

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**THE LEADERSHIP OF THE REGION V PARTY COMMITTEE
IN MILITARY PROSELYTIZING WORK FROM 1961 TO 1975**

**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION MAJOR:
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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study

The military proselytizing offensive is a unique feature in the Vietnamese nation's tradition of resisting foreign invaders. Depending on the historical period, military proselytizing was also known by other names such as: psychological attack (*tâm công*), enemy proselytizing (*địch vận*), military-enemy proselytizing (*binh - địch vận*), and special propaganda (*tuyên truyền đặc biệt*). In essence, military proselytizing during the resistance war against the US for national salvation was a "special" mass mobilization campaign directed at soldiers of the Republic of Vietnam—who, for various reasons, had taken up arms for the enemy—encouraging them to return to the people and the revolution. It also involved propaganda efforts to make American and allied troops realize that the Vietnamese people's resistance was a just cause, while the US invasion was unjust, thereby inciting mutinies, anti-war protests, and demands for repatriation.

In the Party's art of directing the people's war, military proselytizing was identified as one of the three prongs of attack (military - political - military proselytizing). It played a direct role in influencing the opposing ranks, demoralizing their fighting spirit, and dismantling the enemy's war machinery from within. President Ho Chi Minh once emphasized the necessity of "winning over people's hearts," viewing it as a critical method to minimize casualties and secure sustainable victories. In reality, military proselytizing was not merely about mobilizing enemy soldiers but also encompassed building undercover bases, influencing soldiers' families, and coordinating closely with political and military struggles to create combined strength.

The Region V battlefield held a highly crucial strategic position in military, political, and geo-economic terms. Its territory covered the coastal plains of Central Vietnam, South Central Vietnam, and the Central Highlands. It bordered the Southeast region, Northeastern Cambodia, and Lower Laos, serving as a strategic gateway connecting the coastal plains to the mountainous Central Highlands. Region V was the first landing site for US expeditionary forces and the most active operational theater for US allied troops, featuring notoriously brutal South Korean brigades such as the Tiger, Blue Dragon, and White Horse. To counter the revolutionary movement in Region V, the enemy focused

on constructing a massive system of military, administrative, and logistical bases, deploying numerous elite regular units alongside dense Civil Guard and Self-Defense forces. Consequently, Region V became a theater of fierce tug-of-war between our forces and the enemy throughout the periods of the "Special War," "Local War," and "Vietnamization." Therefore, military proselytizing work held special significance in degrading the enemy's combat strength, paving the way for mass uprisings and the offensives of regular troops. Thus, studying the leadership of the Region V Party Committee in military proselytizing work contributes to elucidating the Party's leading role in directing the entire resistance war.

The Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work was influenced by multiple factors. The terrain was vast and heavily fragmented, comprising numerous mountainous and ethnic minority areas. Furthermore, the enemy's oppressive apparatus was tight, and intelligence and counterintelligence activities were complex. These characteristics imposed strict requirements on force organization, operational methods, and secrecy assurance. The Region V Party Committee not only thoroughly grasped the Central Committee's directives but also demonstrated proactiveness and creativity in building undercover networks, promoting the role of internal bases within the enemy's ranks, and flexibly combining military proselytizing with enemy and civilian proselytizing.

Based on the situational characteristics, requirements, and tasks of each resistance phase, the Region V Party Committee clearly defined the targets, task contents, capabilities, scale, and methods of military proselytizing attacks. This generated a broad mass movement, demoralized the enemy, and minimized revolutionary casualties; alongside military and political struggles, it formed the three-pronged attack that defeated all plots and war strategies of the US and the puppet government of the Republic of Vietnam. It pushed the enemy back step by step, achieved partial victories, and contributed to the ultimate overthrow of the enemy, the liberation of the South, and national reunification. Aside from the achieved results, military proselytizing work in Region V also had certain limitations: the direction of the Region V Party Committee and some subordinate committees was occasionally confused and passive, failing to keep pace with new developments; the implementation of policies regarding prisoners of war (POWs) and

surrendered soldiers in some localities was inadequate; and there were times when military proselytizing forces could not be successfully established within the enemy's regular units. Studying the leadership of the Region V Party Committee in military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975 aims to evaluate both successes and limitations, drawing lessons applicable to the current national construction and defense. For these reasons, the PhD candidate has chosen the topic "The Leadership of the Region V Party Committee in Military Proselytizing Work from 1961 to 1975" for the doctoral dissertation in the major of History of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

2. Research Objectives and Tasks

2.1. Objectives

To clarify the leadership of the Region V Party Committee in military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975, thereby extracting valuable lessons for reference and application in the current cause of national construction and defense.

2.2. Tasks

To review the literature related to the dissertation topic;

To elucidate the factors affecting the Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work;

To systematize and analyze the guidelines and directions of the Region V Party Committee regarding military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975;

To remark upon and draw lessons from the Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975.

3. Object and Scope of the Research

3.1. Object of the Research The leadership activities of the Region V Party Committee regarding military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975.

3.2. Scope of the Research

Regarding content: Military proselytizing work encompasses numerous components. Within the scope of this dissertation, the PhD candidate focuses on studying the Region V Party Committee's guidelines concerning the following: building the military proselytizing organization; establishing undercover bases; combining the military proselytizing struggle with political and military struggles; and implementing policies toward POWs and surrendered soldiers.

Regarding time: From 1961 to 1975. The dissertation takes 1961 as the starting milestone: in 1961, the Party Central Committee decided to dissolve Inter-region V and establish Region V and Region VI. The concluding milestone is April 1975, marking the victorious conclusion of the resistance war against the US for national salvation. The dissertation divides the Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work into two phases: 1961-1965 and 1965-1975. During the 1961-1965 phase, Region V was under the direct leadership of the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN); during the 1965-1975 phase, it was under the direct leadership of the Party Central Committee.

Regarding space: On the Region V battlefield. The spatial scope underwent adjustments at certain periods: From July 1961 to March 1966, Region V comprised the provinces of Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam (in 1962, the Party Central Committee split Quang Nam into Quang Da province in the North and Quang Nam province in the South), Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Kon Tum, and Gia Lai. In 1963, Khanh Hoa and Dak Lak from Region VI were merged into Region V. In April 1966, the Central Committee separated Quang Tri and Thua Thien from Region V to establish the Tri - Thien - Hue Party Committee. At this point, Region V included Quang Da, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Khanh Hoa, and Dak Lak.

4. Theoretical Basis, Research Methods, and Data Sources

4.1. Theoretical Basis

The dissertation is conducted based on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, and the guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam on military proselytizing work.

4.2. Research Methods

To achieve the set objectives, the dissertation employs specialized research methods, including historical and logical methods. Additionally, it integrates auxiliary methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, statistics, and fieldwork.

4.3. Data Sources

Documents of the Communist Party of Vietnam, from Volume 16 to Volume 36.

Documents (resolutions, directives, telegrams, reports, etc.) of the Party Central Committee and the Politburo archived at the National Archives Center II and National Archives Center III.

Documents (resolutions, directives, official dispatches, telegrams, reports, etc.) of the Region V Party Committee and local Party Committees archived at the Political Department of Military Region V, the Office of Military Region V, and local archives.

Scientific research works, history books of Region V, histories of local party committees, related journals, and dissertations.

5. Novel Contributions of the Dissertation

The dissertation systematizes a rich and diverse source of materials concerning the Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975.

It objectively, scientifically, and systematically reconstructs and reproduces the process of the Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work from 1961 to 1975.

It provides remarks, evaluations, and draws practical lessons from the Region V Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing work, offering valuable references for application in the current cause of national construction and defense.

6. Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Dissertation

6.1. Theoretical Significance

The dissertation contributes to the study and practical summarization of the Party's leadership in military proselytizing work during the resistance war against the US for national salvation, specifically through the practical leadership activities of the Region V Party Committee from 1961 to 1975.

6.2. Practical Significance

The dissertation helps to clarify and deepen the understanding of the historical reality of our people's resistance war against the US for national salvation under the Party's leadership, observed through the reality of the Region V battlefield.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of: the Introduction, Content (comprising 4 chapters and 10 sections), Conclusion, a list of the author's published scientific works related to the research topic, References, and Appendices.

Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Literature Review Related to the Dissertation Topic

1.1.1. Research works by domestic authors

1.1.1.1. General research works on the resistance war against the US for national salvation touching upon military proselytizing work

General research works on the resistance war against the US for national salvation related to military proselytizing by various authors and institutions include: *The War of Liberation and National Defense*, volume 2 (1973) by General Vo Nguyen Giap; *History of the Communist Party of Vietnam*, volume II, 1954-1975 (1995) by the Institute for Research on Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's Thought; *History of the Art of Vietnam's Military Campaigns 1945-1975* (1995) by the Vietnam Institute of Military History; the book *The Party Directs Winning Step-by-Step in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation 1965-1975* (2003) by Nguyen Xuan Tu; the doctoral dissertation in History of the Communist Party of Vietnam *The Communist Party of Vietnam Directing the Combination of Military, Political, and Diplomatic Struggles in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation from 1965 to January 1973* (2007) by Nguyen Van Bao; the work *Under One Flag: On the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam* (2010) by Tran Bach Dang; the work *History of the Resistance War in Eastern South Vietnam and the Far Southern Central Vietnam 1945-1975* (2011) by the Party Committee and Command of Military Region 7; the book *The Communist Party of Vietnam Directing Our Army and People Against the US Imperialists' "Vietnamization" Strategy 1969-1975* (2012) by Le Van Manh; the work *History of the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)*, volume IV, *The Historic Confrontation* by the Vietnam Institute of Military History (2013); the book *The US-Killing Belt in the Southern Battlefield 1965-1973* (2014) by Trinh Thi Hong Hanh; the work *The Great Spring Victory of 1975: The Strength of the Community of Vietnamese Ethnic Groups* (2015) by Giang Seo Phu; the work *The Great Spring Victory of 1975: The Strength of the Will to Unify the Fatherland and the Aspiration for Peace* (2015) by the Ministry of Defense, the Central Propaganda Department, and the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee; the work *Vietnam's Revolutionary War 1945-1975: Victories and Lessons* (2015) by the War Summary

Steering Committee; the work *The General Offensive and Uprising of the 1968 Tet Mau Than: The Decisive Turning Point and Historical Lessons* (2015) by the Ministry of Defense, the Central Propaganda Department, and the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee; and the work *Summary of the Party's Leadership in Military and National Defense in the Vietnamese Revolution 1954-2020* (2021) by the War Summary Steering Committee.

1.1.1.2. Research works on military proselytizing work in the resistance war against the US for national salvation

Works summarizing military proselytizing work in the South during the resistance war against the US for national salvation: The work *Summary of Military-Enemy Proselytizing Work in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the General Political Department of the Vietnam People's Army (2002); the book *The Miraculous Cover* by Ha Binh Nhung (2003); the article in the *Journal of Military History*, no. 8 (2008), "Military Proselytizing: A Crucial Prong of Attack in the US-Killing Belt" by Trinh Thi Hong Hanh; the article in the *Journal of Military History*, no. 4 (2010), "An Important Contribution of the Military-Enemy Proselytizing Prong at the Conclusion of the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation" by Nguyen Van Dinh; the book *Military-Enemy Proselytizing Work Contributes to Victory, the Great Spring Victory of 1975, a Brilliant Milestone in the History of the Vietnamese Nation* (2016) by Nguyen Van Bich; the book *The Party's Military Proselytizing Line (1930-1975)* by Tran Thuy Nga, Nguyen Thi Hong Phuong, and Pham Thanh Thuy; the doctoral dissertation in History of the Communist Party of Vietnam *The Central Office for South Vietnam Leads Military Proselytizing Work from 1969 to 1975* (2020) and the book *The Party's Military Proselytizing Work in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation Applied to Building Today's Army* (2023) by Nguyen Khac Trai; the basic scientific research project *The Central Office for South Vietnam Leads Military Proselytizing Work in Southern Vietnam (1961-1975)* by the Institute of History of the Party, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (2023); and the doctoral dissertation in Vietnamese History *Military Proselytizing Work on the Southern Battlefield During the US Resistance War, from 1961 to 1975* (2025) by Le Manh Tien.

Works summarizing military proselytizing work in various localities during the resistance war against the US for national salvation: The work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work in Dong Nai Province During the US Resistance War (1954-1975)* by the Executive Committee of the Dong Nai Provincial Party Committee (1998); the work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975) on the Former B2 Battlefield* by the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee (2000); the work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work in Ba Ria - Vung Tau Province in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Executive Committee of the Ba Ria - Vung Tau Provincial Party Committee (2001); the work *Military Proselytizing Work in Binh Duong Province (1954-1975)* by the Executive Committee of the Binh Duong Provincial Party Committee (2002); and the article in the *Journal of Military History*, no. 4 (2008), "The Enemy Proselytizing Offensive Prong in Hue, the 1968 Tet Mau Than" by Vu Quang Hien.

1.1.1.3. Research works on military proselytizing work in Region V in the resistance war against the US for national salvation

Research works on Region V touching upon military proselytizing work: The book *Ten Years on the Forefront Against the US by the Army and People of Region V*, published by the Region V Liberation Propaganda and Training Department in 1963; the book *Military Region 5: Victories and Lessons in the US Resistance War* by the People's Army Publishing House (1981); the Command of Military Region 5 (1989), *Region V: 30 Years of Liberation War*, volume II, *The Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1968)* and volume III, *The Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1969-1975)*; the book *Defeating Any Enemy: Typical Battles on the Region V Battlefield* (1993) by the Command of Military Region 5; the book *History of the Party Committee of Quang Tri Province*, volume 2 (1945-1975) by the Executive Committee of the Quang Tri Provincial Party Committee (1996); the work *Some Experiences in Directing Local People's War in Region V in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Institute of Military History (1999); the work *The US-Killing Belt on the Region V Battlefield: A Creation of the Vietnamese People's War* (2002) by the Institute of Military History; the book *History of the Party Committee of Gia Lai Province*, volume 2 (1945-2005) by the Executive Committee of the Gia Lai Provincial Party Committee

(2005); the book *History of the Party Committee of Military Region 5*, volume 2, *The Period of Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Party Committee of Military Region 5 (2010); the book *History of the Party Committee of Quang Ngai Province*, volume 1 (1930-1975) by the Executive Committee of the Quang Ngai Provincial Party Committee (2019); and the book *History of the Party Committee of Kon Tum Province*, volume 1 (1930-1975) by the Executive Committee of the Kon Tum Provincial Party Committee (2019).

Research works summarizing military proselytizing work in Region V: The work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work in Gia Lai Province During the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Gia Lai Provincial Party Committee (1998); the work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Thua Thien Hue Provincial Party Committee (1998); the *Summary Report on Military Proselytizing Work in the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Executive Committee of the Quang Ngai Provincial Party Committee (1999); the work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work on the Region V Battlefield During the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Standing Committee of the Party Committee and the Command of Military Region 5 (1999); the work *Summary of Military Proselytizing Work in Dak Lak Province During the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation* by the Dak Lak Provincial Party Committee (2001); the work *Military Proselytizing Work on the Binh Dinh Battlefield During the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Executive Committee of the Binh Duong [Binh Dinh] Provincial Party Committee (2004); the work *Summary of Political and Military Proselytizing Struggles in Quang Nam Province During the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation (1954-1975)* by the Executive Committee of the Quang Nam Provincial Party Committee (2021); the article in the *Journal of Military History*, no. 1 (2011), "Undercover Activities During the 1968 Tet Mau Than General Offensive and Uprising in Dak Lak" by Tran Thi Lan; the article in the *Journal of Military History*, no. 6 (2012), "Military Proselytizing Struggle in Quang Nam During the Early Years of the Resistance War Against the US for National Salvation" by Ha Van Ngoc; and the article in the *Journal of*

Military History, no. 10 (2015), "Military Proselytizing Work on the Quang Tri Battlefield in the Years 1961-1966" by Hoang Chi Hieu.

1.1.2. Research works by foreign authors

The works of foreign authors include: the book *Vietnam: A History* (published in Vietnamese as *Việt Nam cuộc chiến tranh mười nghìn ngày*) by Karnow [Maclear] (1990); the book *Vietnam at War: The History* (published in Vietnamese as *Những bí mật của cuộc chiến tranh Việt Nam*) by Phillip B. Davidson (1995); the article/book by Ron Moreau (2001) (*An American Communist Hero... / Việt Nam cuộc chiến không quên*); the book *Decent Interval* by Frank Snepp (2003); the book *Lost Victory* by William Colby (2007); the book *The Vietnam War: The Illustrated History* by Nigel Cawthorne (2007); the book *The Vietnam War Files* by Jeffrey Kimball (2007); the book *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers* by Daniel Ellsberg (2018); the book *Withdrawal: Reassessing America's Final Years in Vietnam* by Gregory A. Daddis (2021); the book *Tiger Force* by Michael Sallah and Mitch Weiss (2022); and the book *The Vietnam War: Intimate History (Nhìn lại quá khứ, tấn thăm kịch và những bài học về Việt Nam)* by Robert S. McNamara (2025).

1.2. RESEARCH RESULTS OF REVIEWED LITERATURE AND THE DISSERTATION'S RESEARCH FOCUS

1.2.1. Research results of reviewed literature

1.2.1.1. Regarding source materials

Studies on the Vietnamese people's resistance war against America for national salvation in general, and military proselytizing in particular, are abundant and diverse in genre. These include war summary books, reference materials, conference proceedings, scientific articles, and memoirs. They serve as valuable, reliable sources to elucidate the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975.

1.2.1.2. Regarding research approaches and methods

Domestic and international scientific works related to military proselytizing during the 1954-1975 period approach the topic from various angles: History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Military History, and Vietnamese History. These works employ diverse research methods, such as historical, logical, analytical, comparative, and statistical methods, covering a broad spatial scope from the entire Southern battlefield to key areas in Zone 5.

1.2.1.3. Regarding content

First, the studies have clarified the crucial role of Zone 5 in the resistance war against America for national salvation. Second, the works have elucidated the concept, content, and role of military proselytizing. Third, several studies focus on summarizing and clarifying the leadership roles of the Party, the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), and the Zone 5 Party Committee in military proselytizing. Fourth, some works evaluate the successes and limitations, drawing out historical lessons learned in military and enemy proselytizing. Fifth, scientific works by foreign authors primarily address U.S. policies during the Vietnam War.

1.2.2. The dissertation's research focus

First, the factors impacting the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership over military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975. Second, the guidelines and directives of the Zone 5 Party Committee regarding military proselytizing across two phases (1961-1965 and 1965-1975) concerning: building proselytizing organizations; establishing covert agents; combining proselytizing with military offensives and political struggles; and implementing policies for prisoners of war and surrendered troops. Third, reviewing and evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, and underlying causes during the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership and direction of military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975. Fourth, summarizing the experiences gained from the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership in military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975, which can be referenced and applied in the current cause of national construction and defense.

Chapter 1 Summary

Research indicates that military proselytizing has attracted the attention of numerous domestic and international scholars. The literature is extensive, approaching the topic from various angles, spatial scopes, timeframes, and research methods. These studies have initially outlined the military proselytizing situation across the Southern battlefield. Furthermore, research on military proselytizing in the Zone 5 battlefield has begun to clarify certain guidelines and directives of the Zone 5 Party Committee and local party committees, while also highlighting achievements, limitations, and historical lessons. However, there has yet to be an independent, systematic study on the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership over military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975.

Chapter 2

GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIVES OF THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE REGARDING MILITARY PROSELYTIZING (1961-1965)

2.1. FACTORS IMPACTING THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP OVER MILITARY PROSELYTIZING

2.1.1. Natural, cultural, and socio-economic conditions of Zone 5

Zone 5 held a particularly crucial position, sharing borders with Cambodia and Laos, and featuring multiple routes from the lowlands to the Central Highlands, alongside major airports and seaports. The area comprised three geographic zones: mountainous forests, coastal plains, and urban centers. The Zone 5 battlefield served as the northern frontline of the South. Consequently, Zone 5 was a vastly important strategic area for the entire country and the three Indochinese nations.

2.1.2. Military proselytizing situation in Zone 5 before 1961

Under the leadership of the Inter-Zone 5 Party Committee, military proselytizing achieved significant milestones. Between 1954 and 1960, the committee's prompt leadership effectively met revolutionary demands. However, alongside these strengths, there were limitations: a failure to fully assess enemy plots and tactics, and inadequate focus on implementation. In the early years, a mass movement for military proselytizing had not yet been established. In many areas, the public held antagonistic and disdainful attitudes towards Republic of Vietnam troops. Policy compliance in several places was largely flawed.

2.1.3. International and domestic situations and demands on the Southern revolution

Entering the early 1960s, socialist, nationalist, democratic, and peace movements continued their rapid and robust momentum, securing new victories. In Vietnam, on January 28, 1961, U.S. President Kennedy adapted the "Eisenhower Doctrine" and launched the "Special War" strategy in South Vietnam. In Zone 5, the enemy intensified efforts to herd the population into Strategic Hamlets. Faced with the schemes of the U.S. and the Republic of Vietnam government, the Southern revolution needed to lead the people in an uprising, combining the "three-pronged

attack" of political struggle, military offensive, and military proselytizing to defeat the enemy.

2.1.4. The Party's guidelines on military proselytizing

The Party's guidelines for the Southern revolution in general, and military proselytizing in particular, were reflected in documents such as: The Politburo's Directive on the immediate directions and tasks of the Southern revolution (January 24, 1961); The Politburo's Resolution "On revolutionary work in the South" (February 27, 1962); The Politburo's Resolution on the immediate situation, directions, and tasks of the Southern revolution (December 10, 1962); The Party Central Committee's Resolution Striving to advance and win new victories in the South (December 1963); and Resolution No. 2/NQ by COSVN (March 1964, 2nd iteration). These documents clarified the Party's guidelines on military proselytizing, focusing on: General objective: Combining military proselytizing, military offensives, and political struggles with troop mutinies to execute a General Uprising, overthrowing the puppet regime and invading forces. Core objective: Disintegrating the enemy ranks both ideologically and organizationally. Focal task: Supporting combat operations and thwarting enemy schemes such as population herding into "Strategic Hamlets". Strategic task: Establishing covert agents within the enemy's main units and key military branches.

2.2. GUIDELINES OF THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE REGARDING MILITARY PROSELYTIZING

The Zone 5 Party Committee's guidelines on military proselytizing were articulated through documents such as: Resolution No. 62 "On military proselytizing" by the Zone 5 Party Committee (February 1961); Resolution of the 3rd Expanded Conference of the Zone 5 Party Committee (July 31, 1963); Resolution of the 4th Conference of the Zone 5 Standing Committee (November 16, 1963); and Resolution of the 8th (Expanded) Conference of the Zone 5 Standing Committee (December 1964).

These documents highlighted the Zone 5 Party Committee's guidelines on military proselytizing with the following main points: Objective: Assisting in disrupting enemy sweep operations, terrorism, land-grabbing, and population herding into Strategic Hamlets to wear down and annihilate enemy troops, and disintegrate their paramilitary forces. Tasks: Conducting political propaganda offensives so that troops understand Party policies and rise up to overthrow the U.S. and the

Republic of Vietnam. Promoting struggle movements within enemy ranks, building forces, establishing covert agents, effectively executing military proselytizing policies, and integrating the "three-pronged attack" in proselytizing efforts...

2.3. THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S DIRECTION OF MILITARY PROSELYTIZING

2.3.1. Directing the organizational development of military proselytizing

To ensure military proselytizing met new requirements, the Zone 5 Party Committee instructed party committees at all levels and local party organizations to establish and consolidate Military Proselytizing Boards from the provincial down to the commune level, while enhancing education on military proselytizing to ensure that the entire Party, armed forces, and the general public thoroughly understood its significance, guidelines, policies, tasks, and methods.

From 1961 onward, the military proselytizing system in Zone 5 was organized across four levels (Zone, province, district, and commune). By 1962, Zone 5 had consolidated eight provincial Military Proselytizing Boards (ranging from 3 to 8 cadres each, mostly headed by a Standing Committee member, with full-time members in some areas), consolidated 68 district Military Proselytizing Boards, and established 515 commune- and hamlet-level proselytizing councils and boards.

2.3.2. Directing the establishment of covert agent networks

The Zone 5 Party Committee directed the establishment of covert agents categorized into several types: long-term sleeper bases; active operational bases tasked with intelligence gathering, propaganda, education, and leading soldier struggles; situational intelligence bases; and ethnic minority bases. By 1963, "Zone 5 had expanded its base network sixfold compared to 1961, with some provinces exceeding 300 bases; in Bình Định, for instance, personnel engaged in military proselytizing increased by 62% compared to 1962." In the plains of Zone 5, 43,000 bases across 1,500 hamlets were developed in 1964.

2.3.3. Directing military proselytizing in combination with military offensives and political struggles to eliminate tyrants, break enemy control, and dismantle Strategic Hamlets

To leverage combined strength, the Zone 5 Party Committee directed the integration of the "three-pronged attack" in dismantling Strategic Hamlets. Implementation of directives from the Zone Party

Committee and Military Region 5 on combining the "three-pronged attack" to break Strategic Hamlets took place vigorously, with key examples including:

During the 1964–1965 Winter-Spring Campaign, military proselytizing coordinated with main-force units to dismantle large clusters of Strategic Hamlets, expanding liberated areas. Across Zone 5, in late 1964 and early 1965, the proselytizing prong collaborated with military operations to disintegrate over 20,000 main-force and Civil Guard (Regional Forces) troops, including the complete collapse of 14 companies and 172 platoons.

Across Zone 5, in the first six months of 1964 alone, 1,080 Strategic Hamlets in the plains and 292 in the mountainous regions were destroyed. In the 1965 Spring-Summer Campaign, Zone 5 largely dismantled 2,100 out of 2,800 hamlets, bringing 2,104,000 people into liberated areas under popular control.

From 1962 to 1965, "Zone 5 as a whole caused the disintegration of 75,117 Republic of Vietnam soldiers (including 20,000 main-force troops), with 1,015 platoons disbanding en masse, primarily consisting of Popular Forces (Civil Defense) and Combat Youth units (peaking in 1964 at 33,000 soldiers)."

2.3.4. Directing the implementation of policy toward prisoners of war and surrendered troops

In executing military proselytizing policy, the Zone 5 Party Committee emphasized that during combat operations, cadres must thoroughly understand policies and maintain meticulous organizational planning to properly implement policies for the wounded, prisoners of war (POWs), and surrendered personnel. Under all circumstances, every effort had to be made to re-educate POWs and surrenderers, combining political education with humane conduct to convince and win them over.

As a result, in 1961, after receiving re-education, 284 enemy POWs and surrenderers were released. Over 1,000 captured personnel were brought together for education and subsequently released on the spot. In 1962, Zone 5 organized policy and proselytizing study sessions attended by 171,200 civilian participants; 18,500 families of RVN soldiers received policy education; and 730 cadres across provincial and district departments were briefed on tasks and policies regarding proselytizing aimed at enemy troops and puppet administrative officials (binh tề vận).

In 1965, out of 5,707 POWs and surrenderers, 252 were recruited into local guerrillas and the Liberation Army. Thanks to the effective execution of the surrender policy of the Party and the National Liberation Front (NLF), numerous deserters joined the revolutionary cause each year, returning to the people or becoming politically enlightened to serve as covert agents assigned appropriate duties.

Chapter 2 Summary

Between 1961 and 1965, the Zone 5 Party Committee thoroughly grasped the directives of the Party Central Committee and the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), promptly issuing guidelines on military proselytizing suited to practical conditions and specific target groups, thereby elevating military proselytizing to equal standing with political and military struggles. However, limitations remained: party committees at various levels lacked agility in mastering operational content and methods, particularly regarding the "Worker-Peasant-Soldier Alliance." Directives often relied heavily on general appeals with few concrete measures, while insufficient attention was given to main-force units, technical arms, officers, and urban centers. Furthermore, a section of grassroots proselytizing cadres lacked adequate training and fundamental knowledge.

Chapter 3

THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP IN INTENSIFYING MILITARY PROSELYTIZING (1965–1975)

3.1. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IMPACTING THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP OVER MILITARY PROSELYTIZING

3.1.1. International and domestic situations and requirements for the Southern revolution

From 1965 to 1975, the international communist and workers' movement, as well as global revolutionary movements, continued to expand rapidly. However, ideological consensus was lacking within the international communist movement regarding global revolutionary strategy.

During the 1965–1975 period, the United States prosecuted two successive war strategies in its aggression against Vietnam: "Local War" (Limited War) and "Vietnamization."

In response to enemy schemes and actions, military proselytizing during 1965–1975 was required to overcome pre-1965 limitations; expand covert bases within enemy main-force units; intensify urban proselytizing; and press forward with the "three-pronged attack" combined with diplomatic struggle to undermine enemy morale and defeat the war strategies of the U.S. and the Republic of Vietnam regime.

3.1.2. The Party's guidelines on military proselytizing

The Party's guidelines on military proselytizing were set forth in key documents, including: Resolution On the New Situation and Tasks (December 27, 1965) by the Party Central Committee; Politburo Resolution No. 154-NQ/TW On Stepping Up Military and Political Struggles in the South (January 27, 1967); Politburo Resolution On General Offensive and General Uprising in the South (August 1968); Politburo Directive Assessing the Situation of Enemy and Friendly Forces (November 9, 1968); Politburo Resolution No. 188-NQ/TW On the Situation and Tasks (May 10, 1969); Party Central Committee Resolution No. 196-NQ/TW (March 10, 1970); Politburo Resolution No. 107/QU On the New Situation on the Indochinese Peninsula and Our New Tasks (June 19, 1970); Party Central Committee Resolution No. 219-NQ/TW (April 4, 1972); and Party Central Committee Resolution No. 227-NQ/TW (October 13, 1973).

These documents affirmed the critical role of military proselytizing and emphasized closely integrating proselytizing with military and political struggles to disintegrate the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN); fostering anti-war sentiment among U.S. and allied troops; and prioritizing the development of proselytizing forces, networks, and policies. Key innovations compared to the pre-1965 period included expanding urban proselytizing and coordinating across four fronts: military, political, proselytizing, and diplomatic. Operational objectives focused on weakening the enemy at the grassroots level, neutralizing outposts, and disintegrating Civil Defense forces. The primary method was transforming military proselytizing into a mass movement, leveraging soldiers' family relationships.

3.2. GUIDELINES OF THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE REGARDING MILITARY PROSELYTIZING

The Zone 5 Party Committee's guidelines on military proselytizing were clearly articulated in documents such as: Resolution "On Urban Work" (March 20, 1966) by the Zone 5 Party Committee; Resolution On Concentrating All Efforts to Step Up Military and Political Struggles to Achieve the Greatest Victory in the Coming Period (March 1967) by the Expanded Zone 5 Party Committee; Military and Enemy Proselytizing Resolution (March 2, 1968) by the Zone 5 Military Proselytizing Board; Resolution of the 8th Zone Party Committee Conference (October 6, 1968); Resolution of the 9th Zone 5 Party Committee Conference (April 1969); Resolution of the Expanded Zone Standing Committee Conference (October 13, 1969); Resolution of the 10th Zone Party Committee Conference (March 1970); Resolution of the Expanded Zone Standing Committee Conference (October 7, 1970); Resolution of the Expanded Zone Standing Committee Conference (March 4, 1972); Resolution of the Expanded Zone 5 Standing Committee Conference (September 13, 1972); Resolution of the 3rd Delegates' Conference of the Zone 5 Party Organization (December 22, 1973); Resolution of the Expanded Zone Standing Committee Conference (May 14, 1974); and Resolution of the 2nd Zone 5 Party Committee Conference (July 1974).

These documents highlighted the Zone 5 Party Committee's directives regarding military proselytizing:

During the struggle against the "Local War" strategy: Intensifying urban military proselytizing while restoring and building solid covert bases for both immediate and long-term needs; exploiting internal enemy contradictions; and targeting the morale of U.S. and allied troops.

During the counter-"Vietnamization" phase: Closely combining military, political, and proselytizing efforts at the grassroots level to counter enemy sweeps and pacification; building bases among both enlisted personnel and officers (focusing on key units and the "Third Force"); and leveraging the combined strength of the three-pronged attack in rural areas to eliminate repressive forces, break up forced relocation zones, and gain control of communes and hamlets.

During the 1973–1975 phase: Objectives focused on attacking and eliminating enemy forces, disintegrating the enemy military and administration, and compelling compliance with the Paris Peace Accords. Tactical methods combined military, political, proselytizing, and diplomatic efforts; establishing underground bases within key units; using covert agents to eliminate notorious tyrants and sabotage enemy supply

depots and rear bases; and rigorously executing proselytizing policies aimed at military and civilian administrative personnel to exert psychological influence.

3.3. THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S DIRECTION OF MILITARY PROSELYTIZING

3.3.1. Directing the strengthening of military proselytizing organizations

The Zone 5 Party Committee instructed party committees to actively streamline and strengthen the military proselytizing apparatus from the zonal down to the commune level, bolster cadre strength in urban and lowland areas, restructure the proselytizing machinery to reinforce district and commune levels, separate commune/ward proselytizing bodies from political struggle boards, review covert networks, and guide the formation of core proselytizing teams.

By early 1966, the Zone and its provinces had organized 31 district-level work teams and 64 forward stationing teams, trained 205 legal cadres, 460 core proselytizers, and 33 secret couriers, while providing short-term training on immediate military and enemy proselytizing tasks to 4,487 hamlet and commune cadres.

From 1973 onward, Military Proselytizing Boards were continually strengthened. Several provinces stipulated that legal proselytizing cadres should make up 50% at the district level and two-thirds at the commune level. The Zonal Military Proselytizing Board comprised over 100 staff members. Provincial boards maintained staffs of 40 to 50 cadres each, while district and town boards had around 10 full-time cadres directly managing dozens of legal and illegal proselytizing bases.

3.3.2. Directing the expansion of covert agent networks

To step up military proselytizing, on April 29, 1965, the Standing Committee of the Zone 5 Party Committee issued a Directive to inter-provincial committees, cities, the P120 Party Committee, and various departments, demanding maximum effort to build covert agent networks to support combat operations, accelerate the disintegration of puppet troops, and serve overall strategic objectives.

In 1966, Zone 5 as a whole organized 170 covert bases. In 1967, Zone 5 established additional operational covert bases, with 64% within regular Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) units, 13.8% in Regional Forces (Civil Guard), and 12% in auxiliary forces. Overall, 85%

of hamlets and communes across the zone had established covert agent bases. By 1972, Zone 5 had built over 2,000 covert bases.

3.3.3. Directing proselytizing offensives combined with military and political attacks to counter rural pacification and pacification encroachments

As U.S. imperialism initiated the "Local War" strategy, landing U.S. and allied troops in the Zone 5 battlefield, the Standing Committee of the Zone 5 Party Committee called for a unified campaign across the entire zone. The primary goal was defeating enemy pacification and encroachment schemes, liberating remaining areas in rural, lowland, and mountainous regions, including key strategic transport routes, district seats, and towns.

During the first dry-season strategic counter-offensive (1965–1966), Zone 5 put over 47,000 enemy troops out of action. During the second dry-season counter-offensive (1966–1967), 73,422 enemy troops were put out of action, with 609 captured. Across Zone 5 in 1968, the coordinated "three-pronged attack" eliminated approximately 47,000 repressive forces and 3,000 notorious tyrants.

In 1974, 30,635 enemy soldiers deserted. Following the two campaigns of Spring–Summer and Autumn 1974, Zone 5 defeated the enemy's rural pacification plan, liberating 440,000 citizens and placing another 160,000 under revolutionary control. During the General Offensive and Uprising of Spring 1975, Zone 5 eliminated 31,366 soldiers, captured 26,340, registered 230,230 surrendered troops, and apprehended 25,310 more during mop-up operations.

3.3.4. Directing the implementation of policy toward prisoners of war and surrendered troops

The Zone 5 Party Committee directed the effective execution of military and enemy proselytizing policies, widely disseminating policies toward enemy troops outlined in the NLF Central Committee's Political Program; and enforcing policy provisions for rebellious/mutinous soldiers and deserters, including commendations and rewards.

In 1966, Zone 5 held 3,000 POWs. Through management and education, 2,254 soldiers were released, while 2,000 were released directly on the battlefield. In 1972, out of over 10,000 POWs and surrenderers, more than 2,000 voluntarily joined the revolutionary forces (811 reinforced main-force units and 1,476 were assigned to civilian administrative organs).

Following the victory of the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation, executing directives from the Party Central Committee and the General Political Department, the Party Committee and High Command of Military Region 5 released 280,000 POWs and remnant troops in Zone 5, shattering psychological warfare propaganda claiming "there would be a bloodbath and revenge once the Communists won."

Chapter 3 Summary

From 1965 to 1975, under the leadership of the Zone 5 Party Committee, party committees at all levels properly recognized the strategic position of military proselytizing, launching a widespread movement across all three strategic regions, launching political offensives against target groups anytime and anywhere, and mobilizing various social strata to join enemy and military proselytizing, including the families of Republic of Vietnam soldiers. However, limitations persisted: proselytizing efforts occasionally lagged behind the rapidly developing revolutionary movement; coordination among the three-pronged attacks was at times uncoordinated; and building revolutionary forces within enemy ranks remained slow. Following the Paris Peace Accords, vigilance slackened in some proselytizing work due to complacency. Furthermore, proselytizing movements within urban areas, main-force units, and senior officer ranks fell short of expectations.

Chapter 4

EVALUATION AND LESSONS LEARNED

4.1. EVALUATION OF THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP OVER MILITARY PROSELYTIZING (1961–1975)

4.1.1. Strengths and causes

4.1.1.1. Strengths

First, the Zone 5 Party Committee thoroughly grasped the guidelines of the Party Central Committee, formulating timely and correct military proselytizing directives.

During the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation, the Zone 5 Party Committee consistently adhered to and creatively applied the Party Central Committee's directives to practical conditions in Zone 5.

On this basis, it defined specific tasks, objectives, and targets for military proselytizing in each phase:

1961–1965 phase: Key target areas were primarily identified in rural, lowland, and mountainous regions to support breaking enemy coercive control, dismantling Strategic Hamlets, and winning over the population. The central objective was launching ideological attacks to demoralize enemy troops, minimize suppression, and support the masses in dismantling Strategic Hamlets.

1965–1975 phase: Alongside mountainous, lowland, and rural areas, military proselytizing shifted focus to intensify operations in urban centers. Coordination was elevated to a higher level, forming a unified four-front posture: military, political, proselytizing, and diplomatic.

Second, the Zone 5 Party Committee directed military proselytizing through flexible and creative methods.

In military proselytizing struggles, Zone 5 devised innovative methods such as: infiltrating personnel into Republic of Vietnam officer academies to embed them deeply within command centers and leadership ranks; launching movements such as the "Congress of Soldiers' Families," "Patriotic Soldiers' Families," and the "Green Shell, Red Heart" operational mode; promoting the movement "Clans and hamlets resolute in having no members conscripted by the enemy"; establishing core proselytizing teams around "Anti-U.S. Belts"; deploying the "Long-Haired Army" along these belts; and building "dual-functioning administrative bodies" within enemy-controlled areas.

Third, military proselytizing achieved major successes, contributing significantly to the victory of the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation.

Under the leadership of the Zone Party Committee, the organizational system for military proselytizing was regularly consolidated, and cadre strength met revolutionary demands; the Zone 5 Party Committee established highly effective covert bases; combining military proselytizing with military and political struggles yielded decisive victories; and Zone 5 effectively implemented policies toward prisoners of war and surrendered personnel.

4.1.1.2. Causes of strengths

First, timely and wise leadership and guidance were provided by the Party Central Committee regarding military proselytizing.

Second, the Zone 5 Party Committee possessed firm political resolve, unity, and creative thinking.

Third, the Party organization, military, and people of Zone 5 maintained a heroic, resilient, and indomitable tradition in the struggle against foreign aggression.

Fourth, Zone 5 combined proselytizing offensives with diplomatic struggle, upholding the righteousness of the cause.

Fifth, throughout its leadership, the Zone 5 Party Committee possessed a comprehensive awareness of the strategic position and role of military proselytizing.

4.1.2. Limitations and causes

4.1.2.1. Limitations

First, direction over military proselytizing by the Zone 5 Party Committee and local party committees was at times confused and passive, failing to keep pace with new developments.

Whenever the U.S. shifted to a new war strategy, or when operational targets and proselytizing subjects changed in the face of new enemy schemes and tactics, party committees at various levels occasionally displayed confusion regarding the strategic role of military proselytizing, resulting in slow formulation of guidelines, operational modes, and execution measures.

Second, direction over the organization and building of proselytizing forces at times fell short of requirements.

In certain localities, force building failed to meet new demands, leading to missed opportunities for proselytizing offensives that could have secured larger victories. The competence of a section of grassroots proselytizing cadres was rarely upgraded through training; though enthusiastic and experienced, they lacked fundamental knowledge.

Third, at times, military proselytizing directed at U.S. and allied troops failed to achieve intended targets.

Proselytizing targeting U.S. and allied forces remained limited in scope, scale, and quality, lacking representative collective mutinies, failing to embed covert bases within enemy military units, and falling short in mitigating enemy atrocities.

Fourth, compliance with POW and surrender policies in some localities was occasionally flawed.

The implementation of proselytizing policies suffered from shortcomings regarding POWs, surrenderers, and soldiers' families.

Certain localities at times exhibited narrow-mindedness, prejudice, and coercion over persuasion, causing doubt and mistrust toward the revolution among soldiers and their families, thereby hindering proselytizing efforts.

4.1.2.2. Causes of limitations

First, the enemy's insidious schemes, brutal tactics, and harsh repressive policies negatively impacted proselytizing efforts.

Second, certain party committees exhibited subjective mindsets in their awareness and direction of military proselytizing.

Third, Military Proselytizing Boards at various levels occasionally failed to effectively fulfill their functions and tasks.

Fourth, the quantity and quality of military proselytizing cadres in some localities remained limited.

4.2. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ZONE 5 PARTY COMMITTEE'S LEADERSHIP OF MILITARY PROSELYTIZING (1961–1975)

4.2.1. Timely and accurate assessment of the situation, correct identification of targets, and formulation of appropriate military proselytizing guidelines

Throughout its leadership, Zone 5 accurately assessed conditions and identified targets of military proselytizing across each enemy war strategy. Based on accurate evaluations of enemy schemes, mindsets, organization, and psychology, the Zone 5 Party Committee promptly issued effective and suitable proselytizing objectives, contents, and modes tailored to each phase, operational target (U.S., Republic of Vietnam, South Korean forces), and military branch across all three strategic regions.

4.2.2. Close integration of military proselytizing with political and military struggles, and flexible application of various proselytizing forms

Under the Zone Party Committee's leadership, the relationship between military, political, and proselytizing struggles was correctly addressed, resolutely overcoming erroneous perceptions that either overemphasized or minimized military proselytizing. Combining military, political, and proselytizing struggles forged the combined strength of people's war, representing a revolutionary method and art.

4.2.3. Mobilizing and organizing the entire population to participate in military proselytizing as a fundamental factor determining success

Under the leadership of the Zone 5 Party Committee, military proselytizing genuinely became a mass movement. It leveraged the combined strength of all administrative levels, sectors, socio-political groups, and organizations—such as trade unions, farmers' associations, youth and women's unions, soldiers' mothers associations, students, soldiers' families, and patriotic religious organizations—making military proselytizing a deep, widespread, and continuous offensive against the enemy that disrupted their rear areas right within their strongholds to achieve major victories.

4.2.4. Building a cadre force strong in political ideology and professional expertise as the core of the movement

Under the leadership of the Zone Party Committee and local party organizations, Zone 5's proselytizing cadre force steadily grew from small to large, weak to strong, and from a small initial core into a sizeable team with an appropriate structure and increasingly high political and professional caliber. Organized within a complete system from the zonal, provincial, and district down to grassroots levels, this force served as the core for a broad mass movement that continuously and proactively attacked the enemy, serving as a primary driver of success in military proselytizing.

4.2.5. Upholding humanitarianism and righteousness in military proselytizing and in implementing policies toward prisoners of war and surrendered troops

The success of military proselytizing on the Zone 5 battlefield stands as a testament to the power of righteousness, humanitarianism, and revolutionary clemency. These achievements not only affirm the skillful and ingenious leadership of the Zone 5 Party Committee, but also illustrate the noble humanistic values of POW and surrender policies—a sharp weapon embodying the Vietnamese nation's tradition of "overcoming brutality with justice, replacing violence with benevolence."

Chapter 4 Summary

Between 1961 and 1975, military proselytizing demonstrated significant strengths: the Zone 5 Party Committee thoroughly grasped Central Party guidelines to formulate timely and correct proselytizing directives, while directing proselytizing work with flexible and creative

methods, yielding major achievements. Alongside these strengths, limitations persisted: direction by the Zone 5 Party Committee was at times confused and passive; force-building remained limited in certain periods; proselytizing targeting U.S. and allied troops did not achieve desired results; and policy enforcement in some localities was flawed. From the practical experience of the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership over military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975, five historical lessons have been drawn, serving as valuable reference points for current national construction and defense.

CONCLUSION

1. The victory of the Party organization, military, and people of Zone 5 in the resistance war against America for national salvation was the combined result of numerous factors, to which military and enemy proselytizing made important contributions. The Party organization, military, and people of Zone 5 inherited and promoted our ancestors' tradition of fighting the enemy through psychological persuasion ("tâm công")—"overcoming brutality with justice, replacing violence with benevolence"—aligned with the Party's line of all-people, comprehensive people's war, holding high the righteous banner of the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation.

2. Under the leadership of the Zone 5 Party Committee, military proselytizing underwent profound transformations, developing from low to high levels, staying close to practical conditions, and achieving major victories. During the 1961–1965 period, the Zone 5 Party Committee promptly formulated military proselytizing guidelines with creative and flexible methods suited to practical conditions. The Zone Party Committee and local party committees directed the building of proselytizing forces from the zonal down to commune and hamlet levels, ensuring both quantity and quality, mobilizing the entire population for proselytizing work, and integrating the "three-pronged attack" to break coercive control and dismantle Strategic Hamlets, frustrating the U.S. "Special War" strategy. During the 1965–1975 period, particularly when the U.S. launched the "Local War" strategy, proselytizing faced immense challenges in mobilizing two distinct target groups: U.S./allied troops and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. However, through correct guidelines, contents, and methods, alongside creative tactics such as establishing "Anti-U.S. Belts," adopting the "green shell, red heart"

operational mode, and holding "Congresses of Soldiers' Families," military proselytizing contributed significantly to defeating the war strategies of the U.S. and the Republic of Vietnam regime.

3. Objectively, leadership over military proselytizing suffered from certain limitations: direction by the Zone 5 Party Committee was at times confused and passive; force-building was occasionally constrained; proselytizing targeting U.S. and allied forces fell short of expectations; and enforcement of POW and surrender policies in some localities remained flawed.

4. The study of the Zone 5 Party Committee's leadership over military proselytizing from 1961 to 1975 yields five historical lessons: 1) Timely and accurate assessment of the situation, correct identification of target groups, and formulation of appropriate proselytizing guidelines. 2) Close integration of military proselytizing with political and military struggles, along with flexible application of proselytizing forms. 3) Mobilizing and organizing the entire population to participate in proselytizing as a fundamental factor determining success. 4) Building a proselytizing cadre force strong in political ideology and professional expertise to serve as the core of the movement. 5) Upholding humanitarianism and righteousness in military proselytizing and in the implementation of policies toward POWs and surrendered troops.

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