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The Background of a Crisis

The constitutional arrangements of Nigeria, as imposed upon the people by the erstwhile British rulers, were nothing but an implicit acceptance of the fact that there was no basis for Nigerian unity.

It was Britain, first, that amalgamated the country in 1914, unwilling as the people of the North were.¹ It was Britain that forced a federation of Nigeria, even when the people of the North objected to it very strongly. It was Britain, while keeping Nigeria together, that made it impossible for the people to know themselves and get close to each other, by maintaining an apartheid policy in Northern Nigeria which herded all Southerners into little reserves, barring them from Northern Nigerian schools, and maintaining different systems of justice in a country they claimed to be one.²

It was Britain, for her economic interest, that put the various nations in Nigeria side by side and called it a federation, so as to have a large market. . . .

On October 1, 1960, independence was granted to the people of Nigeria in a form of "federation," based on artificially made units. The Nigerian Constitution installed the North in perpetual dominance over Nigeria. . . . Thus were sown, by design or by default, the seeds of factionalism and hate, of struggle for power at the center, and of the worst types of political chicanery and abuse of power. One of two situations was bound to result from that arrangement: either perpetual domination of the rest of the country by the North . . . or a dissolution of the federation bond. . . .

Nigeria in the end came to be run by compromises made and broken between the Northerners

and consenting Southern politicians. This led to interminable violent crises, to corruption and nepotism, and to the arbitrary use of power. . . .

Key projects in the National Development Plan were not pursued with necessary vigor. Instead of these, palaces were constructed for the indulgence of ministers and other holders of public offices—men supposed to serve the interest of the common man. Expensive fleets of flamboyant and luxurious cars were purchased. Taxpayers' money was wasted on unnecessary foreign travel by ministers, each competing with the other only in their unbridled excesses.

. . . Internal squabbles for parochial and clanish patronage took the place of purposeful coordinated service of the people. Land, the basic heritage of the people, was converted into the private estates of rapacious individuals who, thus trampling on the rights of the people, violated their sacred trust under this system. . . . Nepotism became rife. Tribalism became the order of the day. In appointments and promotions mere lip service was paid to honesty and hard work.

Grievances of the Eastern Nigerians

In the old Federation some of you here will remember quite vividly what the contribution of the people from this area, now known as Biafra, was to the betterment of the areas in which we chose to reside and believed was our country. Socially we gave our best in Nigeria. Politically, we led the struggle for independence and sustained it. Economically, the hope of Nigeria was embedded deeply in this area and we contributed everything for the common good of Nigeria.

Source: Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, *Biafra: Selected Speeches and Random Thoughts of C. Odumegwu Ojukwu, with Diaries of Events* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969). Copyright © 1969, renewed 1997 by Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. Reprinted by permission of Harper-Collins Publisher.

¹The provinces of Northern and Southern Nigeria were brought under a common administration by Sir Frederick

Lugard, governor-general of Nigeria between 1912 and 1919.

²Many Eastern Nigerians had moved to other parts of the country, mainly to pursue business opportunities. Many believed they were treated as second-class citizens, especially in the Muslim north.

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Our people moved from this area to all parts of the old Federation, and particularly to Northern Nigeria. Where there was darkness we gave them light! In Northern Nigeria, where they had no shelter we gave them houses. Where they were sick, as indeed most Northerners are, we brought them health. Where there was backwardness we brought progress. And where there was ignorance we brought them education. As a result of all this, we became people marked out in the various communities in which we lived.

Initially we were marked out as people who were progressive. Next, as people who were successful. Finally as people who should be the object of jealousy—people who were to be hated, and this hatred arose as a result of our success. . . . We were relegated to the position of second-class citizens and later to slavery—yes, slavery—because as we worked, our masters enjoyed the fruits of our labor.

We reached a stage where the people from this part were fast losing their identity. They hid away the fact that they came from this area. . . .

The Northern attitude is the attitude of horse and rider. . . . We were carrying the North physically, economically, and in every other way. For all that we received no thanks. They only got furious if we did not travel fast enough. Then they would kick. But, for every mule there comes a time when it bucks and says, "No, I will carry no more." We have bucked. We will carry Northern Nigeria no more!

The New Biafran Society

Born out of the gruesome murders and vandalism of yesterday, Biafra has come to stay as a historical reality. We believe that the future we face and our battle for survival cannot be won by bullets alone, but by brainpower, modern skills, and the determination to live and succeed. . . .

Nepotism and tribalism are twin evils. I believe that these can be avoided if we set about making sure that every appointment in our society is based on one and only one criterion—merit. We should ensure that this term "merit" is no

mumbo-jumbo. It should be something that is obvious for everyone to see: that is, when you have given somebody a job, the reason for giving that job to that person in preference to others must be generally clear. . . .

Tribalism is, perhaps, more deeply rooted. . . . When I first came to this area as the military governor, one of the first things I did was to erase tribe from all public documents. We are all Biafrans. "Where do you come from?" you are asked, and the answer is simple: "I come from Biafra." The government must not emphasize tribal origin if it is trying to stamp out tribalism. . . .

Every effort should be made by future governments to educate our people away from tribalism. I would like to see movement of people across tribal frontiers. The government should encourage people to move from their own areas to be educated elsewhere. Yes, I would even go further to support government measures to encourage intertribal marriages. . . . It is only a gesture, but if the government really believes that tribalism could be wiped out, something like a bounty should be given to that young man who marries across tribe, to show that the government appreciates what he has done. . . .

I see a new breed of men and women, with new moral and spiritual values, building a new society—a renaissance and strong Biafra.

I see the realization of all our cherished dreams and aspirations in a revolution which will not only guarantee our basic freedoms but usher in an era of equal opportunity and prosperity for all.

I see the evolution of a new democracy in Biafra as we advance as partners in our country's onward march to her destiny.

When I look into the future, I see Biafra transformed into a fully industrialized nation, wastelands and slums giving way to throbbing industrial centers and cities. . . .

I see agriculture mechanized by science and technology. . . .

I see a Republic knit with arteries of roads and highways; a nation of free men and women

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dedicated to the noble attributes of justice and liberty for which our youth have shed their blood; a people with an art and literature rich and unrivaled.

I am sure all Biafrans share these hopes for our country's future and destiny. . . . We are building a society which will destroy the myth that the black man cannot organize his own society.

. . . We are taking our rightful place in the world as human beings. . . . The black man cannot

progress until he can point at a progressive black society. Until a society, a virile society entirely black, is established, the black man, whether he is in America, whether he is in Africa, will never be able to take his place side by side with the white man. We have the unique opportunity today of breaking our chains.

. . . We owe it, therefore, to Africa not to fail. Africa needs a Biafra. Biafra is the breaking of the chains. . . .

The Challenge of Religious Rivalries: Two Competing Visions of India

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Religious tension between India's majority Hindus and smaller communities of Muslims and Sikhs divided India's political leaders in the 1930s and early 1940s; set off communal rioting that caused the deaths of tens of thousands in 1946; and ultimately led to the founding of two separate states, predominantly Muslim Pakistan and predominantly Hindu India, after the end of British rule in August 1947. In the year following independence, as many as 14 million Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs crossed borders to escape entrapment in a state that was hostile to their faith. Newly formed governments were unable to deal with migrations of such staggering magnitude, and massive violence and slaughter occurred on both sides of the border. As many as 500,000 deaths may have occurred.

Despite partition and the mass migrations of 1947 and 1948, independent India remained religiously divided among Hindus (approximately 82 percent of the population), Muslims (approximately 13 percent), and smaller communities of Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains, and Buddhists. In 1949, under the leadership of the Congress Party, a constituent assembly that also served as India's first parliament approved a constitution that declared India to be a secular state committed to religious freedom and partiality to no single religious group.

None of India's religious groups has been completely satisfied with the results of India's commitment to secularism. Many Hindus remain convinced that the government has bent over backward to protect Muslims and Sikhs; Muslims and Sikhs, conversely, continue to believe that the government has pandered to Hindus. Religious tensions intensified in the 1980s, as Muslims began to make converts among low-caste Hindus in the south, Sikhs agitated for an independent Punjab, and Hindus in 1982 organized their own political party, the Bharatiya Janata (Indian People's Party), or BJP, whose goal was the "Hinduization" of India.

The ongoing tensions between secularism and Hindu nationalism are represented by excerpts from the works of two authors, written 30 years apart. "A Secular

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State" is a brief essay written by Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) in 1961. As leader of the Congress Party and India's prime minister from 1947 to 1964, the upper-class, English-educated Nehru shaped India's early economic and political development more than any other individual did. The other excerpts are from editorials by Girilal Jain, a prominent journalist who served as editor-in-chief of the *New Delhi Times of India* between 1978 and 1988. Born into a poor rural family in 1922 and educated at Delhi University, Jain was drawn to Hindu nationalism and the BJP in the 1980s. He wrote the following editorials in 1990, when Hindu–Muslim tensions were peaking over the Babri mosque, built in the city of Ayodhya in the sixteenth century on a site believed by Hindus to be the birthplace of one of the most revered Hindu gods, Lord Rama. Hindus demanded the destruction of the mosque, which was no longer used, so that a temple in honor of Rama could be built. In 1989, Hindu nationalists began laying the foundations for a Hindu temple near the mosque, and in 1990, the year in which Jain wrote his editorials "The Harbinger of a New Order" and "Limits of the Hindu Rashtra [Polity]" for the *Sunday Mail*, they attacked and damaged the mosque. In December 1992, 150,000 Hindus stormed the mosque and destroyed it, precipitating a government crisis and causing violence that took 2,000 lives.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to Nehru, what is the meaning of the term "secularism" in the context of Indian society?
2. According to Nehru, how will the abandonment of secularism affect India and its future?
3. What does Jain mean when he says that the issues that concern the BJP have to do with "civilization," not religion?
4. How does Jain define the West? How does he view the West's role in Indian history?
5. Why, according to Jain, is the controversy over the Ayodhya mosque so significant for India's future?
6. In Jain's view, why have the Muslims been satisfied to go along with the secularist policies of the Indian state?
7. What is Jain's vision of India's future? How does it differ from the future imagined by Nehru?

Nehru, "A Secular State"

It is perhaps not very easy even to find a good word in Hindi for 'secular'. Some people think that it means something opposed to religion. That obviously is not correct. What it means is

that it is a state which honours all faiths equally and gives them equal opportunities; that, as a state, it does not allow itself to be attached to one faith or religion, which then becomes the state religion. . . .

Source: Printed in Jawaharlal Nehru, *Nehru An Anthology*, Sarvepalli Gopal, ed. (Delhi/Oxford: Oxford University

Press, 1980), pp. 330–331. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press India.

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The word secular . . . [also] conveys . . . the idea of social and political equality. Thus a caste-ridden society is not properly secular. I have no desire to interfere with any person's belief, but when those beliefs become petrified in caste divisions, they affect the social structure of the state. They prevent us from realizing the idea of equality which we claim to place before ourselves. . . .

In a sense, this is a more or less modern conception. India has a long history of religious tolerance. That is one aspect of a secular state, but it is not the whole of it. In a country like India, which has many faiths and religions, no real nationalism can be built up except on the basis of secularity. Any narrower approach must necessarily exclude a section of the population, and then nationalism itself will have a much more restricted meaning than it should possess. In India we would have then to consider Hindu nationalism, Muslim nationalism, Sikh nationalism or Christian nationalism and not Indian nationalism.

As a matter of fact, these narrow religious nationalisms are relics of a past age and are no longer relevant today. They represent a backward and out-of-date society. In the measure we have even today so-called communal troubles, we display our backwardness as social groups. . . .

In a country like England, the state is, under the constitution, allied to one particular religion, the Church of England, which is a sect of Christianity. Nevertheless, the state and the people there largely function in a secular way. Society, therefore, in England is more advanced in this respect than in India, even though our constitution may be, in this matter, more advanced.

We have not only to live up to the ideals proclaimed in our constitution, but make them a part of our thinking and living and thus build up a really integrated nation. That, I repeat, does not mean absence of religion, but putting religion on a different plane from that of normal political and social life. Any other approach in India would mean the breaking up of India. . . .

Jain, "The Harbinger of a New Order"

A specter haunts dominant sections of India's political and intellectual elites—the specter of a growing Hindu self-awareness and self-assertion. Till recently these elites had used the bogey of Hindu "communalism" and revivalism as a convenient device to keep themselves in power and to "legitimize" their slavish imitation of the West. Unfortunately for them, the ghost has now materialized.

Millions of Hindus have stood up. It will not be easy to trick them back into acquiescing in an order which has been characterized not so much by its "appeasement of Muslims" as by its alienness, rootlessness and contempt for the land's unique cultural past. Secularism, a euphemism for

irreligion and repudiation of the Hindu ethos, and socialism, a euphemism for denigration and humiliation of the business community to the benefit of ever expanding rapacious bureaucracy, . . . have been major planks of this order. Both have lost much of their old glitter and, therefore, capacity to dazzle and mislead. . . .

The Hindu fight is not at all with Muslims; the fight is between Hindus . . . and the state, Indian in name and not in spirit and the political and intellectual class trapped in the debris the British managed to bury us under before they left. The proponents of the Western ideology are using Muslims as auxiliaries and it is a pity Muslim "leaders" are allowing themselves to be so used. . . .

Source: Giralal Jain, "The Harbinger of a New Order" and "Limits of the Hindu Rashtra" from Koenrad Elst, *Ayodhya and After* (New Delhi: Crescent Printing Works, 1991),

pp. 364–367, 369–371, 373–375. Reprinted by permission of the author.

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Jain, "Limits of the Hindu Rashtra"

The first part of this story begins, in my view, with the mass conversion of Harijans to Islam in Meenakshipuram in Tamil Nadu in 1981¹ and travels via the rise of Pakistan-backed armed secessionist movements in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir,² and the second part with the spectacular success of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the last polls. . . .

India . . . has been a battleground between two civilizations (Hindu and Islamic) for well over a thousand years, and three (Hindu, Muslim and Western) for over two hundred years. None of them has ever won a decisive enough and durable enough victory to oblige the other two to assimilate themselves fully into it. So the battle continues. This stalemate lies at the root of the crisis of identity the intelligentsia has faced since the beginning of the freedom movement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. . . .

The more resilient and upwardly mobile section of the intelligentsia must, by definition, seek to come to terms with the ruling power and its mores, and the less successful part of it to look for its roots and seek comfort in its cultural past. . . . Thus in the medieval period of our history there grew up a class of Hindus in and around centers of Muslim power who took to the Persian-Arabic culture and ways of the rulers; similarly under the more securely founded and far better organized and managed [British] Raj there arose a vast number of Hindus who took to the English language, Western ideas, ideals, dress and eating habits; . . . they, their progeny and other recruits to their class have continued to dominate independent India.

They are the self-proclaimed secularists who have sought, and continue to seek, to remake

India in the Western image. . . . Behind them has stood, and continues to stand, the awesome intellectual might of the West, which may or may not be anti-India, depending on the exigencies of its interests, but which has to be antipathetic to Hinduism. . . .

Some secularists may be genuinely pro-Muslim. . . . But, by and large, that is not the motivating force in their lives. They are driven, above all, by the fear of what they call regression into their own past which they hate and dread. Most of the exponents of this viewpoint have come and continue to come understandably from the Left, understandably because no other group of Indians can possibly be so alienated from the country's cultural past as the followers of Lenin, Stalin and Mao, who have spared little effort to turn their own countries into cultural wastelands.

The state in independent India has, it is true, sought, broadly speaking, to be neutral in the matter of religion. But this is a surface view of the reality. The Indian state has been far from neutral in civilizational terms. It has been an agency, and a powerful agency, for the spread of Western values and mores. It has willfully sought to replicate Western institutions, the Soviet Union too being essentially part of Western civilization. It could not be otherwise in view of the orientation and aspirations of the dominant elite of which Nehru remains the guiding spirit. . . . Muslims have found such a state acceptable principally on three counts. First, it has agreed to leave them alone in respect of their personal law. . . . Secondly, it has allowed them to expand their traditional . . . educational system in madrasahs³ attached to mosques. Above all, it has helped them avoid the necessity to come to terms with Hindu civilization

mixed populations of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, they have been plagued by religious conflict.

³Madrasahs are advanced schools of learning, or colleges, devoted to Islamic studies.

¹Hindus were incensed when large numbers of low-caste Hindus, or Harijans, were converted to Islam in 1981. It was believed that the missionary campaign was financed by Saudi Arabians.

²The province of Punjab and the province of Jammu and Kashmir were created at the time of independence. With

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in a predominantly Hindu India. This last count is the crux of the matter. . . .

In the past up to the sixteenth century, great temples have been built in our country by rulers to mark the rise of a new dynasty or to mark a triumph. . . . In the present case, the proposal to build the Rama temple has also helped produce an "army" which can in the first instance achieve the victory the construction can proclaim.

The raising of such an "army" in our democracy, however flawed, involves not only a body of disciplined cadres, which is available in the shape of the RSS,⁴ a political organization, which too is available in the Bharatiya Janata Party, but

also an aroused citizenry. . . . The Vishwa Hindu Parishad⁵ and its allies have fulfilled this need in a manner which is truly spectacular.

The BJP-VHP-RSS leaders have rendered the country another great service. They have brought Hindu interests, if not the Hindu ethos, into the public domain where they legitimately belong. But it would appear that they have not fully grasped the implications of their action. Their talk of pseudo-secularism gives me that feeling. The fight is not against what they call pseudosecularism; it is against secularism in its proper definition whereby man as animal usurps the place of man as spirit. . . .

⁴RSS stands for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a militant Hindu organization founded in 1925 dedicated to the strengthening of Hindu culture.

⁵The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), or World Hindu Society, was founded in 1964. It is dedicated to demolishing mosques built on Hindu holy sites.

New Nations and the Cold War: The Experience of Vietnam

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For many states in Africa and Asia, the achievement of independence from Great Britain, France, Japan, or some other colonial power led directly to interference in their affairs by one or both of the world's two new superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. These Cold War rivals, for a host of ideological, diplomatic, economic, and strategic reasons, intervened by providing arms to opposing sides in civil wars, working to destabilize unfriendly regimes, helping organize coups, and propping up sympathetic rulers through foreign aid. Such interference prolonged civil wars in Africa, enabled kleptocratic dictators to stay in power, and led to a shooting war in Korea from 1950 to 1953.

Nowhere, however, did the Cold War cause as much conflict and suffering as in the three former French colonies of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Recognized as independent nations in 1954, they became the locus of the Second Indochina War, caused mainly by U.S. efforts to stop the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. The United States committed 3.4 million military personnel to the war, 60,000 of whom were killed or became missing in action. The South and North Vietnamese, however, suffered 1,200,000 military deaths and almost an equal number of civilian deaths. An unknown number of Cambodians and Laotians also died when the

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United States subjected both countries to bombing attacks to halt the movement of military supplies and personnel from North Vietnam to South Vietnam through their territories. When the fighting stopped in 1975, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia all had communist rulers. In Cambodia's case, the ruler was Pol Pot, whose policies resulted in the deaths of anywhere from 1.2 million to 3 million of his countrymen before he was overthrown in 1979.

The roots of the conflict go back to September 1945, when Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969), the communist leader of the Viet Minh (the Vietnam Independence League), declared Vietnamese independence and went on to lead his supporters in the First Indochina War, in which France, with U.S. aid, fought to reestablish its colonial authority. The war ended in 1954, when the Geneva Accord temporarily divided Vietnam into a communist north and non-communist south, with the question of reunification to be decided by a nationwide referendum in 1956. Such an election never occurred, due mainly to the establishment of a permanent state in the south under the government of Ngo Dinh Diem. Supported by the United States, the Republic of Vietnam developed into an authoritarian state in which Diem imposed censorship, ordered the arrest of opponents on vague charges of treason, alienated the country's Buddhist majority by his pro-Catholic policies, and manipulated plans for land reform to benefit his family and supporters. Opposition to Diem came from Buddhists, disgruntled peasants, frustrated nationalists, and some five to ten thousand Viet Minh cadres (professional revolutionaries), who had stayed in the south after the division of the country in 1954.

Against this background, in late 1958 or early 1959, the leaders of North Vietnam's ruling political party, the Lao Dong (Workers' Party), reconsidered their strategy on how to reunite the country now that elections no longer were a possibility. In the midst of an ambitious program of industrialization and land reform and cautioned against provoking another war in Southeast Asia by the Soviet Union, it issued a directive for its "southern strategy." It promised its supporters in the south financial support and guidance but ordered them to avoid assassinations and direct attacks against the South Vietnamese army. They should focus on tightening their organization and using propaganda to pressure and discredit the Diem government but resort to force only to protect themselves from government informers, security officials, and corrupt landlords. This cautious policy would soon be abandoned, but not the underlying sense of purpose, conviction, confidence, and single-mindedness that would guide the North Vietnamese until April 30, 1975, when their troops took Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, and brought an end to this long and costly struggle.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to the authors of the document, how is the conflict in Vietnam part of broader movements taking place in other parts of the world?
2. How do the authors of the document interpret U.S. motives in South Vietnam?

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3. According to the party's statement, what are the short- and long-term goals of the party for Vietnam?
4. According to the authors, how has rule by "U.S.-Diem" affected the lives of the people in South Vietnam? What will be its future effect, and how does this affect the party's strategy for achieving its goals?
5. Based on their analysis of the situation, what strategies should the parties' allies in South Vietnam pursue for 1959?

World Situation

1) The forces of the socialist camp in every area—economic, political, military and scientific grows unceasingly stronger. . . .

The continuous defeats of the imperialist camp: in the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, Latin America, etc., have weakened imperialism. The movement of peace, democracy and national independence in the world, developing strongly by relying on the strength of the socialist camp. Not only as the potential to check and smash a war provoked by imperialism, but to push it back from one place to another. It is clear that our camp led by the Soviet Union is the mainstay in defending world peace.

2) The movement of national liberation and nationalism . . . is increasingly on the rise in Africa, Asia, Latin America. The colonial system of imperialism has entered the phase of disintegration and collapse. . . .

3) The imperialist economy, especially that of U.S. imperialism, has fallen into serious crisis, influencing those countries dependent on the U.S., and pushing the people of those countries to step up more and more their struggle to escape from their slavery to the U.S. economy: Western Europe, Asia, and Africa.

4) Weakened, defeated and expelled everywhere, imperialism in general and the U.S. in particular, show extreme stubbornness; sickeningly,

cynically, they stick to the positions they have seized and provoke wars to dominate peoples. . . .

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The South

1) The American imperialists more and more actively intervene in the South, turning it into a new type colony and military base, aiming at sabotaging peace and reunification of our country. The U.S. has become the number one enemy of the Southern people and the people of the whole country.

The Diem¹ ruling clique, is really only the lackey carrying out every scheme and policy of their American masters.

2) From 1957 to now, the activities of the U.S.-Diem [regime] exhibit them to be determined to poisonously carry out their country-stealing and country-selling scheme.

Their activities have the following notable points:

—Using anti-Communist and denunciation of Communist labels to make every effort to terrorize and repress. . . . They do not carry out all democratic rights, stubbornly opposing peace, unification and rejecting every proposal for peace, unification from the North. They carry out brazenly fascist policies with regard to politics.

—Striving to build, strengthen and increase military forces in order to repress and provoke war. Widening strategic military lines of communications (highways) and new military bases. Striving to recruit

Source: From Gareth Porter, ed. and trans., *Vietnam: The Definitive Documentation of Human Decisions* (Stanfordville, NY: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, 1979), vol. 2, 36–41. Reprinted by permission of the author.

¹Ngo Dinh Diem (1901–1963), an implacable anticommunist, served as president of South Vietnam until he was overthrown and assassinated in 1963 in a military coup tacitly supported by the United States.

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troops by force, to gather troops, to gather people, to expel villagers, to coerce people's labor, and to do everything possible to destroy old resistance bases.

—Increasing sweeps to mercilessly plunder the human, material and financial means of the people. Aim at impoverishing the peasants by every cruel trick: stealing the land of the peasants, confusing land ownership, increasing rent, increasing old taxes, instituting new taxes, lotteries, collections, fines, gambling and especially under the farce they call community development.

—Sowing the seeds of a degenerate, lavish, cowboy, U.S.-style culture, developing gambling, prostitution in every form in order to deprave the people's spirit, hoping to put them to sleep and make them worthless. . . .

—Because the economy is more and more dependent on American aid, more and more in decline, everyday, because of the policy of long-term division of the country and preparing to provoke war, because of the policy of increasing terrorism and repression, merciless exploitation and plunder, the life of the Southern people, especially workers, peasants and poor strata in the cities is more and more miserable; hunger and famine have appeared in scattered places in the countryside and the cities. Agriculture is declining, industry and commerce are stagnating, peasants are going bankrupt, and many suicides because of poverty and indigence have occurred under the U.S.-Diem regime are very pitiful.

—Because of their miserable, dark real life experience, popular strata from the countryside to the cities are gradually understanding that it is caused by the policies of U.S.-Diem. Aspirations for national independence, peaceful unification of the country, demands for improvement of daily life, demands for democratic freedom among popular strata, peasants and urban workers are clearer and deeper everyday, and the neutralist tendencies are growing among bourgeois people. . . .

The peoples movement against U.S.-Diem during the past period has developed continually and unceasingly.

—The characteristic of the movement is that it has gone deep into the interests of the masses, mobilizing classes, religions, and the people to participate and to form a broader front from the countryside to the cities. . . .

—Looking generally at the movement there are many advances, struggle slogans are very realistic. The Struggle front is broad. Forms of struggle are abundant, the level of struggle sometimes is fierce and decisive. We have won definite victories, caused very many difficulties and obstacles for the enemy. They must exhaust themselves with every step in carrying out their cruel policies. . . .

Tasks for 1959 (Three immediate tasks)

. . . Based on the above situation between the enemy and ourselves now and the changes about to take place, we can see that the three immediate tasks of the Party put forward by the District conference from 1957 to now are fundamentally still appropriate. The tasks have not changed, but the forms and the level of the struggle movement in the near future must be broader, stronger and more decisive.

1) Continue to do everything possible to stay the dictatorial, fascist hands of U.S.-Vietnam, politically, and economically, demanding freedom, food and clothing, to protect the living rights and democratic rights for the people.

2) Stop the U.S.-Diem warmongering scheme to sabotage peace. Demand peaceful unification of the fatherland, and immediately demand establishment of relations between the two zones.

Because the U.S. imperialist intervention in every aspect, economic, political, military and cultural is the origin of all the southern people's suffering . . . , we must especially pay attention to raising slogans opposing the U.S. and demanding national independence in the South.