

## **December 1980**

# **Trần Đông, 'Key Issues in the Struggle against Chinese Spies and American Spies and in the Struggle against the Enemy's Ideological Attacks' [Excerpts]**

### **Citation:**

"Trần Đông, 'Key Issues in the Struggle against Chinese Spies and American Spies and in the Struggle against the Enemy's Ideological Attacks' [Excerpts]", December 1980, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Những Vấn Đề Trọng Yếu Trong Công Tác Đấu Tranh Chống Gián điệp Trung Quốc, Gián điệp Mỹ và Chống Địch Phá Hoại Tư Tưởng [Key Issues in the Struggle Against Chinese Spies and American Spies and in the Struggle Against the Enemy's Ideological Attacks] (People's Public Security Forces Document, Printed by the People's Security University, Hanoi, 12 September 1981), 1-38. Contributed and translated by Merle Pribbenow. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/291426>

### **Summary:**

In a speech, Deputy Minister of Interior Tran Dong makes it clear that the Ministry of the Interior's goal is to develop a massive network of secret informants throughout Vietnam's civilian population, a network that would be every bit as extensive and intrusive as was the informant network established inside East Germany by the Stasi, or the East German Ministry for State Security.

### **Original Language:**

Vietnamese

### **Contents:**

Original Scan  
Translation - English

[Page 1]

**Key Issues in the Struggle against Chinese Spies and American Spies and in the Struggle against the Enemy's Ideological Attacks**

*(Speech given by Deputy Minister Trần Đông [Tran Dong] at the 12 to 15 December 1980 Conference of Leading Cadres from Throughout Our Service on Three Specialized Subjects)*

*Comrades!*

At the direction of the Cadre Affairs Committee and the Minister, I would like to present to you a number of the key issues on the three specialized subjects of this conference - the struggle against Chinese spies, the struggle against American spies, and the struggle against enemy efforts to sabotage our ideology.

I-First of all, I would like to describe to you how the Cadre Affairs Committee and our Minister view these three subjects.

1)-We will be discussing these three specialized subjects in order to study, digest, apply, and begin to implement Politburo Resolution 31, dated 2 December 1980, on protecting political security and maintaining law and order in the new situation. Yesterday you all heard the Minister provide you with a full and comprehensive description of this resolution.

The resolution stated clearly that "The American imperialists are the enemy of the Vietnamese revolution and of the world revolution, and the Chinese expansionists are the direct, most dangerous enemy of the Vietnamese revolution and the dangerous enemy of the world revolution."

[Page 2]

The Politburo resolution stresses that the sharp spearpoint of our struggle must be aimed first of all at the Chinese and American spies, who are the most dangerous targets, but that the most direct danger is that presented by the Chinese spies. Of all the different types of spies, the most dangerous are the enemy's penetration agents [moles], spies within our own ranks. All of the different types of enemy spies conduct attacks against our ideology, but spies are not the only ones that attack our ideology. All enemies, including the imperialists, the international reactionaries, and all types of reactionaries conduct activities that attack our ideology. ...

[Page 3]

...Politburo Resolution 31 said, "The collusion between imperialism and the Beijing expansionists aimed at opposing the Soviet Union and the socialist countries and at opposing the world revolutionary and peace movement is a new danger to all of mankind today." ...

[Page 4]

[...]

2) -The senior leadership of the Ministry has directed the Counter-Espionage Department [the Department for combatting spies] to collect reports and documents and to request the thoughts of leaders of [City] Public Security Bureaus and [Province] Public Security Offices and of the senior officers of almost 30 province and city political security offices and of the leaders of the Ministry's relevant Bureaus and Departments in order to prepare these three special resolutions. Minister Tran Quoc Hoan also reviewed the drafts and contributed ideas for the preparation of these three resolutions. ...

[Page 5]

...All of the texts of the documents [resolutions] for this conference have already been given to all of you. You comrades will study and discuss these documents during the conference and will contribute your ideas on amending, strengthening, and supplementing these documents.

During the preparation of these documents we relied on the conclusions and assessments made by our Politburo and our Central Committee about China and the United States, on documents that our Service captured from the enemy, on information acquired from the interrogation of Chinese and American spies, etc. This

information is probably rather reliable. Lastly, we also used information acquired from the Security agencies of the socialist countries, and especially from Soviet Security [the KGB]. We did not use information that we did not think was totally accurate or that would require additional research to be able to confirm. However, the information that was included in these documents may still contain things that need amending or correction. For example, we had believed that the Liaison Ministry [Bộ Liên Lạc] of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee was China's strategic intelligence agency, but we have just received a document from the Mongolian Ministry of Security that says that the Research Institute [Viện Nghiên Cứu], which is directly subordinate to the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, is China's strategic intelligence agency. ...

[Page 6]

...Now I will describe to you a number of the main features of the plans and actions of the Beijing reactionaries and the American imperialists toward our country.

We have discussed the plans and actions of the spies and the overall plans and actions of the American imperialists and the Beijing expansionists. If we want to find out what the spies plan to do, we must first determine what are the strategic plans and intentions of the Beijing reactionaries and the American imperialists, because all of the plans and actions of the spies must support the strategic plans of their leaders. If we do not clearly analyze this point, we will no be able to address this issue in a scientific manner.

1) -As you already know, our Party Central Committee has concluded that the basic, long-term goal of the reactionary expansionists in Beijing is to weaken and annex [take over] our country and to conquer our people. In order to accomplish this goal, according to information we have collected they have implemented a three-step plan against Vietnam:

Step 1: Focus on slandering us in order to destroy Vietnam's reputation.

Step 2: Cut aid and withdraw specialists [advisors] in order to weaken Vietnam

Step 3: Once Vietnam has been weakened politically and economically, if Vietnam still refuses to accept being conquered by China, then China would invade Vietnam directly.

This is what a Chinese spy confessed to us, and that is exactly what has happened.

The Politburo has concluded that at present there is little chance that China will conduct a large-scale war of invasion against us, because two years after suffering defeats along our southwestern border and along our northern border China's economy and its national military capabilities have not become very much stronger.

[Page 7]

China's invasion of our country and their brutal actions in Cambodia have exposed their counter-revolutionary character, revealing that they are the biggest traitors of the current era. They wrap themselves in the cape of socialism in order to oppose socialism, they pretend to be Marxist-Leninists in order to oppose Marxism-Leninism, and the progressive people of the world and the people of China denounce and detest them. China is currently in a period of ferocious internal conflict. Deng Xiaoping currently has gained the upper hand, but China's history is full of surprises and things are not so simple. China has also realized that during the past two years our national defenses have grown much stronger. We have built a new battle posture in the three nations of Indochina, a posture that is stronger than ever. The situation in Cambodia is slowly stabilizing and Laos has been strengthened to a new level. It would be very dangerous to them should they be so rash as to take the risk of starting a war.

However, we still must be vigilant and guard against any possible rash, adventurist action on their part. All imperialists and reactionaries are stupid, and the Beijing reactionaries are stupider, rasher, and more adventurist than the rest.

What is the situation today? The Politburo has concluded that our enemies are carrying out an economic war against us, an espionage war against us, and a psychological war against us. In reality, this is all one very evil, dangerous, all-out war that is being waged against our country - attacking us politically, economically, militarily, diplomatically, culturally, and personally. The traitor Hoang Van Hoan<sup>[1]</sup> and the reactionary Deng Xiaoping discussed their plan as follows:

-If we just use military force, no matter how big an army we use, no matter how big an invasion we mount, securing victory will not be easy, because the Vietnamese people are stalwart. Every time their Fatherland is invaded, the people of the entire nation rises up to fight the aggressors. In light of their strength and their will, no matter how much brutal force we might use, winning victory would still be very difficult.

[Page 8]

But if we (meaning China) carry out a multi-faceted war and strike powerful blows against their psyche (ideology) and against their stomachs (economic), then Vietnam will surely be defeated (one of their documents says, "if we enter a house through a number of windows, the home owner will be confused and won't know what to do").

Analyzing this issue during the Politburo meeting, our Party's General Secretary [Le Duan] said:

-Even though we are now having problems, if China launches a big war against us, our people will certainly unite together, all as one people, behind our Party Central Committee and our Government. We will put aside all of our problems and forget all personal disagreements in order to unite to fight the Chinese aggressors. Knowing this, while they continue to make plans and preparations to launch a large-scale war, they are exploiting our problems, our mistakes and shortcomings, and the growing negative tendencies in our society to sabotage us, to weaken us, so that when the time is right they can launch a war of aggression [invasion] against us. This is a truly evil, poisonous scheme. Many of our people do not understand their scheme, and so we have the problem that when we have problems and confront negative factors, we frequently aim our attacks at the Party rather than at the Chinese reactionaries and the American imperialists. That is a dangerous mistake.

2) - Even after being defeated in Vietnam, the American imperialists still plan to "return to Vietnam" by using an amended "postwar plan".

After the general offensive and uprisings conducted by the soldiers and civilians of South Vietnam during the 1968 Tet Offensive, the American imperialists began to plan for the possibility that the U.S. would lose and that the war would end. From that very moment they drafted a "postwar plan" with the goal of continuing to maintain two Vietnam's (North Vietnam and South Vietnam), a situation in which the American army would basically withdraw from South Vietnam to prepare for the formation of a pro-American government in South Vietnam that follows reactionary, demagogic economic policies.

[Page 9]

However, on the battlefield the U.S. continued to suffer painful defeats and were forced to sign the Paris Agreement. After 1973, the U.S. revised their "postwar plan" with the intent of setting up a three-sided government in South Vietnam (which would include one side that was American and one that was pro-American). However, our soldiers and civilians quickly totally liberated South Vietnam and the Saigon puppet government totally collapsed, which upset the U.S.'s "postwar plan". After 30 April 1975, the U.S. was forced to revise their "postwar plan" for a third time as part of a plan to collude with China, Japan, and a number of other puppet countries to carry out operations to oppose our country's revolution in the hope of returning to Vietnam by making vigorous use of the tactics of surrounding and blockading us economically, by inciting our people to flee the country, by falsely accusing us of violating human rights, and by inciting violent unrest. They are feverishly carrying out espionage warfare and psychological warfare in an effort to cause counter-revolutionary "peaceful evolution" in Vietnam.

3)-How did the collusion between China and the U.S. come about?

In 1971 China invited Kissinger, President Nixon's special advisor, to come to Beijing to discuss a plan to coordinate their activities in the Indochina area. After the Kissinger opening gambit, the U.S. and China agreed on something they called the "Plan to Balkanize the Indochina Peninsula". These are the primary elements of that plan:

-Utilize every means possible to infiltrate the Vietnamese, Lao, Cambodian Communist Parties and the revolutionary mass organizations of the [Communist]

parties in this region;

-Directly or indirectly nourish and incite border disputes, ethnic divisions, etc. to create constant disorder and warfare between the countries of Indochina.

[Page 10]

-Feverishly carry out all kinds of "economic warfare" tricks and tactics to prevent Vietnam from becoming an economic powerhouse in Southeast Asia.

During the course of the implementation of this plan, the plan was divided into two phases:

-The first phase consists of "temporary" or "short-term" actions and scheme aimed at causing disorder and disruptions to attack all sectors of Vietnam's revolution.

-The second phase consists of carrying out all types of actions, with the primary focus being on preventing Vietnam from becoming an economically powerful country.

The basic requirement is that the plan must reflect a number of parallel interests that the U.S. and China have in the Indochina region.

They are colluding with each other in exploiting the Thai reactionaries and the country of Thailand to assemble exiled reactionaries from the three countries of Indochina to conduct operations to oppose and attack the Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodian revolutions.

III.-The operational methods of the different types of spies depend on the locations, the strategic plans, the actual capabilities, and the individual strengths and proclivities of the spies of each country, and on the situation in the target location. As a result, they are using different methods and are taking different types of action.

Their usual methods are to:

-Conduct efforts to collect strategic and tactical intelligence

-Conduct operations to sabotage their target politically, economically, ideologically, militarily, etc.

-Conduct operations aimed at inciting unrest, violence, and coups.

To carry out these operations, they use the following different methods: hiding themselves to operate undercover in society or within our own ranks (penetration agents); concealing themselves inside permanent foreign missions working in Vietnam or as members of visiting groups; infiltrating personnel from abroad to contact and recruit agents inside our country (including recruiting our people abroad and then sending them back into our country, using spy-commandos, psychological warfare, etc). In order to conduct operations, they must have communications channels, because without communications they cannot obtain intelligence.

[Page 11]

This means that being able to intercept their communications will be decisive.

1) -Chinese spies have a long history of operating inside our country.

China exploited the friendship between the people's of the two countries, clan and ethnic connections, and especially connections between members of ethnic minority groups living along the border between our two countries (the more than one million Chinese who had lived in Vietnam for many generations). Their primary tactic was to "play the card" of combatting revisionism to spread Maoist propaganda and opposition to our Party in order to persuade dissatisfied opportunists to become their lackeys; using the pretense of wanting to help the Vietnamese revolution in order to send spies to worm their way into our ranks; pretending to be fleeing from their opponents in the Cultural Revolution or fleeing from repression by the Chinese government to seek political refugee status in Vietnam during 1966 and 1967. Of the 41 individuals who requested political refugee status, we learned that ten of these individuals were Chinese spies. They often used the cover of being oriental medical doctors traveling around to ply their trade, enabling them to gain access to anyone, even high-ranking cadres. Using these methods, China has sent spies to infiltrate into our interior and into our internal ranks. They have also recruited henchmen [agents] among our people whom they [the Chinese] had captured and who were then released in prisoner exchanges in order to secretly infiltrate our ranks.

They also exploit the fact that our two countries share ground and sea borders (ground and sea borders mean that there are also ethnic, clan, and family links) to

recruit agents and to infiltrate spies, commandos, and reconnaissance personnel into our country. ...

[Page 12]

...The reactionaries in the leadership in Beijing are very skillful and crafty in their use of the "ethnic card" to stimulate divisions between ethnic groups, in using one ethnic group to oppose other ethnic groups. The reactionaries in the Beijing leadership also have raised the "banner" of Hoang Van Hoan to assemble forces both outside and inside Vietnam in preparation for overthrowing our regime and invading our country.

One of the leading lackeys of the Chinese reactionaries has admitted:

"I think that the people of the ethnic minority groups in the Viet Bac area [of North Vietnam] will inevitably break away. Some of them will certainly flee across the border into China and will use help provided by the Zhuang Autonomous Zone in China to fight against the Vietnamese Party and the Vietnamese State and to conduct another revolution in Vietnam. As for me, I also had to rely on the Zhuang Autonomous Zone to join together with cadres and common citizens of the different ethnic minority groups in fighting to the death against the Vietnamese Party and the Vietnamese State. The Zhuang and other ethnic minority groups in the Viet Bac region must rely on one another, and this may lead to the establishment of a region or a separate country consisting of the Zhuang zone and the mountainous regions of northern Vietnam."

During working discussions with the Lao Minister of Interior, the Minister told us that "China plans to incite the ethnic minority tribes along the Lao-Thai-Chinese border to rise up to try to form an autonomous zone and to carry out actions aimed at overthrowing the Lao government."

[Page 13]

...

2) -Chinese and American spies are now exploiting a number of factors, including the immaturity, weaknesses, shortcomings, and difficulties that we are experiencing in our economy and in our living conditions to expand their operations against us.

In his report on Party Organization, Comrade Le Duc Tho<sup>[2]</sup> said,

"The enemy and bad elements are now exploiting difficulties, mistakes, shortcomings, and other negative factors in our society to incite the masses, to sow divisions within our ranks, and to criticize our leaders with the goal of weakening our Party and our State organizations. These problems have become urgent political and social problems for us and if they are not resolved properly they will have a significant negative effect on our national defense and on our internal law and order."

We can overcome the problem of our low material standard of living, but the crisis of confidence is very dangerous, because to lose [the people's] trust is to lose everything, because without trust we cannot accomplish anything.

3)-However, we have a very basic strength that our enemies cannot destroy - that strength is that we have a stalwart Marxist-Leninist Party that has vast leadership experience and a correct political policy. ...

[Page 14]

...4)-As for the enemy, the enemy has many weaknesses and many very fundamental shortcomings that he cannot overcome. We have captured and detained tens of thousands of American and puppet spies. Among them are many strategic spies. We have also arrested hundreds of Chinese spies, including many big [high-ranking] spies. These spies are living sources of intelligence who can help us to spot and identify the enemy and to fight the enemy effectively. This is a historic factor that people do not often enjoy.

[Page 15]

Previously, in North Vietnam we had to feel our way, learning slowly as we went along, but now we have the answers right there in our prisons. These individuals have tremendous knowledge about the U.S., they have worked with the Americans, they have studied in the U.S., and they worked for the CIA. We were also able to capture a tremendous quantity of secret American and puppet documents and

information. We recently have been able to uncover enemy penetration agents [moles], one of whom was Nguyen Thuc Tuan [Nguyễn Thúc Tuấn], formerly the Director of the Binh Tri Thien Province Sports and Physical Fitness Office. We learned about these spies by studying files that we captured from the enemy.<sup>[3]</sup> The files that the enemy left behind and that we captured are 92% accurate, and only 8% are false or only semi-accurate. This has also helped us to clear the names of some of our cadres and people who were unjustly accused. This massive quantity of valuable documents exists not only in our Files Department; these documents are also spread out in our local Public Security City Bureaus and Province Offices. We must pull together all of these files in order to study and fully exploit them, because if we are too slow and if we let these files deteriorate, we will suffer tremendous damage.

During the "Ethnic Chinese" problem<sup>[4]</sup>, which was incited by China, we arrested and removed [deported] tens of thousands of ethnic Chinese, including hundreds of Chinese spies, reactionaries, and lackeys, and we moved almost 100,000 ethnic Vietnamese into our northern provinces and offshore islands in order to purify these areas. This was not solely a Public Security effort, but Public Security made a very active contribution to this work. Previously Bach Long Vi Island was totally populated by ethnic Chinese, but now all of the residents of that island are soldiers in our armed forces. Cat Ba Island previously had 8,000 Chinese residents, but now we have totally cleansed the island [of ethnic Chinese]. Quang Ninh Province has cleansed many of its offshore islands. We previously had many weaknesses in the provinces along our northern border, but now we have corrected those problems. There have been some among those people who were sent in to build our economy and strengthen our national defenses [in that area] who turned around and returned back home, but I have to say that our people are very patriotic and have made tremendous sacrifices. Almost 100,000 of our [ethnic Vietnamese] people bade farewell to their homes and their villages, leaving behind newly-built home and the graves of their fathers and grandfathers, to move up to the border, where they now are fighting and sacrificing every single day. These people are very revolutionary and very stalwart!

[Page 16]

5)-At the same time that they carry out their spy wars, imperialist forces and international reactionaries are also working feverishly to sabotage our ideology ...Efforts to sabotage our ideology are an especially important part of the enemy's strategy; they are a national policy that is part of the counter-revolutionary strategy of imperialism and international reactionary forces.

Imperialism and international reactionary forces have mobilized their entire system, their entire state apparatus in the effort to destroy our ideology, and especially dangerous portions of this effort have been assigned to their espionage agencies, their intelligence agencies, their communications and propaganda organizations, and their religious and ethnic [nationalist] organizations. We should especially take note of the fact that the enemy is now plotting to utilize religious organizations and religions and to exploit religious and ethnic [nationalist] issues in its effort to break the back of Communism. One secret emissary of the "World Catholic Movement" said that today religion and nationalism are now disseminating ideas that present the most serious challenges to Communism. The recent situation in Poland is a painful example of a serious lack of vigilance against the enemy's use of religion to carry out counter-revolutionary "peaceful evolution". These enemies maintain that Communism is atheist and religion is theist [has a God]. They use religion, expand religion, and exploit religion to combat Communism, because atheism and theism cannot coexist. However, our concept is different - our position is that religious believers are just members of the working class who have a religion.

[Page 17]

They have all the qualities and characteristics of workers.

With regard to the reactionaries who are exploiting the Catholic religion, today, externally at least, in light of the revolution's power the Cardinals and Archbishops cannot openly oppose us. However, they recently sent out a series of documents - first a "Letter from the Virgin Mother" and then "the Virgin Mother has Appeared", "Five Little Families", etc. - all of these documents are aimed at opposing us. We have wrapped up and prosecuted a number of cases of armed reactionaries,

reactionaries inside of Catholic organizations. That is not the most important thing - It is more important is that we must be extremely vigilant and on guard against the efforts of the reactionaries who are exploiting the Catholic religion to "adapt to the current era" [reach accommodations with Communist governments]. Their new policy of "adapting to the current era" is in fact simply a change in their method of operations to adapt to the current situation and it is not a change in substance. It is very dangerous for anyone to have any doubts about this.

It is no accident that the reactionaries in the Vatican who exploit the Catholic religion have installed a man from Poland as the Pope. Many Poles are proud that their country has someone who is now the Pope, and they do not realize that this was an evil plot and a enemy major plan that the enemy was preparing to incite the serious political unrest that currently plagues Poland. There are people that think that the "Vietnamese Brotherhood" [Huynh Đệ Việt Nam] led by Father Nguyen Dinh Thi [Nguyễn Đình Thi] is a real thing, but what kind of "brotherhood" is it?[5] It is an organization that is violently opposed to us. They exploit their ability to go around recruiting followers and conducting actions to oppose and sabotage us. They utilize economic inducements under the guise of providing aid and assistance to send spies into Vietnam to conduct their operations in our country.

As for nationalism [ethnic efforts], they incite feelings of narrow-minded, capitalist big-country chauvinism and use it against us. We have achieved a good solution the ethnic issue in our country, but that does not mean that we do not still have problems.

[Page 18]

Our enemies work to incite divisions between ethnic groups and to utilize reactionaries within the ethnic minority groups to attack our country's revolution. All of you comrades know that the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique incites ethnic hatred of the Khmer against Vietnam and against the Cham people, and they incite the Khmer Krom ethnic minority in Cochinchina to oppose the government. In northern Vietnam, during the time that the Chinese reactionaries carried out their invasion of our country they put out statements such as "drive out the Vietnamese, annihilate the Tay, rescue the Chinese, forgive the Nhang" and "The Meo Fatherland is in China" in order to incite divisions and hatred between these different ethnic groups in order to try to weaken our fighting spirit.

Those who have narrow-minded nationalist ideologies and those who are backward [ignorant] and dissatisfied offer fertile ground for the enemy's efforts to attack our ideology. There are people who are not yet enemies but their minds have been poisoned by the enemy and they transmit this poison to others. For example, there is Nguyen Thanh Long, the former Director of the Ministry of Electricity and Coal's Electric Power Company. While we cannot conclude that he is a lackey of the Chinese or of the CIA, he cursed and slandered the Party in a systematic manner and used deeply reactionary arguments. And it is not just that he was dissatisfied - he opposed our Party and our State and he opposed both our Party's domestic and its foreign policies. Today there are many things that are working to erode our ideology and our trust [in the Party].

IV.-Under the leadership of our Party, our entire population and our entire army defeated the American imperialists and defeated the wars of aggression perpetrated by the Chinese reactionaries along our southwestern and northern borders. Naturally, we will also win glorious victories over the American and Chinese spies and we will crush the efforts by imperialism and by international reactionary forces to sabotage and destroy our country's ideology. ...

[Page 20]

...Based on all of our tremendous accomplishments, at the 30th National Public Security Conference our Party General Secretary Le Duan wrote into the pages of our Service's golden tradition book the following words:

"Vietnam's Public Security is one of the best Public Security Services in the entire world."

2) -However, we still have many shortcomings and weaknesses. We still do not have a deep understanding of the crafty plots and schemes that the American imperialists and the Chinese reactionaries are using to attack our country and we have not been

sufficiently vigilant against the enemy's efforts to sabotage our ideology and to destroy our economy.

Our understanding of the enemy is still poor and we do not have a truly complete, concrete, deep understanding of the U.S.'s current "postwar plan", of the Chinese intelligence and espionage organizations, or of the American and Chinese organizational structures and command centers that are attacking our ideology and sabotaging our economy. Thousands of American and puppet intelligence officers and spies are now in hiding and we have not yet found out where they are.

The organizational structures of our apparatus responsible for combating Chinese spies and American spies and for combating the enemy's efforts to attack our ideology are split and separated, and they have not been sufficiently strengthened and perfected. Our command and guidance efforts have not been widespread, have not been effective enough, thorough enough, sensitive enough, or sharp enough, and our efforts have been too bureaucratic.

Many of our cadres and enlisted personnel, including even leading cadres, lack sufficient fighting zeal and their sense of responsibility has been inadequate. Our efforts to combat the enemy's plans and schemes have not kept pace with the urgent requirements of the current situation and still suffer from rightist tendencies, a lack of vigilance, and conservatism, and they have been carried out too slowly. Our work of mobilizing the masses has been too weak and we have displayed many shortcomings and deficiencies in carrying out our professional tasks, especially in our reconnaissance and recruited agent efforts, in our work of interrogating Z6 and infiltrated Chinese spies and commandos, and in researching and exploiting captured enemy files.

[Page 21]

V -The Politburo resolution and Comrade Pham Hung's explanation have clearly spelled out the basic missions of the struggle to protect political security, to maintain social law and order, and the specific missions of our Public Security operations. However, in order to successfully accomplish those missions, I would like to emphasize a number of points: □-First of all I must stress the following:

Public Security operations and the Public Security Service must be placed under the absolute, direct, and across-the-board leadership of the Party. Our Party is the governing Party and has the sole, absolute right and power to lead our people's revolution. Security, national defense, and diplomatic activities are extremely important and are directly related to the fate of our Fatherland. Therefore the Party must have absolute, direct, and total across-the-board leadership. The Party's across-the-board, total leadership means its leadership of all policies and policy guidelines and its direction of the work and the training of our People's Public Security forces....

[Page 23]

...2)-The mission of protecting the Party, protecting our revolutionary government, protecting our armed forces, protecting our economy, and protecting socialist property is the mission of our entire Party and our entire population. This was spelled out in Politburo Resolution 31, which says, "Party committees and the heads of State agencies and of armed forces elements must accept total responsibility for protecting their own organizations"... "All sectors, all agencies, all state enterprises, and all responsible units must be directly responsible for protecting the economic interests and the socialist property of their respective agencies, enterprises, or units" ... "Public Security has primary responsibility for combatting spies, reactionaries, and other criminals who sabotage our economy or violate socialist property."

This resolution makes it clear that Public Security is responsible for combating spies and for combating reactionaries and other types of criminals in order to protect the Party, to protect our revolutionary government, to protect the armed forces, to protect our economy, and to protect socialist property. This means that it is wrong to say that it is Public Security's responsibility when the administration of our economy is conducted immaturely, leading to economic losses; or when an organization suffers from internal divisions, or that it is Public Security's responsibility to combat wasteful expenditures or natural disasters. We must focus on carrying out our roles and our

missions correctly and we must not get involved in everything and thereby step on the toes of other sectors, as we have done in the past. The individual Party committees are responsible for dealing with internal factionalism, the incorrect or improper use of cadres, mistakes in developing and organizing the Party, etc. Public Security is not responsible for those things, because that is not Public Security's job. However, Public Security is responsible for dealing with spies, reactionaries, and other types of criminals (including those who are Party members or who work within State agencies and organizations). From now on we must do things correctly in order to correctly carry out the role and the duties that the Party has given to our Service. Under no circumstances must we become involved in internal Party matters or in the internal affairs of other sectors, because that just causes disorder and confusion. ...

[Page 24]

...3)-This time the Politburo resolution has finally made a clear statement about Public Security's responsibility for carrying out intelligence missions. It says, "People's Public Security has the mission of carrying out good intelligence operations targeted against imperialist and capitalist countries and against international reactionary organizations, and it is responsible for strengthening its counter-espionage work to protect our agencies [offices], cadres, and students located in foreign countries and for properly administering our ethnic Vietnamese compatriots who live abroad."

[Page 25]

This means that our Public Security Service is responsible for intelligence operations across the board - political, economic, science and technology - and not just for collecting intelligence to support its counter-espionage efforts. In our country we have only two services that do intelligence work - Public Security, which is responsible for all types of intelligence, and the Army, which is responsible for military intelligence. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not an intelligence agency. Our diplomatic agency [the Foreign Ministry] collects overt information, including intelligence information, during the course of its work. We have discussed this subject with our comrades from Soviet Security [the KGB]. They tell us that in the Soviet Union the KGB is the only organization that is responsible for strategic, tactical, political, economic, and science and technology intelligence, while the army handles military intelligence.

In light of the spirit of the Politburo resolution, it is the decision of the Ministry's senior leadership to merge our intelligence operations and our counter-espionage operations abroad into a single intelligence organization. This is because it is not logical to divide foreign intelligence operations and counter-espionage operations abroad as we currently have done (with the division of responsibilities between KD1 and KE3). Naturally, we do not conduct intelligence operations targeted against fraternal socialist countries, but we can cooperate with our friends in their countries and on their soil in carrying out intelligence operations against a third country or area that is one of our primary targets [opponents].

4)-The different missions of our People's Security forces and our People's Police forces: Politburo Resolution 31 states clearly that:

"-People's Security forces have the primary responsibility for conducting intelligence operations, for conducting counter-espionage operations, and for combatting reactionaries in order to protect political security.

"-People's Police forces have the primary responsibility for combatting the different types of criminal violators in order to help maintain law and order in our society."

[Page 26]

These two forces are intimately connected and will cooperate closely in carrying out all of their different activities. ...

[Page 27]

...5)-The draft documents you have been given do not mention the requirements [goals] of the struggles to combat Chinese and American spies and to combat the enemy's efforts to sabotage and attack our ideology, so I would like to offer some suggestions for you to discuss:

One: We must ensure the total and absolute protection of the security of our leadership agencies and our key Party and State leaders at the national and local levels. Today we must pay close attention to enemies who are plotting to overthrow

us or to carry out assassinations and sabotage. They have criticized our Politburo very strongly, in a very concerted and profound manner. The fact that they dare to make those kinds of criticism means that they might dare to undertake even stronger actions. This means that the work of providing physical security and overall security is not a simple task. The Army also is responsible for providing security, so the Army and Public Security must work closely with one another to accomplish this mission.

[Page 28]

Two: We must focus our efforts on uncovering all of the Chinese and American spies who are still operating in secret, and especially the Chinese and American spies and commandos who have infiltrated our country across our borders or by sea. We have captured more than 500 Chinese spy-commandos as well as a number of American spy-commandos, but are these all of them? It will take us some time before we will know for sure. If we deploy our forces in a tightly-organized fashion and we are able to mobilize a deep, wide-ranging mass movement we will be able to catch all of them.

Three: We need to identify and closely monitor all of the activities of Chinese and American spies assigned to permanent missions and visiting delegations and groups. We must not allow them to gather intelligence information, stir up trouble, or commit acts of sabotage.

Four: We must focus on uncovering and identifying all of the leading henchmen and organizations that are carrying out actions designed to sabotage our economy or to sabotage and destroy our ideology. We must block efforts to conduct psychological warfare and efforts to flee our country. We must take aggressive action to prevent the enemy from inciting violent disorders and riots.

6)-The documents contain a substantial amount of discussion of policy guidelines, both general and concrete, so I will only mention a few points...

[Page 29]

...Our ethnic minority problem is currently a very important and pressing problem. During the war along our northern border [the Chinese invasion in February-March 1979] a number of local areas committed a number of mistakes in their implementation of the Party and the State's ethnic minority policies. At the national level and in many of our provinces we held conferences for Meo ethnic minority cadres and hard-core supporters and then held conferences for representatives of other ethnic minority groups to consolidate and strengthen ethnic solidarity within the big family made up of all Vietnamese ethnic groups so that everyone would join together to oppose the Chinese reactionary aggressors and to build socialism. All of you comrades now must correctly implement our policies for ethnic groups, do good Public Security work, and actively contribute to the effort to consolidate and strengthen our organizations in the ethnic minority areas. The enemy is now focusing on trying to incite and exploit the Meo and Dao ethnic minority groups. One local area had intended to move all members of the Dao ethnic minority down into the interior and to send ethnic Vietnamese up to live in the area along the border. We advised the leaders of that local area that they should only move elderly people, children, and pregnant women back to the interior. If we had not approached the problem in this manner and if instead we had moved all of the ethnic Dao out of the area and had moved in ethnic Vietnamese to replace them, we would have immediately had problems.

[Page 30]

The people would have thought that our Party comrades did not trust members of ethnic minority groups, and the enemy would have used this to create ethnic divisions and incite the ethnic minority people to oppose us. Recently local authorities in an area tried a number of cases in which all of the defendants were members of the Meo ethnic minority group. We had to counsel the Provincial Party Committee and we had to talk to the court to advise them that they should review these cases to decide which cases really needed to be prosecuted and which cases we should not prosecute. We suggested that perhaps they could instead send the individuals to reeducation camps, or perhaps give them reeducation in their own homes, or force them to relocate to live in other locations in the interior of our country, or perhaps do something else rather than repeatedly placing Meo people on

trial, because this would create a bad impression. Even though these individuals had broken the law, we should not try too many of them in order to avoid giving the impression that the Meo people in that area were being persecuted.

As for the ethnic Chinese, the Politburo resolution on organization discussed this issue and Comrade Le Duc Tho has given the following clear explanation:

-With regard to ethnic Chinese cadres and cadres who are part-Chinese [of mixed blood], we must follow the Party's class standards and policies and our own standards and requirements for cadres when making assignments and utilizing these cadres.

We must use our [Party's] concepts on the working class rather than employing narrow-minded capitalist ethnic concepts when dealing with ethnic Chinese cadres. With regard to those who have been good cadres, who understand and correctly carry out the Party's policies, who have been tested and who have firmly opposed the policies and ideology of the reactionaries who are in power in Beijing, the Party must give them assignments by weighing their qualifications and making efforts to use them effectively, exactly the same way that it does for all other cadres. We must not shift from rightist errors to making leftist errors. We were already on shaky ground and this would just make things worse. We must be extremely solid, utilize the correct concept [thinking], and display a high sense of responsibility. If someone is good, we must say that they are good, and if they are bad we must say that they are bad. We must protect and defend good people and we must suppress and detain bad people. Being wishy-washy and "going with the flow" is not appropriate for Public Security - it is irresponsible. I read the listings of different categories of ethnic Chinese that were sent in by a number of different areas, and virtually all of them categorized most ethnic Chinese as being "in the middle", which means that they did not have a firm understanding of the situation so they did not dare to affirm that someone was good and that someone else was bad. We still do not fully understand the vast majority of ethnic Chinese in Vietnam who have lived here for many generations, so we do not dare to affirm that they are good people.

[Page 31]

We might be able to give them additional education and training so that we could use them to proselytize the Chinese, to combat Chinese spies, or perhaps use them to conduct propaganda operations against China's ordinary citizens and Chinese soldiers. If we cannot do that, then how can we put our trust in revolutionary forces inside China. The Center's policy [the policy of the Politburo, the Central Committee] is that for those whose political thinking is vague, we should call them in, speak frankly with them, and counsel them. Perhaps we could tell them, "Your thinking is mistaken, it is contrary to our Party's thinking, so you must change. You are not permitted to spread those mistaken ideological thoughts."

With regards to those who harbor erroneous political thoughts, who have not taken a clear stance of opposing the reactionaries in Beijing, we should help them, educate them, and use them to conduct ordinary jobs. We must maintain vigilance toward them and we must remove from our Party those who harbor Chinese ideological positions but who are not actually enemies. With regard to those who are bad elements, who oppose the Party's policies, who support the expansionist invaders and who act as their lackeys, we must punish them in accordance with the law, no matter what their status is or how high-ranking position they hold, When we really know for a fact that someone is an enemy, we must detain that person and keep him or her under tight control - we must not let such a person sabotage us, attack us, or escape. ...

[Page 33]

...Today a number of units and localities have initiated Chinese spy investigative cases in which the targets are just crooks and frauds with little education or skills but whom China's spies have sent across the border to collect intelligence and to form reactionary political organizations, and who then return to China to report to their masters. We do not learn anything from them and they cause trouble in our country. We have to be on guard against the enemy spreading smokescreens to attract our attention toward these crooks and fraudsters so that they can then secretly recruit spies and form important reactionary political operations that penetrate deep into our country and into our internal ranks. With regard to the types of criminals I have

described, we need to simply detect, arrest, and deal with them quickly in order to suppress the enemy's activities and increase the revolutionary vigilance of the masses. Our focus when conducting formal investigative cases against Chinese spies must be to detect and identify the enemy's network of secret informants and agents inside our country, and especially their penetration agents operating inside our ranks; to detect and gain control of their lines of communications and mail drops [accommodation addresses]; and to skillfully induce important Chinese intelligence officers and spies to enter our territory so that we can capture them, gain control of them so that we can use them [as double agents], or imprison them. We should cautiously but boldly select a few of our own people, give them very good training, and then send them across into the enemy's territory so that they can infiltrate into the enemy's ranks. We should not simply deal with the enemy passively, reactively, or waste our time deploying our reconnaissance to surveil and investigate crooks and frauds.

One of you has asked for an explanation what is our concept [definition] of a spy, as opposed to a reactionary or a "political card" [lá bài chính trị]. Both spies and reactionaries are counter-revolutionaries, but for a long time we have said that our definition of spies is that they are counter-revolutionary organizations or agents that are in contact with and are under the command of imperialists and international reactionaries, while reactionaries are also counter-revolutionary individuals and organizations but they do not have connections with nor are they under the command of imperialists or international reactionaries.

[Page 34]

As for what this comrade called a CIA "political card", that is a type of big [major, important] spy. These distinctions are only relative [general], but they are essential for us to be able to come up with appropriate struggle policies and methods to use against them. Today spies and reactionaries, and especially spies and reactionaries who are lackeys of the Chinese, are usually interconnected and it is hard to separate them into separate categories. For example, the enemy has ordered Chinese spies to organize the reactionaries inside our country, and FULRO is an armed reactionary organization but it has connections with the Beijing reactionaries, etc. For that reason, with regard to this group we have to deal with them by using our struggle policies and measures for combatting spies and at the same time we must also employ our struggle policies and measures for combatting reactionaries. Our new organizational structure will form a people's security network extending from top to bottom which which will be responsible for combatting spies, combatting reactionaries, and for protecting political security - that is the most rational way to organize ourselves.

This time we are requiring that Public Security [Department and Bureau] Directors and Public Security Provincial Office Commanders must personally review and reorganize our spy nets. We call them "nets", so we must ensure that they really are "nets" - we have to see whether there are any tears or holes in the net so that we can direct that they be repaired and tightened up. We cannot just brag that we have built a spy net - we must look at who we have recruited, where we have recruited the spies, who recruited them. We must mark our spies on a map to see exactly where we have spies [recruited agents] planted and where our spy net is too thin so that we can rebuild it. Today we have the problem that in many cases our spies are not formally registered [into our records system], so now we must strictly ensure that we register and record all of our spies so that we can have a firm grasp of just what our spy net is comprised of and avoid being lax and careless about recruiting and using spies, which can result in exposures of secrets to the public, in reconnaissance personnel using our spies for their own private benefit, and of spies [recruited agents] exploiting our reconnaissance personnel to commit crimes. In addition to our spies and secret informants, we will also develop "honored collaborators", who may be either our own people [Vietnamese] or foreigners, who are people who trust and believe in us, who are sympathetic toward us, and who are willing to supply us with information. **Our goal is to have secret informants on every block, in every residential area, at every bus or train station, on every street, so that when anything happens in their area they will inform us.** [Emphasis added by the translator]

[Page 35]

With regard to the issue of exploiting targets, or conducting investigative interrogations, the first thing we must do is to exploit the American and puppet spies and the Chinese spies and reconnaissance personnel that we have along with the files and documents that the enemy has left behind. We will establish an Interrogation Center at the Ministry level to carry out this task. Currently six of the Chinese spies and commandos that infiltrated our country and that we have captured but still have not yet interrogated have died. Our temporary prison camps in our six northern border provinces and in our big cities must have separate detention facilities to hold and detain these special targets. The Ministry has decided that those individuals who have requested political asylum will receive three piasters worth of food rations each day while foreign spies and commandos will receive one and a half piasters worth of food rations each day. In other countries, when there is a report that someone has requested political asylum, their counter-espionage and intelligence agencies are immediately sent to investigate and question the individual to support their counter-espionage and intelligence requirements, but in our country, you comrades have not really paid sufficient attention to this issue. Our Cadre Bureau must immediately recruit Chinese speakers or reassign cadres who speak Chinese to our [new] Interrogation Center for Chinese Spies, assign additional reconnaissance personnel to exploit the Z6, and send additional personnel to exploit the files and documents. Nguyen Thuc Tuan's treason was right there in the files, but we were slow to exploit the files and so did not uncover him, and this delay allowed him to be elected to our National Assembly and to be appointed as Director of the Binh Tri Thien Province Sports and Physical Fitness Office. This year we must make great efforts because if we do not, the consequences will be very dangerous for us.

The issue of science and technology and of gradually equipping Public Security with new technology and employing science and technology in the work of the Public Security Service is a very important issue. Currently, science and technology has become a production force [economic force]. There is basic science and applied science. Previously we did not view science and technology as one of our methods - we only called it "technical reconnaissance." The Party Affairs Committee has weighed this issue and the Politburo has decided that one of Public Security's operational methods must be to attack the enemy using science and technology.

[Page 36]

Currently we have components that conduct reconnaissance [collect intelligence] using technology, units like KG2 and KG3.<sup>[6]</sup> However, there is also science and technology that is not reconnaissance [intelligence-related]. For example, traffic administration science, fire-fighting and fire-prevention science, etc. As for science and technology that directly supports our intelligence and counter-espionage operations, that science and technology work must be directly tied to our intelligence and counter-espionage organizational structure in order to ensure that our operations will be conducted quickly and with sensitivity. If we allow a situation in which we acquire enemy documents/information and report it up the chain to the deputy office chief, then the deputy department chief, and then the chief of the department, and only then transmit the information to our intelligence and/or counter-espionage organizations, by then the situation would have changed. We will work on this gradually, step by step, based on the pace of the development of our country's economy and of its science and technology, and we will coordinate our science and technology work with the Security and Interior agencies of our fraternal [socialist] countries. Some things we will be able to do more quickly because our friends will help us so that we will not have to figure some of these things out for ourselves. You should understand that our comrades in the Politburo are not criticizing us for trying to develop and expand our use of science and technology - they are only requiring that we must provide across-the-board leadership, that we must not focus too heavily on science and technology, and that we must also pay special attention to the work of mobilizing the masses and to using spies [recruited agents] in addition to employing science and technology and other professional measures - in other words, that we pay attention to both combatting the enemy and to the work of force development [training and force-building]. We are not going to abandon the use of science and technology; instead we must use science and technology well to provide practical

support to our struggles against the enemy and other types of criminals.

VI.-There are differing opinions about our assessment of the initial results of the campaign to build strong, pure People's Public Security forces in accordance with the instructions in Party Secretariat Directive 92. We will conduct a preliminary review of this issue during the 36th National Public Security Conference. ...[two pages on purifying the ranks, including the statement that more than 10,000 Public Security personnel had been expelled/transferred out of the service either because they did not meet the service's requirements or for violations of discipline].

[Page 38]

...These are a number of issues that I felt we needed to clarify to help you comrades to study our report and the draft resolutions.

*I wish you all good health.*

[1] Hoang Van Hoan was a long-time Vietnamese Politburo and Party Central Committee member who was removed from those positions in 1976 for his pro-Chinese views. In 1979, during a foreign trip, Hoan defected to China, where he vehemently denounced the Vietnamese Communist Government for its pro-Soviet stance and openly supported armed resistance aimed at overthrowing the leaders of the Vietnamese Communist Party.

[2] Le Duc Tho was a Vietnamese Communist Party Politburo member who was the head of the Party's powerful Organization Department and was the second most powerful member of the Politburo, second only to Party General Secretary Le Duan.

[3] See article titled "Exposing the Black Pawns: The Arrest of Enemy Penetration Agent Nguyen Thuc Tuan" [Vạch trần "những con cờ đen": Bắt tên nội gián Nguyễn Thúc Tuấn], People's Public Security newspaper, 28 August 2015, accessed 30 May 2022 at

<https://cand.com.vn/Tu-lieu-antg/Bai-cuoi-Bat-ten-noi-gian-Nguyen-Truc-Tuan-i362394>

/ .

[4] The "ethnic Chinese" problem refers to the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam during the years 1978-1979 because their loyalty to Vietnam was "suspect". The Vietnamese government has never publicly acknowledged that it was responsible for this "ethnic cleansing" program.

[5] Father Nguyen Dinh Thi was a Vietnamese priest who while still a seminary student in Saigon was sent to France during the early 1960s to finish his seminary studies. After being ordained as a priest in France, he organized the Catholic "Vietnamese Brotherhood" movement and was active in the anti-war movement in France throughout the 1965-1975 period. The South Vietnamese government viewed him as a Communist sympathizer.

[6] Translator's Note: KG2 and KG3 were Ministry of Public Security Departments responsible for technical support operations such as mail censorship (including checking for secret writing (invisible ink) messages and microdots, audio (electronic "bugs") and photographic surveillance, covert entry (lock-picking), etc.