

*Vietnam*

**THE VIETNAMESE WORKING CLASS  
IN THE LONG AND HARD  
WAR OF RESISTANCE**

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*Special article published by the Vietnam News  
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of the Vietnamese people's War of Resistance*

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HOANG-QUOC-VIET

Chairman of the General Confederation of Labour

ed against our ability of victory and have  
not only the people but the workers and  
the peasants who are fighting to free the  
country from the yoke of imperialism and  
to bring about the liberation of the  
people of the world.

### 1. THE WORKERS HAVE HEROICALLY FOUGHT ON THE BATTLEFRONTS

ON September 23, 1945, the French colonialists invaded Viet-Nam for the second time and attacked by surprise the city of Saigon in the South. The valiant workers in South Viet-Nam, rallied around the Saigon-Cholon Trade Union, resisted the alien aggressors and defended the city with bamboo sticks, spears and wiped out thousands of enemy troops and kept them in check in the city for over three months. The first combat units, organized by the Saigon-Cholon Trade Union equipped and supplied by themselves, indefatigably fought against the enemy under the hardest conditions and were gradually strengthened by other combat units to become afterwards regiments N° 301, 306, 307, 309 and 310 — the picked units of the Vietnamese People's Army in South Viet-Nam. When they

received the order to withdraw from Saigon, these valiant workers carried along with them thousands of tons of munitions, raw materials and implements to build up bases of resistance in the countryside. Today at the memory of this hard struggle, it cannot be forgotten that more than ten thousands of workers have heroically laid down their lives to defend the glorious city of Saigon.

The workers in the rubber plantations of South Viet-Nam also carried out a resolute struggle, knocked out hundreds of enemy troops and before withdrawing to the bases of resistance to set up arms factories, had destroyed enemy's plantations and stores.

On December 19, 1949, the nation-wide war of resistance broke out. Under the direct leadership of the party local organizations and the guidance of local trade unions, the workers' self-defence units in other towns also carried high this glorious tradition and, in close coordination with the army, struggled to defend the population, sabotage the factories, mines and communication lines under the enemy's control and to prevent the activities of enemy motorized units. The guerrilla company formed of workers in Hongay mine, North Viet-Nam, distinguished

itself by its untiring struggle and became afterwards an outstanding guerilla unit in the Red River delta.

Besides, many workers belonging to the « death voluntary » units, the « security » and « intelligence » units etc. infiltrated deep into the enemy-controlled areas to heroically carry out their tasks.

Up to the end of 1949, the workers made up as much as 35% of the Vietnamese people's regular troops.

2. THE VIETNAMESE WORKERS  
HAVE OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES AND  
HARDSHIPS TO ENSURE PRODUCTION  
AND MEET THE FRONT'S AND THE  
PEOPLE'S NEEDS.

WHILE many of their comrades were valiantly fighting on the various battlefields, the workers in the cities, braving the fire of enemy guns, carried away disjointed machines, transported raw materials and tools to the rear, built up factories to turn out arms for the army and guerrillas, and produced farm implements for the people.

Amidst downfall of bombs and shells, across abrupt mountains and dangerous torrents, the workers removed on the shoulders millions of tons of machinery, materials and tools from the cities to the countryside, from the delta to the highlands of Viet-Bac zone. The supply of food encountered many difficulties, the climate was hard and medicaments were scarce, but no



A workshop of an arms factory in the jungle.



1



2



3

With limited means, the Vietnamese workers have been able to turn out ever more efficient arms: hand-made mines (1), mortars (2), bomb-throwers (3).

hardship whatever could shake the iron will of these workers.

Emarking on production with an inadequate quantity of raw materials and tools, the Vietnamese workers organized themselves into groups, infiltrated into the French controlled cities and demolished factories to collect thousands of tons of materials and crossed again enemy's encirclements to carry these materials to the resistance bases.

In the fifth zone (South Central Vietnam), the workers dived into the sea to collect materials and machines in Japanese battleships sunk down during the Second World War. But the achievements scored by the workers were even greater than their creativeness. With the close cooperation of Vietnamese engineers and scientists, the workers prepared chemical products of prime necessity in industry such as acid, chlorate, kali etc., sought means to substitute imported goods by locally made products, such as using the Vietnamese lac to replace ebonits, making barrels and cartridges with rails and vapour-conducting tubes.

During the first four years of the war of resistance, with rudimentary implements and

scanty materials, the workers in arms factories produced six thousand tons of arms of various types ranging from rifles and hand grenades to mortars, bazookas, recoilless guns etc. Besides, local trade unions in many provinces and the General Confederation of Labour of Vietnam directly took in hands the construction and management of a number of mines, printing houses, weaving mills and the production of tools, agricultural implements, weapons, foot-wears, matches, etc... to meet the ever-growing requirements of the army and the people. These foundations have gradually become state-owned enterprises and reached in 1952 thirty six factories with over four thousand workers.

Moreover, during the process of production, the Vietnamese workers had continuously to fight the enemy in defence of their factories. Workers in one factory erected only fifteen kilometres away from an enemy post, victoriously repelled many French attacks and each time inflicted heavy casualties upon the aggressors. Since the outbreak of the war in South Viet-Nam, the enemy had many a time launched attacks in an attempt to destroy the people's bases of production in various parts of the country but 90% of these bases have been kept intact.

The enemy sought every possible means to

cut off the communication lines of the resistance side, but throughout the war, the communications and liaison workers have, under extremely hard conditions, maintained uninterrupted the arteries of communication, ensured transport between the rear and the front and proved helpful to the Central Committee of the Laodong Party and the People's Government in their tasks of leading the resistance and administrative machinery of the country.

Due to the special situation of the fifth zone battlefields (South Central Viet-Nam) the local railway has been maintained to ensure supply to the front and contribute to the stabilization of the living condition of the population. This portion of railway covered over three hundred kilometres and run across large bridges constantly bombed by French aircraft. Moreover, enemy landing troops were often rushed in to destroy the road. Yet, during eight years of resistance, thanks to the sacrifices of the railway workers in the fifth zone, this railroad as well as other important highways in the area could be kept running regularly. Over five hundred local workers were guided by the General Confederation of Labour to create the transport enterprise named TK4 which assumed the task

of supplying the Viet-Bac and the 3rd zones (North Vietnam) and the fourth zone (North Central Vietnam). More than 600 other workers were mobilized to set up the transport service, thanks to which the problem of transport for state-owned trade organization, rice stores, national bank, etc... could be timely solved.

During the eight years of the war of resistance, the Vietnamese workers participated in the repairing of nearly two thousand kilometres of highways, in the building of more than 1,000 wooden and iron bridges and of motor launch frames and ferry boats to meet the ever-increasing requirements in transport and communications. In the building, protection and repairing of roads and bridges, the Vietnamese workers have displayed a valiant spirit of creativeness and self devotion to overcome all difficulties and hardships caused by enemy bombing and shelling.

The workers in the Post and Telegraph Service have also overcome all privations, dangers, hardships in the jungles or mountainous regions and in the enemy controlled areas to guide the cadres, to transport and distribute documents, letters, newspapers, etc... and to maintain liaison between various organs from central to zonal or provincial levels.



In a blacksmith workshop.

The catchword says: "Comrade, what achievements have you recorded to welcome the next Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions?"

A weaving workshop in the IVth war zone (Central Vietnam)



### 3. THE CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS AND PATRIOTISM OF THE VIETNAMESE WORKERS HAD BEEN ENHANCED THROUGH THE PATRIOTIC EMULATION DRIVE.

**T**HANKS to the teachings of President Ho Chi Minh and the Laodong Party, and the guidance of the General Confederation of Labour, the class consciousness and the sense of being masters of the country of the Vietnamese workers have been constantly raised. As early as August 1946, i.e. prior to the outbreak of the nation-wide war of resistance, the General Confederation of Labour of Vietnam launched an emulation movement, the «working extra hours for national salvation» drive, calling on workers to rehabilitate towns, factories and communication lines destroyed during the Second World War. This appeal was warmly responded to by the

workers who contributed roughly 72 million « national salvation work hours ».

To the call of President Ho Chi Minh for a « patriotic emulation drive », the General Confederation of Labour launched on May 1st, 1948 a movement « to increase arms production » with the slogan « creating foundations for production and beating the records » set by the Ministry of National Defence. Workers in factories enthusiastically emulated one another to improve and rationalize their method of work partly mechanized their production and succeeded in setting up a number of new bases for arms production.

« The National Congress of Model Workers and Model Cadres » in 1952 selected two national labour heroes, Ngo Gia Kham and Tran Dai Nghia, who symbolized the patriotic emulation drive of manual and intellectual workers.

Following the examples of heroes, the brain workers in the Departments of Public Health, Education, Public Works and Communication, Industry and Commerce, etc.... enthusiastically emulated one another and had many initiatives in rationalizing their method of work. Intellectual workers in the Public Health Department have

succeeded in preparing, with local raw materials, the surgical anaesthetics and other medicaments such as penicillin, streptomycin, etc., thereby, partly making good the lack of drugs caused by the war.

The patriotic emulation drive has gradually spread from state-owned factories and government services to private factories and enterprises.

Since the outbreak of the war of resistance, the workers in industrial branches have recorded 45,456 initiatives, elected 12,466 model workers, among whom two labour heroes. Many selected workers have been rewarded with medals.

**4. FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE  
OF WORKERS IN THE FREE ZONES,  
WORKERS IN ENEMY HELD AREAS  
HAVE UNREMITTINGLY STRUGGLED.**

**B**y the end of 1947, the enemy plotted to reestablish their former economic bases. They expanded military operations to capture workers and induced ex-foremen to return to their work. Although the workers in French controlled areas had to work for the enemy, their patriotic spirit was by no means shattered. A number of ex-members of trade unions organized themselves and were able to reestablish liaison with the cadres. The conference of trade union cadres in Northern Viet-Nam convened in February 1948 decided to push forward the political agitation work in the enemy-controlled areas and brought it up to the level of free zones. Following

it, underground trade unions were set up to lead the workers in their sabotage activities against the enemy's economic bases and in their struggle against oppression and exploitation.

From the outset to the end of the war of resistance, the workers have altogether burnt down 104 tons of rubber, wrecked 12 enemy generators and water pumps, 10 factories and stores, set ablaze 97 motor vehicles, 8 locomotives, 64 carriages and trucks, 2 ships including a 3,000 ton boat, over 900,000 litres of petrol and a quantity of raw materials and tools worth more than 77 million Indochinese piastres. 478 political and economic strikes have been organized throughout the country, some of which lasted for 2 months as at Haiphong and Haiduong or rallied 2,000 workers as at Hongay. In some regions, the Vietnamese workers succeeded in involving Chinese and French nationals, public servants and intellectuals into their struggle, such as in the strike for wage boost of 12,000 workers and civil servants in Saigon.

Furthermore, the workers have regularly participated in distributing leaflets and stimulating the struggle of other strata of the people behind the enemy's lines.

Frightened by these activities, the enemy

resorted to an inhuman suppression of the movement. To cope with this situation, the General Confederation of Labour decided to « turn large-scale destruction work into regular sabotage ».

Since 1952, the enemy suffered heavier military defeats. For this reason, they stepped up their plot of « using the Vietnamese to fight the Vietnamese and maintaining war with war ». They brought in new machines to raise the output and at the same time reduced or cut down the workers salaries, dismissed the workers and recruited women and children, compelled the unemployed to serve as slave labourers in military works. On the other hand, the enemy intensified repressive measures, erected new jails, tortured workmen even in factories, increased espionage activities and trumped upon « labour legislation » and « trade union freedom ».

But the workers' struggle against forcible conscription of slave labourers and puppet troops has laid bare the false « trade unions » and « labour legislation ». Moreover, strikes for the defence of daily interests broke out in various enemy held regions.

In the hard struggle in French controlled cities, many cadres and workers have heroically sacrificed their lives. During the first four years

of the war of resistance, 71 cadres and 600 members of the rubber workers trade union in South Viet-Nam were massacred by the colonialist aggressors while 300 other cadres and workers were caught and thrown in gaol.

The successful Geneva Conference has led to the conclusion of armistice agreements. Nevertheless, the pro-American French colonialist elements, in obedience to their American masters, have been endeavouring to wreck the agreements. The General Confederation of Labour of Viet-Nam have, in time, led the workers in their struggle to prevent the shifting of machines and implements of public services to Southern Viet-Nam by the Ngo Dinh Diem's clique, and the forcible evacuation and unjustified dismissal of workers. Scores of strikes have been recorded in succession.

The result was that in most cases, the workers carried the day and could retain tens of thousands of tons of machinery, about ten locomotives, many means of transport, a lot of raw materials and other implements. Together with the victories scored in resistance days, this new struggle has contributed to the success of the transfer of the towns and cities by the opposite side, to the stabilization of the people's

living conditions and to the restoration of production in urban areas. In those circumstances, the Vietnamese workers have always been manifesting the valiant spirit and vanguard role of the working class.

Thanks to the clear-sighted leadership of President Ho Chi Minh and the Lao-dong Party of Viet-Nam, the Vietnamese working class has been steeled and tempered and has come of age. In nearly nine years of resistance, they have shown that they deserve to be looked upon as the vanguard class of the people.

But the American imperialists and their followers are now endeavouring to torpedo peace in Indochina and attempting to divide Viet-Nam and sow discord among the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese workers who are closely united around the General Confederation of Labour of Viet-Nam pledge to develop the victories scored during the war of resistance and together with the rest of the people, to struggle in order to resolutely carry through the present tasks set by the Laodong Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

