COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND FACTIONALISM

An Essay on Ho Chi Minh's Legacy

Reproduced from *Collective Leadership and Factionalism: An Essay on Ho Chi Minh's Legacy* by Thai Quang Trung (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985). This version was obtained electronically direct from the publisher on condition that copyright is not infringed. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior permission of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. Individual articles are available at < http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg >

The **Institute of Southeast Asian Studies** was established as an autonomous organization in May 1968. It is a regional research centre for scholars and other specialists concerned with modern Southeast Asia, particularly the multi-faceted problems of stability and security, economic development, and political and social change.

The **Institute** is governed by a twenty-two-member Board of Trustees comprising nominees from the Singapore Government, the National University of Singapore, the various Chambers of Commerce, and professional and civic organizations. A ten-man Executive Committee oversees day-to-day operations; it is chaired by the Director, the **Institute's** chief academic and administrative officer.

The responsibility for facts and opinions expressed in this publication rests exclusively with the author, and his interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views or the policy of the Institute or its supporters.

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND FACTIONALISM

An Essay on Ho Chi Minh's Legacy

Thai Quang Trung

ISEAS INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

Published by
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Pasir Panjang
Singapore 0511

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

© 1985 Institute of Southeast Asian Studies

ISBN 9971-988-01-1

Contents

Preface

FOR almost half a century, a small group of men of unshakeable fidelity to their vision, of iron will and sharp political skill, have succeeded in their fight against the French, Americans, Chinese and, often simultaneously, other Vietnamese and neighbouring Laotians and Cambodians. This is a unique phenomenon in history, fascinating for some and controversial for others, but disturbing for all. It has contributed, however, more to the spreading of their legend than to an understanding of what should be termed a "permanent enigma" for decision-makers as well as scholars.

This essay is part of a broader study on the Vietnamese communist leadership reinterpreted. It intends to go beyond the legend of Ho Chi Minh and his disciples. Beyond the façade of unity, factionalism is the main feature of the Vietnamese communist movement and its leadership. But paradoxically, factionalism, contained within the framework of collective leadership, has been rather a factor of strength than evidence of weakness. Indeed, contending factions in Hanoi have functioned for years as a kind of internal dynamic, while the overbid of Moscow and Beijing towards Vietnam have rather contributed to enhance the war-system of the Vietnamese communist movement.

Ho Chi Minh was far from being a communist dictator, of Tito's calibre, for example. However, his legacy is that his style of collective leadership contributed to the institutionalization of factionalism in Hanoi, while his policy of equidistance between Moscow and Beijing became more or less a necessity for the leadership's unity. Predictably Ho Chi Minh did not leave behind a unified party. Indeed, the Vietnamese Communist Party was soon to witness the degeneracy of the collective leadership, as well as the renunciation of the equidistance policy between the two communist powers.

The original idea of this essay has been germinating for some time — ever since I wrote a much debated piece on the legend of Ho Chi

Minh*. But I am indebted to Ambassador David Marshall, who introduced me to the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies where the accademic environment and specifically the Vietnamese materials in its library have been of most benefit for my research. To Professor K. Sandhu, who has given me encouragement and support, I express my warmest thanks. I wish also to acknowledge the editorial assistance of Helen-Elysabeth West and Triena Ong. To both, I am grateful. Of course, the persons to whom I am indebted for help do not necessarily share my personal views on the subject of this book.

Paris, Spring 1985

* "Les Deux Visages de Ho Chi Minh", *L'Express*, Document, 9–15 February 1980.

Introduction

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND FACTIONALISM
A Confusing Debate

LEGENDS die hard. Especially so the legend that surrounds the Vietnamese communist leadership. The legend of Ho Chi Minh has been so pervasive and enduring that for many Western observers it is inconceivable to imagine that his authority could ever have been contested by any of his disciples. Moreover, the fact that the Vietnamese communist movement has been involved in such disparate and protracted struggles throughout its lifetime has probably made it difficult for many people to understand how, in a state of internal disunity, its leadership could possibly have been able to confront the superpowers. This state of mind, which stems more from some hidden fascination with the image of a David-Goliath confrontation than any scientific approach, has prevailed amongst some members of the Western academic community. Even some of the most brilliant scholars in Vietnamese studies seem to subscribe to the view that the Vietnamese communist leadership is a model of unity, since it has been proven as an example of stability and continuity.

According to Douglas Pike, Hanoi's leadership was "forged of a constant forty-year association", the members of which shared "the

same common experience, the same development, the same social trauma".[1] The ruling group in effect started out as "a closed corporation" in the early 1940s and has remained virtually unchanged ever since. In the words of David Elliot, this group also had "a wealth of shared revolutionary experience, as well as a common external enemy that probably provided strong bonds of solidarity". Elliot quoted Ho, who once calculated that the thirty-one members of the pre-1960 Central Committee (which included all the current Politburo members) had been imprisoned for a cumulative total of 222 years, "an experience which impressed on them the importance of group solidarity and organizational discipline".[2]

Both these analysts have shared roughly the same assessment of the nature of power in Hanoi. Douglas Pike wrote: "Political power is highly concentrated. It exists almost entirely in the hands of the men of the Politburo. Probably no other society in the world has quite the concentrated political power that exists in North Vietnam."[3] David Elliot observed that "the relatively small size of the political system itself surely limited the possibility for an individual or faction to create an autonomous regional or institutional base of power". In his view, "the administrative apparatus in the DRV [Democratic Republic of Vietnam] was quite modest. Hence, the top leaders had taken on a large number of diverse functions, and there was a tightly woven, highly personalized net of interrelationships between party and state institutions". Moreover, he argued that unlike China's Politburo, the ruling body in Hanoi, with only eleven members, was "compact enough to function effectively as a day-to-day decision-making group".[4]

Recently, another scholar, Carlyle Thayer, proposed the collegial model as "the best framework for determining Vietnamese perspectives on national security and foreign policies".[5] He believed that "the collegial system, even if it allows for the identification of individual and factional disagreements, is not one of contention for power by contending rivals, but one in which there is basic agreement over the ultimate ends and disagreement over the means to achieve these ends. The system has evolved and remained stable

because the ultimate ends have remained relatively constant for so long a period of time: national reunification and national survival in the face of a more powerful adversary (France, America, China)."[6] In supporting his view, Carlyle Thayer quoted a remark made in 1973 by Hoang Tung, the editor of the Party's newspaper *Nhan Dan*:

> In the inner activities of our officials some differences of views are normal. When they once deliberate each has his own view on a specific issue (but there is no disagreement on fundamental principles). If necessary, we take a vote, if necessary, we work on the basis of a majority. The leaders have been working together over 30 years already and they have carried out their liberation struggle for 40 years, they are all comrades who know each other well.[7]

However, Thayer, after a survey of the major paradigms dominating the study of Hanoi's decision-making process and based on the methodology known as Kremlinology, recognized that "the explanatory power of the collegial model is limited".[8] Since its Fifth Congress held in March 1982, the Vietnamese Communist Party has dropped six long-serving members of the Politburo, among them General Vo Nguyen Giap, the most trusted of Ho's disciples. In fact, the myth of unity within Hanoi's leadership has been seriously shaken, as just after its final victory, the Fourth Congress in December 1976 removed from the Central Committee at least ten important officials, most prominently Politburo member Hoang Van Hoang and Central Committee member General Chu Van Tan, both close followers of Ho from the early years of the Vietminh struggle.

In contrast to the collegial model, a factional model was also developed. The proponents of the factional model viewed the decision-making process in Hanoi as involving different factions continuously engaged in a power struggle. They differentiated the various factions within the VCP Politburo along ideological dichotomy as hardliners versus moderates or along the pro-Beijing versus pro-Moscow cleavage. The most well-known analyst of this trend is undoubtedly P.J. Honey, who wrote at the time of the Third Congress in September 1960 that "rival factions exist within the Lao Dong Party and it has appeared probable that Ho Chi Minh encourages them, for he imposes his wishes upon the Party by lending his weight to the faction which happens to advocate the

policy he considers the most appropriate at any given time".[9] Honey based the evidence of rival factions on the deep personal animosity between Truong Chinh and Vo Nguyen Giap, along with that between Le Duan and Le Duc Tho, in addition to the ideological alignment which he placed along pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese lines.[10] Later, he preferred to label the factions, led on the one hand by Le Duan and Vo Nguyen Giap and on the other by Truong Chinh and Le Duc Tho, as pragmatists versus ideologues.[11] In any case, Honey concluded that "Ho's backing ensures that the views of this faction prevail and, in this way, he continues to exercise the powers of a dictator while appearing to act in the most democratic fashion".[12]

Going further in the factional framework, Thomas Latimer has supported the thesis that, despite the apparent unity of purpose which the Lao Dong party projected, policy deliberations regarding South Vietnam were characterized by a continuing debate between two elements within its leadership:

> One group tended to give greater weight to the importance of consolidating the Party's hold over North Vietnam and developing the economy of the Northern half of Vietnam. The other group urged a greater emphasis on extending the Party's control over all South Vietnam. Members of both groups shared the desire to gain control over South Vietnam and to see North Vietnam enjoy a greater level of prosperity. The difference between them was in the relative priority each placed on those two main tasks.[13]

According to Latimer, Truong Chinh was the spokesman for the North-oriented group, while Le Duan was the leader of the South-oriented faction. Le Duan was continuously disagreeing with Truong Chinh about the degree to which the situation in the South permitted greater attention being devoted to the building of socialism in the North. Latimer went further to explain: "To some extent, the differences in attitude between the North Vietnam-firsters and the South Vietnam-firsters were a product of the assigned duties of certain key party leaders."[14] In other words, Hanoi's leadership could be classified as "builders versus fighters", to use the labels proposed by Donald Zagoria.[15]

In addition to these differences, which to a certain degree corresponded to the provincialism prevailing within the Party's

apparatus, strategic disagreements were believed to develop within the Party's leadership over how the revolution in the South should be conducted and how victory should be achieved. One group, led by Le Duan, thought South Vietnam could be taken quickly by force of arms, by placing most of their reliance on main force warfare in an effort to race ahead to an early and complete military victory. The other, conducted by Truong Chinh, saw protracted war strategy as the key for final victory and insisted on the combination of armed struggle and political proselytizing.

This basic debate was accordingly coupled with another dispute over the role and nature of the People's Army of Vietnam. General Giap, who favoured an offensive strategy with growing intervention of regular forces, insisted on the role of arms and technics, which implied larger assistance from the Soviet Union, while General Nguyen Chi Thanh, who advocated a more defensive but protracted strategy, put emphasis, like the Chinese, on the role of man and the power of the masses.[16] According to Douglas Pike, those who favoured a military route were in turn divided into two groups: "the regular force strategists and the neo-revolutionary guerrilla war or protracted conflict strategist".[17] These two groups were often described in the press as the big-unit war versus the fifty-year war advocates.

However, the proponents of the factional model have not up to now provided enough evidence on the classification of the Politburo members along precise cleavages. Thus a "U.S. National Security Study Memorandum", which reflected the view of the intelligence community, usually well informed about the internal debate within the Vietnamese Communist Party, was forced to conclude in 1969 with an acknowledgement of confusion: "There is general agreement that knowledge of the existence and significance of possible factions within the Hanoi leadership is imprecise. There are differences of opinion within the leadership on tactics as opposed to ultimate objectives but there are not stable 'Moscow and Peking' factions. The Hanoi leadership will form different alignments on different issues."[18] Douglas Pike, who is considered an authority on the matter, reached the same conclusion:

> In recent years it was fashionable among scholars to divide the Politburo

> members into hard-soft factions: the dogmatists or pro-Chinese faction versus the moderate or pro-Soviet faction, with a smaller faction called the semi-opportunists or nationalists-cum-communists standing in between. In somewhat simplified terms, Hanoi was seen as a debating forum for arguing the merits of furthering communism by means of wars of liberation versus the method of peaceful coexistence. Onto this was grafted the local debate of how best to achieve the unification of North and South Vietnam. The Politburo then could be divided into the pro-Soviet or dove camp and the pro-Chinese or hawk camp.[19]

To add to the confusion, another analyst, Robert Rogers, had the quite original idea of applying the more quantitative than qualitative method to approach the belief-system of the four most prominent leaders in Hanoi. The result of his research is quite disconcerting: "Le Duan, who has long been identified as pro-Soviet, has a USSR to China quotient of 4.4 to 1. On the other hand, Truong Chinh, who is thought of as pro-Chinese by most Western observers, has a USSR to China quotient of 11.6 to 1, a distinctly higher pro-Soviet public stance than Le Duan's. Pham Van Dong's quotient is the most even handed and neutral in substance at 1.5 to 1, while Vo Nguyen Giap's quotient is a moderate 3.2 to 1."[20] Rogers found all four leaders in their public statements to be decidedly pro-Soviet and conservative doctrinally, with all manifesting a strong nationalistic tendency. However, he concluded sceptically: "The evidence revealed by quantitative references to either Russia or China is, of course, hardly conclusive and may to an unknown degree be based simply on pragmatic recognition of Hanoi's greater dependence on Moscow and fear of their powerful Chinese neighbour."[21]

Naturally, great was the temptation to elude the problem, by asserting that the Vietnamese communist leadership spoke with a single voice. The typical advocate of this tendency was W. Smyser, who wrote: "That voice, which reflected the collective policy of the Lao Dong leadership, has been used here as the basis for analysis of Hanoi's attitude."[22] Furthermore he explained: "The intense and disciplined quality of Vietnamese nationalism and the sense that the Lao Dong was engaged in a life-or-death struggle, probably caused Lao Dong leaders to maintain a common public front, even if there was some internal disagreement." According to W. Smyser, a

detailed analysis of statements by Hanoi's leaders did not disclose "the kind of consistent pattern that could be used to argue that any Lao Dong leader was partial to the Soviet Union or to China". However, Smyser was careful enough to recognize that: "This does not necessarily mean there were no differences of opinion within the DRV, nor that some of the leaders may not have felt greater sympathies at one time or another, or even consistently, for the Soviets or the Chinese". He commented that "disputes were successfully contained within the structure of the Lao Dong party and were not publicly manifest to the extent that clear and defensible conclusions could be reached on the political or personal affiliations of major Lao Dong figures".

Thus, we have come full circle back to the starting point: the myth of a unified leadership in Hanoi. A survey of the problem shows sufficiently that while there was general agreement amongst Western scholars that some cleavages within the VCP Politburo did exist, they were however not in a position to provide persuasive evidence and clear classification of such divisions along the lines of personal rivalries, ideological dichotomies, or pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese factions. The major weaknesses of the proposed models is due to the confusion between image and reality. The paradox exists in that while most Western scholars understood there was in Hanoi broad recognition that any sign of disunity would be viewed by party members and the enemy as evidence of the leadership's flagging determination to pursue its basic goals of liberating South Vietnam and dominating Indochina, their tendency however was still to accept for granted the image of a unified leadership which Hanoi wanted to project inside and outside the country.

Yet could one ignore that the creation and the spreading of myths were also a fighting component of the dialectics applied by the Vietnamese Communist Party in its conquest for power? To be sure, one of the first decisive victories of this party was, in the aftermath of the so-called August Revolution, to have very soon built up the legend of Ho, the uncontested arbitrator of Vietnamese nationalism, while Ho himself still had to negotiate with his own extremist followers within the Vietminh directorate. Since that time, as the Vietnamese communist movement has developed, Ho's legend has

grown, whereas his power over his close associates was far from being unchallenged. Later the process of mystification of Ho's authority, probably with his encouragement, reached such a dimension that it soon became impossible to replace him. When the party was faced with the question of his succession as long ago as 1960, Ho did not have a single successor as chief of Vietnamese Communism. According to the party's iconography: "President Ho left behind a collective leadership which he had *at great pains* built and nurtured. It is a collective of his closest comrades in arms and most outstanding disciplines. It is a collective of revolutionary fighters who have been tempered and tested in the long and arduous revolutionary struggle."[23]

What is paradoxically remarkable is that while Hanoi leaders certainly did not want to raise any doubt among party members or to incite any encouragement among enemies by showing disunity, their divergences surfaced frequently in print through party media, even if in veiled forms. It is all the more significant that some prominent leaders, such as Le Duan and Truong Chinh, consistently take the lead of what should be termed the "Great Debate", by expressing over the years more contradictory than complementary lines. Lesser ranking Politburo members, like Pham Van Dong, Vo Nguyen Giap, Le Duc Tho, and Nguyen Chi Thanh were also following the example of their respective leaders by sustaining the debate with opposing arguments. Was it an expression of some form of higher democracy — or more precisely democracy from the top — only reserved for the ruling circle? Or was it a manifestation of factionalism? In any case, the debate was intense not only before major decisions or Party Congress, when diverse opinions were allowed, but also after the formulation of the Party line, when the leadership was supposed to demonstrate "unity and oneness of mind".

Contrary to the thesis set forth by W. Smyser, a close study of Hanoi's documents reveals a pattern of allegiance of specific Vietnamese communist leaders to either China or the Soviet Union. The existence of pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet personalities or groups within the VCP Politburo is far from being an invention of Western sources.[24] As a matter of fact, two sets of writings of respectively

Truong Chinh and Le Duan have provided the kind of persuasive evidence for asserting that they were the two leading figures of the pro-Beijing and pro-Moscow groups in Hanoi. On the one hand, Truong Chinh's major works since the publication of his famous treatise "The Resistance Will Win", were profoundly influenced by Mao Zedong's writings.[25] In a collection of articles published in 1961 and entitled significantly "Vietnam and China in the Common Struggle",[26] the Sino-Vietnamese convergence has been dated back to one of Truong Chinh's first articles in 1949 praising the victory of the Chinese revolution. This collection dealt with the whole period through to 1961, during which the Chinese revolutionary model was impressing its hallmark on the Vietminh's struggle and the building process of its regime.

On the other hand, Le Duan's collection, published at the end of 1982, was entitled no less significantly "Solidarity and all-around cooperation with the Soviet Union is a matter of principle, strategy and revolutionary sentiments".[27] The VCP Secretary-General dated the alliance option with Moscow back to his speech before the Twenty-third Congress of the CPSU in 1966, in which he hailed the Soviet Union as "the most reliable friend in struggle".[28] He dealt with the recent period up to 1982, until a resolution, adopted at the Fifth Party Congress, stipulated "the need for the Party to educate generations of Vietnamese to hold firmly the principle of the Soviet-Vietnamese solidarity".[29]

It would be erroneous to assert that, because the VCP leadership has been united in its basic goals of liberating South Vietnam and dominating Indochina, there have only been disagreements over just how best to go about achieving these goals. Long before the Sino-Soviet alliance broke and set up the framework within which the Lao Dong leaders were progressively to determine their respective positions, Ho Chi Minh and Truong Chinh had developed their own and diverging visions of revolution in Vietnam. Ho's view called on the *bolshevik spirit*, while Truong Chinh's perspective relied on the *model of the people's war* with which Tito and Mao were experimenting at that time. Thus from the outset, two perspectives on revolution, more contradictory than complementary, confronted the Vietnamese communist movement

and contributed to the development of ideological cleavages within its leadership.

Later the Sino-Soviet dispute, which reflected in the debate in Hanoi, was likely only to accentuate these cleavages. Without any doubt, the problem of foreign assistance from the communist world was of vital significance to the Lao Dong struggle. But to reduce the Great Debate in Hanoi to a vulgar affair of means would be failing to realize the singularity of the Vietnamese communist leadership and its *raison d'être*. What has differentiated Ho Chi Minh and his disciples from others within the international communist movement is that they have long nurtured a very high idea of what Le Duan termed "the mission that history has entrusted".[30]

Another point: it is commonly believed that within the Party Politburo there existed some moderates, whose identification was particularly difficult since some of them openly aligned themselves with different, and in some cases, contradictory lines. How then to classify the less senior members along the factional cleavages? What was the weight of the moderates? In any event, there is evidence that the debate in Hanoi was less opposing the radicals and the moderates than two forms of extremism: the *radicalism* of Truong Chinh indeed implied a long-lasting struggle until final victory, even if it recommended a low level of military operation in the South and consequently more resources for the construction of socialism in the North. The *activism* of Le Duan, on the contrary, implied maintaining constant pressure on the South, while advocating flexibility on the issue of division of resources between the war in the South and economic development in the North. It seems that the moderates, like Pham Van Dong and some others, who were often swinging from one side to the other, were no match for this competition. Could it be otherwise, since in the very logic of this overbid between two extremist wings, the goal of national reunification was becoming such a holy writ that advocating any compromise short of this ultimate goal was tantamount to committing treason.

Any study of the Vietnamese communist leadership must start by rejecting what should be termed the *theory of miracle*. Marxism-Leninism is not the kind of super-science likely to transcend

personal rivalries, group conflicts, or national antagonisms. The annals of the international communist movement tell us enough about the devious cynicism which often distinguishes the relations between fraternal parties or between comrades-in-arms. The Tito-Stalin conflict, as well as the Sino-Soviet dispute, has badly shaken the myth of proletarian internationalism. As for "democratic centralism", it is more likely to produce the kind of nepotistic-dictatorial society within communist leadership than any other political system. Communist jargon terms it deviationism. The nature of the Khmer Rouge regime has sufficiently proved that Marxism-Leninism in praxis is not aloof from degeneracy.

Based on the accounts of Hoang Van Hoan, former Politburo member now exiled in Beijing, Truong Nhu Tang, former Justice Minister of the Vietcong, and some other less ranking defectors,[31] it is now argued that not only does factionalism exist within Hanoi's leadership, but since the death of Ho Chi Minh, and especially since the Fourth Party Congress, the Party and State have progressively come under the domination of a small clique, which exercises control through family networks. Advocates of the dictatorial model assert a direct correspondence between the views of the clique leaders and Vietnamese foreign policy. "Vietnam's pro-Soviet line arises from Le Duan's personal proclivities, while Vietnam's hegemonist and expansionist policies towards neighbouring Cambodia were allegedly fashioned by Le Duc Tho."[32]

Just because the Cultural Revolution has revealed how much Mao's authority has been challenged and the Chinese communist leadership has been so badly split, it does not mean that Ho's power must also have been contested and Hanoi's leadership must also have its factional infighting. However, we should not elude the debate over available evidence on the assumption that because there had been no purges, in Ho's lifetime, there were no personal rivalries or contending factions within the so-called collective leadership, or because there have been some major demotions in Hanoi since the Fourth and the Fifth Party Congresses, that factions now automatically exist. The eventual existence of conflicting personalities and contending factions within the Vietnamese communist leadership would, to be sure, have seriously affected the

whole decision-making process in Hanoi. This central dimension of the problem could not be ignored. In this respect, perhaps new light could be projected on the major decisions which have locked the Vietnamese communist movement, and unfortunately Vietnam and its neighbours, in *recurring cycles of war* for the last half century. Maybe it would contribute to the understanding of the new course on which Vietnam is now engaged by its leadership.

Much, if not all, has been written on the legend of Ho Chi Minh. Except probably one thing: Ho had been obsessed all his life by the spectre of factionalism within the Vietnamese communist leadership and that of division within the international communist movement as well. As a matter of fact, Ho himself raised these two main issues in his political testament. Firstly, the question of unity of the Party: "Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people," he wrote, adding however, "all comrades, from the Central Committee down to the cell, must preserve union and unity of mind in the Party as the apple of their own eyes."[33] Secondly, the problem of unity within the world communist movement: "Having dedicated my whole life to the cause of revolution, the more proud I am to see the growth of the international communist and workers' movement, the more deeply I am grieved at the dissensions that are dividing the fraternal parties," Ho recalled, although adding: "I wish our Party to do its best to contribute effectively to the restoration of unity among the fraternal parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in a way consonant to the requirement of heart and reason. I am sure that the fraternal parties and countries will unite again."[34]

This document was laid down in May 1969, at a time when Ho was witnessing with sorrow the ongoing dispute between contending factions within the Vietnamese communist leadership and the dramatic border-clash that was opposing the Soviet Union and China. In this respect, the last will of Ho Chi Minh, which ends with a reference to "a worthy contribution [of Vietnam] to the World revolution",[35] is of particular significance. It sums up, in a concentrated manner, the debate on factionalism and collective leadership which is the theme of this essay.

NOTES

1 Douglas E. Pike, "Operational Code of the North Vietnamese Politburo", *Asia Quarterly*, no. 1 (1971), pp. 94–95.
2 David W.P. Elliot, "North Vietnam Since Ho", *Problems of Communism* XXIV (July-August 1975): 43.
3 Pike, op. cit., p. 94.
4 Elliot, op. cit., pp. 42–43.
5 Carlyle A. Thayer, "Three Revolutionary Currents: Vietnamese Perspectives on International Security" (Paper presented at the Conference on Asian Perspectives on International Security, 11–14 April 1983, The Australian National University, Research School of Pacific Studies, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre), p. 18.
6 Ibid., p. 13.
7 Quoted from Murray Marder, "Hanoi Politburo Avoids Votes Unless Necessary", *Washington Post*, 6 February 1973, p. A14.
8 Thayer, op. cit., p. 18.
9 P.J. Honey, "Divided Counsels in the Party", *China News Analysis*, no. 508, Quarterly Survey, no. 11 (13 March 1964), p. 1.
10 See further discussion in P.J. Honey, "The Position of the DRV Leadership and the Succession to Ho Chi Minh", in *North Vietnam Today*, edited by P.J. Honey (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), pp. 55–59, and P.J. Honey, *Communism in North Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1963), Chapter 2.
11 P.J. Honey, "The Death of Ho Chi Minh and After", *China News Analysis*, no. 785, Quarterly Report, no. 35 (12 December 1969), pp. 6–7.
12 Honey, "Divided Counsels in the Party", p. 1.
13 Thomas K. Latimer, "Hanoi's Leaders and Their South Vietnam Policies: 1954–1968" (Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1972), p. 1.
14 Ibid., p. 3.
15 Donald Z. Zagoria, *Vietnam Triangle: Moscow/Peking/Hanoi* (New York: Pegasus, 1967), p. 103.
16 Latimer, op. cit., pp. 4–8.
17 Pike, "Operational Code of the North Vietnamese Politburo", p. 95.
18 U.S. National Security Study Memorandum No. 1 (1949) reprinted in *Congressional Record*, 10 May 1972, p. E4978.
19 Douglas E. Pike, *War, Peace and the Viet Cong* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 133–34.
20 Robert F. Rogers, "Doctrinal Perceptions of the Hanoi Leadership", *South-East Asian Spectrum* 3, no. 1 (October 1974): 61.
21 See further discussion in Robert Frederick Rogers, "Risk-Taking in Hanoi's War Policy: An Analysis of Militancy versus Manipulation in a Communist

Party. State's Behaviour in a Conflict" (Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1974).

22 W.R. Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese: Vietnamese Communism Between Russia and China, 1956–1969*, Papers in International Studies, Southeast Asia No. 55 (Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1980), p. 4.

23 "Bravely March Forward and Continue President Ho's Great Cause", Editorial in *Nhan Dan*, 5 September 1969, and *Hoc Tap*, September 1969.

24 See Smyser, op. cit.

25 In spring 1947, Truong Chinh wrote his first major treatise "The Resistance Will Win", which laid down the guidelines of a long-lasting three-stage resistance. Truong Chinh's treatise, in fact, was profoundly influenced by Mao Zedong's booklet *On Protracted War*, written in Yenan in 1938; see Truong Chinh, *Selected Writings* (Hanoi: FLPH, 1977), pp. 107–13; Mao Zedong, *On Protracted War*, reprinted in *Selected Works* Vol. II (Beijing: FLPH, 1965), pp. 113–94.

26 Truong Chinh, *Viet Nam Va Trung Quoc Trong Su Chien Dau Chung* (Hanoi: Su That, 1961).

27 Le Duan, *Doan Ket Va Hop Tac Toan Dien Voi Lien Xo La Nguyen Tac, La Chien Luoc, Va Tinh Cam Cua Chung Ta* (Hanoi: Su That, 1982).

28 Ibid., p. 12.

29 Ibid., p. 4.

30 Ibid., p. 12.

31 The author was given the opportunity to discuss Hanoi's leadership at length with both Hoang Van Hoan and Truong Nhu Tang and some other less ranking defectors. Their accounts, while giving a certain insight into the power struggle in Hanoi, have to be carefully interpreted.

32 Thayer, "Three Revolutionary Currents", p. 10.

33 Ho Chi Minh, "Testament", in *Selected Writings*, op. cit., p. 360.

34 Ibid., p. 362.

35 Ibid.