of the most important victories in military history.

#### APPLICABILITY OF U.S. ARMY DOCTRINE

The comments made in Chapter IV concerning the applicability of U.S. Army doctrine to the Viet Minh revolutionary experience appear to fit the Viet Cong revolutionary experience also. The major shortcoming of the definition of revolution from the bottom is again that it is imprecise. The definition of revolution from the bottom fails to reveal the political structure of the revolution, the scope and direction of the revolution, or the methods by which the insurgents organize the population in order to wage the power struggle. The Viet Cong political structures bear little relationship to the type communist organization structure offered by FM 31-23. The type communist organizational structure fails to identify either the governmental political structure or the PAVN augmentation to the revolutionary political structures. In short, both the definition of revolution from below and the type communist organizational structure are inadequate for the purpose of illustrating the Viet Cong revolutionary movement.

#### The Implosive Model of Revolution

The definition of the implosive model of revolution appears to

fit the Viet Cong experience, with several significant exceptions. In order to make these exceptions more apparent, it has been necessary to contrast the Viet Minh and Viet Cong experience. The two revolutionary movements have been similar in that both attempted to capture the state in order to destroy the government and seize power. The two revolutionary movements have differed from each other, however, in the particulars of the environments in which the two revolutionary forces attempted to mobilize the rural populations. Whereas the Viet Minh had been assisted by external intervention in the elimination of the French by the Japanese prior to the August Revolution, the Viet Cong were hindered by the U.S. support of the Republic of Viet Nam (RVN). Furthermore, the Viet Minh leadership and cause (anti-colonialism) were recognized as both legitimate and of significant importance in the eyes of the people, whereas the Viet Cong cause (anti-neo-colonialism) and leadership were practically unknown at the start of the revolution. Moreover, the Viet Cong have been forced to resort to terror in order to eliminate the GVN from the rural communities, whereas the Viet Minh were not forced to rely upon terror to the same extent. As a result the Viet Minh were recognized by the population as possessing the Mandate of Heaven, while the Viet Cong, thus far, have not. Finally, the Viet Cong Revolutionary Movement has required external assistance in men, material, and direction in order to maintain the revolutionary struggle, whereas the earlier models had drawn the manpower and materials to wage the revolutionary struggle from the society in revolt. In short, the

Viet Cong appear to have been a new experiment to determine the exportability of the implosive model of revolution. The difficulties encountered by the Viet Cong and their PAVN comrades have indicated that if the cause for revolt is not genuine, it cannot be successfully exported.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

The communist directed revolutionary movement has been a complex social, political, cultural, economic and military endeavor. Even a casual acquaintanceship with the realities of such a movement can not be found in oversimplifications or cliches. The fish and the sea analogy is picturesque; however, it tells the student of revolution nothing that permits him to react effectively to the revolutionary movement. An effective appraisal of a revolutionary movement requires a knowledge of the purpose and cause of the movement, the recruitment techniques, the organizational structure, the functions of the structures, and the modus operandi of the revolutionary cadres. The possession of such knowledge permits the student of the revolution to ascertain the vulnerability of a society to the revolutionary movement. Moreover, it permits counter action to be directed at the relatively vulnerable cadres of the revolutionary movement.

In recent years the writings of communist ideologues and revolutionaries have flooded the West. None of these documents has contained the blueprints of the organizational structures, which are so necessary for effective counter-revolutionary activity. The volumes of printed matter containing polemic and ideological fare, and an absence of operationally oriented documents, suggest that the revolutionary ideologues may have attempted to create a folk myth to surround Peoples' War in order to conceal the sophistication and complexity of the political structures of the revolutionary movements. Not a few writers in the

West have contributed to these myths through naive platitudes concerning the nature of Peoples' War.

It appears that the ignorance of the West may have presented a valuable passive defensive measure to the revolutionary cadres. The revolutionaries appear to have made good use of this opportunity by creating a classic ruse de guerre, which depicted the guerrilla as a vigilante reacting to the angered indignation of a people in revolt. The myth continues that the guerrilla, strengthened by his inseparable bonds with the people, needs no massive political-military hierarchy in order to carry out his revolutionary role. To the extent that the myth has gained credibility among the opponents of the revolutionary movements, the complex and vulnerable infrastructure has been immune to effective counter action.

Making use of the progress achieved in the last decade in the disciplines of Political Science and Sociology, the U.S. Army has progressively revised its definitions and doctrine relating to communist directed revolutionary movements. The wording of the doctrine presented in FM 31-23 reflects the borrowing, which has occurred from the academic community. The rapid pace of the changes reflect the expansion of knowledge as field experience is gained and as studies of the revolutionary movements continue.

Based upon an examination of the political structure and the functions of the political structures of the Bolshevik, Chinese Communist,

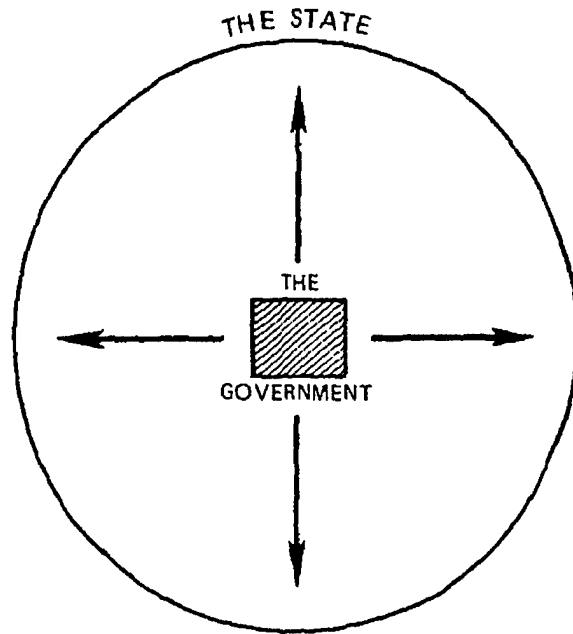
Viet Minh and Viet Cong revolutionary movements, the following conclusions have emerged:

1. Current U.S. Army doctrine and definitions presented in FM 31-23 are inadequate when applied to the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chinese Communist Revolution, the Viet Minh Revolution, and the Viet Cong Revolution.

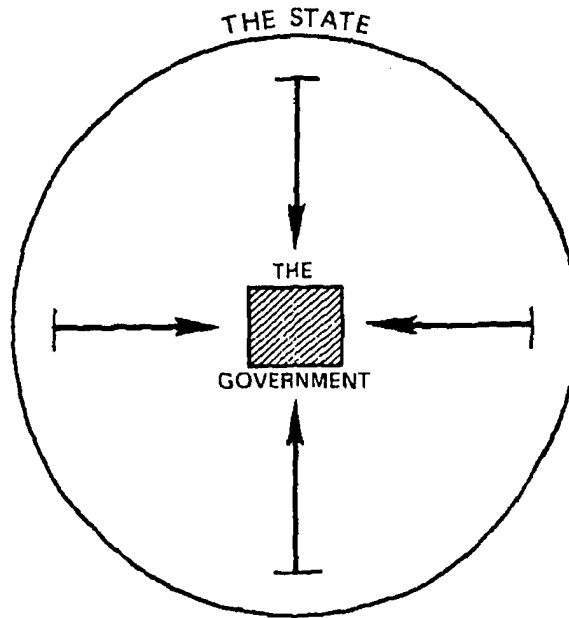
2. The Bolshevik model of revolution consists of a partial mobilization of the body politic in order to mount a direct attack upon the government. The attack on the government is executed in order to capture political structures with which to complete the mobilization of the society. Those political structures of the former government dominated by the propertied classes are destroyed. Following the seizure of power, the revolutionary forces expand their control from the power center to the perimeter of the state through a civil war, in order to complete the destruction of rival political structures and to consolidate their control of the state. This sequence of power seizure, capture of government followed by capture of state, is designated the explosive model of revolution.

3. The Chinese Communist model of revolution consists of a massive decentralized mobilization effort aimed at the seizure of control of the state. During the first phase of the power seizure limited direct attacks are made upon the political structures of the central government, which operate in the rural areas of the country. These direct attacks are designed to weaken the control of the central government over the





The Explosive Model



The Implosive Model

Figure 13 The Explosive and Implosive Models of Revolution

rural population, allowing the revolutionary cadres to extend their mobilization of the population. The mobilization of the rural population constitutes an indirect attack upon the central government since it denies the government the resources of the area for the prosecution of the power struggle. During the second phase of the power struggle the revolutionary political system executes a centralized attack upon the surviving political structures of the central government, in order to complete the destruction of the central government. This sequence of power seizure, capture of the state followed by destruction of the central government, is designated the implosive model of revolution.

4. The explosive model of revolution is a pattern of communist inspired revolutionary activity directed at the capture and destruction of the political structures of an existing political system. The explosive model of revolution is characterized by the mobilization of dissident sectors of the industrial labor force. It is applicable to industrialized countries, or to emerging nations with an industrial labor force. The explosive model of revolution does not attempt to establish an underground government, nor can specific political structures be expected to emerge. The communist party can be expected to mobilize the labor force and other dissident elements of the population utilizing existing political structures or by organizing political structures that reflect the political culture of the dissident sectors of the body politic

5. The implosive model of revolution is a communist led revolutionary effort directed at the mobilization of the rural population in order to gain control of the state. The acquisition of control of the

state, in a decentralized power struggle, culminates in a highly centralized attack to destroy the existing political structures of the government, and to formally seize power. It is further characterized by the establishment of an extra legal and independent political system composed of four primary political structures: the communist party, the red army, the regional government, and mass organizations. The implosive model of revolution is applicable to countries reliant upon agrarian economies, and whose rural population is not mobilized through existing modern organizational structures. The mobilization of the rural population is achieved through the appeals of land reform and anti-colonialism and the exploitation of additional appeals attractive to other dissident elements within the population.

6. Both the Viet Minh and the Viet Cong revolutionary movements have been examples of the implosive model of revolution.

7. The Viet Cong revolutionary movement differs from the Viet Minh revolutionary movement in that the Viet Cong revolution has been dependent upon external sources for massive amounts of materials, men, money, leadership, and for sanctuaries. Moreover, the mandate for change of the Viet Cong cadres appears to have been of questionable value in the eyes of the rural population of South Viet Nam.

One of the major problems facing the Western World today appears to be the identification of effective responses to the threat of communist wars of national liberation. These wars may be based upon either the explosive model of revolution, the implosive model of revolution or some combination of the two models. The wide distribution of emerging nations

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with immobilized rural populations suggests, however, that the implosive model of revolution may find its way into many parts of the developing areas of the world. The remaining comments and conclusions address specifically the wars of national liberation patterned upon the implosive model of revolution.

The ability of the communist revolutionary movement to effectively mobilize the society rests upon the inability of the traditional society to effectively provide for the needs of the dissident sectors of the population. Were the traditional political system responsive to these needs, the mobilization efforts of the revolutionary movement would be robbed of its most potent weapon - social discontent. This conclusion appears to be substantiated by the recent experience of the Viet Cong revolutionary movement. The mobilization of the revolution of the National Liberation Front in South Viet Nam appears to have failed, thus far, to attain the more spectacular results attained by the antecedent revolutions. Much of the credit for this failure must go to the RVN Government which has made extensive efforts to correct the immobility of the peasant. Although much remains to be done, the RVN Government has initiated extensive reforms in order to bring about needed land-reform, increase political participation, and augment the educational opportunities of the peasant. The ultimate effectiveness of these measures to deny the revolutionary movement the support of the peasant, however, remains to be seen. In the event that the social problems remain unresolved, and the peasant remains immobilized, the threat of a protracted and eventually successful communist revolutionary movement will also remain.

Examination of the explosive and implosive models of revolution reveals a similar pattern of organization, mobilization and offensive or insurrectionary activity. During each of these phases political activity predominates and military action tends to play a supporting role, despite the fact that the final phase is usually characterized by extensive military activity. Attempts to find lasting solutions to communist revolutionary warfare through military action in lieu of political action is merely to extend the time required for the attainment of victory by the revolutionary movement. Communist revolutionary warfare is essentially a political movement that utilizes military force as a weapon in the power struggle. Attempts to find military solutions in order to dissolve the political movement are based upon an unrealistic appraisal of the threat posed by the revolutionary movement.

Those authorities who counsel that new military weapons and tactics are required to combat a communist led War of National Liberation demonstrate a lack of understanding of the nature of the struggle. The key to the struggle is its political nature that revolves about the mobilization of the masses. There can be no front lines in the War of National Liberation because it is a class war. The enemy is in the kitchens of the bourgeoisie. They are in the homes and the fields of the land owners. They are in the headquarters of the army. They work the plantations. They run the factories, the communications, and the railroads. When the latent strength of the workers and the peasants has been mobilized by the Communist Party, there is no weapon, tactic, or force available to the traditional government that can defeat it. Since

the enemy exists within the heart of the society, he can pick the time and place of combat. Superior firepower may prolong the struggle with the clandestine enemy, but it is most unlikely to defeat him, for the key to the struggle is political and not military. In order to defeat the War of National Liberation it is necessary to remove the cause of insurgency.

How is it possible for a traditional government in the developing areas, which has failed to be responsive to the needs of the peasant and the worker, to defeat the Communist Party? The answer is that it probably cannot. If the traditional government fails to provide leadership to the people, and if the Communist Party is permitted to identify itself with the needs of the people, then the decision of the conflict appears to be a foregone conclusion. The political society or body politic is based upon the contributions of each of the members of that society. If the traditional political system is responsive to the demands of only a handful of landowners and industrial capitalists, whereas the Communist Party is responsive to the demands of the masses and has organized and mobilized the peasants and industrial workers, who in fact constitute the vast majority of the body politic, then the result of the power struggle is predetermined. The communists have won. The only question that remains to be answered is how long will the combined efforts of the workers and peasants take in order to cripple and crush the organizational structure of the rival political system.

To whom does the traditional government turn, when it recognizes the threat posed by the communist revolutionary efforts? It turns to the workers and the peasants in order to expand its armed forces and to destroy

the communist movement. The peasants and workers are armed and fielded as traditional military forces to destroy the Liberation Army, the Red Guards, or the communist militia. If the communists have already organized and mobilized the people, the traditional government will soon discover that it is training communist armies. The peasants and workers will defect with their arms and newly acquired skills, or they may simply remove the government's insignia and replace it with the communist insignia. In either case they will butcher the officers and agents of the traditional government, who no longer represent them. Once the people have given their allegiance to the Communist Party, the only question that remains is: HOW LONG?

The more rapidly the traditional government mobilizes its armed forces, and the more military assistance and foreign aid it receives, the faster will the communists gain strength as a result of desertions. The only effective method for the traditional political system to compete with the communist revolutionary political system is for the traditional government to recapture the allegiance of the people. The government must provide effective leadership and become responsive to the needs of the people. In order to accomplish this the government leaders may have to sever some of their ties that make them the servants of the landowner and the industrialist, in order to implement effective reforms that will be required to answer the needs of the peasant and the worker.

To compete with the communists, the leadership of the traditional government must be prepared to turn aside from lives of leisure. They must overcome aversions to physical labor. They must be prepared to work

and sacrifice with the peasant. Rejecting this alternative, the traditional government leaves a leadership vacuum within the body politic that the Communist Party is designed to fill. The peasant will not follow insincere leadership, if he is offered an alternative. Neither the peasant nor the worker will follow the leadership of men in fine clothes, with tinkling cocktails in their hands. Instead the workers and peasants will turn to the workers and peasants in their own midst, who are dressed as they are. They will turn to the communist organizers who have shared their inhospitable living conditions and are prepared to share their sufferings in order to provide leadership in a class war. Unless the leadership of the traditional political system is prepared to sacrifice for the privilege of leading the body politic, the communist will do it for them, and the people will crush the traditional political system. Until the traditional political system is prepared to share its wealth, to sacrifice, to work with the peasant, there may be no viable alternative to the dictatorship of the proletariat - the communist police state - in many of the vast, newly developing areas of the world.

When described in these terms, as a liberator of oppressed peoples, the communist cadre takes on a heroic image. It is an image he works to create; however, it may be a far cry from the image which prevails after the Party has seized control of the population. During the examination of the development of the Viet Cong model of revolution, the conflict between the two political systems within the body politic during a period of communist revolutionary development was seen to be constituted of two types of conflict: direct conflict to destroy the rival political system, and indirect conflict



or that conflict which is waged in order to gain control of the population. In the test of popular strength between the two political systems, it would appear that the political system capable of gaining the support of a majority of the population would ultimately destroy the other political system. Thus, the outcome would inevitably reflect the desire of a majority of the population, and in effect constitute a form of "democratic" settlement. Several factors indicate, however, that the assumption that the Liberation Movement is a democratic expression of the popular sentiment is incorrect. Once the communist revolutionary structures have succeeded in organizing the population of an area, the people become trapped within the organization. The individual peasant and his family are no match for the highly organized and disciplined structures of the revolutionary movement. To this unequal struggle between the individual and the communist revolutionary movement must be added the inability of the peasant to make a realistic appraisal of the alternative open to him, of supporting the traditional government and rejecting communist leadership. Shielded from information favorable to the traditional government and force fed propaganda regarding the revolutionary movement, he is no longer in a position to make a rational decision. To this difficult position is added the realization that other members of the family of the peasant are also caught up in the revolutionary movement, and the fact that the Liberation Front has demonstrated repeatedly the fate that awaits the traitors and enemies of the revolution through its use of terrorist activities within the village. Thus, the support of the revolutionary movement by the peasant may be far from voluntary and it is not necessarily a vote for communism. Unfortunately, it is only after the

revolutionary structures, which constitute the revolutionary movement, have been dissolved that the peasant can begin to actively engage in voluntary and rational political participation. Therefore, a communist victory may not be an indication of popular support for the Communist Party, because of the inability of the rural peasant to oppose the Party or even to identify alternatives to communist leadership.

The strength of the communist revolutionary movement rests upon its promise of social justice, and upon its ability to educate, organize, mobilize, and lead impoverished populations. The weakness of the communist revolutionary movement is that it has been conceived upon a fraud. The tiller will not get his land. The political participant in the communist political system is manipulated, he does not participate. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and intellectual freedom cannot exist in a state that controls the sources of information, and permits only that which is favorable to the communist political system to be known. The worker cannot attain the ultimate fruit of his labor, when the economic system is bound by archaic economic concepts that restrict the productivity and creativity of the society. Even the basic needs of human dignity are denied in a state which prostitutes literature and art, destroys traditional culture, and subordinates the needs of each individual to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. In terms of the society that will be created in the event the communist revolutionary movement succeeds in the seizure of power and the destruction of the rival political system, the communist cadre is seen

not as an enlightened social architect of an egalitarian and just society; rather he appears as an opportunistic power seeker, who speculates in the hopes and dreams of poor men. The cynical and tragic insincerity of the Communist Party, however, does not reduce the communist threat to impoverished nations nor does it mitigate the need for reform in such countries.

## APPENDIX I

The following is a full translation of a captured enemy document which contains information concerning an activity report from Chau Thanh District Party Committee, SR 5, COSVN. This document was captured on 7 November 1968 in South Vietnam (XT837286; III CTZ) by 3/11th ACR.

### FULL TRANSLATION

(Page 1 of Original Text)

#### REPORTS

Month-end recapitulative report covering the period 30 September to 30 October 1968.

##### I. Enemy Situation:

a. Military activities: During the month (of October 1968), the enemy conducted continuous sweep operations in liberated areas such as Hamlets 3, 4, and 5 where a total of seven operations involving infantrymen, mechanized vehicles and heliborne troops took place. Enemy movement was constant in these areas and his activities were aimed at seeking out our (armed) forces, destroying our revolutionary movement and decimating our infrastructure cadre, with a view of preventing us from launching the 3d Phase of the (General) Offensive.

b. Political activities: The enemy intensified (his) airborne propaganda broadcasts everywhere, using demagogic appeals to induce our cadre and combatants to defect to his ranks as returnees, and resorting to deceitful arguments to the effect that the government provides assistance for the people, who (in turn) must support the government, whereas, the VC are killing and the people, and so on.

Results: The enemy killed one peasant and one 16 year old boy, captured one youth; destroyed cereals and poultry; burned one house and robbed clothes. The total damage was estimated at VN \$30,000. Besides, two cadre defected to the enemy as returnees.

##### II. Friendly Situation:

a. Propaganda activities: Because of enemy continuous sweep operations, we were unable to hold large scale and widespread popular meetings. Our propaganda activities were conducted among small groups or isolated individuals. Substance of our propaganda included:

- Disseminating news of victories such as those won in Tay Ninh

and Binh (Binh Duong) and our political success on the international scene in connection with the Paris talks.

- Stabilizing the (people's) mind; analyzing our present struggle and President Ho's teaching that "despite" many hardships this struggle will finally end in our complete victory.

- Motivating the (people) to increase production and feed the troops. As a result, the majority of the population were confident in our final victory. However, in the face of fierce enemy sweep operations in their villages and districts, a small number of people lost confidence and showed a wavering attitude.

(Page 2 of Original Text)

As for the cadre and combatants, following enemy sweep operations, they wavered (in their determination to fight), dared not widen their activities and shrank from duty. A number of them resigned or turned themselves to the enemy as returnees.

However, through a recently conducted reorientation course, Party members, cadre and combatants had a clearer understanding of our successes and the enemy's weaknesses and have thereby become more active in carrying out their tasks and overcoming the (aforesaid) deficiencies.

b. State of mind of the masses: The majority of the masses at present are rather more interested in peace and are following up (peace progress) through the press of the Capitol (of Saigon). This fact has considerably harmful effects (on the masses) because its in agreement with the (enemy's) schemes of misleading the masses and appeasing the hatred of our compatriots to cause them to adopt a wait and see attitude and weaken their determination to make contributions of manpower and material resources to the revolution.

This state of mind considered prevailing among the masses, creates many difficulties to us in the field of ideological indoctrination which cannot be overcome in the present situation because our cadre are more inclined to shirk than to fulfill their duties.

This is but a preliminary report as we do not have the situation well in hand. I beg you to understand the situation. Because of the enemy obstruction of (roads) the mail service cannot operate regularly. Besides, there are no more specialized cadre in the (commo-liaison) network on Road #13, and since the withdrawal of Sister Ba Sang we had only one hamlet cadre left. But the latter has already joined the enemy as returnee.

It is requested that a new report form be sent to us for the previous one has been seized by the enemy.

30 October 1968

For the Propaganda and Training

Section of A.65

/s/ Hai Can

END OF TRANSLATION

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