

= Việt Nam Quốc Dân Đảng =

The Việt Nam Quốc Dân Đảng ( VNQDD ), also known as the Việt Quốc , the Vietnamese Nationalist Party or the Vietnamese Kuomintang , is a nationalist and moderate socialist political party that sought independence from French colonial rule in Vietnam during the early 20th century . Its origins lie in the mid 1920s , when a group of young Hanoi based intellectuals began publishing revolutionary material . In 1927 , after the publishing house failed because of French harassment and censorship , the VNQDD was formed under the leadership of Nguyễn Thái Học . Modelling itself on the Republic of China 's Kuomintang ( the same 3 characters in chữ Hán : 三民主義 ) the VNQDD gained a following among northerners , particularly teachers and intellectuals . The party , which was less successful among peasants and industrial workers , was organised in small clandestine cells .

From 1928 , the VNQDD attracted attention through its assassinations of French officials and Vietnamese collaborators . A turning point came in February 1929 with the Bazin assassination , the killing of a French labour recruiter widely despised by local Vietnamese people . Although the perpetrators ' precise affiliation was unclear , the French authorities held the VNQDD responsible . Between 300 and 400 of the party 's approximately 1 ,500 members were detained in the resulting crackdown . Many of the leaders were arrested , but Học managed to escape .

In late 1929 , the party was weakened by an internal split . Under increasing French pressure , the VNQDD leadership switched tack , replacing a strategy of isolated clandestine attacks against individuals with a plan to expel the French in a single blow with a large scale popular uprising . After stockpiling homemade weapons , the VNQDD launched the Yên Bái mutiny on February 10 , 1930 with the aim of sparking a widespread revolt . VNQDD forces combined with disaffected Vietnamese troops , who mutinied against the French colonial army . The mutiny was quickly put down , with heavy French retribution . Học and other leading figures were captured and executed and the VNQDD never regained its political strength in the country .

Some remaining factions sought peaceful means of struggle , while other groups fled across the border to Kuomintang bases in the Yunnan province of China , where they received arms and training . During the 1930s , the party was eclipsed by Ho Chi Minh 's Indochinese Communist Party ( ICP ) . Vietnam was occupied by Japan during World War II and , in the chaos that followed the Japanese surrender in 1945 , the VNQDD and the ICP briefly joined forces in the fight for Vietnamese independence . However , after a falling out , Ho purged the VNQDD , leaving his communist dominated Viet Minh unchallenged as the foremost anti colonial militant organisation . As a part of the post war settlement that ended the First Indochina War , Vietnam was partitioned into two zones . The remnants of the VNQDD fled to the anti communist south , where they remained until the Fall of Saigon in 1975 and the reunification of Vietnam under communist rule . Today , the party survives only among overseas Vietnamese .

= = Origins = =

French involvement in Vietnam started in the late 18th century when the Catholic priest Pigneau de Behaine assisted Nguyễn Ánh , to found the Nguyễn Dynasty by recruiting French volunteers . In return , Nguyễn Ánh , who took the reign name Gia Long allowed Catholic missionaries to operate in Vietnam . However , relations became strained under Gia Long 's successor Minh Mạng as missionaries sought to incite revolts in an attempt to enthrone a Catholic . This prompted anti Christian edicts , and in 1858 , a French invasion of Vietnam was mounted , ostensibly to protect Catholicism , but in reality for colonial purposes . The French steadily made gains and completed the colonisation of Vietnam in 1883 . Armed revolts against colonial rule occurred regularly , most notably through the Cần Vương movement of the late 1880s . In the early 20th century , the 1916 southern revolts and the Thái Nguyên uprising were notable disruptions to the French administration .

In late 1925 , a small group of young Hanoi based intellectuals , led by a teacher named Pham Tuan Tai and his brother Pham Tuan Lam , started the Nam Dong Thu Xa ( Southeast Asia

Publishing House ) . They aimed to promote violent revolution as a means of gaining independence for Vietnam from French colonisation , and published books and brochures about Sun Yat @-@ sen and the Chinese Revolution of 1911 , as well as opening a free school to teach quoc ngu ( Romanised Vietnamese script ) to the working class . The group soon attracted the support of other progressive young northerners , including students and teachers led by Nguy?n Thái H?c . H?c was an alumnus of Hanoi 's Commercial School , who had been stripped of a scholarship because of his mediocre academic performance .

Harassment and censorship imposed by the French colonial authorities led to the commercial failure of the Nam Dong Thu Xa . By the autumn of 1927 , the group 's priorities turned towards more direct political action , in a bid to appeal to more radical elements in the north . Membership grew to around 200 , distributed among 18 cells in 14 provinces across northern and central Vietnam .

= = Formation = =

The Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang ( VNQDD ) was formed at a meeting in Hanoi on December 25 , 1927 , with Nguy?n Thái H?c as the party 's first leader . It was Vietnam 's first home @-@ grown revolutionary party , established three years before the Indochinese Communist Party . The party advocated socialism , but at the outset there was considerable debate over its other fundamental objectives . Many wanted it to promote worldwide revolution , rather than limiting itself to campaigning for an independent Vietnamese republic ; but there were fears that this would lead to accusations of communism , putting off potential Vietnamese supporters who yearned above all for independence . In a bid for moderation , the final statement was a compromise that read :

The aim and general line of the party is to make a national revolution , to use military force to overthrow the feudal colonial system , to set up a democratic republic of Vietnam . At the same time we will help all oppressed nationalities in the work of struggling to achieve independence , in particular such neighboring countries as Laos and Cambodia .

Although the VNQDD modelled itself on Sun Yat @-@ sen 's Chinese Nationalist Party ( the Kuomintang or KMT , later led by Chiang Kai @-@ shek ) , even down to copying the " Nationalist Party " designation , it had no direct relationship with its Chinese counterpart and in fact did not gain much attention outside Vietnam until the Yên Bái mutiny in 1930 . Like the KMT , it was a clandestine organisation held together with tight discipline . Its basic unit was the cell , above which there were several levels of administration , including provincial , regional and central committees . Also like the KMT , the VNQDD 's revolutionary strategy envisaged a military takeover , followed by a period of political training for the population before a constitutional government could take control .

Most party members were teachers , employees of the French colonial government or non @-@ commissioned officers in the colonial army . The VNQDD campaigned mainly among these facets of society ? there were few workers or peasants in its ranks . The party 's popularity was based on a groundswell of anti @-@ French feeling in northern Vietnam in the 1920s ; many writers had assailed society for glorifying military actions against China , Champa , Siam and Cambodia , Vietnam 's historical rivals , while neglecting to oppose French colonialism . The VNQDD admitted many female members , which was quite revolutionary for the time . It set about seeking alliances with other nationalist factions in Vietnam . In a meeting on July 4 , 1928 , the Central Committee appealed for unity among the Vietnamese revolutionary movements , sending delegates to meet with other organisations struggling for independence . The preliminary contacts did not yield any concrete alliances . The VNQDD also assailed the Vietnamese communists of Ho Chi Minh for betraying the leading nationalist of the time ? Phan B?i Châu ? to the French in return for a financial reward . Ho had done this to eliminate other nationalist rivals . The VNQDD would later be on the receiving end of another of Ho 's manoeuvres .

= = Initial activities = =

Financial problems compounded the VNQDD 's difficulties . Money was needed to set up a commercial enterprise , a cover for the revolutionaries to meet and plot , and for raising funds . For this purpose , a hotel @-@ restaurant named the Vietnam Hotel was opened in September 1928 . The French colonial authorities were aware of the real purpose of the business , and put it under surveillance without taking further preliminary action . The first notable reorganisation of the VNQDD was in December , when Nguyen Khac Nhu replaced Hoc as chairman . Three proto @-@ governmental organs were created , to form the legislative , executive and judicial arms of government . The records of the French secret service estimated that by early 1929 , the VNQDD consisted of approximately 1 @, @ 500 members in 120 cells , mostly in areas around the Red River Delta . The intelligence reported that most members were students , minor merchants or low @-@ level bureaucrats in the French administration . The report stated that there were landlords and wealthy peasants among the members , but that few were of scholar @-@ gentry ( mandarin ) rank . According to the historian Cecil B. Currey , " The VNQDD 's lower @-@ class origins made it , in many ways , closer to the labouring poor than were the Communists , many of whom ? [ were ] from established middle @-@ class families . "

Beginning in 1928 , the VNQDD attracted substantial Vietnamese support , provoking increased attention from the French colonial administration . This came after a VNQDD death squad killed several French officials and Vietnamese collaborators who had a reputation for cruelty towards the Vietnamese populace .

= = Assassination of Bazin = =

The assassination of Hanoi @-@ based French labour recruiter Hervé Bazin on February 9 , 1929 , was a turning point that marked the beginning of the VNQDD 's decline . A graduate of the École Coloniale in Paris , Bazin directed the recruitment of Vietnamese labourers to work on colonial plantations . Recruiting techniques often included beating or coercion , because the foremen who did the recruiting received a commission for each enlisted worker . On the plantations , living conditions were poor and the remuneration was low , leading to widespread indignation . In response , Vietnamese hatred of Bazin led to thoughts of an assassination . A group of workers approached the VNQDD with a proposal to kill Bazin . H?c felt that assassinations were pointless because they would only prompt a crackdown by the French Sûreté , thereby weakening the party . He felt that it was better to strengthen the party until the time was ripe to overthrow the French , viewing Bazin as a mere twig on the tree of the colonial apparatus .

Turned down by the VNQDD leadership , one of the assassination 's proponents ? it is unclear whether or not he was a party member ? created his own plot . With an accomplice , he shot and killed Bazin on February 9 , 1929 , as the Frenchman left his mistress 's house . The French attributed the attack to the VNQDD and reacted by apprehending all the party members they could find : between three and four hundred men were rounded up , including 36 government clerks , 13 French government officials , 36 schoolteachers , 39 merchants , 37 landowners and 40 military personnel . The subsequent trials resulted in 78 men being convicted and sentenced to jail terms ranging between five and twenty years . The arrests severely depleted the VNQDD leadership : most of the Central Committee were captured , though H?c and Nhu were among the few who escaped from a raid on their hideout at the Vietnam Hotel .

= = Internal split and change in strategy = =

In 1929 , the VNQDD split when a faction led by Nguyen The Nghiep began to disobey party orders and was therefore expelled from the Central Committee . Some sources claim that Nghiep had formed a breakaway party and had begun secret contacts with French authorities .

Perturbed by those who betrayed fellow members to the French and the problems this behaviour caused , H?c convened a meeting to tighten regulations in mid @-@ 1929 at the village of Lac Dao , along the Gia Lam ? Haiphong railway . This was also the occasion for a shift in strategy : H?c argued for a general uprising , citing rising discontent among Vietnamese soldiers in the colonial

army . More moderate party leaders believed this move to be premature , and cautioned against it , but H?c 's stature meant he prevailed in shifting the party 's orientation towards violent struggle . One of the arguments presented for large @-@ scale violence was that the French response to the Bazin assassination meant that the party 's strength could decline in the long term . The plan was to provoke a series of uprisings at military posts around the Red River Delta in early 1930 , where VNQDD forces would join Vietnamese soldiers in an attack on the two major northern cities of Hanoi and Haiphong . The leaders agreed to restrict their uprisings to Tonkin , because the party was weak elsewhere .

For the remainder of 1929 , the party prepared for the revolt . They located and manufactured weapons , storing them in hidden depots . The preparation was hindered by French police , particularly the seizure of arms caches .

= = Yên Bái mutiny = =

At around 01 : 30 on Monday , February 10 , 1930 , approximately 40 troops belonging to the 2nd Battalion of the Fourth Régiment de Tirailleurs Tonkinois stationed at Yên Bái , reinforced by around 60 civilian members of the VNQDD , attacked their 29 French officers and warrant officers . The rebels had intended to split into three groups : the first group was to infiltrate the infantry , kill French NCOs in their beds and raise support among Vietnamese troops ; the second , supported by the VNQDD civilians , was to break into the post headquarters ; and the third group would enter the officers ' quarters . The French were caught off guard ; five were killed and three seriously wounded . The mutineers isolated a few more French officers from their men , even managing to raise the VNQDD flag above one of the buildings . About two hours later , however , it became apparent that the badly coordinated uprising had failed , and the remaining 550 Vietnamese soldiers helped quell the rebellion rather than participate in it . The insurrectionists had failed to liquidate the Garde indigène town post and could not convince the frightened townspeople to join them in a general revolt . At 07 : 30 , a French Indochinese counterattack scattered the mutineers ; two hours later , order was re @-@ established in Yên Bái .

That same evening , two further insurrectionary attempts failed in the S?n D??ng sector . A raid on the Garde indigène post in H?ng Hóa was repelled by the Vietnamese guards , who appeared to have been tipped off . In the nearby town of Kinh Khe , VNQDD members killed the instructor Nguyen Quang Kinh and one of his wives . After destroying the Garde indigène post in Lâm Thao , the VNQDD briefly seized control of the district seat . At sunrise , a new Garde indigène unit arrived and inflicted heavy losses on the insurgents , mortally wounding Nhu . Aware of the events in the upper delta region , Pho Duc Chinh fled and abandoned a planned attack on the S?n Tây garrison , but he was captured a few days later by French authorities .

On February 10 , a VNQDD member injured a policeman at a Hanoi checkpoint ; at night , Arts students threw bombs at government buildings , which they regarded as part of the repressive power of the colonial state . On the night of February 15 ? 16 , H?c and his remaining forces seized the nearby villages of Phu Duc and V?nh B?o , in Thái Bình and H?i D??ng provinces respectively , for a few hours . In the second village , the VNQDD killed the local mandarin of the French colonial government , Tri Huyen . On February 16 , French warplanes responded by bombarding the VNQDD 's last base at Co Am village ; on the same day , Tonkin 's Resident Superior René Robin dispatched 200 Gardes indigènes , eight French commanders and two Sûreté inspectors . A few further violent incidents occurred until February 22 , when Governor @-@ General Pierre Pasquier declared that the insurrection had been defeated . H?c and his lieutenants , Chinh and Nguyen Thanh Loi , were apprehended .

A series of trials were held to prosecute those arrested during the uprising . The largest number of death penalties was handed down by the first Criminal Commission , which convened at Yen Bay . Among the 87 people found guilty at Yen Bay , 46 were servicemen . Some argued in their own defence that they had been " surprised and forced to take part in the insurrection " . Of the 87 convicted , 39 were sentenced to death , five to deportation , 33 to life sentences of forced labour , nine to 20 years imprisonment , and one to five years of forced labour . Of those condemned to

death , 24 were civilians and 15 were servicemen . Presidential pardons reduced the number of death penalties from 39 to 13 . H?c and Chinh were among the 13 who were executed on June 17 , 1930 . The condemned men cried " Viet Nam ! " as the guillotine fell . H?c wrote a final plea to the French , in a letter that claimed that he had always wanted to cooperate with French authorities , but that their intransigence had forced him to revolt . H?c contended that France could only stay in Indochina if they dropped their " brutal " policies , and became more amiable towards the Vietnamese . The VNQDD leader called for universal education , training in commerce and industry , and an end to the corrupt practices of the French @-@ installed mandarins .

= = Exile in Yunnan = =

Following Yen Bay , the VNQDD became more diffuse , with many factions effectively acting virtually autonomously of one another . Le Huu Canh ? who had tried to stall the failed mutiny ? attempted to reunite what remained of the party under the banner of peaceful reform . Other factions , however , remained faithful to H?c 's legacy , recreating the movement in the Hanoi @-@ Haiphong area . A failed assassination attempt on Governor @-@ General Pasquier led to French crackdowns in 1931 and 1932 . The survivors escaped to Yunnan in southern China , where some of Nghiep 's supporters were still active . The Yunnan VNQDD was in fact a section of the Chinese Kuomintang , who protected its members from the Chinese government while funds were raised by robbery and extortion along the Sino @-@ Vietnamese border . This eventually led to a Chinese government crackdown , but VNQDD members continued to train at the Yunnan Military School ; some enlisted in the nationalist Chinese army while others learned to manufacture weapons and munitions in the Yunnan arsenal .

Nghiep was briefly jailed by Yunnan authorities , but continued to run the party from his cell . Upon his release in 1933 , Nghiep consolidated the party with similar groups in the area , including some followers of Phan B?i Châu who had formed a Canton @-@ based organisation with similar aims in 1925 . Chau 's group had formed in opposition to the communist tendencies of Ho Chi Minh 's Revolutionary Youth League . However , Ho betrayed Chau to eliminate a potential rival and to pocket a reward . With nationalist Chinese aid , Chau 's followers had set up a League of Oppressed Oriental Peoples , a Pan @-@ Asian group that ended in failure . In 1932 the League made the point of declaring a " Provisional Indochinese Government " at Canton . In July 1933 , Chau 's group was integrated into Nghiep 's Yunnan organisation . In 1935 , Nghiep surrendered to the French consulate in Shanghai . The remainder of the VNQDD was paralysed by infighting and began losing political relevance , with only moderate activity until the outbreak of World War II and Japan 's invasion of French Indochina in 1940 . They attempted to organise workers along the Yunnan railway , threatening occasional border assaults , with little success .

The VNQDD was gradually overshadowed as the leading Vietnamese independence organisation by Ho 's Indochinese Communist Party ( ICP ) . In 1940 , Ho arrived in Yunnan , which was a hotbed of both ICP and VNQDD activity . He initiated collaboration between the ICP and other nationalists such as the VNQDD . At the time , World War II had broken out and Japan had conquered most of eastern China and replaced the French in Vietnam . Ho moved east to the neighbouring province of Guangxi , where Chinese military leaders had been attempting to organise Vietnamese nationalists against the Japanese . The VNQDD had been active in Guangxi and some of their members had joined the KMT army . Under the umbrella of KMT activities , a broad alliance of nationalists emerged . With Ho at the forefront , the Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi ( Vietnamese Independence League , usually known as the Viet Minh ) was formed and based in the town of Chinghsi . The pro @-@ VNQDD nationalist Ho Ngoc Lam , a KMT army officer and former disciple of Phan Boi Chau , was named as the deputy of Ph?m V?n ??ng , later to be Ho 's Prime Minister . The front was later broadened and renamed the Viet Nam Giai Phong Dong Minh ( Vietnam Liberation League ) . It was an uneasy situation , as another VNQDD leader , Truong Boi Cong , a graduate of a KMT military academy , wanted to challenge the communists for pre @-@ eminence , while V? H?ng Khanh led a virulently anti @-@ communist VNQDD faction . The Viet Nam Revolutionary League was a union of various Vietnamese nationalist groups , run by the pro

Chinese VNQDD . Chinese KMT General Zhang Fakui created the league to further Chinese influence in Indochina , against the French and Japanese . Its stated goal was for unity with China under the Three Principles of the People , created by KMT founder Dr. Sun and opposition to Vietnamese and French Imperialists . The Revolutionary League was controlled by Nguyen Hai Than , who was born in China and could not speak Vietnamese . General Zhang shrewdly blocked the Communists of Vietnam , and Ho Chi Minh from entering the league , as his main goal was Chinese influence in Indochina . The KMT utilized these Vietnamese nationalists during World War II against Japanese forces . At one stage , the communists made an appeal for other Vietnamese anti @-@ colonialists to join forces , but condemned Khanh as an " opportunist " and " fake revolutionary " in their letter . The cooperation in the border area lasted for only a few months before VNQDD officials complained to the local KMT officials that the communists , led by Dong and Võ Nguyên Giáp , were attempting to dominate the league . This prompted the local authorities to shut down the front 's activities .

= = Post World War II = =

In March 1945 , the VNQDD received a boost , when Imperial Japan , which had occupied Vietnam since 1941 , deposed the French administration , and installed the Empire of Vietnam , a puppet regime . This resulted in the release of some anti @-@ French activists , including VNQDD members .

In August 1945 , Ho 's Viet Minh seized power and set up a provisional government in the wake of Japan 's withdrawal from Vietnam . This move violated a prior agreement between the member parties of the Viet Nam Cach Mang Dong Minh Hoi ( Vietnamese Revolutionary League ) , which included the VNQDD as well as the Vietminh , and Ho was pressured to broaden his government 's appeal by including the VNQDD ( now led by Nguy?n T??ng Tam ) . The Vietminh announced that they would abolish the mandarin governance system and hold national elections with universal suffrage in two hold . The VNQDD objected to this , fearing that the communists would perpetrate electoral fraud .

After the seizure of power , hundreds of VNQDD members returned from China , only to be killed at the border by the Vietminh . Nevertheless , the VNQDD arrived in northern Vietnam with arms and supplies from the KMT , in addition to its prestige as a Vietnamese nationalist organisation . Nationalist China backed the VNQDD in the hope of gaining more influence over its southern neighbour . Ho tried to broaden his support in order to strengthen himself , in addition to decreasing Chinese and French power . He hoped that by co @-@ opting VNQDD members , he could shut out the KMT . The communists had no intention of sharing power with anyone in the long term and regarded the move as purely a strategic exercise . Giap , the Vietminh 's military chief , called the VNQDD a " group of reactionaries plotting to rely on Chiang Kai @-@ Shek 's Kuomintang and their rifle barrels to snatch a few crumbs " . The VNQDD dominated the main control lines between northern Vietnam and China near Lào Cai . They funded their operations from the tribute that they levied from the local populace . Once the majority of the non @-@ communist nationalists had returned to Vietnam , the VNQDD banded with them to form an anti @-@ Vietminh alliance . The VNQDD and the Dai Viet Quoc Dan Dang ( DVQDD , Nationalist Party of Greater Vietnam ) started their own military academy at Yên Bái to train their own military recruits . Armed confrontations between the Vietminh and the nationalists occurred regularly in major northern cities . The VNQDD were aided by the KMT , who were in northern Vietnam as the result of an international agreement to stabilise the country . The KMT often disarmed local Vietminh bands .

The VNQDD then established their national headquarters in Hanoi , and began to publish newspapers , expounding their policies and explaining their ideology . The OSS agent Archimedes Patti , who was based in Kunming and northern Vietnam , reported that the VNQDD were " hopelessly disoriented politically " and felt that they had no idea of how to run a government . He speculated that the VNQDD were driven by " desires for personal power and economic gain " . Giap accused them of being " bandits " . Military and newspaper attacks between the groups occurred regularly , but a power @-@ sharing agreement was put in place until the elections occurred in

order to end the attacks and strengthen national unity to further the goal of independence . The communists also allowed the VNQDD to continue printing material .

However , the agreement was ineffective in the meantime . The VNQDD kidnapped Giap and the Propaganda Minister Tran Huy Lieu and held them for three weeks until Ho agreed to remove Giáp and Lieu from the cabinet . As a result , the VNQDD 's V? H?ng Khanh became defence minister , with Giap as his deputy . What the VNQDD and other non @-@ communist nationalists thought to be an equitable power @-@ sharing agreement turned out to be a ruse . Every non @-@ communist minister had a communist deputy , and if the former refused to approve a decree , the Vietminh official would do so . Many ministers were excluded from knowing the details of their portfolio ; Khanh was forbidden to see any military statistics and some were forbidden to attend cabinet meetings . In one case , the Minister of Social Works became a factory worker because he was forced to remain politically idle . Meanwhile , Giáp was able to stymie the activities of VNQDD officials of higher rank in the coalition government . Aside from shutting down the ability of the VNQDD officials to disseminate information , he often ordered his men to start riots and street brawls at public VNQDD events .

Ho scheduled elections for December 23 , but he made a deal with the VNQDD and the Dong Minh Hoi , which assured them of 50 and 20 seats in the new national assembly respectively , regardless of the poll results . This only temporarily placated the VNQDD , which continued its skirmishes against the Vietminh . Eventually , Chinese pressure on the VNQDD and the Dong Minh Hoi saw them accept a coalition government , in which Tam served as foreign minister . For the communists ' part , they accused the KMT of intimidating them into sharing power with the VNQDD , and claimed that VNQDD soldiers had tried to attack polling stations . The VNQDD claimed that the communists had engaged in vote fraud and intimidation , citing Vietminh claims that they had received tallies in excess of 80 % in areas controlled by French troops .

= = War against French colonial rule = =

The Ho ? Sainteny agreement , signed on March 6 , 1946 , saw the return of French colonial forces to Vietnam , replacing the Chinese nationalists who were supposed to be maintaining order . The VNQDD were now without their main supporters . As a result , the VNQDD were further attacked by the French , who often encircled VNQDD strongholds , enabling Viet Minh attacks . Giáp 's army hunted down VNQDD troops and cleared them from the Red River Delta , seizing arms and arresting party members , who were falsely charged with crimes ranging from counterfeiting to unlawful arms possession . The Viet Minh massacred thousands of VNQDD members and other nationalists in a large scale purge . Most of the survivors fled to China or French @-@ controlled areas in Vietnam . After driving the VNQDD out of their Hanoi headquarters on On Nhu Hau Street , Giáp ordered his agents to construct an underground torture chamber on the premises . They then planted exhumed and badly decomposed bodies in the chamber , and accused the VNQDD of gruesome murders , although most of the dead were VNQDD members who had been killed by Giáp 's men . The communists made a public spectacle of the scene in an attempt to discredit the VNQDD , but the truth eventually came out and the " On Nhu Hau Street affair " lowered their public image .

When the National Assembly reconvened in Hanoi on October 28 , only 30 of the 50 VNQDD seats were filled . Of the 37 VNQDD and Dong Minh Hoi members who turned up , only 20 remained by the end of the session . By the end of the year , Tam had resigned as foreign minister and fled to China , and only one of the three original VNQDD cabinet members was still in office . In any case , the VNQDD never had any power , despite their numerical presence . Upon the opening of the National Assembly , the communist majority voted to vest power in an executive committee almost entirely consisting of communists ; the legislature met only once a year . In any case , the façade of a legislature was dispensed with as the First Indochina War went into full flight . A small group of VNQDD fighters escaped Giáp 's assault and retreated to a mountainous enclave along the Sino @-@ Vietnamese border , where they declared themselves to be the government of Vietnam , with little effect .

= = Post @-@ independence = =

After Vietnam gained independence in 1954 , the Geneva Accords partitioned the country into a communist north and an anti @-@ communist south , but stipulated that there were to be 300 days of free passage between the two zones . During Operation Passage to Freedom , most VNQDD members migrated to the south .

The VNQDD was deeply divided after years of communist pressure , lacked strong leadership and no longer had a coherent military presence , although they had a large presence in central Vietnam . The party 's disarray was only exacerbated by the actions of autocratic President Ngô ?inh Di?m , who imprisoned many of its members . Diem 's administration was a " dictatorship by Catholics ? A new kind of fascism " , according to the title of a VNQDD pamphlet published in July 1955 . The VNQDD tried to revolt against Diem in 1955 in central Vietnam . During the transition period after Geneva , the VNQDD sought to set up a new military academy in central Vietnam , but they were crushed by Ngô ?inh C?n , who ran the region for his elder brother Di?m , dismantled and jailed VNQDD members and leaders .

Many officers in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam felt that Di?m discriminated against them because of their political leanings . Di?m used the secret Catholic C?n Lao Party to keep control of the army and stifle attempts by VNQDD members to rise through the ranks .

During the Di?m era , the VNQDD were implicated in two failed coup attempts . In November 1960 , a paratrooper revolt failed after the mutineers agreed to negotiate , allowing time for loyalists to relieve the president . Many of the officers involved had links to or were members of the VNQDD , and fled the country after the coup collapsed . In 1963 , VNQDD leaders Tam and V? H?ng Khanh were among those arrested for their involvement in the plot ; Tam committed suicide before the case started , and Khanh was jailed . In February 1962 , two Vietnam Air Force pilots , Nguy?n V?n C? ? son of a prominent VNQDD leader ? and Ph?m Phú Qu?c , bombarded the Independence Palace in a bid to kill the president and his family , but their targets escaped unharmed . Diem was eventually deposed in a military coup and killed in November 1963 . While the generals that led the coup were not members of the VNQDD , they sought to cultivate ARVN officers who were part of the VNQDD because of their antipathy towards Diem .

Many VNQDD members were part of the ARVN , which sought to prevent South Vietnam from being overrun by communists during the Vietnam War , and they were known for being more anti @-@ communist than most of their compatriots .

After the fall of Di?m and the execution of C?n in May 1964 , the VNQDD became more active in their strongholds in central Vietnam . Nevertheless , there was no coherent national leadership and groups at district and provincial level tended to operate autonomously . By 1965 , their members had managed to infiltrate and take over the Peoples Action Teams ( PATs ) , irregular paramilitary counter @-@ insurgency forces organised by Australian Army advisers to fight the communists , and used them for their own purposes . In December , one VNQDD member had managed to turn his PAT colleagues towards the nationalist agenda , and the local party leadership in Qu?ng Nam approached the Australians in an attempt to have the 1000 @-@ man PAT outfit formally allied to the VNQDD . The overture was rejected . The politicisation of paramilitary units worked both ways ; some province chiefs used the anti @-@ communist forces to assassinate political opponents , including VNQDD members .

In 1966 , the Buddhist Uprising erupted in central Vietnam , in which some Buddhist leaders fomented civil unrest against the war , hoping to end foreign involvement in Vietnam and end the conflict through a peace deal with the communists . The VNQDD remained implacably opposed to any coexistence with the communists . Members of the VNQDD made alliances with Catholics , collected arms , and engaged in pro @-@ war street clashes with the Buddhists , forcing elements of the ARVN to intervene to stop them .

On April 19 , clashes erupted in Qu?ng Ngãi Province between the Buddhists and the VNQDD , prompting the local ARVN commander Tôn Th?t ?inh to forcibly restrain the two groups . Three days later the VNQDD accused the Buddhists of attacking their premises in H?i An and Da Nang , while



US officials reported that the VNQDD were making plans to assassinate leading Buddhists , such as the activist monk Thích Trí Quang .

The VNQDD contested their national elections of 1967 , the first elections since the fall of Diem , which were rigged ? Diem and his people invariably gained more than 95 % of the vote and sometimes exceeded the number of registered voters . The campaign was disorganised due to a lack of infrastructure and some VNQDD candidates were not formally sanctioned by any hierarchy . The VNQDD focused on the districts in I Corps in central Vietnam where they were thought to be strong . There were 60 seats in the senate , and the six victorious tickets would see all ten of their members elected . The VNQDD entered eight tickets in the senate election , and while they totalled 15 % of the national vote between them , the most of any grouping , it was diluted between the groupings ; none of the tickets and thus none of the candidates were elected . This contrasted with one Catholic alliance with three tickets that won only 8 % of the vote , but had all 30 candidates elected . They won nine seats in the lower house , a small minority presence , all from districts in central Vietnam , where they tended to poll between 20 and 40 % in various areas . The VNQDD members made several loose alliances with Hòa H?o members of the lower house .

During the Tet Offensive of 1968 , the communists attacked and seized control of the central city of Hu? for a month . During this time , they executed around 3 @,@ 000 ? 6 @,@ 000 people that they had taken prisoner , out of a total population of 140 @,@ 000 . The communists had compiled a list of " reactionaries " to be liquidated before their assault . Known for their virulent anti @-@ communism , VNQDD members appeared to have been disproportionately targeted in the massacre .

After the Fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam War , the remnants of the VNQDD were again targeted by the victorious communists . As Vietnam is a single @-@ party state led by the Vietnamese Communist Party , the VNQDD is illegal . Some VNQDD members fled to the West , where they continued their political activities . The VNQDD remains respected among some sections of the overseas Vietnamese community as Vietnam 's leading anti @-@ communist organisation .