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### 3. Cuu Long on Strong Offensive\*

It has been a year since the day the U.S. imperialists began to pour their expeditionary forces into the South to engage in direct combat. In this short time, successive events have taken place in the theater of war, the most outstanding being the three heavy strategic setbacks the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys have suffered. The first one occurred in the summer of 1965. Unable to bear the strong, accurate blows of the Liberation Armed Forces, 500,000 puppet troops began to disintegrate abruptly, making a dead corpse out of the puppet army. The situation was so dangerous that 100,000 American expeditionary troops had to plunge into the war, but they could not revive the cold corpse of the special-war strategy. The second one was the complete bankruptcy of the daring, massive counteroffensive of the Americans themselves in the 1965-66 dry season. Having increased dramatically to 200,000 and then 250,000 men, the U.S. aggressive forces furiously expended all their strength, hoping to score a victory. However, we attacked them from the beginning and inflicted on them shattering defeats in all fields, principally the military one. The third one was their successive defeats throughout the 1966 summer in strategy and tactical defense.

From these three great setbacks of the enemy, we see that the enemy has acted foolishly by adhering to a fixed rule: every time they suffer a striking defeat, the U.S. imperialists shore up the strength of American expeditionary forces in the South by adding masses of new troops; every time they get additional troops and steel and iron hardware, they design a new strategic plan and try every wicked trick they can to wipe out our resisting forces, regain the offensive and recover their lost initiative. Alas, this military build-up has brought the Americans nothing but more casualties on the battlefields and loss of face in the world. Having increased the number of U.S. expeditionary troops to 100,000, they were unable to revive the special-war strategy, and [General Maxwell] Taylor had to retire. Boosting the number of U.S. expeditionary troops to 200,000, they launched the first full-scale dry-season counteroffensive,

\*Broadcast by Liberation Radio to South Vietnam, 1000 GMT, September 7, 1966.

but they could not exterminate so much as a single squad or platoon of our forces. On the contrary, we wiped out some 50,000 Americans and annihilated dozens of U.S. battalions. In the summer of 1965 the Americans could blame the mediocre puppet army for failure, but whom could Johnson, McNamara, and Dean Rusk blame for the more severe defeats suffered in the 1965-66 dry season, when 200,000 American troops had entered the war? Was it perhaps the fault of the rain, which made the American too lazy to act? It was not. Even if it were, the rain could only hamper some of their activities. In fact, their aircraft still logged more than 1,000 sorties on some days, showering bombs and shells on villages, churches, and schools, and killing the Southern people. The Johnson-McNamara-Dean Rusk-Westmoreland clique is embittered because with so large a number of troops and so many aircraft and guns, it still cannot find a way to avoid defeat; or, in other words, to defeat the Viet Cong, even if the victory is only a small one.

Of course, the army is the force that directly determines victory or defeat on the battlefield, but having as large a force as the Americans and puppet does not mean you are strong or will be the winner. In the history of the just, revolutionary wars against unjust, counterrevolutionary wars, there have been many aggressors who, though equipped with large forces and great stores of weapons, have suffered shattering defeats. Long ago, 200,000 troops of the Ching Dynasty were routed by the Tay Son force, which was only half as strong. In our first resistance, 500,000 professional French and puppet expeditionary troops were defeated by the heroic Vietnamese people. Why? Because victory stems not from strength—that is, just from the possession of a large force—but mainly from a strong position, from an overall strategic position sufficiently superior to that of the enemy to defeat him. This basic problem of warfare has been analyzed profoundly by Comrade Truong Son in his recent article. Here we only wish to reemphasize the key points of our strong strategic position: (1) our cause is just, and has the enthusiastic sympathy, support, and encouragement of the world; (2) we have absolute political and spiritual superiority; (3) we have a correct political policy, an excellent military strategy, and correct, unique, and creative tactics; (4) the Liberation Armed Forces have three categories of troops, which have been developed logically in quantity and quality and are acquiring more and more experience in the fight against the Americans; (5) we have the determination to fight and win; and (6) we have a strong rear.

Therefore, though strength is important, it is only the top, only one component, while position is the base, the compound, the secret of victory. Then what is the position of the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys now? It can be said that since the day the Southern people arose in a general uprising, the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys have always been in a perilous position, just like a person standing beside an oil cauldron, because their war of aggression is completely unjust. They are hated and attacked by our people, despised and condemned by the world, and completely isolated politically. Their strategy is erroneous; it has been defeated and overwhelmed by the Southern revolutionary strategy. Their tactical ideas conflict, while the fighting spirit of the American troops is no better than that of the puppet troops. Their rear is unstable because they are involved in an endless crisis, their [words indistinct] is extremely chaotic, and so forth. Placing ourselves in the Americans' position, we see that

even by increasing their forces to 100,000 men, they could not recoup their losing game; increasing them to 200,000 men, they still could not gain the upper hand; and even with 300,000 men, they still would have to fight in a very passive and confused manner. This is an obvious fact, and is very easy to understand because while the enemy was driven into so perilous and inferior a position, we continued to score victories from the dry season through the summer, got a firmer hold on the initiative, and stood more firmly on the offensive and a dominant position over the enemy. Thus we have achieved an excellent situation, as follows:

1. We developed our forces rationally in a favorable offensive and counteroffensive position. Therefore, our forces seemed weak but in reality were strong; their numerical strength was limited, but they were high in quality, so much so that we had driven the enemy into a situation that if he sprang up to attack, he would be defeated, as he was in the 1965 dry season, and if he set out to defend himself, he would still get a bumped head and would become sleepless, as he did in the summer of 1966.

2. Though the enemy might increase his force to 300,000 men, the guns of the Liberation Armed Forces still rattled throughout the theaters of war during the summer, killing puppets and exterminating Americans. The reports on the annihilation of battalions of puppets in My Tho, Binh Hung, Lam Dong, Binh Thuan, and Quang Ngai, on the extermination of combat teams of the Americans on Route 13, and on the extermination of companies and battalions of Americans in Binh Long, Pleiku, Kontum, Long Khanh, Quang Tri, Cu Chi, and elsewhere—all these reports elated our people and the world.

3. Another good feature of this summer was that we continued to fight with the mobile, flexible, and active methods of the Liberation Armed Forces. The enemy tried to retreat into his nests for defense, but we still were able to lure the U.S. Air Mobile Division to Toumarong and Ia Drang and to force the U.S. Marine division to leave its base on the coast and rush into the jungle so that we could exterminate them. The entire U.S. First Infantry Division was tied down on Route 13 throughout the summer, only to be wiped out company by company, and battalion by battalion. It even lost nearly one armored regiment in this battlefield. By nature cunning and deceitful, the Americans often turn their bitter defeats on the battlefield into victories before public opinion.

4. The U.S. air war of destruction in the North has been so costly that U.S. President Johnson had to lament and admit his failure: "They are lucky, while we are not." In telling such lies, he showed only the hateful face of a swindler.

To sum up, since the day the American expeditionary troops plunged into the South to fight the Liberation Armed Forces, the contrast between the strategic positions of the two parties has become as clear as black and white. On our side, we are on the offensive continually. We are developing unceasingly. The stronger we are, the more victories we win. Our position is as firm as the Truong Son Cordillera and is as clear as a spring day. Meanwhile, the enemy's position flutters like a lamp in a storm and is as somber as the thick darkness, encompassing the grim fate of the country-occupiers and country-sellers. Though the Americans and puppets may resort to psywar tricks, pointing to imaginary

victories and painting an artificial optimism, the aforementioned facts are as clear as the sunlight, and they have been forced bitterly to admit them.

Then what should the Americans do? And what can they do in the second dry season? Will they be resigned to defeat when they have 300,000 or 400,000 men, 500,000 puppet troops, and 50,000 satellite troops—that is, nearly one million troops—plus more than 3,000 aircraft of all types and 2,000 heavy guns? No; owing to their bandit-like nature, the U.S. aggressors will strive to cling to the Southern part of our country and will resort to many more brutal tricks in order to accelerate their war of aggression further. It is clear that the Johnson-McNamara-Dean Rusk-Westmoreland clique is feverishly preparing for another dry-season counteroffensive. Many of their activities have given clues to their new, wicked designs. For example, the foolish act of bombing the outskirts of Hanoi and Haiphong, economic complexes and densely populated areas, and river dikes and dams in the North is the starting point of this plot. A rapid, massive build-up to increase the American forces to 300,000 or 400,000 men or possibly more by the end of this year is also part of this design. Westmoreland's surreptitious trip to Washington to confer with Johnson on the situation in the South is aimed at carrying out this design. There are still more, but we cannot list them here.

Meanwhile, Johnson is speaking of U.S.-style peace. However, are the escalation of the bombing of the North, the spraying of toxic chemicals having a high percentage of poison throughout the South, and the rapid military build-up prior to and during last year's dry season the expressions of Johnson's and his clique's sincere wish for peace? It is obvious that the U.S. aggressors and their henchmen have recklessly launched a fierce, large-scale military counter-offensive, along with their extremely tricky and dangerous political plot, in this dry season in an attempt to recover their position and leading role. They recklessly dispatch their troops to all battlefields and resort to all the cruelest moves, still aiming for the five strategic objectives that were denied them in the 1965-66 dry season. Although the U.S. aggressors and their henchmen do so willfully and will pay dearly for their acts, what will they achieve? Will we let the enemy act as arrogantly as he pleases? We have answered and will answer definitively that he will only achieve more shameful defeats. So our determination to achieve final success is an invincible strength.

The determination of all our army and people in the 1966-67 winter-spring campaign is to stand steadfast in the offensive strategic position, to step up the people's common revolutionary movement, to continue to maintain and develop our leading role on the battlefield, to attack positively and to counterattack fiercely on all battlefronts, to exterminate many more U.S.-puppet troops, to step up the guerrilla war, to strongly attack the enemy's rear and communication lines, to step up the political struggle and military proselyting task, and to resolutely smash the second dry-season offensive scheme, as well as the wicked pacification and people-concentration plots of the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys. Our determination consists of producing while improving and building our forces in all fields, of actively preparing for the next phase during the present phase, and of advancing toward ever-greater victories.

The struggle between us and the enemy during the 1966-67 dry season will surely be very arduous and fierce. But we can assert that advantages and victories

will be ours and disadvantages and defeats will fall on the heads of the bandits, because our troops and people have the right leadership, a high determination, and a gallant fighting spirit, and are unafraid of sacrifices, hardships, fierceness, and difficulties. Objectively speaking, the enemy still has a large number of troops, guns, and planes; his mobility is high. Therefore, while squirming frantically, he may cause more difficulties. But it is not as if he has just acquired these things. We have known him for a long time. We have realized that behind this semblance of power, he has many unsurmountable weaknesses. Since we have clearly seen him and the situation with our own eyes, we so far have achieved victories. From now on, we will surely win victories. At present, what are the strong and weak points of the enemy on the battlefield? It can be said that we have realized the enemy has the following three basic strong points and five basic weak points. Here are his three basic strong points:

1. He has many troops. But the more troops the Americans have, the more difficulties they encounter. They have many troops, but the troops' morale is low. Thus, their troops seem numerous but in reality they are few. The more numerous their troops, the greater their casualties. They must be replaced constantly, because each U. S. soldier stays in South Vietnam only a year. Thus they need a great source of supply. On this point they are facing increasingly fierce opposition from American youth and people who refuse to go die for the top aggressors in the White House and Pentagon. Such are the U. S. troops' difficulties. The situation of the puppet troops, who are on the verge of collapse, is worse. On the battlefields where they face our regular troops, the puppet troops can take neither an offensive nor a defensive stand. Four hundred thousand U. S. troops is a large force. But since they could do nothing after suddenly and truculently increasing their force to 200,000 men before last year's dry season, what can they do now with 400,000 men, who represent only an increase of one-fourth of the force they had during the summer—an increase that has taken place at a moment when they are in a state of defeat and passivity and when our force is developing and acquiring more combat experience?

2. The enemy has many planes and guns. These are his only hope of success. Launching over 1,000 air strikes in one day throughout the South is not [words indistinct]. No less fierce are bombings by B-52 planes against the Duong Minh Chau combat zone for thirteen days in a row, during one of their raids, and attacks by the same planes against the Demilitarized Zone twice a day for a whole week. Some 180,000 heavy bullets were fired at the people in the liberated villages in the Cu Chi district this July. Certainly this is not a small amount. Yet, after each fierce bombing and attack, the guerrilla and liberation forces suddenly spring up from underground and forest to fiercely attack the enemy. Thus, U.S. infantrymen have had to take to their heels many times. The power of the U.S. planes and guns is strong. But faced with the extraordinary combativeness of the people's war, the Americans are unable to get the expected results from these planes and guns, are unable even to save themselves from defeat. Our people and Liberation Armed Forces not only have devised means of dodging the enemy's planes and guns, they also have found means of attacking the enemy in his own lair, thus forcing his guns to keep silent and destroying his planes.

3. The enemy has many armored vehicles. In the South, where there are many canals and forests, the enemy's use of armored vehicles is very restricted. The U.S. 25th Infantry Division, called "Tropic Lightning," has often boasted of its ingenious methods of fighting with armored vehicles. Yet guerrillas of one village destroyed eighty U.S. vehicles in six months. Columns of armored vehicles of the "Big Red One"—the First Infantry Division—have been attacked and destroyed along blood-stained Route 13. If our Liberation Air Forces had cut off all communication lines and had better fighting methods on the roads, the so-called tactical cooperation between the enemy's ground force, planes and guns, and armored vehicles would have been ignominiously crippled, and there would have remained only heaps of rusted iron—no more, no less.

In short, the enemy's strong points have not just been acquired. For a long time the enemy has displayed them on the Southern battlefield, even at a very high level. But in fact, faced with the strategy, tactics, techniques, and invincible gallant spirit of the Vietnamese people's war, these strong points of the enemy are very restricted and are not terrible at all.

Here are his five basic weaknesses:

1. His politics are absolutely weak and completely isolated. Just as cries of "Americans, go home" have been loudly shouted in the streets of Saigon, Hue, Dalat, and other cities, slogans condemning the aggressive war in South Vietnam and demanding that Johnson come to fight in South Vietnam have appeared in Washington itself. Even though Johnson has resorted to fascist and terroristic measures, he has been unable to stop the fierce protests of the U.S. people.

2. The U.S. ground forces are very weak in the fields of organization, tactics, techniques, and morale. When they are attacked by liberation troops in close-range combat and their cooperation with planes, guns, and armored vehicles is crippled, the tall but stupid U.S. soldiers will behave exactly in the way described by a U.S. first lieutenant, who admitted that in the fierce battle [name indistinct] in July 1966, "the Viet Cong attacked so fiercely that we waited only for an opportunity to retreat."

3. Being separated from Vietnam by some 16,000 kilometers, the United States cannot endure forever the load of one million tons of logistical supplies a day and two billion dollars in expenditures per month. These enormous expenses fall on the heads of the U.S. workers, who are being impoverished by exploitation, economic crises, and inflation. One misfortune breeds three or four others. Thus, the waves of opposition to the aggressive war in Vietnam, the strikes, and the struggle for the right to live will develop strongly inside the United States.

4. The enemy's rear area has many gaps. During the coming winter-spring period there will be many battles as terrible as the firing at the 25th Division in (Dong Du—phonetic) in Cu Chi, at the U.S. First Infantry Division in Lai Khe, at the U.S. airborne division in An Khe, at Tan Son Nhut, at Chu Lai, at Da Nang, at Can Tho, at Soc Trang, and at Saigon and Hue in broad daylight.

5. The lackeys of the Americans are very weak. The puppet troops have so badly disintegrated that they are unable to offer resistance to liberation troops, and the Americans do not entrust them with pacification work or the task of

mounting guard along roads. Puppet authorities are so corrupt that the Americans are dismayed. How long will the U.S. seat hold up, since one of its two tactical legs—the puppet leg—has been broken? Thus the Americans are not so strong as last year. It is obvious that the truculence they displayed in last year's dry season no longer exists.

The morale of the U.S. troops is no higher than that of the puppet troops. They do not have confidence in the puppets. Their politics are increasingly confused. Their contradictions are increasingly fierce. Therefore, no matter how cruel their military and political plots during the 1966-67 winter-spring may be, no matter how many times they increase their air force, artillery, and armored vehicles, and no matter what "modern tactics," such as helicopter-borne, armored-vehicle-borne tactics, they resort to, we can assert that all their forthcoming crazy schemes cannot avoid the grim fate of their 1965-66 dry-season offensive, because the following factors ensure our success:

A. We are in an offensive state and are maintaining and developing the initiative. The more we fight, the stronger we will become, and the stronger we become the more victories we will win because we have the invincible people's war line; because we have correct military strategies and constantly perfected and creative tactics and techniques; because we have also an absolute political superiority, an all-people solidarity, a very high determination to fight; and especially because we are winning and the enemy is suffering defeats.

B. We have the firm and strong North—the great rear area of the entire country—which is endeavoring to satisfy all our needs so that we can defeat the U.S. bandits and their lackeys. We also enjoy the warm support of the entire peace-loving and justice-loving world.

C. We have the Liberation Armed Forces, which have grown stronger and more mature to an extraordinary degree. All three armed forces have developed rationally and are better coordinated with one another. They have been trained in real combat, fighting the enemy and striving to improve themselves at the same time. They have become forces that cannot be defeated by the puppet troops, and they frighten the Americans.

D. Following a period of direct battle against the Americans, we have gained a great deal of valuable experience in surprise attack, ambush, shelling, knifing deeply into the enemy's defenses, attacking infantry forces, attacking motorized troops, attacking aircraft, attacking at close quarters, night attack, day attack, attack in the jungle, attack in the delta, and so forth. This is priceless experience, which enables us to vanquish the U.S. aggressors and their henchmen promptly, neatly, and repeatedly, and which contributes to making our Vietnamese people's anti-aggressive tradition more heroic and extremely great.

E. We are capable of executing deep thrusts and of attacking the enemy's weak and vulnerable points, thus making him suffer more severe and quicker defeats. If we are smart enough to make enemy troops leave their fortifications, and if we resolutely knife deeply into their camp and strike hard at the U.S. infantry troops and puppet regular troops, the U.S. troops will suffer heavy defeats and the puppet troops heavy extermination and disintegration.

F. The enemy's rear area will become more troublesome and will show many defects. He will have no way to check our Liberation Armed Forces, which will

set his airfields, depots, and command centers ablaze. They will fight more fiercely to turn the Southern strategic routes into routes of "blood and tears" like Route 13, to make his rear area confront a desperate situation in every field, whether it be military, political, or economic, and to make upheavals there unavoidable.

With these fundamental advantages, we must score great victories in the forthcoming winter-spring campaign and crush every new counteroffensive scheme of the enemy. The resounding appeal of President Ho is like an intense fire that tempers our will to fight and urges us to advance to carry out his advice, "Johnson and his clique should realize this: They may bring in 500,000 troops, one million, or even more to step up the war of aggression in South Vietnam. They may use thousands of aircraft for intensified attacks against North Vietnam. But never will they be able to break the iron will of the heroic Vietnamese people to fight against U.S. aggression for national salvation. The more truculent they are, the further they aggravate their crime. The war may still last ten, twenty years, or longer. Hanoi, Haiphong, and other cities and enterprises may be destroyed, but the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated. Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. When the day of victory comes, our people will rebuild our country and provide it with bigger and more beautiful construction." President Ho appealed; the whole country has responded. On July 20, 1966, the NFLSV—the only legitimate representative of the Southern people—instructed the Liberation Armed Forces to answer President Ho's appeal: "The Southern people and Liberation Armed Forces must strive to learn from the Northern people and to [word indistinct] emulate to achieve merits in every field of activity in order to accelerate the resistance for national salvation. The Southern people and troops must move ahead quickly, annihilate and wear down as much of the energy of the American and puppet forces as possible, and score now the greatest achievements possible in all fields of activity."

On entering this year's winter-spring campaign, all the Liberation Armed Forces are earnestly carrying out President Ho's combat order and the NFLSV's instructions with the highest determination to win success. Siding with their compatriots throughout the country, properly coordinating the regular forces, regional troops, and guerrilla militia, and achieving close cooperation among the three military, political, and military-proselyting forces, the Liberation Armed Forces pledge to achieve a union of hearts, to fear no hardships and sacrifices, to rush feverishly forward to destroy many more U.S. troops, to exterminate and disperse the greater part of the puppet army, to destroy series of strategic hamlets, and to frustrate the enemy's plan for pacification and herding people.

These are the primordial objectives of our new objective to defeat all military and political counteroffensive schemes of the enemy in the dry season and to inflict heavier and more painful setbacks on the enemy as compared with last year's dry season. The Liberation Armed Forces are determined to strike repeatedly and five or ten times more vigorously at the communication lines and at the enemy's strategically important rear bases. These, too, are our very important strategic tasks. With an iron-like combat stand, strong offensive fervor, and a spirit of moving ahead urgently to earn repeated and greater

successes, the Liberation Armed Forces will resolutely smash all new enemy plots and counteroffensive actions in the dry season and wage a winter-spring campaign covered with blossoms of victory until the day of final success.