

**HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

**TRAN VAN DU**

**THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V LEADING THE  
RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE SOUTH  
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (1949-1961)**

**Field of study: History of the Communist Party of Vietnam**

**Code : 922 90 15**

**DISSERTATION SUMMARY**

**HA NOI - 2026**

**THE DISSERTATION WAS COMPLETED AT  
HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

Academic Supervisors: **Assoc. Prof., PhD Tran Trong Tho**

**PhD Luong Viet Sang**

Reviewer 1: .....

Reviewer 2: .....

Reviewer 3: .....

The dissertation will be defended before the Academy – level Dissertation Defense Committee convened at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics.

At.....hours.....minutes, on .....day.....month.....year 2026.

The dissertaion is available for reference at:

The Library of the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics and  
the National Library of Vietnam

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The urgency of the Dissertation

During the 30-year period of the Vietnamese people's resistance wars against French colonialism and U.S. imperialism (1945–1975), the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces (Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, and Binh Thuan) and the Central Highlands (Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Dak Lak, Lam Vien, and Dong Nai Thuong) constituted an area of great strategic importance to the revolutionary movement in the South Central region and throughout the country. This was a mountainous and highland region with rugged terrain and a diverse population and ethnic composition, it was a land with a strong tradition of patriotism and resilient revolutionary struggle. It served simultaneously as a fierce battlefield and a local rear area; as both temporarily occupied areas and revolutionary base areas where the resistance leadership were based. With its terrain and geographical location at the center of the Indochinese Peninsula, strategically positioned between the North and the South, controlled the East–West transportation routes, connected the coastal plains with the Central Highlands, and bordered Lower Laos, Cambodia. The Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands therefore held strategic importance for the resistance movement in Interzone V, and for the Vietnamese people's struggle to safeguard national independence and achieve national reunification. At the same time, it played an important role in the resistance against the common enemy waged by the peoples of the three Indochinese countries.

Deeply aware of the strategic importance of the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands, from the outset of the resistance war against French colonial aggression, as well as during the subsequent resistance war against the United States for national salvation, the Communist Party of Vietnam consistently attached importance to leading efforts to promote the strategic position and potential of this area in order to serve the struggle for national liberation and reunification and to fulfill its international obligations toward Laos and Cambodia. The Party's leadership was further strengthened when the Party Central Committee decided to establish the Party Committee of Interzone V in 1949. Under the leadership and direction of the Party Central Committee and President Ho Chi Minh, from its establishment until the completion of its mission in 1961, the Party Committee of Interzone V focused on leading efforts to build and promote the role of the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands. Under the leadership of the Party Committee, the potential and strengths of the resistance movement in

the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands were brought into full play in military operations and attacks against the enemy, as well as in building local rear areas (during the resistance war against French colonialism); building and consolidating revolutionary bases; building and protecting revolutionary forces and agencies leading the resistance; and combating the enemy's pacification policies (during the early years of the resistance war against the United States for national salvation), thereby contributing to the victories of the revolutionary movement in Interzone V and throughout the country.

Historical practice demonstrates that the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961 was rich and dynamic, demonstrating its capacity to creatively apply the Party's revolutionary line to the specific conditions of a strategic, complex, and highly distinctive area and leaving valuable lessons that can be applied to the formulation of policies and the organization of efforts to harness the potential and strengths of this area in the current context.

Thus far, a number of research works have addressed the Party's leadership over the resistance movements against French colonialism and U.S. imperialism in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands. However, research on this issue remains fragmented, focusing primarily on individual localities or separate periods; no in-depth study has been conducted from the perspective of the scientific discipline of the History of the Communist Party on the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961. Therefore, the historical reflection of the leadership role of the Party Committee of Interzone V, and the contributions of Party organizations at various levels and the people in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands, remains neither comprehensive nor sufficiently in-depth. Moreover, no study has yet drawn lessons and experiences from the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961 that could be applied in the present context.

Therefore, studying the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961 in order to clarify the policies and direction of the Party Committee of Interzone V toward the revolutionary movement in the Western areas of the

South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands; thereby drawing lessons that can be applied in practice and providing a scientific basis for formulating policies and organizing their implementation in the current cause of national construction and defense, which is necessary and of profound theoretical and practical significance.

In view of its scientific significance and urgency, the doctoral candidate has chosen the topic entitled *“The Party Committee of Interzone V Leading the Resistance Movement in the Western Areas of the South Central Provinces and the Central Highlands (1949–1961)”* as the subject of the doctoral dissertation in the field of History of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

## **2. Purpose and Tasks of the Dissertation**

### **2.1. Purpose**

The dissertation aims to clarify the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961, and to draw lessons that can be applied to leading and promoting the potential and strengths of the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands in the current context.

### **2.2. Tasks**

- To review the existing research related to the topic of the dissertation.
- To analyze the factors affecting the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961.
- To reconstruct and interpret the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961.
- To assess and evaluate the strengths and limitations, identify their causes, and draw several lessons from the practical experience of the Party Committee of Interzone V in leading the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands (1949–1961), which can be applied to the country’s renewal process, the promotion of industrialization and modernization, and international integration in the current context.

## **3. Research Subject and Scope**

### **3.1. Research Subject**

The research subject of the dissertation is the policies and leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V in directing the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961.

### **3.2. Research Scope**

*- In terms of research content:*

The substantive dimensions of the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961 can be approached and analyzed from various perspectives. This dissertation primarily approaches the subject from the perspective of *the leadership content* of the Party Committee of Interzone V; at the same time, it combines an approach based on the leadership process and leadership methods of the Party Committee of Interzone V to the extent necessary in order to clarify the formulation of policies and the direction of the implementation of the political tasks set forth by the Party Committee of Interzone V for this area.

Accordingly, the scope of the dissertation focuses on examining the policies and leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V with regard to the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands, from two aspects: *Building and safeguarding the material and organizational foundations of the resistance, and promoting the role of the resistance movement in the strategic area for Interzone V and the entire country.*

*-In terms of research area:*

The dissertation does not seek to examine the entire range of leadership activities of the Party Committee of Interzone V across all mountainous areas in the western parts of the provinces falling within its leadership jurisdiction over the periods, but rather focuses on the districts and communes in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces (comprising: Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, and Binh Thuan, and the Central Highlands provinces, namely Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Dak Lak, Lam Vien, and Dong Nai Thuong).

*- In terms of research period:*

From 1949 (when the Party Committee of Interzone V was established) to 1961 (when the Party Committee of Interzone V completed its assigned mission). In the course of the research, the dissertation extends the temporal framework to periods before 1949 and after 1961, where necessary, to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the issues addressed in the dissertation

## **4. Theoretical Foundations, Research Methods, and Sources**

### **4.1. Theoretical Foundations**

The research is based on the theoretical foundations of Marxism–Leninism and Ho Chi Minh’s thought on revolutionary warfare, force building, revolutionary bases, the building and consolidation of Party organizations, government institutions, and revolutionary bases, and the mobilization of the masses.

### **4.2. Research Methods**

- The dissertation uses a combination of *the historical method and the logical method*: These are the two principal methods employed throughout the research process. The historical method is used to objectively reconstruct the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961, following a chronological sequence and in close connection with the specific historical context of each period. The logical method is employed to analyze and synthesize the nature, characteristics, and leadership role of the Party Committee of Interzone V; thereby drawing observations, assessments, and historical lessons.

- In addition to the two principal methods, the dissertation also combines the use of other methods: *Analysis and synthesis methods; statistical and comparative methods; source criticism method; and the application of an interdisciplinary approach drawing on political science, military science, and sociology ...*to clarify the impacts of natural conditions, population, strategic locations, and the political and socio-economic context on the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement.

Through the combination of the above research methods, the dissertation aims to objectively and comprehensively reconstruct the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961, and to draw lessons of theoretical and practical significance.

### **4.3. Sources**

- Party documents relating to the Party Committee of Interzone V, as well as the Party’s leadership and direction concerning the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961, published in the Complete Collection of Party Documents.

- Resolutions and Directives of the Party Committee of Interzone V; reports and documents of the Administrative Resistance Committee of South Central Vietnam from the final years of

the resistance war against French colonialism and the early period of the resistance war against the United States for national salvation, archived at the Archives Department of the Office of the Party Central Committee; National Archives Center III; the Institute of Party History; the Institute of Military History and Defense Strategy of Vietnam; the archival and documentary collection of Military Region V; and the archival offices of the provincial Party Committees in the provinces formerly within the South Central and Central Highlands regions.

- Published scholarly works related to the dissertation topic (books, journal articles, and conference proceedings by Vietnamese and foreign authors,... particularly works on the history of the Party Committee of Military Region V; the histories of the Party Committees of Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Dak Lak, and Lam Dong provinces). Some published or unpublished memoirs of historical witnesses related to the dissertation topic.

## **5. New Contributions of the Dissertation**

### ***5.1. Contributions in terms of sources***

- Collecting, compiling, and systematizing historical sources related to the leadership and direction of the Party Committee of Interzone V with regard to the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961.

- Providing additional new sources, contributing to the enrichment of sources for research on Party history and the history of the resistance in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands

### ***5.2. Contributions in terms of content***

#### ***- Scientific contributions***

- + The dissertation is the first in-depth and systematic study of the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961; clarifying the proactiveness and creativity of the Party Committee of Interzone, Party Committees at various levels, and the people of different ethnic communities in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands in applying the Party's revolutionary warfare line to the practical circumstances of the local resistance movement; contributing to further elucidating the characteristics and role of Interzone V within the overall context of the resistance wars against French colonialism and U.S. imperialism.

#### ***- Practical contributions***

+ The dissertation draws out and provides lessons from the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V in flexibly applying various forms of struggle, building revolutionary bases, promoting the strength of national great unity, and combining local forces with external support...in order to organize and promote the role of the resistance movement in the region. These lessons provide valuable references for leadership and direction in socio-economic development, the consolidation of national defense and security, and the building of the political system in the South Central coastal and Central Highlands regions today.

+ The scientific findings of the dissertation contribute to promoting education in revolutionary traditions and enhancing historical awareness among cadres, Party members, and the people.

## **6. Theoretical and practical significance of the dissertation**

### ***6.1. Theoretical significance***

The dissertation contributes to the development of theoretical understanding of the Party's people's war strategy; it also contributes to the development of theoretical perspectives on organizing revolutionary movements, ethnic affairs, and mass mobilization, and on harnessing the potential and strengths of an interregional area with strategic importance and distinctive characteristics in terms of natural conditions, territory, and population.

### ***6.2. Practical significance***

The dissertation provides lessons drawn from experience in leadership and direction of the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands, which can be applied in the process of national construction and defense in the present context.

It also provides scientific grounds that can serve as references for and be applied to the formulation of policies on socio-economic development, national defense, and security in the Central Highlands and South Central coastal regions in the new context. It also serves as a reference document for research and teaching on Party history, local history, and educating cadres, Party members, and the younger generation about revolutionary traditions today.

## **7. Structure of the dissertation**

In addition to the Introduction, Conclusion, List of the Author's Published Works Related to the Dissertation Topic, References, and Appendices, the dissertation consists of four chapters and eight sections.

## *Chapter 1*

### **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC**

#### **1.1. RESEARCH RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC**

##### **1.1.1. Research Works on the Party's Leadership Role and the Nationwide Resistance Movement that refer to the Party Committee of Interzone V**

Thus far, numerous general studies on the history of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the history of the Vietnamese resistance wars, and revolutionary warfare have addressed various issues related to the dissertation topic. Notable among them are the volumes of *the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam*, *the History of the Southern Party Committee and the Central Office for South Vietnam*, studies summarizing the wars conducted by the Steering Committee for War Summaries under the Politburo, as well as numerous studies on people's war, revolutionary bases, Party building work, organizational work, and the art of warfare.

The above-mentioned studies have clarified the historical context, the Party's leadership line, the characteristics of people's war, the role of revolutionary bases and local rear bases, and the building of political forces, armed forces, and the Party organizational system during the two resistance wars. Many of these studies also refer to the position, role of Interzone V and the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands within the broader context of the nation's resistance wars.

Some studies by foreign authors on the "Vietnam War" and the "Indochina War" have reflected historical events, provided assessments of the conditions and developments on the battlefields, the fighting capacity of the Vietnamese military and people. The works of foreign scholars provide perspectives on the historical context, information about the schemes of French colonialists, U.S. imperialists, and their collaborators to suppress the resistance movement and control the population. At the same time, they reveal the fear and powerlessness of the invading forces before the Vietnamese people's fighting strength, including that of the people in the South Central coastal and Central Highlands regions, in the struggle for national liberation.

However, due to the limitations of their scope and research subjects, the above-mentioned studies do not provide an in-depth and comprehensive account of the system of revolutionary armed forces in South Vietnam; these works have not fully and specifically assessed the characteristics, role, and innovative features of the resistance movement in the region under the direction of the Interzone Party Committee V. Nevertheless, the author of the dissertation

considers these studies an important source of materials for comparison, cross-checking, and reference in conducting the present research.

### **1.1.2. Studies on the Party Committee of Interzone V and the Resistance Movement in the Western Areas of the South Central Provinces and the Central Highlands**

This group of studies is relatively diverse. Notable works include *The South Central Region in the Resistance War (1945–1975)*, *Military Region 5 – 30 Years of the War of Liberation, Volumes I and II*, and *History of Military Region 6 (South Central Coastal Region – Southern Central Highlands) Resistance War against the United States (1954–1975)*. These works provide a relatively comprehensive account of the formation and development of the Interzone V battlefield; and refer to the leadership and direction of the Interzone V Party Committee and Party committees at various levels with regard to the resistance movement in the region.

In addition, works such as *Military Region 5 – Victories and Lessons from the Resistance War against the United States*, *Some Experiences in Directing Local People's War in Military Region 5 during the Resistance War against the United States for National Salvation (1954–1975)*, together with a number of thematic studies reviewing the war in Military Region 5 have clarified the characteristics of the battlefield, the art of directing local people's war, the establishment of revolutionary bases, the combination of political struggle and armed struggle, and the experiences of leading the resistance in the region.

Articles by Tran Quoc Long, Nguyen Van Nhat, Tran Huu Dinh, and other authors published in specialized journals have provided in-depth analyses of specific issues, including the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V during the period from 1954 to 1960, the Trà Bồng Uprising and the Western area of Quang Ngai, and the formation of mountainous revolutionary bases in Interzone V during the resistance war against the United States for national salvation. These studies have contributed to clarifying the proactive and creative role of Party committees and local populations in building forces, developing revolutionary bases, and advancing the revolutionary struggle movement.

Many provinces and cities within the territory of Interzone V have compiled histories of their Party committees, histories of the resistance wars, and histories of local traditions. In addition, several doctoral dissertations, including *The Party's Leadership of the Uprisings in the Western Areas of the Lowland Provinces of Interzone V (1959–1960)* by Tran Quoc Long, *The Free Zone of Interzone V during the Resistance War against French Colonialism (1945–1954)* by Le Van Dat, *Party-Building Work of the Party Committee of Interzone V from 1949 to 1961* and a number of related dissertations have provided valuable research findings on the

revolutionary movement, force building, Party building, and the establishment of revolutionary bases in Interzone V.

In general, the aforementioned works have provided important source materials and valuable research findings, which constitute a basis for this dissertation to build upon. However, most of these studies have focused primarily on individual localities, specific fields, or particular periods; no study has systematically and comprehensively examined the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands during the period from 1949 to 1961 from the perspective of the scientific study of the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

## **1.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE REVIEWED SCHOLARLY WORKS AND THE ISSUES FOCUSED ON IN THIS DISSERTATION**

### **1.2.1. Overview of the Research Findings of Studies Related to the Dissertation**

***In terms of the research content:*** The studies have reflected the characteristics, achievements, and impact of the resistance movement on the revolutionary struggle throughout the country, while initially addressing the leadership and direction of the Party Committee of Interzone V and drawing several historical lessons. However, from the perspective of the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, no study has independently, comprehensively, and systematically examined the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961.

***In terms of research methodology:*** The relevant research works cover various disciplines, but are all grounded in the methodological foundations of Marxism–Leninism and other research methods, including specialized methods in the historical sciences, which comprise the historical method, the logical method, periodization and several methods commonly used in social science research... The reviewed research works, particularly scholarly works in the fields of history and the History of Party History, provide important references for this dissertation in terms of applying historical and logical methods, source criticism, and the cross-checking of original documents and directives against historical events...thereby clarifying and reconstructing the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands

***In terms of sources:*** The aforementioned relevant scholarly works focus on clarifying the content and scope of their respective research. These works have provided a wealth of source materials on the strategic position, natural conditions, socio-economic conditions, demographic

characteristics, traditions of revolutionary struggle, and activities of Party committees and local populations in the region. These materials constitute valuable references and make an important contribution to the cross-checking, building upon, and conducting the research for the dissertation.

### **1.2.2. Issues focused on in this dissertation**

On the basis of building upon the research findings of the scholarly works reviewed, this dissertation focuses on examining the following issues:

First, analyze the factors influencing the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands during the two periods: 1949–1954 and 1954–1961.

Second, systematically analyze the policies adopted by the Party Committee of Interzone V concerning the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961, through two periods: from the establishment of the Party Committee of Interzone V (1949) to the completion of its leadership of the resistance movement against French colonialism (1954); and from the Party Committee's shift in direction to lead the struggle against the United States and its henchmen (1954) to the conclusion of its organizational structure and activities (1961).

Third, reconstruct the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V directed the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands through two periods: 1949–1954 and 1954–1961; in two aspects, which also constituted the two main political tasks set out for the direction of the movement: directing the building of forces and resistance potential; and directing the struggle against the enemy, while protecting and promoting the role of the region.

Fourth, assess the strengths, limitations and analyze the causes of these strengths and limitations in the process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands from 1949 to 1961; on this basis, draw several lessons of reference value that may be applied to ensuring socio-economic stability and development, national defense, security in the South Central coastal region and the Central Highlands today.

## **Chapter 2**

### **POLICIES AND DIRECTION OF THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V TOWARD THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE**

## SOUTH CENTRAL COASTAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (1949–1954)

### 2.1. FACTORS INFLUENCING AND POLICIES OF THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V TOWARD THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL COASTAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

#### 2.1.1. Factors influencing the leadership of the party committee of interzone v over the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands

##### *2.1.1.1. Natural, economic and social characteristics, traditions of patriotism, and the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands before 1949*

###### *- Natural conditions*

The Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands constituted a strategically important area, connecting Trị Thiên with the Southeastern region, the coastal plains with the Central Highlands, and bordering Laos and Cambodia. The terrain was predominantly mountainous and forested, with difficult transportation conditions; however, it was favorable for establishing revolutionary bases, developing forces, and organizing guerrilla warfare.

###### *- Socio-Economic conditions*

The Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands were a region with an economy based primarily on subsistence agriculture, combined with the exploitation of forest products and small-scale trade. The region had a multi-ethnic population structure, a rich tradition of patriotism and solidarity in revolutionary struggle

###### *- Patriotic and revolutionary traditions*

This was one of the areas that responded early to the August Revolution and the resistance war against French colonialism, thereby creating an important political and social foundation for the Party Committee of Interzone V to build forces and develop the resistance movement. The traditions of patriotism and love for the homeland, together with the steadfast revolutionary spirit of the peoples in the western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands constituted a fundamental and highly important condition for organizing and leading the resistance movement in the area.

###### *- The resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the*

### *Central Highlands before 1949*

Following the August Revolution in 1945, revolutionary administrations were established, the organizations of the Viet Minh Front and the armed forces were gradually consolidated. In response to the demands of the resistance war, revolutionary bases, political bases, and armed forces in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands were gradually established and developed, creating new advantages and strengthening the capacity for resistance. However, the movement also faced numerous difficulties due to the fierce attacks of French colonial forces, the poor economic conditions, difficult transportation and uneven levels of development among localities. These circumstances required the Party Committee of Interzone V to adopt appropriate policies and leadership measures following its establishment in 1949.

#### ***2.1.1.2. The policy of promoting the resistance war and the Party's direction of the resistance movement in Interzone V.***

The Party's policies toward the resistance movement were reflected in the resolutions of the Central Committee: the Sixth Cadre Conference (January 1949), the Third National Conference (January 1950), the Second National Congress of the Party (February 1951), the Second Plenum of the Central Committee (September 1951), the Third Plenum of the Central Committee (April 1952), and the Politburo Conference in late September 1953. These resolutions set out the following principal policies:

- Mobilize all forces for the resistance war, fulfill the task of national liberation; build up the resistance potential in all fields; intensify attacks against the enemy; maintain the revolutionary bases and guerrilla zones.
- Build Party organizations, consolidate the administration, and build the national united front; unify the Viet Minh and Lien Viet; expand the front in Laos and Cambodia.

#### **2.1.2. Policies of the Party Committee of Interzone V toward the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central Coastal provinces and the Central Highlands**

##### ***2.1.2.1. Establishment of the Party Committee of Interzone V***

Following the Autumn–Winter Viet Bac Victory in 1947, the Central Party Committee and the Government adopted a policy of consolidating Party organizations and local administrations, merging military-administrative zones into interzones, establishing interzone Party committees to ensure unified leadership of the resistance war. On January 25, 1948, President Ho Chi Minh signed Decree No. 120/SL on reorganizing the resistance–administrative zones into interzones. An interzone was a resistance–administrative unit directly

under the Central Government, led by the Interzone Party Committee and the Interzone Resistance - Administrative Committee.

In implementation of the policy adopted by the Fifth Central Cadre Conference, on October 20, 1948, Zones V, VI, and XV were merged to form Interzone V in order to ensure unified leadership of the resistance war in the South Central Provinces and the Central Highlands.

#### ***2.1.2.2. Policies of the Party Committee of Interzone V***

During the period from 1949 to 1954, the Party Committee of Interzone V gradually supplemented and refined its policies for leading the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands in accordance with the requirements of each period. These policies were reflected in the resolutions of the Party Committee, including: The First Congress of Delegates of the Party Committee of Interzone V (March 1949), the First Conference of Party Committee Delegates (April 1949), the Enlarged Interzone Conference (December 29, 1950 - January 2, 1951), the Second Congress of Delegates of the Party Committee of Interzone V (July 1951), the Fourth Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V (May 1953), and the Fifth Conference (March 1954). The principal directions were as follows:

- Make every effort to consolidate, develop revolutionary forces, intensify guerrilla warfare, expand guerrilla zones and guerrilla bases, narrow the temporarily occupied areas; actively establish, protect, and expand revolutionary bases.

- Make every effort to strengthen the people's forces, build up the resistance potential in order to have the conditions to maintain and intensify the prolonged resistance war; reorganize Party organizations and working methods to suit the new circumstances and tasks. Strengthen and consolidate the directing agencies at all levels, from the interzone level to the commune and village levels.

## **2.2. THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V DIRECTING THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS**

### **2.2.1. Direction of the building of forces and resistance potential**

#### ***2.2.1.1. Direction of the building of armed forces and resistance bases***

The process by which the Party Committee of Interzone V directed the building and consolidation of forces, resistance bases in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands was carried out continuously, with a focus on building political bases, armed forces, and resistance bases...

The results achieved in force building were an important foundational factor enabling the Party Committee of Interzone V to promote the role of this strategically important area in the resistance movement within the Interzone and throughout the country, as well as in fulfilling international obligations.

***2.2.1.2. Direction of the building and consolidating Party organizations, the administration, the Front, mass organizations, and economic and cultural life during the resistance war.***

Building and consolidating Party organizations followed the principle: avoiding indiscriminate development; consolidating party cells and significantly increasing the number of self-reliant party cells; practicing diligence, thrift, integrity, and uprightness; making every effort to train cadres; improving leadership methods and working methods.

The people's administration continued to be consolidated, the effectiveness of the administration at all levels was strengthened, and revolutionary bases were established in areas under enemy control. The Lien Viet Front and mass organizations were expanded and consolidated, promoting their role in bringing together and mobilizing the people to participate in the resistance war. Alongside the building of the Party, the administrative apparatus, and mass organizations, despite facing numerous difficulties, Party committees at all levels also paid attention to developing economic and cultural life during the resistance war in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands.

***2.2.2. Direction of intensifying and promoting the role of the resistance movement in the area for Interzone V and the whole country***

***2.2.2.1. Direction of intensifying the struggle through various forms in coordination with the Interzone and national battlefields***

In implementing the policies adopted, the Party Committee of Interzone V directed continuous and increasingly vigorous military activities in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands. Therefore, although the levels and scales varied across specific areas, nevertheless, within a broad common strategic space, the armed struggle in the western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands played a particularly important role in protecting the liberated zone of Interzone V, contributed to the victory of the national battlefield, particularly the victory of the Dien Bien Phu Campaign.

***2.2.2.2. Direction of mobilizing human and material resources for the resistance war***

On the basis of thoroughly grasping the line of an all-people and comprehensive resistance war, the Party Committee of Interzone V led the mobilization of the people to contribute

human and material resources; build a logistical system, bases, storage facilities, and transportation routes; implement the policy of self-reliance and self-strengthening, ensuring food, weapons, and essential supplies for the resistance war. The ethnic peoples in the mountainous areas of the South Central region and the Central Highlands actively transported supplies, protected communication corridors, established revolutionary bases, and protected cadres and troops, thereby contributing to maintaining the resistance posture.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V OVER THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL COASTAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (1954–1961)**

##### **3.1. THE SITUATION, NEW TASKS, AND POLICIES OF THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V TOWARD THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (1954–1961)**

###### **3.1.1. The situation, new tasks, and policies, direction of the Party**

###### ***3.1.1.1. The situation and new tasks.***

In the new context and situation, the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands continued to hold a particularly important geostrategic position, serving as an area controlling strategic corridors between the North and the South, between the Central coastal region and the South, and at the same time as a gateway connecting with Laos and Cambodia. Maintaining the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands was of great importance to the capacity for offensive operations, defense, and the development of the strategic posture of the revolutionary armed forces in the struggle for the liberation of South Vietnam.

The situation described above presented enormous major difficulties for the leadership of the resistance movement, imposed very demanding new tasks, requiring the Party Committee of Interzone V to draw upon its experience, the courage and steadfastness of its Party members, the capacity of Party committees at all levels to reorient their work, protect, build the resistance movement and maintain its leadership role.

###### ***3.1.1.2. Policies and direction of the Party toward the resistance movement in Interzone V***

During the period from 1954 to 1961, the policies of the Party Central Committee were reflected in specific resolutions, including: The Sixth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party (2nd tenure), held from July 15 to July 18 1954; the Directive of the Party Central

Committee Secretariat to the Party Committee of Interzone V, dated November 2, 1955 concerning the requirement to “consolidate and develop the movement, preserve forces, and maintain the Party organization throughout the long, arduous, and complex struggle”; the Twelfth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party (March 1957), which directed Party committees at all levels in the western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands to arrange, deploy forces to remain in the area; and the Fifteenth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party (1959), which clearly stated: “Launch an uprising to seize power and place it in the hands of the people...”; The Third National Congress of the Party (1960) also set forth the task of “taking the building, consolidation, and development of the revolutionary forces among the masses as the foundation.”

The content of the Party’s policies was reflected in the following specific areas: Consolidating and developing the movement, preserving forces, and maintaining Party organizations, particularly Party cells and mass organizations; Maintaining and promoting the role of resistance bases; leading the people in the struggle against acts of terrorism and repression by the enemy. Effectively carry out ethnic affairs, build and consolidate self-governing people’s organizations; expand the scope of the two-sided administration. Developing self-sufficient economic production; giving special attention to mobilization among enemy troops; building armed forces toward launching uprisings and attacking the enemy, thereby contributing to victory in the resistance war against the United States for national salvation.

### **3.1.2. Policies of the Party committee of Interzone V**

During the period from 1954 to 1961, the Party committee of Interzone V thoroughly grasped and concretized the policies of the Central Committee, adopted policies for leading the resistance movement in the western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands in accordance with the actual situation. These policies were expressed through the conferences of the Party Committee of Interzone V, including: the Enlarged Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V (July 1954), the Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V (February 1956), the Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V in mid-1958, the Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V (June 1959), the Enlarged Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V (April 1960), and the Conference of the Party Committee of Interzone V (February 1961).

The policies and direction of the Party Committee of Interzone V focused on two main areas: preserving and strengthening the local resistance potential by maintaining and

safeguarding Party organizations, mass organizations, building armed forces, resistance bases; promoting the role of this strategically important area in the resistance movement in Interzone V during the early years of the resistance war against the United States for national salvation.

### **3.2. THE DIRECTION OF THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF INTERZONE V OVER THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL COASTAL PROVINCES AND THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (1954–1961)**

#### **3.2.1. Direction of preserving, consolidating, and developing local revolutionary forces**

##### ***3.2.1.1. Direction of preserving and developing Party organizations, mass organizations***

During the period from 1954 to 1961, the Party Committee of Interzone V paid particular attention to building, consolidating Party organizations, the administration, and mass organizations in order to preserve the revolutionary forces and maintain the struggle movement, as expressed through the Resolutions of the conferences of the Party Committee. By 1961, the organizational system of the Party, the administration, and mass organizations had basically been restored and firmly consolidated, creating an important foundation for maintaining and developing the revolutionary movement in the resistance war against the United States for national salvation.

##### ***3.2.1.2. Direction of building armed forces and resistance bases***

On the basis of, and concurrently with, preserving and consolidating Party organizations and mass organizations, implementing the proposed guideline, the Party Committee of Interzone V directed the building of armed forces in the resistance bases in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands.

Along with building the armed forces, the Party Committee of Interzone V focused its direction on consolidating, expanding the revolutionary bases in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands. At the same time, it coordinated the establishment of political bases, training of cadres, maintaining the bases along the border areas, and intensifying the dissemination of the spirit of international solidarity among cadres, Party members, and people of various ethnic groups, thereby contributing to strengthening the solidarity in combat among the peoples of the three countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

#### **3.2.2. Direction of reorienting and promoting the role of the struggle movement in the area for Interzone V and the revolution in South Vietnam**

##### ***3.2.2.1. Direction of reorienting the struggle to demand the implementation of the Geneva Accords, protect revolutionary cadres of Interzone V***

Under the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone, the direction of the provincial Party Committees, the people in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands made very important contributions to protecting cadres, Party members, thereby contributing to enabling the Party Committee of Interzone V to remain steadfast in the face of the enemy's fierce attacks, gradually restore and develop the resistance movement in the Interzone. Implementing the policies of the Central Committee, the Interzone V Party Committee and local Party committees mobilized the people to struggle for the implementation of the Geneva Accords, consultations for general elections to reunify the country; to demand civil and democratic rights; and to oppose the "denunciation of Communists" campaign and acts of retaliation against resistance participants.

However, in the face of the terrorist and repressive policies of the Ngo Dinh Diem administration and the new requirements of the revolution, the Party Committee of Interzone V gradually reoriented the methods of struggle in accordance with the policies of the Central Committee, thereby creating conditions for the revolutionary movement to develop.

***3.2.2.2. Direction of combining political struggle with armed struggle, mobilizing the people to rise up, and shifting the resistance movement in Interzone V from force preservation to the offensive***

Implementing the Resolution of the 15th Plenum of the Central Committee, the Party Committee of Interzone V directed the combination of political struggle and armed struggle, gradually mobilizing the people to rise up and seize power. By mid-1961, many areas in the Western parts of the South Central provinces and part of the Central Highlands had been liberated or had become bases of the revolutionary armed forces. The creative application of the policies of the Central Committee contributed to enabling the revolutionary movement in Interzone V to overcome its difficult period, together with the revolution in South Vietnam, move to the offensive.

In 1961, Interzone V and Zone 6 were divided into two zones: Zone V, comprising Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Quang Da, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Kon Tum, and Gia Lai, under the Central Committee; and Zone 6, comprising Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, Dak Lak, Quang Duc, Tuyen Duc, and Lam Dong, under the Central Office for South Vietnam.

## **Chapter 4**

### **ASSESSMENTS AND SEVERAL LESSONS LEARNED**

#### **4.1. SEVERAL ASSESSMENTS**

#### **4.1.1. Strengths and their causes**

##### **4.1.1.1. Strengths and achievements**

*First*, the Party Committee of Interzone V formulated correct and creative policies toward the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands.

*Second*, the Party Committee of Interzone V proactively and flexibly directed the building of resistance potential and promoted the role of the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands.

*Third*, under the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V, the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands was consolidated and developed, playing an important role in the resistance war in Interzone V and the whole country.

##### **4.1.1.2. Causes of the strengths**

*First*, the resistance was based on a correct line and sound policies, together with the direction and guidance of the Party Central Committee.

*Second*, the peoples of the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands demonstrated strong patriotism, solidarity, and determination to follow the Party, resist foreign aggression, and defend national independence.

*Third*, the Party Committee identified leading the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands as a key task and focused on directing the entire Interzone to implement it.

*Fourth*, the Party Committee promoted a strong sense of responsibility, proactiveness, flexibility, and creativity in the leadership activities of the Interzone Party Committee, local Party committees at all levels, and the entire contingent of cadres, Party members.

#### **4.1.2. Limitations, shortcomings, and their causes**

##### **4.1.2.1. Limitations and shortcomings**

*First*, the implementation and application of the policies of the Central Committee were at times insufficiently flexible.

*Second*, the direction of building up the material and organizational strength of the resistance also revealed certain limitations and shortcomings.

*Third*, the direction of combining different forms of struggle was at times inappropriate to the circumstances; the identification of key areas of struggle did not always keep pace with developments in practice.

*Fourth*, Party building and ensuring the leadership role of the Party Committee also revealed certain limitations.

#### **4.1.2.2. Causes of the limitations and shortcomings**

*First*, the schemes and methods of aggression employed by the French colonialists, the U.S. imperialists, and their lackeys against the Central Highlands and the Western areas of the South Central provinces.

*Second*, the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands were a vast area with complex terrain; the population was dispersed; socio-economic conditions remained difficult; linguistic diversity was considerable; and some backward customs among ethnic minority communities.

*Third*, the policies and support provided by the Central Committee to the battlefield of Interzone V remained limited.

*Fourth*, Party building and the consolidation of revolutionary grassroots structures in remote areas and among ethnic minority communities remained limited; the promotion of the leadership role at times did not fully meet requirements.

## **4.2. SOME LESSONS LEARNED**

4.2.1. Mastering and creatively and flexibly applying the Party's line to the practical conditions of the resistance movement and in accordance with the characteristics of the strategic area of the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands.

4.2.2. Focusing on building the bloc of great national unity and mobilizing the people, particularly **ethnic minority communities**.

4.2.3. Continuously **developing and consolidating military potential, armed forces, and resistance bases as the foundation for conducting people's war**.

4.2.4. Bringing into full play the combined strength, flexibly combining various forms of building up the strength of the resistance, and promoting the role of the strategic area.

4.2.5. **Consistently maintaining the leadership role of Party organizations as the core, attaching importance to building a contingent of locally based cadres under conditions of war, terrorism, and severe division**, as a decisive factor in leading the resistance movement to victory.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. In leading the resistance movement in the strategically important area comprising the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands, from its

establishment (in 1949) until the completion of its mission (in 1961), the Party Committee of Interzone V consistently and seriously adhered to the Party's line of national democratic revolution, the line of people's war, and its military and political lines, the directions and guidance of the Central Committee, the Politburo, and the Secretariat during the resistance wars against the French colonialists and U.S. imperialists. The Party Committee of Interzone V also consistently upheld the principle of independence, self-reliance and creatively applied the Party's policies and line in formulating leadership policies for the resistance movement that were suited to the circumstances of the strategic area. The Party Committee's policies remained consistent and focused on building and developing the strength of the resistance, while also promoting the role of the resistance movement in this area in the resistance efforts of Interzone V, thereby contributing to the national struggle to defend independence, freedom, and national reunification.

2. On the basis of the policies and directions of the Central Committee, the policies formulated, the Party Committee of Interzone V led the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands through two periods: from 1949 to 1954 (corresponding to the period of leading the resistance movement against the French colonialists); and from 1954 to 1961 (corresponding to the period of leading the resistance movement during the initial years of the resistance war against the United States for national salvation). The leadership focused on two principal tasks: building up the strength of the resistance (including such specific tasks as building the political foundations, Party organizations, mass organizations, maintaining the fighting spirit, developing military potential, and establishing resistance bases...); and bringing into full play the role of the resistance movement, capitalizing on the strategic advantages of the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands in relation to the resistance movement in Interzone V and the revolutionary war of the whole country (through such activities as organizing armed operations; pinning down enemy forces; directing attacks to wear down, destroy enemy manpower; coordinating with battlefields throughout the country, providing human and material resources, thereby contributing to the victory of the resistance war against the French colonialists; directing political struggles to demand that the opposing side implement the Geneva Accords; preserving forces; protecting cadres and Party members, launching guerrilla warfare; organizing the people into armed uprisings...). The Party Committee's leadership was comprehensive, close, and highly effective.

3. Under the leadership of the Party Committee of Interzone V, the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands overcame numerous major difficulties and challenges and continuously grew in strength, contributing to the victories achieved in the resistance efforts of the people of Interzone V and the whole country, as well as contributing to the development of the trilateral fighting alliance among Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The process of strengthening the resistance movement and bringing into full play its role in the area was clearly reflected in the building of solidarity among the various ethnic groups, the consolidation of political foundations, the development of armed forces, and the intensification of military and enemy-propaganda activities, as well as in the close combination of political struggle with armed struggle and military agitation... Thereby contributing to the victory of the resistance war against the French colonialists in Interzone V; playing an important role in preserving forces, opening up and promoting the resistance movement in the Interzone, and transforming it from a posture of force preservation to a posture of offensive operations during the period from 1954 to 1961.

The resistance movement in the western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands also contributed to fulfilling international obligations toward the revolutionary movements in Laos and Cambodia, particularly by creating conditions for communication and coordination among the battlefields in Indochina; coordinated with and assisted the revolutionary forces in Laos and Cambodia in building their resistance forces, thereby contributing to the formation of a strategically interconnected posture among the battlefields in Indochina during the resistance wars against the common enemies - the French colonialists and the U.S. imperialists.

4. Alongside its strengths and achievements, the process of the Party Committee of Interzone V leading the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands also revealed certain limitations. Its leadership and direction were at times characterized by subjectivity, haste, insufficient flexibility, and inadequate attention to the actual situation in the area. At certain points, changes in the situation were not grasped in a timely manner; the combination of different forms of struggle remained insufficiently flexible in some areas; and the building of grassroots Party organizations and the development of forces in remote areas, ethnic minority communities continued to face considerable difficulties. The identification and adjustment of the focus of struggle in each period did not always keep pace with developments in practice, resulting in the leadership of the movement not achieving the desired effectiveness. The capacity of cadres and

the work of building and consolidating Party organizations under conditions of fierce warfare also revealed certain limitations and shortcomings. The establishment, expansion of revolutionary bases and the consolidation of local political foundations remained weak and were not always closely aligned with local realities.

5. The actual process of the Party Committee of Interzone V leading the resistance movement in the Western areas of the South Central provinces and the Central Highlands has yielded valuable lessons: (1) Mastering and creatively and flexibly applying the Party's line to the practical conditions of the resistance movement and in accordance with the characteristics of the strategic area comprising the Western areas of the South Central coastal provinces and the Central Highlands; (2) Attaching importance to building the bloc of great national unity and carrying out mass mobilization, particularly among ethnic minority communities; (3) Continuously developing and consolidating military potential, armed forces, and resistance bases as the foundation for conducting people's war; (4) Bringing into full play the combined strength, flexibly combining various methods of struggle, and closely linking the building of the strength of the resistance with bringing into full play the role of the resistance movement in the strategic area; (5) Consistently maintaining the leadership role of Party organizations as the core and attaching importance to building a contingent of locally based cadres and Party members. The lessons drawn from the practical leadership of the resistance movement in Interzone V during the period from 1949 to 1961 continue to hold practical value and may be applied to the cause of building and defending the Fatherland today.

**LIST OF THE AUTHOR’S PUBLISHED WORKS RELATED TO THE  
DISSERTATION TOPIC**

1. Tran Van Du (2023), “Building and Defending the South Central Free Zone during the Resistance War against French Colonialist Invasion”, *Journal of Party History*, No. 3, 2023.
2. Tran Van Du (2024), “The Party Committee of Interzone V Leading the Resistance Movement in Western Quang Ngai during the period from 1954 to 1960”, *Journal of Party History*, No. 9, 2024.
3. Tran Van Du (2025), “The Party Committee of Interzone V Leading the Building of Revolutionary Bases and Rear Areas in the Western Areas of the South Central Provinces and the Central Highlands (1954–1961)”, *Journal of Party History*, No. 8, 2025.
4. Tran Van Du (2025), *The Party Leading the Building and Defense of the South Central Free Zone (1945–1954)*, Thuan Hoa Publishing House, Hue