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Discussants:
Tahsin Bashir
Dawud Talhami
Mahmoud Swayd
Dr. Hussein al-Sharif
Munir Shafiq
Mohammed Kishli

Moderator: Haytham Ayyoubi

Dawud Talhami: Friday 15 June, 4 o'clock GMT (a few days ago). The command issued from both sides in South Vietnam has become the following: "for all armed forces, regular and non-regular, and the armed police under their command, to completely respect the ceasefire in effect over South Vietnam." This was in the text of the agreement signed on 27 January 1973 in Paris, and this resolution came in effect.

Thus, the Vietnam War ended, or rather one of its wars, for the people of Vietnam have not known peace for almost 30 years, ever since they took up arms against the Japanese, then the French after the announcement of the establishment of independent "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" on 2 September 1945, and finally against the Americans and their collaborators during the fifties, and in a concentrated way ever since the sixties.

The people of Vietnam won against the Japanese invasion, and also claimed victory against French colonialism during the great Battle of ""Dien-Bien-Phu" in 1954, a day recorded as a victory against one of the most powerful imperialist forces known to history.

This people – a miracle. This land – a legend. This specific experience commands respect and requires interest. Vietnam – the experience, is the richest experience presented to us by modern revolutionary heritage in facing different forms of oppression. Insofar as we need to look at our past and study our history of struggle, analyzing the roots of our reality, and analyzing this reality with its contradictions and points of weakness, we also need to learn lessons from the momentous experiences of the world's peoples,

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especially ever since the beginning of the century. Here, we must make sure of the following point:

That the manifestations of the Vietnamese people's power, and the manifestations of weakness that we see in the Arab context after the American-Israeli offensive, are not fixed factors; the Vietnamese manifestations of power—regardless of whether it is political, social, or military power—grew throughout a long struggle that was waged on all fronts, internally and externally. No law but the law of racism can prevent these types of manifestations—perhaps through a special developmental pattern—from growing amongst the peoples of the Arab world in the context of its violent confrontation of the imperialist challenge. Our discussion today will primarily focus on this topic.

I welcome the brothers who are attending this discussion today, and who have participated in elaborating upon this comparison; I give it over now to Haytham al-Ayyoubi, sp that he may moderate the discussion.

Haytham al-Ayyoubi (head of the Military Studies division of the PLO Research Center): before we begin our discussion today, I would like you to allow me to present the participants in the discussion:
Dr. Hussein al-Sharif: the technical specialist (الأخصائي التقني).
Tahsin Bashir: assistant of the General Secretary of the Arab League.
Dawud Talhami: head of the World Studies division of the PLO Research Center.
Mahmoud Swayd: one of the well-known progressive Lebanese journalists.
Mohammed Kishli: director of the Ibn Khaldoun House, and the political writer in two newspapers, *al-Hurriya* and *al-Balagh*.

Several days ago, studies written by researches were distributed to our participants. These studies are the following:
1) "The History of Vietnam: a Struggle United Against Invasion" compiled by Dawud Talhami.
2) "The Ceasefire Decision in Vietnam" compiled by Dr. Sadiq Jalal al-'Azm, which was published in the Beirut newspapers *al-Nahar*.
3) "The effects of the Vietnam war on American society" compiled by the American writer, Ken Meyercord.
4) "The Vietnamese experience" compiled by Naji 'Allush.

These studies will be the basis of our discussion here, in addition to all that our participants would like to add. The discussion will center primarily on the following four points: 1) Was the Vietnamese truce agreement a victory

for the struggle of the Vietnamese people, or was it a victory for the limited war launched by America, the countries in its orbit, and the army of Southern Vietnam? 2) What are the political lessons that the forces of the Arab revolution, generally, and the Palestinian revolution, particularly, can derive from the Vietnamese victory and how to benefit from them in the struggle against imperialism and Zionism? 3) What are the political lessons in this field, on the levels of strategy, grand strategy, tactics, and the technicalities of war? 4) What are the diplomatic lessons, and the lessons in media, in this field?

Mahmoud Swayd will preliminarily discuss the political lessons in the political arena, as well as their circumstances generally.

Mahmoud Swayd: I will quickly summarise the characteristics of the Vietnamese victory and the lessons learned from the Vietnamese experience, as a set of points, and as a catalyst for discussion.

In my summary of the characteristics of the Vietnamese victory, I mention the following points: first: a national liberation movement is based upon the widest alliance of the classes and groups of the Vietnamese people, both national and revolutionary. Vo Nguyen Giap expressed this in the following expression: "the greatest that can be possibly expected of allies, the least that can be expected of enemies, attracting forces, recruiting forces, dividing forces." A national liberation movement under the leadership of the party of the working classes, in accordance with Marxism-Leninism, Internationalism, and revolutionary proletarianism. Similarly, Giap affirmed this for the party leadership in the different fields of military, political, economic, and cultural struggle. The leadership of mass organisations in different fields, and the leadership of the popular armed forces. Second: revolutionary mobilisation of the masses: regular warfare + guerrilla warfare + popular war.

Political struggle: amongst the masses + armed struggle + demoralizing the enemy. A war that includes cities, villages, and mountain terrain. Ideological and political education. Considering internal factors (that is, reliance upon the power of the individual as the main factor in achieving victory) without discounting external aiding factors. In Giap's words: "To rely primarily on the power of the individual, along with hard work to achieve international support"…and: "the reasons for the victory of the revolutionary war in our countries are primarily internal. The party's good luck, and the sacrifices of our armed forces and of our people on the field of battle. The political, moral, and material events of our country." Third: the international situation. It has three dimensions…the pan-national dimension, North Vietnam, a socialist

regime that is built upon a base of revolution in its relations of production, and through a revolution in education, technology, ideology, and culture. A regime that does not balk at supporting the revolution in the South, despite being subject to total annihilation since the beginning of 1965. The role of the experience of the North in achieving the social revolution, in the liberated areas of the South. This role was coupled with other roles on the military, political, and mobilisational levels. The regional dimension, which is represented in the Laotian and Cambodian arenas. And the internationalist dimension, represented in Chinese and Soviet aid. These, in my opinion, are the features of Vietnamese victory in its broad strokes...very quickly.

In terms of the lessons learned from the Vietnamese experience, it can also be summarised, in my opinion, in the following: first, pursuing an independent and self-ruling tract in its relations with the countries of the socialist camp, inspired by the interests of the Vietnamese revolution, which is in the interest of the world revolution. Steadfastness in the face of pressure from the great countries, regardless of whether they are large states or imperialist ones. Secondly, reliance upon individual power (that is, the internal factor), which determines the value of external aid and eases its employment. Thirdly, influence through the practices of the Vietnamese experience in correcting some of the practices of the socialist camp, in addition to scientific criticism and the presentation of the revolutionary alternative to the Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence. Fourth, attracting and supporting world public opinion through hundreds of supportive bodies and aid from Western European countries. Isolating the regime opposed to the United States internationally. Allying with forces opposed to the war within the country of the enemy, causing an internal disorder which impedes its initiatives and demoralises it. These are the broad strokes of the features of the Vietnamese experience's lessons—in sum.

Tahsin Bashir: The period of suffering experienced by the progressive Arab forces and the Palestinian revolution pushes us to research other revolutionary experiences, and so, the most successful of the modern experiences is the Vietnamese experience, serving as a good way to study ourselves more than it is a study of the Vietnamese issue. However, we must take into account the dangers of using comparison as a method of historical understanding, logical demonstration, or even for revolutionary criticism. Because using comparison in Arab thought, and in modern revolutionary thought, was one of the greatest pitfalls that pushed Arab thought away from the realm of reality. Any real revolutionary thought—any revolutionary thought that seeks to change society—must occur in a new and real framework, and we must caution ourselves against using the victory of others

as a means of intellectual opium that prevents us from criticism, above all self-criticism. In many of the Palestinian writings, we find this comparison repeatedly, and we use it as a means of unending self-excuse. We also use comparison as a means of not succeeding, or postponing success to an unending time; this type of thinking was used in many religions and many movements, and they did not lead to success. Perhaps I should also refer to the advantages of comparative studies, so that I may mention that the Vietnamese did not apply revolutionary lessons blindly, whether they be the Chinese or Soviet ones, or the national experiences from which they benefitted—rather, they constantly took care to compare the reality they faced with the experiences of others and with their ability to change this reality. At the end of this introduction, I believe that the Vietnamese people and the Vietnamese revolution achieved the greatest success, and this success cannot be reduced to a specific technical definition: is the ceasefire agreement in and of itself a success, or is it not? The true proposal of the problem differs from this. The success of the Vietnamese experience is based upon the success of humans over technology—in my opinion—. The United States, with its violent intervention against the Vietnamese revolution and against the Vietnamese people, tried to propose an issue, and did so in practice. The issue is that modern science and modern technology, in using computers and planners, are capable of defeating humans. I have mentioned this before, but ever since four years ago, I was in the United States and met Herman Kahn in a discussion on the Middle East, when they had finished a study in the Hudson Institute on the options that faced the Vietnamese people, and the situation appeared as if it was an American game to be studied by planners in research councils, where politicians and military men would have to implement this research, and so the game would end. The Vietnamese people were able to secure the victory of a people with primitive supplies, or supplies that are not advanced over the supplies of other humans who use the latest machines, and what is derived from those machines in terms of technology designed to defeat humans; this is because [the Vietnamese] were aware of their possibilities—that is, aware of their positive abilities, and aware of their negative abilities...for it was within their powers, if they set a practical human goal, to achieve victory, regardless of the length of time. There are no technological powers that are able to destroy humans, but rather humans can destroy themselves through their values, organisation, and insistence upon struggle. From this standpoint, success in achieving a ceasefire is regarded as a more encompassing victory than the technical meaning of ceasefire and the reality to which Dr. Sadiq Jalal al-Azm referred, because in my opinion the Vietnamese victory has a great meaning: the small, medium-sized, and developing nations can, through using the positive aspects of their relative weakness, achieve their social and national goals.

Secondly: the Vietnamese victory has proven the failure of a large state such as the United States, which used all it had at its disposal in terms of funds, science, and planning, and the Vietnamese people were able to decide the course of the issue using the American military way. This is a great victory, and not only a victory against the United States, but also a victory against the use of force by any great nation to decide the course of any issue of independence or popular unity of the small nations. I see the ability of the Vietnamese in using their limited resources, and the narrow international position, even in the circles of friends and allies, forces them to take a specific position of neutrality between the Soviet Union and China, and emphasises that progress is not only the use of modern machines, as we have done in many areas of the Arab nation; rather, true development is the ability of humans to use what is possible to achieve their goals, along with an evolution of these goals and means so that society progresses continuously. From this aspect, the standpoint of ideology and implementation in the Vietnamese revolution is very rich. Of course, there is disagreement over the type of issue that it is, over the goal, and over the type of enemy and its nature, that faces the Palestinian people in their revolution and the Arab people in the Palestinian revolution. This disagreement has many participants from the historical and social standpoint, but I will content myself for now with referring to one thing, which is that the Vietnamese people were not subjected to a type of settler-colonialism that sought to replace them. The Algerian people, for instance, were subjected to settler-colonialism, but French settler-colonialism was not liquidationist; that is, French colonialism did not target the Algerian people for expulsion (or as they were called, the Muslim people) from their lands and for the French to settle in their place. French settler-colonialism aimed to control the natural and human resources of Algeria (or what was called the Algerian part of France).

The revolution of the Vietnamese people aimed for the sovereignty of a specific social system by uniting Vietnamese land and influence over the neighboring area, which implied the work for a social and pan-national revolution. In this area, the Palestinian people are faced with a possibly greater problem: being exposed to a settler-colonialism that seeks to replace them (that is, one that has aimed in the last fifty years to replace the Palestinians with the Jews, and creating them in a violent process of "national becoming" with centralised power and international support, and expelling the Palestinian people from their land completely). From here we must, while benefitting from the Vietnamese experience, not forget that the Palestinian experience and the Palestinian revolution's type, and the type of opposition faced by the Palestinian revolution, requires another way of benefitting from it, and another type of awareness and reality.

Mohammed Kishli: I imagine that the discussion must first center on the question that Mr. Tahsin proposed, which has to do with the concept of using historical experiences and comparing them. This, in my opinion, forms a natural entrance to the topic of understanding everything that will be produced throughout this discussion. The central question does not have to do with relative comparison, since he who studies the question in terms of its political and military features will have the comparison become abstract and nominal to him. That is, when the Vietnam experience is studied in terms of its pure military victories, we will forget the core of that very same experience and its historical relativity, and when we study its foreign policy or its tactical policy in a certain field (whether internal or external), we will also find that we omit the historical relativity of the issue. Historical relativity is not only the product of the ingenuousness of the Vietnamese people, but rather determines the meaning of national wars amongst different peoples. Different peoples are distinguished, primarily, by virtue of peasants making up the majority population, suffering from political stagnation and social backwardness, along with the mentality produced by this political and social backwardness, which is the main obstacle to its liberation or ability for liberation; in other words, colonialism itself controls them economically through a social structure and existing mentalities…the stagnation suffered by different peoples, in general, is a type of surrender to colonialism. The Vietnamese experience, especially, shows us to what extent we may destroy the traditional existing social structures for the majority of the people, at which point it instigates a political awakening capable of coping with the requirements of a national war against imperial exceptionalism of the American kind. He who studies the Vietnamese experience from the standpoint of its historical relativity notices to what extent the Vietnamese peasants have experienced a political awakening, and to what extent they have internalised colonialism. If it is untrue that Vietnam did not challenge American technology except through political action, then it also challenged it with the technology used by the peasants, who are a majority of the Vietnamese people capable of comprehension and political awareness through studying the enemy and using the type of defense appropriate to the advanced technology. The last American warplane was brought down with weapons; true, weapons technologically advanced by the Soviet Union, but it was required of the Vietnamese war's needs for development and the needs of fighters and militias to receive advanced weapons against modern warplanes—that is, the ability of the people to mobilise on all levels. If one studies technology in and of itself in Vietnam, one realises to what extent, during the last ten years, the people were able, in their majority, to receive, on the practical, military, and health levels (and in all fields of science, through

scientific studies and universities), all the benefits of modern industrial civilisation. What I want to focus on in this historical comparison is that the war, the people's war, is different when waged against advanced imperialism—this means: to what extent was the people's leadership able to politically, ideologically, and intellectually wake up (thereby ridding themselves of all psychological, political, and mental barriers) in such a way that allows them to play their role collectively? When the Vietnamese people were able to overcome illiteracy in 90% of the peasant population, this means that they were able to enjoy popularity amongst the peasants in the countryside, as the Cuban revolution did when it was able to popularise anti-illiteracy initiatives to the point that it reached 90% of the population. When we implement this standard, which is the standard that we can apply to our Arab circumstances, we find that illiteracy still persists, for example, in the Arab nations, even the advanced ones, at a percentage of 70-75. Anti-illiteracy is not something normal, and requires that the revolution attract a large number of the population's individuals. This is the historical challenge that the Vietnamese revolution represents. When we separate the other lessons, we can study them in order to benefit from them within the context of historical comparison. In my opinion, the Vietnamese victory is a victory for the meaning of the popular liberation war, not in its meaning as a guerrilla war (as they are often studied, in terms of freedom of movement, strikes, terror, etc…), but rather in its tactical meaning; that is, the **meaning of total mobilisation and all that it entails in terms of political, intellectual, and physiological liberation of the masses**. In my opinion, the main lesson is the following: to what extent can we study the historical periods of the Arab national liberation movement (with the Palestinian cause at its core), and to what extent did this historical period represent this historical comparison? To what extent did the Arab liberation movement use historical comparison for national liberation wars? Here, we may truly study the Arab experience in light of the Vietnamese experience. History does not carry comparisons in their abstract meanings, and does not carry comparisons in terms of mental standards (**لا يحمل مقارنات بالمعنى المقاييس العقلية**), but rather means a comparison between the historical periods themselves; that is, to what extent do national liberation wars apply to us specifically. In my opinion, this is our segway to benefitting from the Vietnamese experience.

Munir Shafiq: In studying the Vietnam experience, or any other experience, we find that there are two primary issues to be differentiated from one another. The experience is in terms of its historical significance in a specific age and in specific circumstances, in the sense that the Vietnam experience, for instance, was able to show its significance specifically to the backwards nations (**الشعوب المتخلفة**), that it is in the ability of a small people to win against

the mightiest imperialist power, equipped with the greatest level of weapons and technology. Lessons of this kind are very important for giving a tangible confidence in being able to achieve a victory by any small backwards nation against the imperialist powers. But the other aspect that we must differentiate from the first is when we study Vietnam's experience, or study any of its aspects. We can find that there are general rules that can apply to all situations. For instance, the presence of a vanguardist organisation leading a wide front of the masses, the formation of popular armed forces affiliated with centralised political leaderships, the ability to mobilise the masses in a revolutionary fashion, and igniting their energies in the way described by Mohammed Kishli. There is also the importance of the revolution having a mass character so that it is able to break up the opposing forces and their army, to isolate them internally, locally, and in the international context; but these conditions for the victory of the revolution cannot be taken in an abstract manner when we implement it in any country, because the formation of these conditions must take place in every nation in accordance with its special circumstances and the historical developments it has experienced. The definitive point we must consider is that when we take into account the different aspects of the lessons learned from the Vietnamese revolution we must always ask how this happened in Vietnam; for instance, how was the building of the party achieved? How was the front built? Not in order to see the articulation in which it was presented, but rather in order to see the core, the philosophy that made possible the creative implementation of the general rules in specific circumstances, in a specific land, and amongst specific masses. The definitive issue we must be aware of is that there is a primary condition that must be present in every revolution, which is to find a revolutionary theory in that nation. That is, how can the revolution occur in this or that nation, where it derives from its specific characteristics a revolutionary theory that leads to a conclusion of the appropriate tactics and strategy? All of this helps us come up with a revolutionary program in that country. Knowing these three basic conditions is the definitive condition for the presence of the other conditions: the issue of building a vanguardist organisation, building a front, forming armed forces, the method of isolating the enemy…etc. From here, we find from studying the Vietnamese revolution the creative implementation carried out by the Communist Party leadership in Vietnam, in addition to the appropriate tactics, strategies, and programs, or to use another phrase, adopting a line appropriate to the revolution's leadership. If we were to say that mobilizing the masses and igniting their energies is a basic condition for the armed revolution, the question remains: how can this be achieved? Here always lies the complication that must be solved in every nation and in accordance with every revolution, because the means and articulations used in Vietnam are not necessarily appropriate for

our revolution in Palestine, or in any other revolution in the world. Because a number of issues enter here, including the specific circumstances of a specific nation, the circumstances of the enemy it faces, and it also has a strong relationship with the history of the people and its traditions, ideas, and general situation. If there is a main issue that I think must be always taken into account, it is this: when we study the Vietnam revolution, we do not engage in a comparison between Vietnam's circumstances and our own, except in a very general context, so that we can immediately decide to focus on proposing the questions I mentioned, which is that when we mention the conditions that were made available for the victory of the revolution (in their entirety, general conditions that can be applied to all situations), we must ask what are the conditions that must be available in our nations so that we may provide them. Another point I would like to refer to on this issue is a general phrase repeated by Tahsin Bashir, on the presence of "a nation" in the process of formation in Israel. Of course discussing this issue may move research far away from the core of the matter, but I would like to express a reservation concerning it only in this discussion.

Dr. Hasan Sharif: I do not wish to add much at this stage to the political discussion, because my colleagues dealt with it—I would like to comment on the topic of technology. A point was made that a primary part of the victory in Vietnam was the ability of the Vietnamese to win in the face of advanced material and technical abilities and energies. This experience is very important because it proposes a new type of technology. The Vietnamese were able, in truth, to create a technology of a new kind that relies primarily upon humans. American technology relies primarily upon the machine, and it attempted to transform the entire war into a total machine war in which humans are forgotten. In the face of this, which requires great financial and mental energies constantly working in the largest of contexts, the Vietnamese were able to develop what we can call "human technology" in the sense of benefitting greatly from the simplest of things available to normal and simple humans. I give only two examples for demonstration: when the Americans found out that rivers were used in Vietnam as the primary means of movement and transportation, they attempted to sabotage them by any possible means. American warplanes planted mines in all of Vietnam's rivers. In response, the Vietnamese used the simplest and most basic means (in technical terms), but perhaps the most effective, which was human surveillance. They planted people all along the rivers, elderly women and men, so that their surveillance noticed the mines thrown by the American planes. This is an example of advanced technology vs simple technology, an example of what humans can do. The other example, which was a surprise for the Americans, was when it planted in all of Vietnam's lands (especially in the

South) sensors that can pick up human and mechanical movements across large distances of land. They were sure that this way would allow them to pick up the movement of machines in a space of hours, or the movements of the Vietnamese brigades, and all possible means were used for this purpose (magnetic machines, sound-detection devices, heat-detection machines…etc), and even with this, they were surprised when a large number of tanks were launched during the spring attack, in places that were not possible to reach without being detected by the sensors. Of course, the Vietnamese solution was simple, which was to take apart these machines from their bases and to transport them, piece by piece, through the simplest of means of transportation (that is, human transportation vs. advanced transportation). I think that this must be considered a primary and important lesson, because it applies in every area. All we need is to absorb our human energies and employ them totally in the face of any other advanced technology.

Dawud Talhami: In terms of detailing the political lessons learned, on the internal Vietnamese level, and militarily on the level of opposition to America, this is present in Naji Allush's study. Of course, the entire study can be a topic of discussion. But I would like to add some points in terms of comparison. The first point that appeared in Tahsin's words is the removal of the Palestinian people from their land and their subsequent presence in other Arab lands, not their primary land—this is of course one of the main differences between the Vietnamese and Palestinian situations. In direct conclusion, this gives rise to the difficulty or impossibility of initiating a purely Palestinian revolution. This means that there will be a Palestinian liberation movement, as there was an independent Vietnamese liberation movement in the early forties; that is, when the Viet Minh Front was created (which was created in Vietnam, although it was not liberated at this time). Secretive actions amongst the masses occurred inside Vietnamese lands, and the strategy was for the liberation of Vietnamese land from French colonialism (which was a colonialism defeated by German imperialism and its allies in East). We cannot forget that during that period Vietnam did not have a land that could serve as a launching pad; China was not liberated, and South China was not liberated, and the Chinese liberation forces had not reached Vietnamese borders until 1949, that is, after four years from the launch of the Vietnamese armed revolution and four years after the declaration of Vietnam's independence and the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Let us return to the main difference (the Palestinian presence outside of the Occupied Territories). This presence requires—whether we like it or not—the communication of the Palestinian struggle for liberation with the Arab liberation movement against imperialism and its pillars. The last experiences of Palestinian resistance, especially in Jordan, and

lately in Lebanon, and the last problem in most Arab countries, now undoubtedly prove the inevitability of this involvement, and the need for the presence of an Arab strategy that works for the liberation of Palestine. This does not mean that all Arabs must at the same time direct themselves to the Palestinian arena, under one concentrated army and with a unified leadership, and of course the real facts do not allow for this, due to the difference in the Arab circumstances and the entrenchment of Arab regionalism, which is the distinction between one Arab country and the other. No matter how much we reject this regionalism, it is still present, and this type of distinction remains. Therefore, we cannot confront the issue of liberating Palestine except when we analyze the extent of the Palestinian issue's involvement of the Arab issue, for every Arab nation has its specificities, contradictions, specific economic circumstances, and a range of imperial control over them, etc…we concluded from all this that a full view allows us to take appropriate steps, regardless of whether they are progressive revolutionary steps, or regressive tactical steps if needed, for the purpose of the continuation and escalation of the Palestinian resistance. Tied to this point is another one, unique in the Arab situation, which is stressed in Western media: the topic of oil. The presence of oil in large quantities in the Arab region, with 60% of the world's known reserves, makes the linking of the Palestinian liberation process with imperialist designs for control over regions of oil sources, is an inevitable process that evolves more and more towards cohesion. We see clearly in recent American declarations and even in the statements of some Israeli officials, the call for intervention to strike at the Palestinian resistance, and to strike at the Arab liberation forces in the Arab Gulf and in all adjoining regions for "guaranteeing the free arrival of oil to the Western world," which more and more relies upon exports from the Arab region. Another factor that distinguishes the Arab situation from the Vietnamese one, which has not been mentioned so far, is the religious-social component. I give this factor significance when we compare the Vietnam experiences or when applying socialism to Vietnam and China, for instance, and when applying socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The differences are not only the differences tied to the extent of economic development in the countries, or the nature of the leadership or the nature of the circumstances that brought the Communist Party to the government of those countries, and there must be a better analysis of the extent of effect of the social background, and specifically the religious element in these situations in terms of the rate of development towards socialism in all of these countries and in the rate of building revolutionary parties and the rate of the revolutionary movement's growth, on the rate of mass mobilisation, etc. There is a study by our Vietnamese comrades on the effect of religion on the self in Vietnam. I believe that Confucianism, and its simplicity and closeness

to the daily lives of people and its social character—all of that played a role in the transformation described by Mohammed Kishli, the transformation of those people, who were truly backwards, who were thirty years ago in a state of backwardness that perhaps surpasses the backwardness we suffer from now in the Arab region, a transformation that allowed for the mobilisation of all of these peasants under the leadership of advanced political forces, progressive and open to modern ideologies and advanced technology. All of this cannot but make us look at the effects of the social makeup and the religious element. Of course, with relation to the Arab world, the topic requires a study of the Islamic religion, which is the religion of most of those in the region and is the effective religion that presents the social aspect (that is, the makeup of the Arab region which will be reflected, whether we like it or not, even on the politically advanced movements). This hundred-years old Islamic heritage will be reflected upon the makeup of these forces and revolutionary movements, and will be reflected on the extent of mass mobilisation and the extent of its accommodation of specific slogans and practices. A final tangential point is the issue of using media by the Vietnamese comrades, alongside military action and political action, but this media component is directed to the outside, to the socialist world, the Third World, and to the capitalist world and all of its accompanying contradictions. This media, in my estimate, plays an important role, and the Vietnamese victory, as Naji Allush pointed out, was a primary political victory. Vietnam was able to seduce America politically into signing its withdrawal and its abandonment of its aggressive goals. Media had a role in this victory. The Vietnamese were able to mobilise their communities on the outside. For instance, in Paris a festival was held by the foreign minister of the temporary Revolutionary Republic, attended by thousands from the Vietnamese communities in France, most of them a part of the bourgeoisie, that is a part of the merchants, etc…there was an atmosphere of excitement and mobilisation that truly gave a feeling that these masses were truly mobilised, and prepared to take part in actions that have requirements on the media level, on the level of collecting funds, etc…because the slogans that were proposed by the liberation front were mobilisational slogans, aiming, as has been pointed out, to mobilise most sectors of the people, knowing that the leadership is a progressive leadership with a progressive political line that worked to mobilise all sectors of the people, including the national bourgeoisie, under the moderate slogans of national liberation. I want to refer to the topic of addressing the American people—briefly, since it was mentioned in one of the studies—in order to create contradictions within American society and creating a peace trend amongst the American people calling for an end to the war. Of course, the topic was not about media, and is primarily a military topic, having to do with launching strikes upon the American army in

Vietnam and inflicting heaving damages; it also has to do with the media line of the Vietnamese revolution on the outside…a non-chauvinist line towards the American people, which influenced the development of the antiwar movement in America and in affecting the American administration's decision to stop the war. Another point I will quickly refer to is the benefitting from imperialist contradictions, and this is not new for the Vietnamese revolution. In the first revolution, they were able to benefit from the contradictions in France and America, and between France and Japan during a short period of time, and after the sixties between America and the other imperialist powers. Of course, all of these observations are not valuable if the primary makeup of the Vietnamese liberation front, the presence of a leading party, and of a wide front, etc, is not taken into account…all of these are points referred to by Naji Allush in his study on the political and military makeup of the Vietnamese revolution, which had a decisive role in the victory.

Haytham Ayyoubi: I would like to speak of the military lessons we can learn from the Vietnamese victory. Of course my talk won't be purely military, because the revolutionary war is primarily a political, diplomatic, media, and military war. It used diplomacy, media, and politics to inspire the enemy's will to fight on the eve of battle and during the period of deliberations; it applied the Leninist principle that held that the disintegration of the enemy materially and morally, putting it in the worst of mental and strategic circumstances before delivering the decisive blow, is imperative.

However, before I begin my talk about the lessons as I see them, I would like to present some observations that seek to remove some common conceptions that accompanied this topic.

When the Vietnamese revolution achieved its great victories, and when the military escalation was unable to bring down the Vietnamese people, and when the consecutive battles proved the impotence of American technology in confronting the revolution of the politicised individual acting under a conscious revolutionary leadership, the conversation started in the Arab nation on the potential of benefitting from the lessons of this revolution, and of the possibilities of implementing these lessons by the revolutionary Arab forces. Here, a point of view appeared holding that benefitting from these lessons are not only difficult, but impossible, and those who hold this view presented excuses that have to do with the presence of facts tied to the Arab lands, the lack of the presence of the Palestinian people on their land, and they presented to us information about the forests, swamps, and mountains of Vietnam, and tied the revolutionary war to these geographic factors.

In this regard, I would like to say that what is being said about the geographic factors has to do with guerrilla warfare, not with revolutionary war. It has to do with the tactics, not with strategy or grand strategy, and is tied to the methods of revolutionary war, not the methods of revolutionary war as a unique type of war. Land (including swamps, jungles, mountains, etc...) has an effect upon guerrilla warfare, but guerrilla warfare is a method, a means used within a revolutionary war without being *the* revolutionary war. It is a fighting style, not a type of opposition between two peoples. Perhaps topography and climate also have an effect upon strategy, but it is a limited effect within the framework of its relations with strategic movement, not within the context of a strategy chosen for opposition. The aim of this clarification is to reveal the existing mixing between guerrilla warfare and revolutionary war in much of the political and military Arab literature. This mixing is sometimes due to the error in understanding the truth in things. It is also often due to the desire of many exploitative social forces in demoralizing the Arab masses of all possibilities of implementing revolutionary war as an ideal method of opposing imperialism and its local pillars, and as a decisive solution to the contradictions resulting from the different types of imperialist presence in our nations and all types of nationalist and social oppression experienced by our masses. This desire springs from the demoralisation and fear caused by these exploitative social forces, in order to preserve their positions and class interests and privileges, which at the outbreak of the Arab revolutionary war will be immediately endangered, or endangered in the long-term.

We cannot regard revolutionary war as a fighting method, but rather a type of total opposition used by materially weak peoples against external aggression, or against internal class oppression, or against both at the same time. It is a total opposition in which all material, intellectual, spiritual, political, and diplomatic means of the oppressed people are mobilised, and are immersed in a long-term struggle that targets the frustration of the enemy's will, causing it a state of material and mental exhaustion that forces it to concede defeat, whether this war military takes on the form of a guerrilla war, a regime war, urban terrorist operations, mine wars, etc...or takes on a form that combines all of these forms or some of them according to the nature of the general position and according to the balance of power. This is in addition to the numerous forms of political, mental, and diplomatic struggle.

When the Arab revolutionary powers spoke of full opposition as a feature of revolutionary war, some theorists opposed to the revolutionary war emerged with a novelty, aiming to warp the view of this war and obscuring it, saying:

if full mobilisation of all the forces of the people and dragging them into battle were the proof of the revolutionary war, then the Israeli wars are also revolutionary wars, and the war that Nazi Germany launched was also revolutionary, because these were wars in which the people participated and were in cohesion with their leadership; they were politically and economically mobilised, and used all of the spiritual, intellectual, material, etc means of these people...the Leninist response to this novelty is to look for the goals of war and the forces benefitting from it, and the nature of the latent political thought underlying it, revealing the direction of its course in relation to the line of historical evolution. There is a difference between a war that a nation undertakes in order to exterminate another one, to steal its wealth, or to bolster its oligarchs' reservoirs on the back of the masses, and a war that the oppressed people launch for the liberation of their land and for securing their progress and well-being, or launched by the masses in order to rid themselves of misery imposed upon them by exploitative and greedy classes. The second war is a revolutionary war that carries the political ideal of justice, in accordance with the line of historical evolution (national liberation, social liberation, and social and national liberation); the second war is a counter-revolutionary war [even if it used some of the methods of revolution in fighting, propaganda, and diplomacy, etc...] because it carries an unjust political ideal that opposes the line of historical evolution, and deceives the masses, mobilises them, and drags them towards massacres by way of using a dynamic doctrine like Nazism and Zionism. After this clarification, I would like to talk about the lessons learned from the Vietnamese revolution.

The first lesson: it is more important on the level of grand strategy, which is the politicisation of the armed forces in its different branches (governmental, guerrilla, local militias), and using the political ideal as a weapon to raise the level of combat effectiveness of every human associated with total opposition, and creating an individual that is conscious of his cause and prepared to defend it and to die for it. The studies specializing in the Vietnamese war show that everything in this war was politicised, and that the war used politics as its primary weapon in a revolutionary way. Politics was used for three goals: the internal support of the forces of revolution, the moral disintegration of the counterrevolutionary forces, and to neutralise those who can be neutralised inside the enemy camp between the forces of the revolution and the counterrevolutionary forces.

Resulting from this politicisation were numerous results on all levels:
On the level of tactics this politicisation was reflected by the amendment to Mao Zedong's basic principle; "one against ten in strategy, and ten against one in tactics," which meant that it was within the powers of the forces of

revolution to fight the forces opposing it even if it were strategically superior with a proportion of one to ten, on the condition that the forces of revolution implement the principles of movement, secrecy, and stealth, in order to achieve the tactical superiority of a proportion of ten to one in a specific place and balance of power (the battle's place and balance of power). It has become possible, after politicizing the fighters, to engage in the battle without achieving the mentioned [numerical] superiority, since the politicisation of fighters and their mental mobilisation to make the greatest sacrifices is an important factor that tips the balance of power and increases the general size of the forces of revolution; it also increases its level of effectiveness despite the lack of its numerical increase. Undoubtedly, concentrated politicisation allowed for the Vietnamese to engage in victorious battles against the forces of the enemy, ending up with a general superiority equivalent to a proportion of one to ten, due to the increase in the level of awareness and the drive of their fighters. It is possible to explain this by going back to the laws of the calculation of forces in battle, which has to do with several factors, including materiality, training, leadership, politics, psychology...etc. The counterrevolutionary forces posses only material superiority, while the politicised forces of revolution possess a superiority politically, morally, in their leadership...etc. Therefore, they use these factors in order to tip the [general] balance of power in their favour.

The politicisation was reflected upon the administrative issues, with the revolt of every citizen, which served as a source of supply for the revolutionary forces. The Vietnamese people all became one group that aided the processes of supply, aid, evacuation, and medical relief, which is the factor that secured the continuation of the administrative affairs despite all the great difficulties due to American air strikes of roads, bridges, ports, and warehouses, and the shortage of supplies, means of transportation of thousands of tons of ammunition, food, medical supplies, spare parts, etc...required for battle.

The effect of politicisation was also clear in the area of intelligence. If every citizens were to be qualified for gathering information on the enemy and transporting it to the revolutionaries, and the hiding of information specific to the forces of the revolution with an implementation of the principle of "not heard, not seen, not known."

The effect of politicisation was reflected also by the question of supporting awareness and raising the level of enthusiasm, tying the struggle to the issues of daily life within the framework of national unity. It is true that the Front for the National Liberation of Vietnam (F.L.N.V) used to propose the question of

the war of national liberation, tying it directly to social liberation and the expected social benefits. It used to benefit from the socialist achievements in North Vietnam, and presents the image of this fighting nation on the path of progress and prosperity as an image of the future nation in the South. This tie made the fighters more enthusiastic for the revolution and in their ties to it, giving the national liberation war a social character that is indispensable without leaving the project of national unity.

The second lesson: the vanguardist leadership and the leading party. The war in Vietnam proved that the revolutionary war is in need of vanguards tied to one another factionally and ideologically, not tribally, personally, or in terms of sects, etc...if the family, the sect, the clan, etc...made up the social ties of the last centuries, during past revolutionary wars, then the party is the only modern form of organisation capable of uniting our ranks, lending them cohesion, and leading the revolutionary war in our modern society.

With this point of view, the Vietnamese Communist Party had a primary and vanguardist role within the national liberation front, and in this point of view, the Vietnamese understanding of national unity was built upon a political program of the lowest common denominator, including all of the democratic and national forces under the leadership of the party of the working classes.

The Third Lesson: the importance of the presence of a liberated land near the land that has not been liberated as of yet. The presence of North Vietnam was a basic and important advantage for the forces of revolution in South Vietnam. North Vietnam was an important base of supplies, ammunition, cadres, fighters, etc...and it would not have been within their ability to continue if not for a strong socialist country with a system around which the masses rally, and whose people are prepared for defending this system under the banner of a leadership that has confidence in it ot the highest degree. It was not within the ability of North Vietnam to play the role that it did in terms of its refusal to be subject to the deterrence operations from sea and air, and if it had not be able to remains steadfast in the face of the land invasion operations. The presence of a strong revolutionary base capable of withstanding the most brutal of land offensives launched by American B-52 planes during several years, and the continuation of life, production, giving, and remaining steadfast, continued to help the forces of revolution, based upon the idea that there was no difference between the North and the South. This was also helped by the continuation of support for the forces of revolution, which was not influenced by deterrence and regional thinking, and did not consider the forces of revolution to be a danger to security or that they must be restrained and hit from behind. This presence, represented in

North Vietnam, presents us with a wide opportunity to think into the future. It pushes us to have a real view of the needed relationship between the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution.

It is wrong to think of a Palestinian revolution without seeing the dialectical relationship between this revolution and the presence of an Arab revolution, and an Arab base capable of playing the role of an Arab Hanoi effectively. It can regard itself as a part of the battle, prepared to remain steadfast in the face of the wide and limited attacks, and to continue fighting despite the violence of the deterrent attacks. The correctness of this appears when we study the reality of the Palestinian revolution in the Occupied Territories and outside of it, and if we studied the Israeli reactions and what resulted from it in terms of the deterrence of every Arab state that does not carry the features of a secure and steadfast base, and the likelihoods of transformation in the positions of this state towards supporting the Palestinian revolution effectively, to supporting it with restraints and reservations, and to limiting its freedoms and clashing with it.

Any Arab nationalist or semi-nationalist regime that is against Israel but not prepared for withstanding the process of deterrence for a long time, will transform whether it likes it or not into a force that strikes against the Palestinian revolution when it acts in a way that provokes Israeli countermeasures. From here comes the reason for focusing on the Arabness of the revolution and the Arabness of the battle, because this condition can make the Arab region whole, as with the Vietnamese region in its Southern and Northern parts. If this condition were not achieved, one can regard the Arab lands, including Palestine, as divided into **liberated areas** including an Arab country more ready to play the role of a Hanoi that is unaffected by deterrence. And then there are **occupied areas** including the land that is controlled by the enemy almost completely, **areas of permanent clashes** including wide parts of occupied lands and areas bordering the liberated or occupied areas, and all the Arab areas that can be penetrated by the opposing forces through invasions. In the area of clashes, the struggle occurred between the revolutionary Arab forces—including the forces of the Palestinian revolution—and the enemy forces. This happens with the Arab revolutionary powers' support by a true and secure base. I believe that this is the correct explanation of the principle of the Arabness of the revolution, and the importance of revolutionizing the Arab lands as a part of a struggle with the Israeli enemy.

The Fourth Lesson: coordinated rebellion. The Vietnamese revolution proved during all of its battles that it does not operate in a region and leave another.

When the operations of armed rebellion, strikes, and bomb operations inside cities, the countryside revolts and tries to cut off the paths to cities, attracting the enemy forces. In reverse, when the countryside revolts and the enemy armies start moving to strike at the countryside, the grasp upon the city is loosened and explosions start within it. We say this because the Jordanian experience and the Lebanese experience are of the examples in which coordinated rebellion takes place. When Amman was attacked, Irbid did not move all of the Jordan Valley forces thoroughly in such a way that cuts off the Amman-Irbid roads and breaks up the Jordanian forces. When the government struck the bases in the Jordan Valley, the area did not ignite completely. This also applies to Lebanon's events, for when the battle ignited in Beirut the countryside did not ignite, or at least did not ignite in Tripoli; coordinated rebellion did not take place, and the breakup of forces in the widest possible area of land did not occur.

The Fifth Lesson: coordination between different types of fighting in the revolutionary war. The Vietnamese used guerrilla warfare, regime war, and individual terrorism against the enemy leadership, in addition to sniping, mine warfare. The Fifth Lesson: coordination between different types of fighting in the revolutionary war. The Vietnamese used guerrilla warfare, regime war, and individual terrorism against the enemy leadership, in addition to sniping, mine warfare, and psychological and media warfare. They coordinated between these types, differentiating between them according to the balance of power. If the balance of power allowed them at a certain time and place, they would use regime war, and if the balance of power shifted, they would transform into guerrilla warfare, and if in other circumstances they find that one can only work according to the means of secretive war, they would implement these means until the enemy's grasp upon them loosens, at which point the secretive war becomes a guerrilla war, or an armed rebellion according to the tangible circumstances. All of this happens with the perseverance in political, psychological, and media work. Coordination between the different methods of struggle means that there must be a correct Vietnamese understanding of the principle of the balance of powers, and the principle of using the correct tool to achieve the correct aim, according to the actual balance of powers.

The Sixth Lesson: Gathering powers and breaking up the enemy. Guevara called—on the level of the world revolution's strategy—for the urgency of there being more than one Vietnam for opposing world imperialism. The Vietnamese implemented this principle on the level of the Vietnamese revolution. They created more than one struggle point in more than one place, and so the enemy as forced to spread out it across the length and width of

Vietnam, and then they focused their forces on one point using movement, speed, and stealth, striking hard at it and then dispersing. These are the primary lessons presented by the Vietnamese revolution to the world revolution on the level of strategy. In terms of lessons in tactics, administrative affairs, intelligence, and technology, it is sufficiently dealt with in the study presented by Naji Allush. Thank you.

Tahsin Bashir: the first point is a clarification of the reservations held by Munir on the question of Israel being nationalist in its stage of formation. Regardless of the analytical accuracy of the presence of this nationalism in its state of formation, or in the case of no nationalist features being present, the more dangerous aspect is that it creates a dynamic whereby the Israelis are given a type of defense by proving themselves through continuous action and achievements, which happens at a time when Arab society remains qualitatively, in most of its sectors, in a state of political stagnation. The second point is that we, in relation to the reservation, have ignored an aspect of comparison between Vietnam and the position in the Arab world; it is the type of the Israeli occupation, the type, example, and methods of implementing this occupation, and the impossibility of the Israelis in initiating a type of counter social revolution; in addition, it is the type of American occupation through the Saigon government and the different and old initiatives under the monarchy and the Catholics, and after that in the mix between the Catholics and the Buddhists. The Israelis currently are undertaking two operations of the utmost danger, and the Arab people and the Arab forces do not do enough for the people under occupation. Many of us are primarily interested in the process of liberation, its position, and its obstacles, but there is not enough interest in helping those under occupation. Israel recently resorted through employing Arab workers who do not own land or lands to attempting a counterrevolution of a new kind, giving the workers five times the normal wage usually agreed to by the occupation, which creates a type of worker who is dependent on the investments and decisions of Israel, which works as a type of degradation of Palestinian society occurring between the present bourgeois class in the small Palestinian cities and the traditional leaderships, and this new worker who relies upon his income and accompanying privileges, whether in medical treatment or social security, because of his membership and participation in the Histadrut; this is the type of social counterrevolution, because it is not real and because this factor relies upon the will of the Israeli government. At any point where the Israeli government is capable of ceasing their use, and so it becomes without an economic base, but Israel may use it after two or three years as a method of pressuring the new class of workers which became used to a specific consumerist pattern in order to expel from the lands economically, to

halt their employment. We have not been able so far to respond positively to this problem at a time when Israel was able in the last year to stop the type of effective resistance in the West Bank and Gaza, with the presence of a minority that still looks for a way for appropriate resistance to the type of Israeli colonialism. The Vietnamese position on this issue was totally different. Neither the Saigon government, nor the American government, was able to gain—after many long years of employment, expenditure, and gathering forces—a supportive and effective element for the pro-American government. It is our duty to search for means by which the people under occupation may resist, even if in a limited fashion. The third point I would like to address is the Vietnamese political capabilities. The appropriate political-military-economic-media decision is a political decision. The Vietnamese war and the Vietnamese revolution is distinguished by its ability to make appropriate political decisions that rely upon the self, taking into account the forces of allies, regardless of whether they be China, the Soviet Union, the neutral forces, or the fluctuating forces (القوى المذبذبة)—but it is, at its core, a political decision. When we see, for instance, the pace of airstrikes and their relations to the negotiations, their duration, the time in which they are decided, and the point at which they are discontinued, the decision was a political one and indicated extreme cleverness. In this political decision, media did not play an important role in responding to Dawud, in the sense that media itself was isolated from the cause. Media was one of the factors in political decision-making because from the point of vie of the United States' reaction, we find the political ability to make political-military decisions, which have a media effect within American society without the presence of Vietnamese media activities within the United States itself. However, they were able to ignite, between the American people, a situation in which American decisions against Vietnam became decisions that were opposed to the peaceful and enlightened forces in the United States. This capability for a long term political view, coupled with a tactical view of the moderate problems between the long term and the middle term, is also lacking in its Arab vision. We see, for instance, the long-term view in building a new society and a democratic state in which all races coexist, but what is occurring between the present and an unspecified time period in which this vision takes place? In the Vietnamese case, there was a continuous tactical ability and a middle term view for benefitting from the phased steps for the implementation of the final vision. In our case, there is an urgent need for creating a middle-term revolutionary vision that serves the long-term vision and does not hinder it. But I stress again that the most important factor that maintained the Vietnamese movement, refined it, and enriched it, was continuous practice. The war in South Vietnam, which continued through periods of victory and failure, through periods of stagnation and activity, is

the factor that secured the continuation of this revolution, refining it and attracting to it all of the neutral and fluctuating element to the perseverance in struggle, and which forced countries, including the enemy countries, to respect the Vietnamese people, their capabilities, and the capabilities of their revolution. On this basis, perhaps the most important question we face in our situation is: how do we guarantee to the people living under occupation, and to and the Palestinian people, the continuation of an effective resistance movement that ebbs and flows, but perseveres in such a way that it influences the enemy? True resistance is the resistance that affects the enemy in a way that is positive for the revolution's goals.

Mohammed Kishli: Of course, Zionism and Israel make up a type of settler-colonialism that is different to what is happening in Vietnam or other colonised countries. This is true, but only partly, because the question does not go back to this difference so much as it goes back to the type of war and the type of response by which we confront settler-colonialism of this type. Let us take, for example, the issue proposed by Tahsin: Israel practices settler-colonialism tied organically to world imperialism. Inside this settler society, which is moved by Zionist dynamics (a type of total mobilisation for Israelis),this development—that is, the development of settler-colonialism—with its organic tie to imperialism, suffers from contradictions even on the level referred to now as economic absorption of social strata of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. First: this absorption is limited to the limits of exploitation within Israeli society itself, which means that there is oppression even of Arab citizens in the occupied territories, political and social oppression in which they do not receive the rights conferred upon Israeli citizens. They are considered second-class or third-class citizens; in fact, within the economic development of Israel, it is possible to say that the limits reached by Israeli society now will not remain at this rate of development, as some contradictions have begun to surface, contradictions like those arising between Eastern and Western Jews. Will Israel be able to fund its economy from the outside at the same pace of the past? All of these are factors that influence the future of the relationship between the people in the occupied territories and the formation of Israel. Second: if we truly wanted to look at the Palestinian issue from the viewpoint of a Palestinian people and Israel, we will find ourselves in a narrower scope in terms of the reality in Israel—that is, how it is represented on the level of its embodiment of an imperialist base for all the Arab region, and the other is that to what extend does confrontation take place with all those that surround the Palestinian people with an organic relationship with all the Arab fronts. This appears through all of the other occupations, the occupation of the Golan and Sinai. The challenge practiced by the Palestinian issue in terms of the practical

measurement, even without turning to theory, is the fact that the Palestinian people are a part of the people of the Arab nation, and in terms of the practical measurements, Israel is an imperialist reality that challenges all of the Arab countries, or at least the neighboring ones, and this challenge is what we can look at in terms of a historical comparison. It is true that settler-colonialism is stronger, and that settler-colonialism is more prepared and tries to be a base for economic, social, and military imperialism, but all of that does not mean the we should deal with this question in terms of obstacles, but rather in terms of the meaning of the popular war against Israel, or the meaning of a war against Israel. On this level, we can truly compare between Vietnam and the current Arab circumstances. Its inability to challenge Israel does not result from a lack of effectiveness of resistance in the occupied territories, and we see no that the current Arab impotence tries to show its impotence through this slogan: the impossibility of resistance in the occupied land for many reasons. It emphasises its impotence in challenging Israel, and so it constructs a pretext around the reality its internal configurations in every Arab nation that is impotent in opposing an enemy like Israel and Zionism. We have stated that we can study through comparison the meaning of a gap within the internal Arab front in the Arab nation, especially in the concerned countries, and we can study the meaning of the defeat of June and the contradictions born of the last few years; we can also study the extent to which opposing Israel can occur in the same reality upon which Israel relies, the reality of backwardness, and the reality of existing backwards foundations in every Arab nation. I imagine that the basic historical conclusion that can serve as a comparison with the Vietnamese experience in the current Arab situation is the historical relativism of national wars, and to what extent this relativism present? And to what extent is mass mobilisation present? And to what extent can we say that we oppose Israel within the limits of the type of colonialism represented by Israel.

Munir Shafiq: In reality, my view is that comparison always carries several differences between any two experience and any two situations and peoples. These differences are also primarily historical and cultural-economic, in the broad sense of the term. The same applies to the enemy's circumstances, to the extent that we find several differences in the comparison of the latest war fought by the Vietnamese people with the war fought against French colonialism. The differentiation and comparisons may be misleading in arriving at the proper results. This is because it is, in my opinion (in order for us to be able to determine precise differences and to specify precise points of convergence), we must have between our hands a precise analysis of the special features of our nation's circumstances, and based upon this we may undertake a comparison such as this. Because in taking on the situation

arrived at by Vietnam in the current phase, and in comparing it with the current situation, whether it be in relation to the Palestinian revolution or in relation to the Arab liberation movements and the Arab situation generally, it cannot bring us to precise and correct conclusions. For instance, if we take the fighting level reached by the Vietnamese revolution, we notice its level of dynamism, as described by Haytham because the situation itself has not always been present in Vietnam. It expresses a lofty phase in the development of the revolution, which cannot be compared to a lower phase. Also, this starting point can also be applied to all of the other fields. For instance, if we took the level of the party in Vietnam, what will happen when we compare it to the existing attempts in our nation that seek to play the role that the party plays there? We will also find frightening and horrible comparisons in relation to our situation. From here I can say that benefitting from the lessons of Vietnam must be only a general guide, and must not become the template that is applied to our nations. In other words, we must make of the general lessons an answer to what we must do here. Even when we say that Vietnam's revolution proved that it was within the abilities of a small people, if they fought a long-term war, to win over the greatest imperialist powers. For this is not enough, it is generally true, but we must also prove it in our nations so that the masses be convinced of this issue. It is not enough to say to our masses that the Vietnamese people have won if it is within your ability to also win. We must say this, but we must not be content with it and base all of our work upon it. We must rather analyze for our masses the circumstances of our nations and the circumstances of the enemy, in addition to the circumstances we face, proving that we can indeed win over the superior enemy that is supported by world imperialism, this point is what I wanted from the outset to try and discuss, which is that we should not engage in a comparison except within certain limits, and to take it only as a general guide while the focus remains on what we must present in terms of an analysis of the specific features of our nations' circumstances, and after that we can arrive at a more precise comparison between the two experiences. The second point is related to the issue of the Palestinian revolution and the Arab situation. It is true that it is incorrect to say that the Palestinian revolution on its own can win against the Zionist enemy. It is also true to say that there is external intervention between the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution, and there is even more than intervention, there is an organic unity between the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution in relation to the issue of liberating Palestine. However, the thing that we must determine is what is this relation precisely? Here we can proposer three basic features; the first is that the **Palestinian revolution's prioritisation of the issue of liberating Palestine must be a primary condition for the explosion of the Arab revolution and the formation of a liberated base and Arab**

participation. The second is that achieving parts of the Arab revolution's goals must take place through and during the first condition, and **it becomes in its own right a primary condition for the continuation of the Palestinian revolution and the achievement of the process of liberation**. Third: throughout this dialectical relationship, the organic unity of the revolution in our nations is achieved, not in relation to the issue of liberating Palestine, but rather in relation to all the goals of the Arab revolution and its issues. The issue is not merely a description that it is overlapping, or that an organic relationship exists between both aspects, but rather what is needed is a specification of what the features of this basic relationship are? From where do we start? And throughout our work how can we see the relationship and the features in its actions on the field of practical implementation? The importance of this specification springs from the fact that it becomes theoretically destitute, a fact that is clear to the vanguard forces in drawing up and practicing their struggle.

Mahmoud Swayd: in my estimation, while we try to draw inspiration from the Vietnamese experience in the Arab-Israeli conflict, we must look at the current Arab situation, from which we may similarly draw inspiration. The current Arab circumstances are characterised, in my opinion, by the following features: or, the political map of the Arab nation is currently in the following form: A) backwards regimes that are within the orbit of world imperialism and complicit in it, benefitting from the Israeli victory in 1967 and its result in regaining many of its positions on the back of the regimes that used to be called progressive, and then advanced, and on the back of the Arab liberation movement. B) Bourgeois state regimes that failed in achieving the goals of the democratic revolution, some of them going a long way in their retreat from engaging in the imperialist relations and coexisting with the backwards regimes in the region, and liquidating the struggle with the old classes of its society, surrendering to the terms of American-Israeli peace. Its other part forms a barrier between the Palestinian resistance and the Arab masses in their lands, and it acts based on the fact that it is an alternative to these masses' interaction with the resistance. C) Some of the Arab liberation movement is affiliated with the regimes and adheres to their programs, and the second part was not able to prove its ability to carry the interests of the masses and claim to represent them, while the third part bears arms and fights in different areas in the Arab nation. The Arab liberation movement in its entirety is weak and fragmented, living upon the steadfastness of the resistance movement and its victories, and so it does not help addressing the situation if the name changed from support to participation. D) The rising up of the Palestinian people under the leadership of their armed revolution as a central chain in the struggle of the Arab liberation forces and their

steadfastness in this phase. This Arab circumstance is surrounded by regional circumstances, encircling the Arab liberation movement and extending from Saudi Arabia to Israel, Jordan, Turkey, and Iran in the Levant, and Ethiopia in East Africa. Israel occupies the center of gravity in this axis in the Arab East, while Iran occupies a center of gravity in the Gulf. On the international level: the international circumstances: the failure of the non-capitalist road to socialist, which formed the center of the relationship between national military regimes and the Soviet Union in Asia and Africa during the previous period. This was coupled, during recent years, with victories achieved by the Nixon Doctrine against the liberation forces in Asia and Africa specifically. It is a comfortable situation for the United States in the Middle East, in contrast to Vietnam, that is, its lack of need to directly intervene militarily as a result of Israel's effectiveness and ability to absorb American military advances. Naturally, the Arab situation was impotent as a result. In affirmation of this situation, in recent times we can note the attempts to the United States and the Zionist press to benefit from the crisis of world energy and to try and shift world interest from the Arab-Israel conflict to a conflict in the Gulf. The international situation in which the Arab-Israeli conflict takes place is characterised by the growth of economic and market relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, and taking progressive steps on the level of peaceful coexistence, starting with relationships of this type. Then there was China's popular joining of the United Nations and its relations with the United States, and the effects of all of this upon the foreign policy of China. The Arab-Israeli conflict takes place in light of these Arab and international circumstances. What do the Arab and Palestinian liberation movements take from the Vietnamese experience? In my opinion, the phase reached by the Arab liberation movement puts forth the issues of the party, the front, and revolutionary mass mobilisation within the horizons of the long-term popular war. These issues are proposed on the level of the Palestinian resistance on the one end, and on the level of the Arab liberation movement on the other. In addition, there is an independent line that adheres primarily to Marxist-Leninism, and the representative of the Arab revolution's interests on the basis that what the revolution achieves makes up its initiative in the world revolution. That is, the value of any position towards the theoretical and political arguments within the socialist camp is determined by the position of the Arab revolution in the camp of the forces of world liberation and its participation in this camp, starting from the fact that the interests of the Arab revolution are in the conflict against imperialist and world forces on the one hand, and the oppressed and exploited masses, and occupied nations, on the other. Then, there is another lesson: relying upon the powers of the self, which determine the value of external aid and help their employment; in this regard, we are able to point to the Egyptian example; that is the external

Soviet aid, which with the absence of the internal factor was not able to transform Egyptian society to the socialist path and was not able to achieve national liberation. Therefore, we must consider the element of the self the main element in the battle of national liberation and the road to socialist transformation. Here we msut of course point to what the Egyptian regime meant in its discourse on relying upon the factor of the self, and the contradiction of that with what is meant by the reliance upon the element of the self and the internal elements in the Vietnamese experience. Therefore, the meaning of relying upon the powers of the self cannot mean expelling Soviet aid and liquidating the national forces instead of mobilizing the masses for a long-term people's war. In our view of the current Arab reality we must take note of the increase and escalation in the wave of suppressions of the mass movement, which accompany steps to surrender. This escalation calls for the factions of the Arab mass movement and popular protests to practice the organisation of armed activities spread across the Palestinian revolution and the Dhofar revolution, which are the existing examples in the Arab region.

I would like to refer finally to the fact that this situation must have a view of what the armed rising of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian revolution did—despite all the factors of weakness from which it suffered—and despite all the elements of power enjoyed by Israel. We must note that Israel has fallen into a historical impasse, represented by the fact that it faces the problem of the nationalist question of the Palestinian people, whether they be in a state of war or peace. The Arab region ended in terms of phases with a type of surrender, represented by the proposed peaceful settlements, and that does not lead to the saving of Israel from its impasse in confronting the armed Palestinian people and the growing Arab liberation movement. Also, if the current Arab impasse continued and if the Arab regimes did not reach the peaceful solution they desired, then Israel also faced a historical impasse. It faces this impasse in any situation, whether the occupied territories, with its Palestinian Arab masses, were annexed, or abandoned so that it becomes a part of King Hussein's kingdom, or formed into a Palestinian state. In all of these situations, Israel faces in reality its historical impasse with the rise of the armed Palestinian people and the inevitability of the explosion of the contradictions of the Arab situation for the benefit of Arab liberation in a final analysis.

Mohammed Kishli: In terms of the comparative slogan of "the Arab Hanoi," this means that the conditions for the victory of the Palestinian revolution must be compared to the Southern and Northern Vietnamese situations through the current Arab situation. In my estimation, this comparison is in need of a study of the historical meaning of the slogan, "the Arab Hanoi," or

the relation of the Palestinian revolution with the Arab situation. The main historical observation is that the Jun defeat was not, naturally—a confession made by most—was not a military defeat, but a defeat of all the structures that stood behind the war and behind the military aspect. If we studied them in depth, we notice that the main question has to do with the fact that the road to the capitalist economic construction of the Arab situation failed in that historical phase. The first phase is which the bourgeoisie attempted to construct, an attempt followed by a type of parliamentarianism of the ruling parties themselves, failed, and the military and technocratic bodies—the state bodies—attempted to establish a capitalist development that rejected the political path of the bourgeoisie, but with the same goals that the bourgeoisie desired but was unable to achieve…that is, even what has been called the democratic rights of the masses—and this slogan is repeated now from the Maghrib to the Gulf—which is tied to the national question…that is, the liberal bourgeois achievement was not achieved for the passes until now, not by the hand of the bourgeoisie before the military uprisings, and not by the hands of the recent social-economic attempts. For in the current phase of the Palestinian issue, which appeared after the 5 June defeat, it has become clearer and clearer that its relationship with the internal Arab struggle, the struggle and the contradiction that explode…explodes with the impact of the defeat itself in every Arab nation tied to what the Arab bourgeoisie was not able to achieve, which are its historical achievements: political democracy for the masses, construction, etc…all of the achievements that the European bourgeoisie made on the level of intellectual liberation and getting rid of feudalist mentalities, etc…all of these tasks that are regarded long-term goals, we find ourselves in every phase approaching the impasse in order to oppose Israel; the Palestinian revolution and armed Palestinian national awakening is actually linked to it, and to the extent of the Arab masses' political awareness—that is, their ability to move politically and socially within every Arab nation, and this liberation has different levels that emerge in every phase according to the nature of the struggle that the mass movements undertake. Because of this, for instance, we note that the response to the crisis between a peaceful compromise and Palestinian armed awakening is the slogan of democratic rights for the masses. This slogan represents the crisis and the gap in the relationship between the Palestinian revolution and the internal changes that are ignited by the popular energies after the fifth of June. That is, internal change and internal struggles in every Arab nation is tied to Palestinian national awakening, and at the same time, Palestinian national awakening does not have horizons except in terms of what the social and mass movements ignite in every Arab nation on the level of changing its circumstances and its makeup, and the emergence of political movements that express it. I imagine this complicated phase in its historical meaning, which is

what makes up now the Arab situation's complex towards what is now called the Arab impotence in opposing Israel, the peaceful settlement, and other such projects, even projects that are tied to the Palestinian people, such as the Palestinian state. The national awakening of the Palestinian people in their historical measure is tied to the extent of its organic relationship with the changes that must occur inside every Arab nation, regardless of whether it signed the peaceful settlement or not! If it signed the peaceful settlement, the ruling classes will clash with its internal economic and social crises and existing class contradictions, and if it did not sign the settlement, it will see that the internal contradictions will explode continuously on the field of the national question itself; that is, the inability to liberate the occupied lands.

Munir Shafiq: I have an observation on the words of Mohammed Kishli; of course, judging by his presentation of the issue it appears that he is in agreement with my proposition on the relationship between the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution, but in reality there is a point of disagreement. This point of disagreement is that the renaissance of the Palestinian people, or the continuation of the Palestinian revolution and the continuation of the battle for liberation against the Zionist enemy, is the condition for effecting revolutionary changes in the Arab situation, which in turn is the condition for the continuation of the Palestinian revolution and the transformation of the battle from a fight between the Palestinian people, or the Palestinian revolution, and the Zionist enemy, into a fight on the pan-national level between the Arab masses and Arab revolution on the one hand, and the Zionist enemy, world imperialism, and the counterrevolutionary forces on the other. However, the changes occurring in the Arab nation are also conditional upon a fighting strategy that is directed against the pan-national enemy. This means that the question is not merely about the explosion of conflicts and toppling exploitative classes; giving democracy to the masses can be the condition, if it is not tied to the strategy and program for the continuation of the battle against the pan-national enemy. We find the importance of this observation in practical implementation, theoretical and organisational construction, strategy and tactics, the program's issues, etc…

The more important question is, when the Arab revolution is able to achieve one of its goals in this or that Arab region, will it be transformed into an attempt for the "revolutionary" building of this nation, including economic development in its different forms? Or will all of its measures, arrangements, and policies for continuation be subject to entering the battle? That is, will whatever happens to these Arab conditions be tied to aiding in the continuation of the battle, or will it go in other directions? The point here means exactly that the Arab revolution in this case does not face the question

of establishing "socialist" mini-states in this or that region; rather the question is one of building a liberated base for the Arab revolution as a whole, engaging in a direct confrontation and employing all capabilities and arrangements in the service of continuing the fight. There is a question I would like to ask the gentlemen, if possible, on the question of the lessons learned from the Vietnam experience: can we regard the Vietnam experience as having added something new to the general characteristics that are usually derived from world revolutionary experiences? If this is true, then what are these characteristics?

Haytham al-Ayyoubi: With regards to Munir's question, the answer can be found in the study by Naji Allush; his study included the lessons that the Vietnamese revolution added, on the political, tactical, and strategic level, and on the level of intelligence, administrative affairs, logistics, etc.

Munir Shafiq: to clarify my question: it has been duly noted that, when one speaks of the lessons, a backwards people has the ability to beat a superior imperialist force, the ability of the people's war to mobilise and ignite that people's energies in order to face the highest forms of mobilisation. In addition, there is the importance of the faction, the broad national front, the issue of isolating the enemy, the issue of working in the international field, the issue of correct politics, etc…all of these issues, which were mentioned as being the primary characteristics of the Vietnamese revolution—do they go beyond the general characteristics of an armed revolution generally, and the general characteristics of an armed revolution that takes the form of a long-term people's war?

Dawud Talhami: I will speak of the point raised by Mohammed Kishli regarding the Arab situation and the Vietnamese situation, with regards to his words on the failure of the Arab bourgeoisie in achieving any true economic progress, or in achieving liberal democracy on the level of bourgeois freedoms. If we compared the Vietnamese situation with the Palestinian situation, for instance, or the Arab situation, we will find that the Vietnamese situation is distinguished by the fact that it was in a feudalist, colonial context; feudalist and under colonial control, by which I mean that Vietnam's social makeup was feudalist, and French colonialism did not crucially alter its economic development to a higher level. Obviously, the Palestinian context, because of their displacement and the dispersion of Palestinians across several countries, is a complicated situation. The Palestinian people in the occupied area came under the shadow of colonialism, which was capitalist by virtue of the nature of Israel—capitalist and tied to imperialism, with all the complications and specificities of Israeli capitalism, as it were—and the other

part is distributed across different Arab countries, suffering and living under conditions that range from feudalism to primitive nomadism, as is the case in Jordan, between the bourgeois nature of the state and the categorisations mentioned by Mohammed Swayd, between the coexistence of sectarian feudalism, economic feudalism, and nominal democracy, as is happening in Lebanon. Here, the question must be raised: are we—and the Vietnamese revolution of course answered this question—are we indeed in need of going through a phase of bourgeois liberalism, or are we even capable of going through this phase in our current circumstances? The Vietnamese experience was an experience of transition from a pre-capitalist phase—a feudalist phase—to a phase of building socialism, at least in the northern part of Vietnam. All of the studies and information have shown that it was a great success. The Arab situation—most Arab countries now can say that they were corrupted by colonialism—that is, colonialism tried in most of the Arab countries to force upon them a type of semi-bourgeois development, within the context of imperialist control over the world market, which cannot be a national bourgeoisie, and can only be tied in one form or the other to the new colonialism. After the growth of Japanese capitalism, what did not grow there, outside of Europe and North America, was a true national bourgeoisie—what did not grow there, in any of the Third World countries, was a true exploitative capitalism; any attempt to develop a classic capitalist bourgeoisie (as is happening in Brazil, for instance) has ended with a return to riding the new colonialism by virtue of the advent of foreign capital. Here it is proposed, not in the case of Palestine, because the reality as I stated is complicated, but in the case of more backwards nations in the Arab world, such as the Gulf and the south of the Arabian Peninsula, the likelihood is to transition from pre-feudalist phases, that is, from the primitive phase to the phase of building socialism. Here, an experience such as the southern Yemen experience might be relevant in this area. Another point I'd like to mention with respect to the conversation on the nature of Israeli colonialism and Israeli settlement, which Tahsin started speaking about. The resistance rejected the notion of the Israeli nation, which in the end results in: recognizing the right to self-determination of this nation on this specific land. Conversely, Israeli Jews cannot resemble—in comparison to Vietnam—an invading army, like the American army. They cannot even be compared to the French colonists in Algeria, who numbered at a million and remained there for a hundred and fifty years, although they were in the end tied to a "motherland" to which they may seek refuge in the end. The circumstances of the Jews and Israelis remain unique. They are tied to a "motherland" (in their view) without geographical boundaries which is the group of world Jewry, whom they attempt to attract to this land, but in the end they have a feeling that they are rooted in this land, upon which they live—for us, this does not

mean, naturally, that we must recognise their right to this feeling; however, for the sake of revolutionary realism in placing a plan or strategy for liberation, we must take this feeling of the enemy into account, which makes their preparation for remaining in Palestine in terms of their human numbers more advanced than the preparation of the American soldiers in Vietnam; this leads to the need, on our end, to analyze Israeli society as it is, so that we can take into account the contradictions that may arise, not of their own accord, since Israel is economically tied to the cycle of world imperialism, but rather through Palestinian and Arab military pressure. By this, I mean that the Israeli contradictions will not emerge, will not develop, and will not pose a threat to its existence, to Israeli unity, to Zionist ideological hegemony, or to Israeli Jews, without the presence of Palestinian and Arab military pressure that threatens the Israeli entity and is accompanied by the political revolutionary orientation of its individuals. This is, of course, just to round out this point. I would like to make a final point regarding the Vietnamese experience, which has not been talked about: the **importance of leadership**. Of course, we have spoken of the importance of the faction and the front; more than that, I am talking about the importance of the leader as an individual, the individual element of the leadership. In Vietnam, leaders of a historic quality were present; Ho Chi Minh, for instance, was no ordinary leader, he was a historic leader. Giap was no ordinary military strategist; he is one of the greats of military strategy produced by the knowledge of war in recent centuries, a fact to which the very enemies of the Vietnamese people admit. This is because the element of the individual in the Vietnamese experience is important, and it must be present alongside the other conditions, which are alive and well in the Arab region: the conditions to which we referred previously.

Tahsin Bashir: I find now that we are awash in a sea of questions after this discussion; Munir has proposed a number of good questions. Dawud built upon them. But the same question repeats itself in my head: why was the Arab bourgeoisie not able to be as competent as the Zionist bourgeoisie in order to beat it, or to at least deter or limit it? Why was the Palestinian revolution unable to surpass many obstacles? Why did we not learn, politically and socially, from the 1967 defeat, and did not become an army with a different makeup and different thought? Why, when I got to Algeria, for instance, am I told by one of the old fighters: "we fought and vanquished France, we started a people's war, and you in Palestine and in the East (المشرق) refuse to learn."? And yet I still witness tenets being adopted automatically. Every Arab viewed liberation as his primary cause, at a time when other priorities and different forms of thinking could be found. The Algerian fighter assumes that he waged a people's war and succeeded in it, and that he now

enters the phase of socialist building, as he envisions it. From his point of view in Algeria, the Palestine problem is one with which he sympathises religiously—and pan-nationally, to a lesser degree—but it is a problem in Palestine, and for you in Egypt, and far away. The questions in my head are many, and the reality resulting from these questions, how we—whether we be socialists, socialists calling for a popular war, revolutionary intellectuals, or non-intellectual revolutionaries—were not able to transform these opinions, which from 1967 until today have become mere rhetoric repeated in coffee shops, into new and lively principles, and into implementation. Perhaps, through lively implementation, these questions will be answered by the current generation or the next one in a more positive way. But I would like to make a simple comment on Haitham's military views, which has to do with the question of what is victory, and what is defeat. The Vietnamese revolution shows capability (**الثورة الفيتنامية قدرة**). Many will say that the ceasefire agreement was not a victory. It is a change in the conflict—the phase of conflict took on another form, and the United States is on good terms with the Soviet Union and China. This may be true, but there is no doubt that the position in Indochina changed as well, and the basis of this change is the implementation of the meaning of victory in Vietnam. Victory and defeat are not to be measured by occupying Cairo or Beirut, or all of the Palestinian lands. Rather, victory is to reach a phase where your enemy psychologically feels that continuing the conflict through armed struggle is useless. This is where the Vietnamese have gained the ability to engage the Americans in the last two years of armed struggle against them. No matter how much the bombs, aerial raids, and mines increase, it will not lead to an American victory. Perhaps the Arabs or any other army or people should learn to determine this type of meaning for victory, at least in its lesser meaning, which is that the continuation of struggle is itself struggle, clear in its goals to us and to the enemy against whom we are fighting. Moreover, it is whether it is able to attract not only specific peoples, but also the people of the world, and to fragment and break up the counter-forces.

Mahmoud Swayd: I have a comment only on Munir's assumption on the establishment of socialist mini-states apart from the pan-nationalist issue. In my opinion, Israel after 67 answered this question by increasing its level of interference in the Arab region and creating a type of police that follows the Arab experiences wherever it may interfere, and the two examples of Jordan and Lebanon indicate specifically the level of Israeli interference in the region. If there were any hope for the Palestinian resistance to succeed in Jordan, Israel and the US would have interfered and occupied Jordan; in addition, if there were any possibility for the establishment of a democratic national governance united with the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon. Israel, after 67,

regarded the main meaning of its victory—which is the meaning of its insistence on direct negotiations and total peace—to be the division of wealth in the Arab region with the United States, world imperialism, and the reactionary regimes, and this is exactly what Israel means when it announces constantly that it is the main factor in helping the United States in protecting the regimes affiliated with it in the Arab region. This is on the one hand; on the other, we must ask another question: which regimes build socialism? Is it really possible to build socialism apart from the issue of pan-national liberation? Are there, for instance, areas that ignore the Arab region in the question of building socialism? Was not the failure of these regimes in solving the pan-national issue equal to its failure in solving the social issue; that is, building socialism? Therefore, this begs the question: who will lead the battle for liberation? And who will lead the battle for building socialism? A peasant majority in the Arab region is like the peasant majority in Vietnam, which is led by the armed working class using Marxist-Leninist theory. Is this truly the main issue in the Arab region, after all the experiences witnessed by this region?

Munir Shafiq: there is observation upon observation…Mahmoud Swayd: first of all, it is true that the issue of Israeli inference, and the will of the matter, is to strike at any movement that aims to effect any sort of change in the Arab lands. This is exactly what I mean by saying that any true revolutionary change in the Arab lands must transform into a liberated base that opposes the Zionist entity in a permanent battle, taking upon itself the burden of fighting the enemy, but despite this, this does not mean that regional shifts, especially from forces currently taking shape in the Arab lands, may reach a ruling position that will allow it to sign agreements with great nations, imposing some sort of compromise with and appeasement of the Zionist enemy in exchange for an attempt at regional internal building. Therefore, it is wrong to leave this question only on the basis that the realistic evolution of the events cannot cause this type of regional echo (ارتداد اقليمي), especially because many of the forces and organisations currently taking shape in the Arab nations do not place the issue of liberating Palestine and fighting the Zionist enemy at the top of their priorities, but rather define the issue as one of supporting the Palestinian revolution and helping the Palestinian revolution; this means that all of its internal structure and political mobilisation, regardless of whether it is for the masses amongst which it works and organises, is not oriented in the direction of fighting. Here the question becomes: when these organisations and forces become regimes, will they become fighters? Or is the question of fighting and putting Palestine at the top of their priorities not only a long-term strategy, but also a part of its daily struggle on the tactical level? Will this happen, or will the opposite

occur? From this starting point, we may determine how a movement—based on making big promises to its masses that it will solve all of its economic problems and raise its standard of living to higher levels—increases its production more and more...and then announces that it will enter the war. I suppose that the principle of political incitement and mobilisation of the Arab masses, especially for the revolutionary vanguards, must from the beginning be enshrined in the direction of the pan-national enemy before us, posing a threat to our pan-national security and the security of the Arab revolution and its future; therefore, from the start, confronting the war with it and preparing for mobilizing all of the forces and organizing all of our affairs morally, organisationally, and materially in order to oppose this reality is unavoidable.

Haytham Ayoubi: the summary of this discussion will be in reply to the question of Munir Shafiq; the question is, did the Vietnamese revolution add anything to the tenets of the people's war? Did it add innovations? Is it a part of its characteristics? Or are these the characteristics of the revolutionary war in general? The reality is that the long-term revolutionary war against the long-term counter-war is a war with known rules based upon political mobilisation, mass mobilisation, conscious bases, cohesion with the masses, fragmenting the enemy strategically, and focusing on the tactical areas in order to strike at and scatter it, etc...the rules of revolutionary war in the world are one. Ever since the revolutionary wars broke out in the world, these rules were applied in one form or the other. They were applied in the Soviet Union through interventionist wars, as well as in China, Cuba, Vietnam, etc...but in every one of these countries it was applied while taking into account their geographic, human, and ideological specificities; they made some changes to these primary rules, which remain the primary rules of the revolutionary war. What we may say, in response to this question, and as a summary, is that the Vietnamese revolution, which succeeded and presented a successful example of the revolutionary war in our times, was able to implement the rules of the revolutionary war with innovation and creative contributions in understanding these rules and implementing them in the battle given its facts, whether it is related to friend or foe, to the issue of land, or to the nature of the world conflict; the greatest lessons that the Vietnamese revolution can teach us is the importance of understanding the rules of revolution, and studying all of the factors and facts, using innovation, flexibility, and the creative spirit.