

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**THE VIET BAC INTER-ZONE PARTY COMMITTEE'S
LEADERSHIP IN IMPLEMENTING ECONOMIC TASKS
FROM 1949 TO 1956**

SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Urgency of the Dissertation Topic

Economic construction and development are of significance in laying the material foundation for social life, ensuring and improving the people's living standards, while also contributing to building the potential, overall strength, and standing of each country. According to the viewpoint of Marxism–Leninism, material production and economic development play a fundamental role in the existence and development of society; they provide the material basis for conducting revolutionary warfare as well as for national construction and development in peacetime. V.I. Lenin affirmed: "...without the most thorough economic preparation, it is impossible for an exhausted agricultural country to wage a modern war against advanced imperialism." This viewpoint demonstrates that economic strength is not only the foundation for ensuring social life but also a decisive factor in the ability to organize, sustain, and achieve victory in war.

Thoroughly imbued with the viewpoint of Marxism–Leninism, during the resistance war against the invading French colonialists, the Party consistently attached importance to the task of building a resistance economy. The Party's line on economic construction and development constituted an integral part of its line on resistance and national construction. Under this line, the Party led the people in building a resistance economy that both ensured daily subsistence and improved the people's living standards, while also supporting the operation of the resistance administration and supplying the armed forces in combat. As a result, the Party led the protracted, self-reliant resistance war to victory and proceeded to build and consolidate the North in all respects, with economic recovery being a key task.

The Party's success in leading economic tasks during the resistance war against the invading French colonialists, as well as during the initial years of economic recovery in the North, owed an important role to Party organizations at various local levels, including the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee. Viet Bac was the country's principal revolutionary base during the resistance war against the French colonialists and, at the same time, the center for the leadership and command of the resistance. The Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee was established in November 1949 and completed its mission in August 1956. During its existence, the Party Committee played the leading role in the revolutionary movement across an area of particularly important strategic significance, accounting for approximately two-thirds of the territory of Northern Vietnam and holding a pivotal position in the overall situation of the resistance war and national construction.

On the basis of thoroughly grasping and creatively applying the Party Central Committee's economic line to specific local conditions, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee led and effectively organized the implementation of economic tasks, contributing to firmly ensuring logistical requirements for the resistance war against the French colonialists while also serving the restoration and consolidation of the North after the restoration of peace. The Inter-zone not only gradually achieved self-sufficiency, meeting local living needs and supporting the activities of Party and Government agencies as well as the resistance leadership apparatus stationed in the area, but also actively provided support to various battlefields, contributing to major

victories in the resistance war, notably the Border Campaign (1950), the Hoang Hoa Tham Campaign (1951), and the Dien Bien Phu Campaign (1954), among others, while achieving initial results in economic recovery after 1954.

The history of the establishment, operation, and exercise of the leadership role in general, and the leadership in implementing economic tasks in particular, of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee constitutes an aspect of Party history that needs to be studied in order to provide a clearer, more comprehensive, and more profound understanding of the process of putting the Party's economic line into practice in an area of strategic importance in all respects. Such research contributes to completing the overall picture of the Party's sound and comprehensive leadership, while further elucidating the history of struggle of Party organizations and the people in the northern midland and mountainous regions during the resistance war against the French and the initial years of recovery in the North following the restoration of peace. However, the fact remains that, to date, no study from the perspective of the science of Party History has selected the leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in carrying out economic tasks as an independent research topic.

For the above reasons, the doctoral candidate has selected the topic **“The Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's Leadership in Implementing Economic Tasks from 1949 to 1956”** for a doctoral dissertation in History, specializing in the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

2. Research Purpose and Tasks

2.1. Research Purpose

To clarify the process by which the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee led the implementation of economic tasks from 1949 to 1956, and to draw lessons for application to current economic development.

2.2. Research Tasks

- To review published scientific works related to the research topic in order to identify the research contents and the extent to which they have been studied; to determine the contents on which the dissertation will focus; and to identify the materials and methods that can be inherited and utilized in conducting the dissertation.
- To study and clarify the factors governing and affecting the process of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks from 1949 to 1956.
- To reconstruct and interpret the process by which the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee formulated policies and directed the implementation of economic tasks, as well as the results achieved under such leadership.
- To analyze and assess the strengths and limitations of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in leading the implementation of economic tasks from 1949 to 1956; and to draw lessons that can be applied to economic construction and development in the northern midland and mountainous provinces.

3. Research Object and Scope

3.1. Research Object

The object of the dissertation's research is the process by which the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee led the implementation of economic tasks from November 1949 to August 1956.

3.2. Research Scope

- Regarding content: The dissertation focuses on studying the policies and direction of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee concerning the following economic sectors and areas: agriculture, handicrafts, commerce, transportation, finance, protection of the resistance economy, and economic struggle against the enemy.

- Regarding time: The temporal scope of the dissertation extends from the establishment of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee (November 1949) to its dissolution (August 1956).

- Regarding geographical scope: The geographical scope of the dissertation corresponds to changes in the areas under the leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee.

4. Theoretical Basis, Research Methods, and Sources

4.1. Theoretical Basis

The dissertation is conducted on the basis of the methodology of dialectical materialism, Marxist–Leninist theory, the Party's line, and Ho Chi Minh Thought on economics.

4.2. Research Methods

The dissertation employs two principal methods: the historical method and the logical method. In addition to these two methods, the dissertation also employs other methods, such as synthesis and analysis, comparison, and statistics, to analyze and cross-check data and facts, and to identify developments in the leadership of the implementation of economic tasks across different periods and areas within the Viet Bac Inter-zone, or between the Viet Bac Inter-zone and other areas.

4.3. Sources

The doctoral candidate primarily draws upon the following sources for the dissertation:

- *Complete Collection of Party Documents, Documents of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee, and Ho Chi Minh: Complete Works.*

- Original documents related to the process of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks from 1949 to 1956, preserved at the Documentation Department of the Institute of Party History, the National Library of Vietnam, National Archives Center III, and the Archives Department of the Office of the Party Central Committee.

- Histories of the provincial Party Committees within the Viet Bac Inter-zone; relevant published studies by Vietnamese and foreign authors; and published research projects, doctoral dissertations, and master's theses related to the Party's leadership of the economy and to the Vietnamese economy from 1949 to 1956.

5. New Scientific Contributions of the Dissertation

5.1. In Terms of Source Materials

To systematically provide materials on the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks from 1949 to 1956.

5.2. In Terms of Content

To reconstruct the leadership process and provide a scholarly analysis of the achievements and limitations of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in leading

the implementation of economic tasks across various economic sectors from 1949 to 1956; and to draw lessons from the process of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks during this period that can be applied to the current process of economic construction and development in the northern midland and mountainous region.

6. Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Dissertation

The research findings of the dissertation contribute to the review and synthesis of practical experience in economic construction and development in Vietnam in general and in the Viet Bac Inter-zone in particular from 1949 to 1956. The dissertation's research findings provide scientific arguments and lessons that can be applied to guiding and harnessing resources for economic development in the northern mountainous localities today. The dissertation may also serve as a reference for research, teaching, and the study of Vietnamese History in general and the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam in particular.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

In addition to the Introduction, Conclusion, Overview of Research Works Related to the Dissertation, List of References, and Appendices, the dissertation is structured into 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. Studies Addressing the Party's Leadership of the Economy from 1949 to 1956

1.1.1.1. Works on Party History Addressing the Party's Leadership in Economic Construction and Development

The Institute of Party History, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, *History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Volume 1 (1930–1954), Book 2 (1945–1954)*; the Institute for the Study of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, *History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Volume 2 (1954–1975)*; *The Communist Party of Vietnam – 80 Years of Construction and Development (1930–2010)*, compiled and published by the National Political Publishing House – Truth; the Institute of Party History, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, with the ministerial-level scientific research project *The Communist Party of Vietnam's Leadership in Agricultural Development during the Resistance War against the French (1945–1954): Issues and Experiences*; Dao Trong Cang, with the associate doctoral dissertation *The Communist Party of Vietnam's Leadership in the Construction of Major Free Zones during the Resistance War against the French Colonialists (1946–1954)*; Ly Viet Quang, with the doctoral dissertation *The Party's Leadership in Implementing Land Policies in Northern Vietnam from 1945 to 1957*; Le Duc Thuan, with the doctoral dissertation *The Party's Leadership of the Economic Resistance against the French Colonialists from 1946 to 1954*; Dinh Tran Duong, with the article *The Party's Policy on Building the Resistance Economy, 1947–1954*; and Pham Van Vinh (2022), with the article *The Party's Leadership in Economic Construction (1946–1954)*.

Studies on Party History have addressed relatively comprehensively the Party's leadership role in economic construction and development throughout the periods of resistance and national construction. Many notable works have provided an overview

of the Party's economic line for the resistance war against the French colonialists, while also clarifying its policies on economic recovery and development in the North after 1954. Through these analyses, the studies affirm the Party's sound and creative leadership role in organizing economic development in the service of the resistance war and national construction.

1.1.1.2. Works on the History of Vietnam's Revolutionary Wars, Modern and Contemporary Vietnamese History, and the History of the Vietnam People's Army, among Others, Addressing the Party's Leadership of the Economy

The Steering Committee for the Review of Wars under the Politburo: *Review of the Resistance War against the French: Victories and Lessons; Review of the Resistance War against the United States for National Salvation: Victories and Lessons; Vietnam's Revolutionary War, 1945–1975: Victories and Lessons*; the Vietnam Institute of Military History: *The Rear Base in Vietnam's People's War (1945–1975); History of the Vietnam People's Army (1944–1975); History of Vietnamese Military Thought, Volume IV (from 1945 to 1975)*; the Institute of History, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences: *History of Vietnam from 1945 to 1950; History of Vietnam from 1951 to 1954; History of Vietnam from 1954 to 1965*; Ngo Dang Tri, with the associate doctoral dissertation *The Thanh–Nghe–Tinh Free Zone during the Resistance War against the French Colonialists (1946–1954)*; Le Van Dat, *The Inter-zone V Free Zone during the Resistance War against the French Colonialists, 1945–1954*; Pham Van Vinh and Le Duc Thuan, *Economic Development and National Defense Building during the Resistance War against the French Colonialists (1945–1954)*.

Studies on the history of Vietnam's revolutionary wars, modern and contemporary Vietnamese history, and the history of the Vietnam People's Army have clarified the Party's leadership role in economic construction and development in association with the tasks of resistance and national defense. Many studies affirm that the economy was not only the material foundation for sustaining people's warfare but also a decisive factor in the capacity to mobilize human and material resources for a protracted resistance war. Studies on the rear base, free zones, and resistance inter-zones have provided relatively comprehensive analyses of policies on developing production, building up finance, commerce, transportation, and logistics in support of the battlefields. At the same time, these works have also drawn numerous lessons concerning the combination of economic development with national defense and the building of a strong rear base under the Party's leadership. Thereby, they contribute to affirming the soundness and creativity of the line of all-people and comprehensive resistance in the history of the Vietnamese revolution.

1.1.1.3. Monographs Approaching the Subject from the Perspectives of Economic History, Political Economy, Economics, and Other Disciplines, Addressing the Party's Leadership in Economic Construction and Development

Nguyen Ngoc Minh and other authors, *The Vietnamese Economy from the August Revolution to the Victorious Conclusion of the Resistance War (1945–1954)*; Dao Van Tap and other authors, *45 Years of the Vietnamese Economy (1945–1990)*; Dang Phong, *Economic History of Vietnam, 1945–2000, Volume I (1945–1954); Economic History of Vietnam (1945–2000), Volume II (1954–1975)*; Ministry of

Finance, *60 Years of Vietnamese Finance*; Nguyen Van Bich, *Vietnamese Agriculture and Rural Areas after 20 Years of Renovation: Past and Present*; Pham Minh Chinh and Vuong Quan Hoang, *The Vietnamese Economy: Vicissitudes and Breakthroughs*.

These works focus on studying the process of concretizing the Party's economic line for the resistance war against the invading French colonialists and its line on economic recovery after the restoration of peace in the North, as well as the results achieved in such sectors and areas as agriculture, industry, commerce, and finance.

1.1.1.4. Foreign Studies Addressing the Communist Party of Vietnam's Economic Construction and Development during the Period 1949–1956

Lucien Bodard, *The Indochina War*; Yves Gras, *History of the Indochina War (1945–1954)*; François Joyaux, *China and the Settlement of the First Indochina War (Geneva–1954)*; H. Navarre, *The Time of Truths*.

These works primarily reflect the context of the Indochina War, the process of building the resistance rear base, and the economic and political factors related to Vietnam's resistance war. Through these analyses, the studies contribute to clarifying that “economic capacity” was one of the factors contributing to Vietnam's victory in the war.

1.1.2. Studies Addressing the Leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in Economic Tasks from 1949 to 1956

1.1.2.1. Studies on the Resistance Movement and Party Building in the Viet Bac Area Addressing the Leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in Economic Affairs

The Vietnam Institute of Military History, with the works: *Viet Bac: 30 Years of Revolutionary War (1945–1975), Volume 1*; *Viet Bac: 30 Years of Revolutionary War (1945–1975), Volume 2*; the Military Region I Command, *Review of the Direction of the Implementation of the Strategic Military Tasks of the Viet Bac Inter-zone during the Resistance War against the French Colonialists (1945–1954), Volume 3*; Hoang Ngoc La, *The Formation and Development of the Viet Bac Revolutionary Base (During the Movement Leading to the August Revolution of 1945)*; the Commission for Information and Education of the Thai Nguyen Provincial Party Committee, *Ho Chi Minh and the Building of the Dinh Hoa ATK in the Viet Bac Revolutionary Base (1947–1954)*; Nguyen Xuan Minh, *The Central Safe Zone (ATK) in Viet Bac (during the Resistance War against the French Colonialists, 1945–1954)*; Tran Trong Tho and Le Xuan An, *Building the Viet Bac Revolutionary Base under the Policy of the Party Central Committee and President Ho Chi Minh (1946–1954)*; Nguyen Duy Tien, *The Process of Resolving the Land Issue in Thai Nguyen from after the August Revolution to the Completion of Land Reform*; Do Khanh Chi, *The Process of Implementing the Party's Land Policy in Phu Tho Province from 1953 to 1957*; Phan Thi Thoa, *Financial Activities in the Viet Bac Inter-zone during the Nationwide Resistance War against the French Colonialists (1945–1954)*; Nguyen Thi Lan, *The Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's Implementation of the Task of Party Building (1949–1956)*; Duong Dinh Thong, *The Armed Forces and People of Viet Bac in the Dien Bien Phu Campaign – Lessons on Promoting the Role of the Revolutionary Base in National Defense*.

In general, studies on the resistance movement and Party building in the Viet Bac area have addressed the Party's policies; analyzed the natural and socio-economic

conditions that presented both advantages and difficulties for economic activities; and examined certain aspects of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in economic affairs, including specific fields and tasks such as agriculture, finance, and land policy, as well as the results achieved during the 1949–1956 period.

1.1.2.2. Works on the History of Local Party Organizations in Areas Formerly within the Viet Bac Inter-zone Addressing the Implementation of Economic Tasks

History of the Lai Chau Provincial Party Organization, Volume I (1945–1975); History of the Tuyen Quang Provincial Party Organization (1940–1975); History of the Cao Bang Provincial Party Organization (1930–2020); History of the Ha Giang Provincial Party Organization (1945–2020); History of the Thai Nguyen Provincial Party Organization, Volume I (1936–1965); History of the Bac Ninh Provincial Party Organization (1926–2025); History of the Son La Provincial Party Organization, Volume I; History of the Phu Tho Provincial Party Organization; History of the Yen Bai Provincial Party Organization; History of the Bac Kan Provincial Party Organization; History of the Bac Giang Provincial Party Organization; History of the Lang Son Provincial Party Organization; History of the Vinh Phuc Provincial Party Organization, among others.

The above-mentioned works provide information on the natural conditions, people, and socio-economic characteristics of the provinces and analyze the leadership role of the local Party organizations in maintaining and developing production during the resistance war against the French colonialists; restoring the economy, stabilizing people's lives, and gradually building the material foundations after the restoration of peace. These works show that the local Party organizations formulated various policies for the development of agriculture, handicrafts, and commerce that were implemented in accordance with the specific conditions of each locality; they also directed the building and promotion of the role of local administrations and mass organizations, thereby laying the foundation for economic development.

Nized and implemented economic tasks across various fields. Insufficient attention has been paid to analyzing the strengths, achievements, and limitations of the Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks, as well as the causes of its strengths and achievements and the causes of its limitations; the lessons drawn have remained confined to experiences in implementing economic tasks in specific areas and fields. Nevertheless, the findings of the reviewed studies are of considerable significance, particularly in providing arguments that the doctoral candidate can draw upon in conducting the dissertation.

In terms of research approaches and methods:

The relevant studies have employed various research methods, including specialized methods of historical science, namely the historical method, logical method, and periodization method, as well as several methods commonly used in social science research, such as analysis, synthesis, statistics, comparison, and cross-checking. The methods employed in these studies are appropriate and have enabled them to address the stated requirements and tasks. Therefore, the approaches and research methods adopted by the above-mentioned studies provide useful methodological guidance for the doctoral candidate in conducting the dissertation.

In terms of sources:

The relevant studies have utilized various sources, including published Party documents; published scholarly works; recollections and memoirs of historical witnesses; and materials currently preserved in the archives of the Party and the State, research institutes, and other repositories. The materials utilized in these studies provide valuable guidance for the doctoral candidate in identifying, utilizing, and critically evaluating historical sources for the dissertation.

1.2.2. Issues on Which the Dissertation Needs to Focus and Address

- Factors affecting the leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in implementing economic tasks from 1949 to 1956.
- The policies and direction of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in leading the implementation of economic tasks across various economic sectors and fields, and the results achieved from 1949 to 1956.
- An assessment of the strengths and shortcomings, and the causes of those strengths and shortcomings; and the drawing of several lessons that can be applied to the leadership of economic development in localities in the northern mountainous region today.

Conclusion of Chapter 1

The review of the research literature shows that numerous studies have addressed the Party's role in leading economic development during the resistance war, including issues related to the Viet Bac Inter-zone during the 1949–1956 period. These studies have clarified the historical context, policies on economic development, the role of the resistance rear base, and some of the results of economic construction in Viet Bac. They provide important sources and methodological foundations upon which the author can draw in conducting the dissertation. However, to date, there has been no independent monographic study that comprehensively examines the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks from 1949 to 1956. Therefore, the dissertation focuses on systematically reconstructing and analyzing the process by which the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee led the implementation of economic tasks during this period.

Chapter 2

POLICIES AND DIRECTION OF THE VIET BAC INTER-ZONE PARTY COMMITTEE IN IMPLEMENTING ECONOMIC TASKS FROM NOVEMBER 1949 TO JULY 1954

2.1. Factors Affecting and Policies of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee on the Implementation of Economic Tasks

2.1.1. Factors Affecting the Implementation of Economic Tasks

The dissertation analyzes factors relating to geographical location and natural, economic, and social conditions; the economic situation in Viet Bac prior to the establishment of the Inter-zone; the patriotic tradition and revolutionary struggle of the people of the Viet Bac Inter-zone; the economic line for the resistance war; and the Party's direction to the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee regarding economic tasks, thereby clarifying their impacts on the process by which the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee led the implementation of economic tasks.

2.1.2. Policies of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee on the Implementation of Economic Tasks

In response to the requirements of the resistance war, from October 27 to 28, 1949, the Party Central Committee decided to merge Inter-zone 1 and Inter-zone 10 into the Viet Bac Inter-zone. On November 5, 1949, a conference was convened to unify the Party organizations of Inter-zones 1 and 10 and establish the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee. The conference resolution set forth tasks and plans for unification, personnel arrangements, and relations between the military, the Party, and the resistance administration.

Thoroughly grasping the direction of the Party Central Committee while also taking into account the practical situation of the locality, the Inter-zone Party Committee formulated a series of policies to address economic difficulties: the Resolution of the *First Cadres' Conference of the Entire Viet Bac Inter-zone* (March 1950); Resolution No. 25-NQ/LKVB (July 26, 1950), *On the Plan for the Provisional Allocation of Land in the Viet Bac Inter-zone*; the Resolution of the *First Congress of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Organization* (1951); Resolution No. 1-NQ/LKVB (April 2, 1953), *On Tasks in Enemy Rear Areas*; Resolution No. 39-NQ/LKVB (September 13, 1953), *Expanded Conference of the Standing Committee of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee*, among others.

It can be seen that, following its establishment, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee consistently identified the economy as a “key” task and formulated policies for the implementation of economic tasks. These policies both thoroughly reflected the lines and direction of the Party Central Committee and the Government and were suited to the specific situation, tasks, and characteristics of the Inter-zone

2.2. The Process of Directing Economic Sectors by the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee

2.2.1. Direction of Agricultural Production

In implementing the policies of the Inter-zone Party Committee and, at the same time, taking into account the actual risk of famine occurring within the Inter-zone, the *First Viet Bac Inter-zone Cadres' Conference* (March 1950) adopted the *Plan for Actively Combating the Immediate Threat of Famine and Improving the Living Conditions of Poor Peasants*. In implementing the policy of increasing agricultural production for the 1950–1951 winter-spring crop, at the *Midland Military, Civil and Administrative Conference* (September 1950), the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee provided specific direction regarding the implementation plan, from organization and program formulation to dissemination of the program and mobilization of the people for its implementation. To strengthen direction, Economic Councils were established in the provinces. In implementing the policy of temporarily allocating land, the Inter-zone Party Committee assigned the regional Peasants' Party Committee the task of coordinating with the authorities in guiding and inspecting localities.

In response to the Government's campaign of “emulation in production to achieve meritorious accomplishments” and in implementing the Resolution of the First Congress of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee on “successfully carrying out the seasonal crop, with the aim of increasing cultivated area in conjunction with increasing productivity,” the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 61-TT/LKVB (August 22, 1951), *On Mobilizing and Leading the People to Promote a*

Successful Seasonal Crop. To address labor shortages in agricultural production in localities, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 34-CT/LKVB (August 6, 1952), *On Promoting the Development of Labor Exchange and Combining Labor Exchange with the Mobilization of Civilian Labor to Ensure Production, Economization, and the Needs of the Front.* Thoroughly grasping the Party's line on the tasks of production and economization in 1953, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee adopted the *Plan on Economic and Financial Tasks for 1953*. In response to the Government's emulation campaign, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee launched the “1953 Emulation Season.”

On May 24, 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 40-TT/LKVB, *On Promoting Agricultural Production*. At the same time, land reform was accelerated. On March 7, 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 19-TT/LKVB, *On Implementing the Plan to Mobilize the Masses for the Fourth Rent-Reduction Campaign*. Under the leadership of the Inter-zone Party Committee, agricultural production in the Viet Bac Inter-zone developed strongly during the 1953–1954 Winter–Spring Campaign. In the 1954 winter-spring crop, the total cultivated area throughout the Inter-zone increased by 40,852 *mẫu* of rice, and the Inter-zone contributed 136,000 tons of foodstuffs to the State.

2.2.2. Direction of Handicraft Production and Commerce

Regarding handicrafts

In 1953, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee adopted the *Plan on Economic and Financial Tasks for 1953*. The Plan set out a rigorous and comprehensive scheme for directing and implementing activities in various sectors, including industry and commerce as well as transportation. Regarding the development of handicrafts in support of agricultural development, the Inter-zone Party Committee directed that “attention should be paid to developing household handicrafts and small-scale industries, with household handicrafts as the principal form.” With the active direction of the Inter-zone Party Committee, combined with the intensified mobilization of the masses and the expansion of bandit-suppression activities, “the production of agricultural implements and phosphates developed steadily.”

Regarding commerce

In implementing the Resolution of the First Congress of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee (1951) on the development of commerce, the Inter-zone Party Committee directed that: “Trading activities constitute one of the three important tasks in this year's economic and financial program.” Under the direction of the Inter-zone Party Committee, on the one hand, trading agencies were established and their operations strengthened throughout the Inter-zone; on the other hand, commercial activities by private traders became more vibrant than before following the widespread dissemination of regulations on industrial and commercial taxation. Circular No. 53-TT/LKVB (October 21, 1952), *To the Provincial Party Committees throughout the Inter-zone on the Leadership of Trade and Import-Export Activities*, was issued.

In order to further promote economic development and meet the requirements of an increasingly difficult and intense war, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee adopted the *Plan on Economic and Financial Tasks for 1953*. The Plan specified that, in order to develop trade in support of production, efforts should focus on the following

principal tasks: making thorough preparations in all respects to stabilize prices; and encouraging the people to increase production and the exploitation of forest and local products in order to supply goods to the market. Regarding the exploitation of forest and local products, with the sound line of the Party Central Committee, the close direction of the Inter-zone Party Committee, and coordination among various sectors, trading establishments became increasingly developed and gained the trust of the people. By 1953, considerable progress had been made in price management: trade and transportation had been stabilized and regulated. Consequently, the prices of essential goods such as rice, meat, and salt were stabilized, contributing to the stabilization of the people's living conditions.

2.2.3. Direction of Ensuring and Developing Transportation

During the years 1949–1954, the French colonialists made concerted efforts to disrupt transportation, with Routes No. 1 and No. 3 in the Viet Bac Inter-zone being major targets of their attacks. In response to this situation, on January 16, 1951, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 08-TT/LKVB, *On Repairing Transportation Routes*; and Directive No. 5-CT/LKUVB (February 16, 1953), *On the Repair and Protection of Bridges, Roads, and Ferries*, with a view to strengthening the Party's leadership over the transportation sector.

Under the resolute direction of the Inter-zone Party Committee, local Party committees directed and organized the promotion of the role of mass organizations such as the Youth Union and the Women's Union. As a result, transportation was strengthened compared with the previous period. In addition to transportation services operated by the State, private transportation also developed. State-owned, collective, and private means of transportation all increased. In particular, private transportation activities were encouraged and facilitated by the State. Privately established transportation units also emerged in many provinces within the Viet Bac Inter-zone, such as Phu Tho and Thai Nguyen. Goods were transported by various means, contributing to increased circulation of commodities from the Viet Bac Inter-zone to other areas and vice versa. This, in turn, contributed to price stabilization within the Inter-zone.

2.2.4. Direction of Financial and Budgetary Work

Under the direction of the Party Central Committee and the Government, the financial apparatus at all levels, including that of the Viet Bac Inter-zone, was consolidated. From June to September 1953, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued three circulars concerning the financial apparatus: Circular No. 37-TT/LKVB (June 9, 1953), *On Assigning Cadres and Party Members to Take Charge of the Tax Sector*; Circular No. 60-TT/LKVB (September 10, 1953), *To the Provincial Party Committees throughout the Inter-zone on Rectifying the Organization of Provincial Agricultural Tax Offices*; and Circular No. 68-TT/LKVB (September 20, 1953), *To the Provincial Party Committees throughout the Inter-zone on Rectifying Provincial Tax Sub-Offices*. These circulars clearly identified the weaknesses of the tax sector, on the basis of which the Inter-zone Party Committee called for strengthening the Party's leadership over the tax sector from the provincial to the grassroots level. At the same time, attention was paid to consolidating the organizational apparatus,

supplementing it with cadres of appropriate qualities and qualifications, and professionalizing the tax workforce.

Alongside personnel work, the Inter-zone Party Committee actively directed financial revenue and expenditure activities and unified revenue and expenditure throughout the Inter-zone in accordance with State policies. On September 25, 1952, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 49-TT/LKVB, *To Party Committees at All Levels throughout the Inter-zone on Incorporating Separate Funds into the National Budget*. Along with incorporating separate funds into the national budget with a view to ensuring a balance between revenue and expenditure, the Inter-zone Party Committee also closely directed the collection of various taxes, the implementation of the temporary loan policy, and the practice of economization. On June 10, 1951, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 02-CT/LKVB, *On Temporary Loans*, which clearly explained and emphasized the importance and principles of temporary loans so that localities could promptly rectify errors in attitude and understanding. To continue directing the dissemination and implementation of the agricultural tax policy, on August 9, 1951, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 62-TT/LKVB, *Guidance on the Implementation of Directive No. 14-CT/TW of the Party Central Committee on Agricultural Tax Collection*. Import-export activities also received attention from the Inter-zone Party Committee. On March 25, 1951, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 29-TT/LKVB, *To the Vinh Phuc Provincial Party Committee on Prohibiting Civilian Laborers in Temporarily Occupied Areas from Bringing Luxury Goods into the Free Zones*.

Along with increasing budget revenues, the Inter-zone Party Committee also directed the rationalization of expenditure through economization and personnel restructuring. As early as 1950, the Inter-zone Party Committee directed the streamlining of administrative agencies. On September 24, 1950, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Resolution No. 22-NQ/LKVB, *On Promoting the Planned and Organized Streamlining of Administrative Agencies*. On July 9, 1951, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 45-TT/LKVB, *On Implementing the Party Central Committee's Directive on Personnel Restructuring*.

2.2.5. Direction of the Economic Struggle against the Enemy

During the 1949–1954 period, the French colonialists intensified their sabotage of the resistance economy, carrying out numerous raids, burning and destroying property, plundering crops in various areas, and attacking and obstructing Vietnamese boats transporting paddy and rice. In response to this situation, the Resolution of the *Midland Military, Civil and Administrative Conference* (September 1950) identified crop protection as a key task. Under the direction of the Inter-zone Party Committee, the ethnic communities of Viet Bac actively made preparations under the slogans “protect the crops to achieve victory” and “harvest quickly, conceal carefully, transport rapidly.”

In addition to protecting crops and food supplies, the economic struggle against the French colonialists also took place in the fields of commerce and finance, closely combining monetary struggle, trade struggle, and import-export struggle. To implement specific measures for the trade struggle against the French colonialists, the

Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 45-CT/LKVB (November 24, 1952), *On Intensifying the Trade Struggle against the Enemy*. In thoroughly grasping the Party Central Committee's viewpoint on the economic struggle against the French colonialists in trading activities, the guiding principle was to control key commodities, control key markets, and focus primarily on wholesale trade.

The struggle in the field of foreign trade was no less complex. In the initial period, the French colonialists took advantage of their military superiority to blockade the Viet Bac Inter-zone, obstructing trade among areas within the Inter-zone, between the Inter-zone and other regions of the country, and with foreign countries. In thoroughly implementing the Party Central Committee's direction on shifting the orientation of the economic struggle against the French colonialists: "From passively imposing an economic blockade on the enemy, we shifted to actively waging an economic struggle against the enemy, managing imports and exports according to the principle of seeking mutually beneficial exchange and striving to achieve an export surplus." Protecting the resistance economy and waging an economic struggle against the French colonialists in the Viet Bac Inter-zone constituted an important front aimed at safeguarding the potential of the resistance and the people's livelihoods.

Conclusion of Chapter 2

During the resistance war against the French colonialists, the Viet Bac Inter-zone was an important revolutionary base and the direct rear base of the battlefield. The Inter-zone Party Committee creatively applied the Party Central Committee's economic line for the resistance war and identified the development of production as a central task aimed at ensuring the people's livelihoods and serving the resistance. Despite numerous difficulties arising from the terrain and an underdeveloped economy, the Inter-zone continued to promote agriculture, handicrafts, commerce, transportation, and finance. As a result, the resistance economy in Viet Bac achieved significant accomplishments, contributing to the provision of logistical support for major military campaigns and strengthening the people's confidence in the victory of the resistance war.

Chapter 3

THE VIET BAC INTER-ZONE PARTY COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP IN IMPLEMENTING THE TASK OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY FROM JULY 1954 TO AUGUST 1956

3.1. The New Situation, New Requirements, and Policies of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee on the Implementation of Economic Recovery Tasks

3.1.1. The New Situation and New Requirements

Viet Bac, Together with the Entire Country, Entered a Period of Economic Recovery and Cultural and Social Development

With the victory of the Dien Bien Phu Campaign and the signing of the Geneva Accords, the Vietnamese people brought the resistance war against the invading French colonialists to a victorious conclusion; however, numerous difficulties remained to be addressed.

Along with changes in the situation of the country in general and the North in particular, during the years 1954–1956, the Viet Bac Inter-zone also witnessed many changes and new developments, involving both advantages and difficulties.

The Party's Line on Economic Recovery

Following the signing of the Geneva Accords and the complete liberation of the North, the Vietnamese revolution faced new tasks, among which an important and major task was to restore the economy, heal the wounds of war, and stabilize the people's living conditions in order to preserve and consolidate peace. The Politburo Resolution (September 1954), *On the New Situation, New Tasks, and New Policies of the Party*, identified “restoring the national economy” as one of the ten specific tasks to be undertaken. Subsequently, the *Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Party Central Committee* (March 3–12, 1955) identified the rapid restoration of the economy as one of the important tasks for 1955 in order to consolidate the North in all respects. The Party Central Committee's policies and direction on comprehensive economic recovery, with primary emphasis placed on agriculture, provided an important orientation for local Party organizations, including the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee, in leading the implementation of economic tasks under the new circumstances.

3.1.2. Policies of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee on the Implementation of Economic Recovery Tasks

In implementing the Party's line on economic recovery, from the beginning of 1954, when setting out its working tasks, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee attached importance to the work of “restoring and protecting production.” In November 1954, the Inter-zone Party Committee issued Resolution No. 49-NQ/LKVB, setting out working policies that emphasized the task of economic recovery. Subsequently, in Resolution No. 50-NQ/LKVB (December 1954), *On Working Policies*, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee clearly stated: “Under the new situation and tasks, the economy is a major issue that must be given due importance and placed under close and concentrated leadership.”

On February 1, 1955, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Resolution No. 01-NQ/LKVB, *On Leading Famine Relief and Famine Prevention Work in the Viet Bac Inter-zone*. On August 20, 1955, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Resolution No. 11/NQBB, *On the Conference on Production and Famine Relief*, which identified production for famine relief as one of three principal tasks, alongside mobilizing the masses for rent reduction and land reform, and preparing for the establishment of an autonomous ethnic region. The Inter-zone Party Committee also emphasized that, in order to restore and develop production, it was necessary to establish labor-exchange teams, promote government borrowing from the people, mobilize mutual assistance and redistribution, and establish purchasing and selling cooperatives.

Resolution No. 14-NQ/LKVB of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee, *On the Viet Bac Inter-zone Cadres' Conference* (October 8, 1955), clearly stated: “For communes where land reform has already been carried out, the central task is to develop production. To develop production, it is necessary to organize labor exchange on the basis of voluntariness and self-awareness, and to provide education so that productive activities gradually acquire a more concrete and organized character. Supply and marketing cooperatives should be established to bring benefits to the masses.”

In preparation for the implementation of tasks in 1956, the Executive Committee of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Organization issued Resolution No. 17-NQ/LKVB (December 31, 1955), *Resolution of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Organization*. The Resolution clearly stated that, regarding industry, in addition to restoring the economy to meet the people's basic needs for food and clothing, it was necessary to restore industry and commerce, including mineral, tin, coal, and phosphate mining; tea, silk, and textile factories; and other establishments. It was also necessary to restore trade with foreign countries. These policies of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee provided the basis for Party committees at various levels and localities to implement the tasks of economic recovery and development during the years 1954–1956.

3.2. The Process of Directing the Recovery of Economic Sectors by the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee

3.2.1. Direction of the Recovery of Agricultural Production

Thoroughly implementing the Party Central Committee's policy on economic recovery, on July 22, 1954, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 33-CT/LKVB, *On the Task of Promoting Production in the Last Six Months of 1954*; on August 3, 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 38-CT/LKVB, *On the Immediate Tasks of the Inter-zone Following the Signing of the Armistice Agreement*. In implementing Resolution No. 01-NQ/LKVB (February 1, 1955), *On Leading Famine Relief and Famine Prevention Work in the Viet Bac Inter-zone*, the Inter-zone Party Committee convened the Viet Bac Inter-zone Food Conference (February 14–17, 1955) to implement urgent famine-prevention tasks. In implementing the policy that “seasonal crop production is a very important and urgent task” in famine prevention and relief, the Inter-zone Economic Committee met with the provinces to disseminate the policy and review the leadership of production, thereby enabling the provinces to fully grasp the significance and importance of the 1955 seasonal crop.

Under the direction of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee, the provinces implemented the task of restoring and promoting agricultural production: increasing the cultivation of rice, subsidiary food crops, and vegetables; developing livestock and poultry raising; restoring abandoned farmland and resolving issues concerning the land of people who had been induced or coerced into migrating to the South; and, in particular, strengthening irrigation and combating droughts and floods. On March 15, 1955, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 5-CT/LKVB, *To the Provincial Party Committees within the Inter-zone on Promoting the Movement to Combat and Prevent Drought*. On March 23, 1955, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 6-CT/LKVB, *On Leading the Protection of Dikes and Sluices during This Year's Flood Season*. The Inter-zone Party Committee directed the provincial Party committees to regard dike protection and flood prevention as “one of the very important tasks,” to strengthen leadership, repair dikes, and organize their guarding and protection so as to ensure the prevention of flooding.

Thoroughly implementing the Party Central Committee's policy of fostering the people's strength, the Party's land policy continued to be implemented in the Inter-zone in order to encourage the people to participate actively in productive labor. In

preparation for achieving good results in the second phase of land reform, on July 9, 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 49-TT/LKVB, *To the Provincial Party Committees of Cao Bang–Bac Kan–Lang Son, Phu Tho, Tuyen Quang, Thai Nguyen, Vinh Phuc, and Bac Giang, and Comrade Nhan, Member of the Inter-zone Party Committee, on the Establishment of Provincial Land Reform Committees.*

Under the close direction of the Inter-zone Party Committee, cadres' and Party members' awareness of the task of economic recovery, particularly the development of agricultural production, was increasingly enhanced. This awareness was translated into concrete actions in practice, as reflected in the close involvement, active engagement, and exemplary spirit of cadres and Party members in leading and organizing the implementation of the task. By the 1955–1956 Winter–Spring crop, the production of various food crops, including maize, sweet potatoes, cassava, and rice, exceeded the prescribed targets in both output and cultivated area: “the winter-spring rice cultivation area increased by 4%, while output increased by 15 to 30%.” Consequently, the Inter-zone was able to substantially overcome food shortages, contributing to improvements in famine relief.

3.2.2. Direction of the Recovery of Handicrafts and Commerce ***Regarding handicrafts***

Thoroughly implementing the Party Central Committee's policy, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee advocated restoring and developing existing small-scale industrial establishments while steadily establishing new ones in order to ensure the supply of essential goods for daily life. The Inter-zone Party Committee directed: “On the one hand, it is necessary to conduct in-depth studies of the existing conditions and potential in both mountainous and lowland areas. On the other hand, immediate issues that already exist or have already been identified must be addressed.” The output of handicraft production in the first nine months of 1956 was higher than that of 1955.

Regarding commerce

In implementing the Party Central Committee's policy on redirecting commercial activities and the Resolution of the Enlarged Conference of the Executive Committee of the Inter-zone Party Committee (May 1955), Party committees and authorities at various levels promulgated and implemented regulations on the management of traders, directed trading activities, particularly those of the food company, and assisted and facilitated production sectors in meeting the people's essential needs and producing goods for export, including forest and local products, textiles, and agricultural implements. In October 1955, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 73/TT, *To the Provincial Party Committees of Phu Tho, Thai Nguyen, Bac Giang, and Vinh Phuc on Strengthening Leadership over Purchasing and Selling Cooperatives.*

In 1955, the establishment of purchasing and selling cooperatives in the Inter-zone was still concentrated mainly in Thai Nguyen and several areas of Bac Kan. By 1956, State trading organizations and cooperatives had become increasingly closely connected. State trading organizations provided various forms of assistance to cooperatives, such as guidance on sales operations and program formulation, and

priority access to goods, particularly scarce commodities. This created favorable conditions for the development of cooperatives.

3.2.3. Direction of the Recovery of Transportation

Fully recognizing the importance of restoring transportation, the Inter-zone Party Committee directed that efforts should focus on several principal issues: “Ensuring transportation during the rainy season, specifically by repairing and reinforcing bridges and culverts; preventing muddy ground and subsidence and strengthening ferry crossings; closely directing the transportation sector to ensure transportation security, redirecting surplus means of transportation, and uniformly directing freight rates for waterway and road transportation.”

On July 8, 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 27-CT/LKVB, *On Ensuring Transportation to Fulfill the Transportation Plan*; on September 17, 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Official Letter No. 616-CV/LKVB, *To the Provincial Party Committees throughout the Inter-zone (Except Thai Nguyen) on Supplementing Personnel for the Transportation Sector*. In addition to ensuring transportation, the Inter-zone was required to collect and produce a large quantity of railway sleepers to meet the requirements for restoring the Nam Quan–Hanoi railway. From September to October 1954, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee successively issued three circulars: Circular No. 58-TT/LKVB (September 22, 1954), *To the Provincial Party Committees of Bac Kan, Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, Vinh Phuc, Thai Nguyen, Lang Son, Phu Tho, and Quang Yen on Restoring the Nam Quan–Hanoi Railway*; Circular No. 15-TT/LKVB (October 13, 1954), *On Collecting Old Rails and Sleepers*; and Circular No. 16-TT/LKVB (October 13, 1954), *On the Reporting Regime for Provinces Producing Wooden and Stone Sleepers and Collecting Rails*. By 1955, 90% of the plan had been completed.

3.2.4. Direction of the Recovery and Consolidation of Financial and Budgetary Work

Following the liberation of the North, financial activities needed to be adjusted accordingly, shifting from a financial system primarily serving the requirements of the resistance war against the invading French colonialists to one serving national reconstruction and the rapid recovery of the economy. Accordingly, revenue and expenditure activities were expanded. Within this general context in the North, the Viet Bac Inter-zone entered a period of active economic recovery, which entailed substantial expenditure requirements.

In response to this situation, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 32-CT/LKVB (July 21, 1954), *On Industrial and Commercial Tax Tasks in 1954*; on October 18, 1954, it issued Circular No. 59-TT/LKVB, *To the Provincial Party Committees throughout the Inter-zone on Agricultural Tax Collection in the Inter-zone*; and on May 20, 1955, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 13/CT, *On Agricultural Tax Collection for the 1955 Summer Crop*. Under the close direction of the Party Committee and the Inter-zone Administrative Committee, the provinces enhanced their awareness of the importance of tax work in 1955. Most localities promoted the collective leadership role and assigned specific and clearly defined responsibilities to the cadres in charge.

In the final months of 1955, the Party Central Committee directed an increase in revenues and a gradual reduction in agricultural taxes, while intensifying efforts to combat embezzlement and waste and reduce staffing levels. Therefore, the immediate financial task of the Inter-zone was to move toward fiscal balance and actively increase revenue to ensure expenditure. In the context of gradually reducing agricultural taxes, inspection and supervision of industrial and commercial taxes and other taxes had to be strengthened. On December 10, 1955, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 99-TT/LKVB, *On Inspecting Compliance with Industrial and Commercial Taxes*; on January 16, 1956, it issued Directive No. 01-CT/LKVB, *On Strengthening Leadership over Industrial and Commercial Tax Work in 1956*.

As a result of these efforts, the collection of agricultural and industrial-commercial taxes showed remarkable progress compared with 1954. For the whole of 1955, agricultural tax collections delivered to State warehouses reached 102.9%, exceeding the target assigned by the Party Central Committee by 4,284 tons. By December 10, 1955, industrial and commercial tax collections had reached 11,753 tons against the centrally assigned target of 12,080 tons, equivalent to 97.9%; compared with 1954, revenue collected in 1955 reached 227%. During the first six months of 1956, the collection of both industrial-commercial and agricultural taxes fulfilled the assigned tasks, with agricultural tax collection for the summer crop reaching 115%.

3.2.5. Protection of the Economy against Sabotage by French Forces and Reactionary Elements

Following their defeat at Dien Bien Phu, during the Geneva Conference, French forces, while withdrawing from Vinh Phuc, Quang Yen, and other areas, also carried out acts of economic sabotage against the Inter-zone, bombing the Gia–Luong–Thuan base areas and the guerrilla zone in southern Vinh Phuc and damaging the Cau River irrigation system. In response to this situation, on July 7, 1954, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Directive No. 26-CT/LKVB, *On Responding to the Enemy's Schemes*, directing localities to strengthen the protection of the people's lives and property. On April 12, 1955, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 18-TT/LKVB, *To the Thai Nguyen and Bac Giang Provincial Party Committees on Organizing the Protection of the Cau River Irrigation System*.

In addition to the French forces, reactionary elements within the Inter-zone also carried out acts of sabotage targeting the transportation system. In Lang Son and Bac Giang, reactionary elements burned and destroyed railway sleepers. Therefore, to protect transportation infrastructure and the large quantity of railway sleepers, the Inter-zone Party Standing Committee issued Circular No. 40-TT/LKVB (July 7, 1955), *On the Protection of Wooden Railway Sleepers*. Along with sabotaging transportation routes, reactionary elements within the Inter-zone also exploited mistakes in the Party's land policy to oppose its implementation; disseminated distorted information and rumors to create confusion among the masses; and incited landlords to react through negative actions.

In response to this situation, the Inter-zone Party Committee directed that ideological issues among cadres had to be addressed. The Inter-zone convened a meeting of Party delegation secretaries to review the issue and resolved to take the

initiative in countering the enemy and to expand the movement against enemy sabotage as a key and central task in addressing the movement as a whole.

Conclusion of Chapter 3

After 1954, the North entered a period of economic recovery and the building of a new economy under the Party's leadership. The Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee formulated various appropriate policies to restore agriculture, handicrafts, commerce, and transportation, thereby contributing to the stabilization of the people's living conditions. Despite numerous difficulties resulting from the consequences of war, rugged terrain, and an underdeveloped economy, the process of economic recovery achieved many important results. Production gradually developed, the people's living conditions progressively stabilized, and the economic system was consolidated. These achievements contributed to the building of the socialist North and the creation of a strong rear base for the struggle for national reunification.

Chapter 4

ASSESSMENTS AND SOME LESSONS

4.1. Assessment of the Leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in Implementing Economic Tasks (1949–1956)

4.1.1. *Strengths, Achievements, and Their Causes*

4.1.1.1. *Strengths and Achievements*

First, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee proactively and promptly grasped and applied the Party's economic line, identified economic tasks as a central area of work, and formulated appropriate leadership policies closely aligned with actual conditions.

Second, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee demonstrated flexibility in its methods of directing various economic sectors, in accordance with the realities and conditions of the Inter-zone.

Third, under the leadership of the Party Committee, the economic sectors of the Viet Bac Inter-zone achieved significant accomplishments and played an important role in the resistance war, while also contributing to socio-economic recovery and the stabilization of people's living conditions following the restoration of peace.

4.1.1.2. *Causes of the Strengths and Achievements*

First, the Party's resistance line, economic line for the resistance war, and line on economic recovery in the North served as the guiding principles for the Inter-zone Party Committee in implementing economic tasks.

Second, Viet Bac was a region with a rich tradition of revolutionary struggle, and the ethnic communities in the Inter-zone had a tradition of patriotism, followed the Party, and had confidence in the victory of the resistance war under the Party's leadership.

Third, the Viet Bac Inter-zone covered a vast area with abundant resources and considerable potential for developing a diversified economy across various sectors. In particular, it possessed favorable soil, climatic, and river conditions for agricultural production and, at the same time, had considerable potential for achieving “self-sufficiency and self-reliance.”

4.1.2. *Limitations and Their Causes*

4.1.2.1. *Limitations*

Limitations in Awareness and Policy Formulation:

First, during the resistance war against the French colonialists, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's awareness of the position, role, and requirements of economic development was gradually enhanced; however, at certain times, it was still not fully comprehensive.

Second, limitations in awareness were also reflected in the fact that, at certain times and in certain localities, Party committees had not clearly identified the focus of each task or the relationships among different economic sectors.

Limitations in Direction and Organization of Implementation:

First, at certain times, direction was not sufficiently aligned with practical conditions and lacked flexibility; coordination among economic tasks was not synchronized; guidance, inspection, and supervision were not conducted regularly; and the capacity of a segment of cadres and the operational effectiveness of the economic and financial apparatus remained limited.

Second, in implementing the land policy, the Inter-zone Party Committee also committed errors and shortcomings.

4.1.2.2. Causes of the Limitations

First, owing to wartime conditions and the intense disruptive activities of the French colonialists and their collaborators, the implementation of tasks was not always timely, regular, or continuous.

Second, cadres in many localities had limited capabilities, and some cadres had not yet fully grasped the Party's viewpoints and policies.

Third, economic construction and development under wartime conditions was a new task.

4.2. Some Lessons from the Process of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's Leadership in Implementing Economic Tasks (1949–1956)

4.2.1. Maintaining and Strengthening the Party Committee's Leadership over the Implementation of Economic Tasks

The Party's sound and close leadership ensured the maximum mobilization of local resources, promoted the people's spirit of self-reliance and self-strengthening, and effectively organized the production, circulation, and distribution of goods to serve both the front and the rear base. Party committees at various levels proactively formulated economic development plans suited to local conditions, closely linking production with national defense tasks and ensuring the supply of food, foodstuffs, and essential goods for the armed forces and the people. In the context of threats from both internal and external enemies, the Party's role was not only that of the political leadership but also a pillar in orienting and promoting the development of the resistance economy. Regularly consolidating and strengthening the leadership of Party committees at all levels over the implementation of economic tasks was of great importance and constituted the foremost and prerequisite condition for the successful implementation of economic tasks. This was both an achievement and a major lesson drawn from the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee's leadership in implementing economic tasks from 1949 to 1956.

4.2.2. Exercising Proactivity and Flexibility in Leading Economic Tasks in Accordance with Local Conditions

During the 1949–1956 period, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee consistently grasped and strictly implemented the lines and policies of the Party Central Committee while flexibly applying the Central Committee's policies in accordance with the specific conditions of each locality. Following the principle of promoting the strengths of the revolutionary base area, utilizing local resources, and mobilizing the people's strength helped the resistance economy develop steadily. The harmonious combination of direction from the Party Central Committee and creativity in organizing implementation at the grassroots level was a decisive factor in achieving positive results. As a result, the Viet Bac Inter-zone not only ensured the people's livelihoods but also firmly fulfilled its role as a major rear base for the front, making an important contribution to the victory of the resistance war and to national construction following the restoration of peace.

4.2.3. Building the Economy Comprehensively while Focusing on Developing Economic Sectors with Potential and Advantages and Suited to the People's Level of Production

Building the economy comprehensively while focusing on developing economic sectors with potential and advantages and suited to the people's level of production constituted an approach and method that proved highly effective in economic construction and development in the Viet Bac Inter-zone both during the resistance war against the French colonialists and following the liberation of the North.

4.2.4. Strengthening the Mobilization of the People, Harnessing the People's Strength, and Relying on the People to Implement Economic Tasks

On the basis of recognizing that the principal resources lay with the people and that the implementation of economic tasks must rely on the people, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee formulated numerous policies and measures to mobilize and organize the people to participate in building the resistance economy during the resistance war against the French colonialists, as well as to play a major role in economic recovery following the restoration of peace in the North. Under the leadership and care of the Inter-zone Party Committee for their living conditions, various strata of the people in the Inter-zone voluntarily contributed human and material resources to the cause of resistance and national construction, thereby laying the foundation for victory in the protracted resistance war. Relying on the people and mobilizing the people's strength constituted a successful lesson of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee in leading economic development during the resistance war and the initial years following the restoration of peace in the North.

Conclusion of Chapter 4

During the 1949–1956 period, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee effectively led economic construction and development, making an important contribution to the victory of the resistance war against the French colonialists and to the recovery of the North after 1954. These successes stemmed from the sound direction of the Party Central Committee, the solidarity of the people, and the flexible application of the Party's policies to local conditions. Alongside these achievements, the leadership process still exhibited certain limitations resulting from wartime conditions and limitations in the contingent of cadres. This practical experience yielded numerous

valuable lessons for economic development in the northern midland and mountainous region today.

CONCLUSION

1. Thoroughly grasping the viewpoints of Marxism–Leninism on the economy and the role of the economy in social life, throughout the process of leading the revolution in general, the resistance war against the invading French colonialists, as well as the construction and consolidation of the North following the restoration of peace, the Party Central Committee, the Government, and President Ho Chi Minh formulated a sound, creative, and consistent economic line, reflecting continuity in leadership thinking and thereby contributing to the victory of the Vietnamese revolutionary cause.
2. The process by which the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee led the implementation of economic tasks from its establishment in 1949 until the completion of its mission in 1956 took place in two stages. During the 1949–1954 period, the principal task of the Inter-zone Party Committee was to build the resistance economy in order to serve the cause of resistance and national construction and bring it to victory. During the 1954–1956 period, the Inter-zone Party Committee's task shifted to postwar economic recovery in support of the construction and consolidation of the North.
3. The process of leading, directing, and organizing the implementation of economic tasks by the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee achieved many successes and demonstrated notable strengths. First and foremost were its strengths in awareness and policy formulation: the Party Committee proactively and promptly grasped and creatively applied the Party's economic line, correctly identified the position and role of economic tasks, and formulated policies closely suited to the practical conditions of the area. In organizing implementation, despite facing numerous difficulties caused by the war, the Party Committee provided relatively comprehensive direction over such economic sectors as agriculture, handicrafts, commerce, and finance. Under the leadership of the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee, the economy in the area not only gradually achieved self-sufficiency, stabilized the people's living conditions, and broke the enemy's blockade and embargo, but also ensured the provision of human and material resources to the battlefields, contributed to consolidating the North, and created the conditions for carrying out higher strategic tasks assigned by the Party Central Committee.
4. Alongside its strengths and successes, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee also exhibited certain limitations and shortcomings in leading economic tasks from 1949 to 1956. Notably, the Inter-zone Party Committee seriously acknowledged these limitations, conducted repeated reviews, drew lessons from experience, and promptly adjusted its leadership policies and measures.
5. From the practical experience of leading economic tasks during the 1949–1956 period, the Viet Bac Inter-zone Party Committee drew numerous valuable lessons of both theoretical and practical significance. These lessons provide valuable reference for the cause of socio-economic construction and

development in conjunction with ensuring national defense and security in the northern midland and mountainous region in the new era.

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