

April 7, 1967

**Discussion between Zhou Enlai, Pham Van Dong and
Vo Nguyen Giap (1), 11:00 am - 1:00 pm**

Citation:

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Summary:

Zhou Enlai comments on the American military personality.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

ZHOU ENLAI AND PHAM VAN DONG, VO NGUYEN GIAP[1]

Beijing, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., 7 April 1967[2]

Zhou Enlai: America's tradition and experience are based on the War of Independence, which was fought 190 years ago. There was also the Civil War, which was fought almost 100 years ago. During the First and Second World Wars, it gained much at the end. During the Second World War, the United States landed [in Europe] at a time when Hitler had already been dramatically weakened. They widely used artillery bombing, as if they were conducting exercises. The commander on the Western front at that time was Eisenhower, and the chief of staff of the United States Army was [Gen. George C.] Marshall. Marshall was very proud of the landing plan, which ran hundreds of pages. I once asked him whether he had read the plan. He said that he had only read the outline. Each one of them will only read the part that was related to himself.

[1] Vo Nguyen Giap (1912-) had set up the first unit of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) in 1944 and had been commander-in-chief during the first Indochina War. Through the 1960s and most of the 1970s he was Deputy Premier, Minister of Defense, and Commander-in-Chief of the PAVN. He is generally thought to have been replaced by Van Tien Dung as Minister of Defense and Commander-in-Chief in 1980, but a military dictionary published in Hanoi in 1996 says that he was replaced by Dung already in early 1978. If this is correct, then Giap was not responsible for the decision to invade Cambodia, or for defending Vietnam against the Chinese attack in 1979. Giap remained on the VWP Politburo until 1982 and the Central Committee until 1991.

[2] This was the third meeting between the Chinese and Vietnamese delegations, during which Vo Nguyen Giap described the military situation in Vietnam and America's strategic aims. The first two meetings were held on 11:30 a.m.-? and 3:30-6:30 p.m., 29 March 1967. The Vietnamese delegation went on to visit the Soviet Union and then returned to Beijing.