"Truong Son" on Military Leadership (5/67)
TRUONG SON ON LESSONS OF NPLSV VICTORIES

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 1454 GMT 26 May 1967--B

(Text) Hanoi, 26 May-(VNA editor's note: In the winter-spring of 1965-66 the South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces and people smashed the first big dry-season strategic counteroffensive of the U.S. and Saigon stooges who then had over 700,000 men at their disposal, including 200,000 American troops. In the winter-spring of 1966-1967 the LAF and people of South Vietnam defeated the enemy's second big dry-season strategic counteroffensive involving most of the million-odd enemy troops, including over 400,000 Americans; half of them had freshly been sent to South Vietnam as reinforcements, in an attempt to turn the tide. The United States and its henchmen suffered much heavier losses in men and materiel. From the unprecedented victory of the recent dry-season, Truong Son, well-known military commentator of the South Vietnam Liberation Forces has drawn a number of lessons on the success in military strategic leadership of the NPLSV which give grounds for belief in yet greater victories. Truong Son's analysis, sent from South Vietnam, is published in the May issue of the Vietnam PEOPLE'S ARMY REVIEW. Following is a condensed version of the article.)

Victory of 1966-1967 winter-spring--five lessons on strategic leadership:

Under the stunning blows in the dry season (1966-1967) followed by bitter failures in both zones of Vietnam in the rainy season, the Johnson-McNamara clique, though still reluctant to open their eyes to reality, cannot help feeling that: The U.S. strategy of local war of aggression with the expeditionary army as trumpcard has gone through a stormy period full of difficulties; and the concept of a quick fight and early victory no longer holds water.

The transient optimism created by the introduction of U.S. troops in 1965 to save the puppet army has gradually vanished, and the U.S. imperialists are lying under the incubus of new nightmares. Many tough questions are yet before them: What is the prospect for the aggressive war in South Vietnam? How to get out of the war with a military victory? How to solve the political problem in South Vietnam? What to do in the immediate future? . . .

In face of this situation, though having begun to feel somewhat discouraged, the U.S. aggressors remain stubborn and are banking on a military solution on the battlefield. That is why, at the start of the 1966-1967 dry season, they took the big decision to open a new strategic counteroffensive (several words indistinct) power, war means, and money.

In taking this strategic decision the Americans nurtured a big ambition--namely, to try and win important victories in their search-and-destroy and pacification operations, hence to bring about a turn for a decisive early victory. The U.S. scheme was very cunning, its military forces very big, its efforts tremendous, and its ambition enormous. But the cruel vulture was beaten by the brave Trach Sanh. (Vietnamese legendary peasant-hero who defeated all evil forces and finally won the heart of his princes whom he had saved from the cruel vulture's claws--VNA ed.)

For their part, as early as the beginning of the dry season, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the National Front for Liberation, the armed forces and people of South Vietnam already took their own strategic decision with the following basic objectives:
To defeat 1 million U.S. satellite and puppet troops, to defeat the so-called big pincers plan, smash their second strategic counteroffensive (the two limbs of the pincers are search-and-destroy operations and the pacifications campaign--VNA ed.)

To push the U.S. and puppet troops from their already passive and deadlocked political and strategic position into a still more passive and deadlocked position and increase the factors that would bring the still greater defeats.

To create for us a new strategic situation as a premise to win still bigger victories.

Now yet another dry season has passed and the enemy has sustained another big defeat and we have won another major victory. Fighting in a not very large area with a not very big population, we have defeated 1 million U.S., puppet, and satellite troops, tipping the balance of force much more in our favor.

If one proceeds from the bourgeois military point of view, the old outlook and formal logic, to analyze the balance of force, it is difficult to understand why we are winning and why the United States, with 1 million troops and an enormous firepower, modern weapons and techniques and a colossal array of modern means of transport and communication, continues to lose, both politically and militarily, both strategically and tactically, both in South and North Vietnam. The most concentrated evidence of this failure is that after two years and two dry seasons of their war, the U.S. strategy of local war of aggression has entered a period of serious stalemate.

The statistics published by the U.S. Defense Department itself and Western reports--though far below reality--can give enough grounds for demonstrating the U.S. failure.

The more U.S. troops are sent to South Vietnam, the heavier their casualties. The rate of U.S. casualties compared to the total number of U.S. troops in South Vietnam rose from 7 percent in 1965 to 11 percent in 1966 and 14 percent in 1967. Not counting the number of dead whose bodies were blown to pieces, could not be recovered, or were simply abandoned on the field, an average of 175 U.S. dead were shipped back to the States per week. According to statistics covering the first quarter of 1967, U.S. troops took 6,000 or 8,000 casualties per month, which makes a total of from 70,000 to 100,000 a year.

Not only are American troops killed or wounded individually but also by whole companies, battalions, and multibattalions. The U.S. commanders themselves have admitted that in the battles against the LAF in Tay Ninh Province, the entire 196th Light Infantry Brigade was so heavily decimated that it only remains on the drawing board, and General de Saussure, its commander, was relieved of his post even while the operation was under way (AP, UPI, AFP).

The more U.S. troops are sent in, the faster the puppet army weakens and disintegrates. According to a report of the U.S. Senate Armed Forces Committee following a fact-finding mission in South Vietnam, nearly 120,000 puppet soldiers deserted in 1966. A Western source even put the figure at 160,000.
At the recent Guam conference, Westmoreland himself conceded that out of the 150 battalions of puppet troops, only seven retain their combat abilities. Thus, the United States itself has come to the conclusion that the puppet army is so weak that it can undertake neither a strategic offensive nor a strategic defensive. At present the United States has been forced to give the puppet army the main role in the pacification program without, however, believing it could succeed.

With the introduction of U.S. troops into South Vietnam the political situation of the enemy has greatly deteriorated. According to the same report of the U.S. Senate Armed Forces Committee, the Viet Cong (meaning the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation) still controls 80 percent of South Vietnam's territory. Nguyen Van Thien, minister of rural development of the puppet administration, declared that the recent village elections could be conducted in only one-third of the villages in South Vietnam.

It is public knowledge that the removal of Lodge, Lansdale, and their associates was actually motivated by their failure in the pacification program and the fast deterioration of the political situation in the towns compared with two years ago. This spells out the frustration of the U.S. hope to use its local war to improve the political situation in South Vietnam and proves that the harder the United States tries to improve it, the worse the situation becomes.

The contradiction between the U.S. aggressors and the Vietnamese people as a whole has sharpened and broadened. The inner contradictions of the puppet administration and army have aggravated and become an incurable cancer. The Saigon puppets have been quarreling daily with one another like horses shut in the same stable under the nose of their U.S. masters.

Since the arrival of U.S. troops, the economic situation of the puppet administration has been even more dislocated. According to U.S. sources, inflation is aggravating in South Vietnam, in 1967, it is estimated, Saigon must import 1 million tons of rice, the cost of living continues to rise, industry is at a standstill, and cultural and social life is deprived. This is eloquent proof that after two years of U.S. local war, the economy of Saigon has gravely deteriorated. That is a very bitter failure of the U.S. neocolonialist policy in the economic field. It is also a great disaster for the United States.

Also, according to American sources, the backbone of the Viet Cong, that is our main forces, has not only been preserved but has also become steadier (let the enemy never hope to break it). Meanwhile the Viet Cong guerrillas and militia have not ceased to grow and are now believed to number in the hundreds of thousands. That is a great menace to the United States.

According to comments by some U.S. and other Western news agencies, after two years of the U.S. war of destruction against North Vietnam, the people there have become steadier, more determined, and more closely united around the party, government, and esteemed President Ho Chi Minh, and have given an even greater and more effective assistance to the revolution in South Vietnam.

That, in a word, is the present military, political, and economic picture of the United States in South Vietnam drawn from figures given by the United States and other Western news agencies. That is also the significance and nature of the U.S. failure in the dry season. But the U.S. aggressors still are adamant, and brutal, and are matching many wicked shemes.
That is why we still have to wage a hard, complicated, and protracted fight before winning complete victory. However, the prospect of our victory is now clearer and brighter than in any previous period.

We have relied on the unshakable revolutionary determination of a whole nation to fight and defeat 1 million professional troops of the United States and puppets equipped with the most up-to-date weapons. Our people throughout the country, especially in South Vietnam, and our cadres and fighters here have endured innumerable trials and sufferings and have fought with matchless heroism in this momentous confrontation.

Our people have stopped at no difficulty and fear no sacrifice because in the face of foreign aggression, we millions, like one man, are deeply aware that as long as we have independence we have everything, from the most ordinary to the most sacred and noble things, whereas if independence is lost everything is lost.

President Ho Chi Minh has said: Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. We not only have the determination to fight the U.S. aggressors, but also know how to fight and fight victoriously, with both military and political means, and combining these two aspects into an invincible strength of a comprehensive strategy.

Proceeding from the study of the features and character of the U.S. neocolonialist policy, and the features and character of the revolution in South Vietnam, we have devised an original and creative method of fighting. This is because we have applied the experiences already accumulated, learned from new experiences, and know how to apply them to new conditions. That is why we have creatively solved many problems, such as defining our strategy and combat method, the principle of the utilization of our armed forces, the way to master the battlefield, the relationship between our three kinds of armed forces, the objective of each battle, the relationship (several words indistinct) areas, the pattern of organization and disposal of our forces on the battlefield, and the way to win victory. . . .

This is made possible because, proceeding from our deep knowledge of the realities in South Vietnam, we have grasped the laws of development of the South Vietnam society, the laws of revolutionary struggle and uprising and the laws of people's war, because we have made a combined use of these laws, turned them to account, and stimulated their interactions (and are able) to create a situation in which the South Vietnam revolution can advance with steady and vigorous steps and even by leaps and bounds. At the same time we have grasped and mastered the laws of development of neocolonialism and correctly assessed the capabilities of the U.S. troops.

Thus, our victory in winter-spring 1966-1967 is the result of correct strategy and (word indistinct).

As a result, the U.S. imperialists, though having 1 million troops at their disposal, have been unable to act at will, to hold or regain the initiative, to control the battlefield, and have no hope of controlling the battlefields.

In [view of our efforts], the fighting efficiency of the U.S. and puppet troops has lowered step by step, the results of their offensive campaigns have been reduced, and they have been unable to achieve the strategic effect they wanted with the use of their colossal army, by means of big pincer movements, by all-out strategic operations, by counteroffensive and pacification campaigns, by attempts to encircle and split our forces, mop up and nibble at our liberated areas, and so forth. By so doing, we have driven the enemy into an increasingly passive position and inflicted on him ever more bitter defeats.
With regard to our forces, entering this winter-spring season on a steady strategic position, we have been able to hold the initiative on the battlefield; as a result, we have secured the objective bases for acting freely as we choose, for fighting on our own pattern, achieving an even higher fighting efficiency, ever bigger results (on each) wave of attacks and each campaign, and ever greater strategic effect.

For these reasons, an important problem for both sides in strategic leadership in the recent period was to wrest the initiative on the battlefield, to be master of the battlefield in both the military and political fields. Victory belongs to he who holds the initiative. Actually, we managed to get those advantages, and as a result we won and are winning. Thus one may come to the conclusion that our strategy, our fighting pattern, have prevailed over the enemy's.

The victory of the winter-spring campaign of 1966-1967 shows that our political line is correct, and our military line accurate, the determination of the people and armed forces very high, our fighting pattern good, our big rear and big front-line very closely coordinated in all fields. Our (word indistinct) are also closely associated with wholehearted support and assistance of the socialist countries and our friends all over the world.

Five lessons on the success of military strategic leadership:

First lesson: Only by understanding the enemy's strategic determination and correctly anticipating the laws and capabilities of action of the enemy can we rightly build our own strategic determination and our fighting pattern.

To know the enemy and know oneself is a principle to win victory in any war. In South Vietnam, in the dry season of 1966-1967, to know the enemy means first of all to find out the enemy's strategic scheme and determination, to firmly grasp the laws and capabilities of action of the enemy.

Our recent winter-spring victory may be attributed to many causes, one of which is that right at the start we have in the main rightly anticipated the strategic scope and laws of action of the enemy.

1. We have rightly anticipated the enemy's strategic determination.

As early as the spring of 1966 we foretold that having suffered heavy defeats in the dry season of 1965-1966, in the rainy season that followed, the enemy would carry out normal activities with the aim of preparing for a large-scale counteroffensive in the dry season of 1966-1967, possibly with 1 million American, puppet, and satellite troops involved including around 400,000 American troops. That forecast had a great effect on the ideological preparations for our entire people and armed forces. At the same time, it provided the direction for preparation in the field of organization. Right then, although we could not yet fully foresee everything, yet the outstanding success is that we had made the preliminary assessment that since the enemy had sustained heavy defeats in the dry season of 1965-1966 with 700,000 troops at his disposal, in the following dry season, even if he had 1 million men, he could (by no means stem the tide).

Entering the rainy season, after examining the all-round situation, we came to the following conclusions:
1. In South Vietnam, the enemy has the following disadvantages: a) The political situation of the United States in South Vietnam has gone from bad to worse; b) The United States has failed to reach any strategic objective on the battlefield. The puppet army has further weakened. Particularly, the strategic concept of quick fighting and quick victory could no longer hold water; c) The armed forces and people of South Vietnam have defeated the United States and puppet troops right at the outset, and the more they fight, the stronger they become. We have firmly held and still are holding the initiative on the battlefield, and continue to be the master on the battlefield.

2. In North Vietnam the U.S. war of destruction has also failed in its basic schemes. North Vietnam's defense and economic forces have considerably increased.

3. In the world and in the United States, U.S. imperialism has been more isolated and opposed more strongly than ever before because of its war of aggression in Vietnam.

4. Though somewhat discouraged by their repeated defeats, yet, out of stubbornness, and having large forces, the U.S. aggressors still hope to secure a military solution and decisive victories on the battlefield.

On the basis of these conclusions, we foresaw that the enemy would make great efforts, muster large forces, launch a big strategic counteroffensive in the dry season of 1966-1967. This counteroffensive, judging from its concrete objectives, basically does not differ from the previous one. But this time the U.S. aggressors have the ambition to turn the tide, and even secure a decisive victory within a short time, (several words indistinct) in Vietnam and in the world, even that of the U.S. Democratic Party and Johnson's run for the presidency will be seriously threatened.

For these reasons we have rightly foreseen that although the U.S. strategic determination this time is very high, its forces very large, its ambition very big, its maneuvers very cruel and cunning, yet they are fraught with many weak points, great confusion, and a serious loss of initiative. In other words, the forces and measures taken to materialize that determination are fraught with factors for defeat.

From this we have drawn a number of conclusions for the direction of our actions—namely:

1. We should in no way underestimate the enemy's strategic determination, for besides his weaknesses, he still has some strong points which must be taken into account. We must make energetic preparations to smash the enemy's plan for a new strategic counteroffensive. We have the objective conditions to defeat the enemy in this winter-spring campaign. But we must make all-out efforts. That victory, will be of tremendous significance; it will create for us new premises to win yet greater victories.

2. To grasp firmly the laws of the enemy's action in order to take the initiative in smashing and defeating all his plans on the battlefield.

One of our successes during the past two years was: At first we did not know the U.S. aggressors, but gradually we found out the laws of their activities. That is a basis for us to assert our own way to fight the U.S. aggressors.

The following are some of the enemy actions which we have foreseen:
A--Coordinating the two limbs of the pincers: search and destroy, and pacify. In the previous dry season, they concentrated on search and destroy by striking hard at our main forces in an attempt to break that backbone. In the current dry season, besides sticking fast to their search-and-destroy objective they pay high attention to pacification and try to combine these two aspects as best they can. But reality on the battlefield has upset the wishful ambitions of the U.S. aggressors because: They have to deploy their forces in yet more scattered positions; their strategic objectives have been equated with one another, with no key points to be emphasized; they are embarrassed in the use of mobile forces and occupation troops of the U.S. and puppets; the worsening political situation resulting from the massive introduction of U.S. troops.

B--Combining offensive with defensive. In the previous dry season they laid more emphasis on the offensive. In the current dry season they pay attention to both offensive and defensive. They made sallies outside their perimeters in an attempt to foil our preparations for attacks, disengage the areas under pressure from the liberation forces, and widen the safety corridors around their bases, and at the same time they launched attacks in an attempt to prevent and restrain our major offensives. The United States is doing in South Vietnam what the French did and failed to achieve both in Indochina and Algeria in the past. Because the U.S. policy is only a passive adaptation of the French policy it is not a good policy either militarily or politically.

C--Combining attacks from inside and outside and isolating South Vietnam. The enemy has intensified his attacks on North Vietnam with the aim of preventing it--the big rear--from supporting South Vietnam, the big frontline. He has widened ground actions in South Vietnam while intensifying air, naval, and artillery attacks on North Vietnam in an attempt to sever the frontline from the rear base, contain the latter, and attack us both on the frontline and in the rear.

D--Combining military, political, and diplomatic activities, widening actions in all three regions--the mountain and jungle regions, the countryside, and the urban areas. The enemy has combined his military and political counteroffensives in all three regions with diplomatic counteroffensives through his peace negotiation swindle, hoping thereby to combine military pressure with political deception and economic blackmail with a view to weakening our people's spirit of revolutionary struggle and slackening our determination to fight.

3--To assess correctly the strategic abilities of 1 million enemy troops in order to decide on a good method of fighting.

In preparing themselves to fight and defeat 1 million U.S. and puppet troops, and proceeding from the lessons of the first dry season (several words indistinct) position of the two sides, the armed forces and people of South Vietnam have come to the conclusion that, although the enemy had considerably increased his effective and war means, his combat efficiency had not increased. To have a big army is one thing. How to use this army and how to fight to win a victory of strategic significance is another.

In the past, Westmoreland always attributed his failure to the shortage of troops. But in the early days of the current dry season, when he already had nearly 1 million troops at his disposal (an ideal number for him), he began admitting that the problem confronting the United States on the South Vietnam battlefield was not only one of troop strength but also of how to fight.
The U.S. strategists had to answer some questions: What results must they obtain that might be called victories of strategic significance and what must they do to achieve a strategic effect, concretely.

1. They hoped to compel our main forces to scatter and return to guerrilla warfare. Should this be achieved, the United States would, strategically speaking, have won victory and end the war by launching major attacks, so as to enter the period of pacification to stamp out the guerrilla war and consolidate its rear base. Then the large-scale concentrated attacks by the main forces of the liberation army would no longer constitute the main threat for the U.S. and puppet troops, and they would have a free hand to focus their efforts on stamping out the guerrilla war in South Vietnam, creating a favorable strategic position for the United States to push on and regain the initiative. It is in this sense that the United States regarded it as a most important task to concentrate big forces on repeated search-and-destroy operations against our main forces on the key operational theaters during the previous, as well as current, dry season.

2. They hoped to compel our main forces to spread on some main frontlines in unfavorable conditions so that they might use their own way of fighting and their superior fire power to inflict heavy losses on us. This means they would be able to force us to fight on their terms and to decimate or destroy an important part of our main forces especially on battlefronts regarded by them as key ones. This is also a way to change the balance of forces in favor of the United States, which would help it achieve a strategic turn in its favor, and ultimately win a decisive victory in a short period of time.

3. They hoped to really pacify a number of vast areas so as to stabilize and expand their rear, upset and narrow down our rear, thus consolidating their foothold to launch military counteroffensives. By so doing they hoped to nibble some land under the liberation front's control, scoop part of the population into areas under their control as planned, severing our people from the liberation armed forces so as to wipe out our guerrilla organizations, bases, and movement as a whole. It is with this end in mind that during the current dry season the enemy has made great efforts in pacification and combined his search-and-destroy operations and pacification campaign into a big pincers movement. They have put high hopes on the pacification plan to create a strategic position favorable to them and unfavorable to us.

4. They hoped to clear the strategic communication lines, regain control over these vital lines to link up their bases, overcome the present disconnection between their bases, thus enabling free movement of their troops, insure steadier defense and more effective attacks.

5. They hoped to isolate the South Vietnam revolution, prevent North Vietnam from supporting South Vietnam so as to weaken the revolutionary war now developing victoriously in the south. They have made big efforts to foil the great strategic role of North Vietnam toward South Vietnam, even resorting to the escalation of their war of destruction against the north. It goes without saying that if the enemy succeeded in severing the relations between socialist North Vietnam--the big rear--and South Vietnam--the big frontline--and stopping the moral and material support for the revolution in South Vietnam from the big rear of the whole country which is linked to the immense rear, that is, the socialist camp, then he would secure a notable strategic effect or at least stave off to some extent his strategic defeat in South Vietnam in the immediate future.
In the view of the enemy, only when the above schemes are materialized can he be said to have gained a strategic effect. But the enemy could not materialize his plan and he can never do so.

In World War II, only less than six months after throwing their troops into battle, Japan and Germany gained big—though temporary—strategic victories. In South Vietnam, however, U.S. troops have been active for more than two years now, without having recorded any strategic battles. Why?

Following are the main reasons: 1) the local war was launched in the wake of the unsuccessful special war; 2) as a result the United States has lost its strategic initiative right at the start; 3) the U.S. troops are not so strong as some people think them to be, although true they have some strong points but at the same time have many weak points affecting basic and important aspects; 4) the strategy of the U.S. local war—must rely on two strategic forces, the U.S. troops and the puppet army. However, the latter is too weak and its weakness impairs the strength of the U.S. troops themselves; 5) the immediate rear of the U.S. troops is very weak; so are their social and political base there. The (words indistinct) of the United States is rotten to the core; 6) the U.S. troops are not fighting against a capitalist army but against a people's war in Vietnam, where the army and people are in a victorious position, are holding the initiative on the battlefield, and are not fighting alone . . .

One can therefore come to the conclusion that the strategic effect of U.S. troops in South Vietnam is limited by two factors: The reactionary and unjust character of the U.S. aggressive war doomed to failure, on the one hand, and an erroneous leadership, on the other. This weakness and error are not fortuitous but have objective causes which make errors unavoidable. And the more the United States tries to correct them, the bigger errors it commits. The specialists might eventually succeed in landing a man on the moon, but they decidedly cannot reverse the laws of development of society. Still less can they replace it by other laws to be brought with dollars.

The U.S. aggressive war is being conducted in a new era and in the conditions of a new balance of forces in the world as well as in Vietnam. In such conditions, despite their large number and modern weapons and military techniques, the U.S. troops cannot bring into full play their effect since they have to depend on many complicated factors. The unavoidable result is that they cannot win, but will only suffer political and military setbacks.

It is impossible to understand the nature of the developments in Vietnam without taking into account all the above characteristics. As president and commander in chief, Johnson is the most conceited about the U.S. strength. But he has committed a serious error in his appraisal of the new era. That is why the United States still fails to find out why its neocolonialist policy and local war of aggression have met with failure after failure.

Second lesson: To maintain and develop the position of continual offensive, hold firm and expand the initiative on the battlefields, force the enemy to fight on our terms.

Following are some striking features of the general situation on the battlefields in the current dry season:

For our part, we have continually maintained our offensive position and our control over the battlefield throughout South Vietnam. By mid-October 1966 and mid-February 1967 we started simultaneous attacks and counteractions having an offensive character.
along with luring the enemy troops out of their fortifications to attack then, we
organized counterattacks against the enemy search-and-destroy operations and their
large and medium-scale terrorist raids, and launched attacks close to or deep into
the enemy's rear bases. With their strong victorious nettle and after careful
preparations in all fields, ideological, organizational, and technical, the South
Vietnamese armed forces and people started their offensive early, mounted simultaneous
attacks on many battlefronts, from Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Central Trung Bo, to
the high plateaus and further south to East Nam Bo and the Nam Bo Delta (southern-
most part of the Mekong delta—VNA ed.).

We have attacked the enemy on both the political and military fields, using both
our political and military forces and all our three kinds of forces, the regular army,
the regional forces and the guerrillas. We have combined military and political
attacks with agitation work among the enemy troops in the jungle areas, the country-
side as well as the towns, and used various combat methods of people's war to
fight against both the military and political forces of the enemy comprising the
U.S., puppet, and satellite troops. We have thus wiped out enemy forces while
countering their pacification and nibbling raids to defend and widen the liberated
areas and maintain and develop the people's authority.

On the U.S.-puppet's side, during the current dry season, they started their
operations earlier and with more troops than before. Instead of massive offensives
all over the battlefield as previously they concentrated their attacks as well as
pacification raids on key points, conducting repeated and protracted search-and-
destroy and pacification operations in the jungle areas, the delta as well as the
towns.

Due to his loss of initiative in strategy, the enemy has generally speaking tended
toward the defensive in the dry season. However, he has also launched big operations
to attack us first, such as operation "Junction City" in Tay Ninh Province, or
to counter our attacks as along Highway 9 in Quang Tri Province. He increased
considerably the number of combat operations and pacification raids compared
with the previous dry season and doubled the division-sized operations compared with
last year. The result, however, is that after the dry season, the South Vietnamese
armed forces and people are holding the initiative more firmly than ever while the
enemy is driven into greater passivity and embarrassment.

The glorious victories recorded by the South Vietnamese armed forces and people have
provided many valuable lessons on how to maintain and develop our position of continual
offensives and how to maintain and develop our control over the battlefield. The
following experiences can be drawn:

1—To launch continual offensives is the most positive and effective way to maintain
and develop our control over the battlefield.

The U.S. aggressors and their lackeys are in a losing, defensive position. Both
we and the enemy have deployed big forces with firm strategic intentions. We have
many experiences, but the enemy too has endeavored to draw experiences. Both we
and the enemy waged a bitter struggle, we to maintain and develop our initiative
and the enemy to regain his. The armed forces and people of South Vietnam hold
that in conditions when the enemy is making all-out efforts and using a big force
in the hope of turning the tide of the war in his favor, if they are not determined
to open continuous attacks to maintain and develop their initiative on the battle
field, not only will they not be able to annihilate the enemy and win greater victories,
but will also be decimated and even gradually driven back into a defensive position. Therefore, the only and most effective way to maintain and develop the initiative is to attack the enemy resolutely and continuously at all times and in all places.

The armed forces and people of South Vietnam, having correctly posed the problem, have taken a correct strategic decision and won ever greater victories. This has been confirmed by reality on the battlefield. In this dry season, 1 million U.S. and puppet troops have met with a series of strategic difficulties: They fielded a numerous army but it is thinly scattered, its mobile force is not proportionate to its total strength. The United States tends more and more toward the defensive and has been forced to send its troops everywhere to cope with the LAF, from Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces to the Mekong Delta. Our position of continuous offensive has insured the initiative for the South Vietnam armed forces and people in their combat plans. This is a great success in the leadership and materialization of our strategy and tactics.

2--Concentrating our forces to meet our fundamental requirements in order to maintain and develop our initiative on the battlefield and push the enemy into a more and more unfavorable position.

To drive the enemy into an unfavorable strategic position, the South Vietnam armed forces and people have carried out satisfactorily the three following points:

A--To push the enemy into a more critical political position.

The enemy has right at the start found himself in an absolutely inferior position, politically and morally. He is beset with political crisis in South Vietnam, the world, and right in the United States. That political passiveness and crisis has exerted a direct and very strong influence on the military activities of the enemy, increasing his confusion and setbacks in the military field.

Entering the dry season, the South Vietnam armed forces and people, aiming at those fundamental weak points of the enemy, stepped up their all-out political and military offensive, thus deepening the contradictions of the enemy and worsening his political position.

B--To drive the enemy into a greater crisis in military strategy.

It is clear that in view of the development of the war in South Vietnam, no matter how many more troops the enemy may pour in, he cannot secure any strategic victory. He is held in such a critical strategic position that he does not know how to win, for all the big army at his disposal, always feels a shortage of troops in spite of a continuous buildup, and cannot achieve any strategic effect. This has frustrated all the U.S. efforts to regain the initiative on the battlefield and makes the U.S. war more and more costly in terms of American lives and material and brings the U.S. imperialists nearer to the end of their issueless tunnel.

C--To drive the enemy into an impasse in both operations and tactics.

In this dry season the U.S. aggressors, relying on their numerical strength and big firepower, hoped with their operations and tactics to make up for their erroneous, defensive strategy. They put much hope in regaining their initiative in each battle and each operation, thereby gradually regaining the strategic initiative they have lost.
Therefore, to defeat and foil all combat and tactical methods of the U.S. aggressors, drive them into a great crisis in the operational and tactical fields, and reduce to the minimum the combat efficiency and the result of operations of the U.S. and puppet troops actually amount to shattering all their hope of regaining the initiative on the battlefield.

To maintain and develop the initiative on the battlefield, our armed forces and people have correctly met the following requirements:

A--Upholding the determination to fight and defeat 1 million U.S. and puppet troops.

Entering this winter-spring, on the basis of the victories already obtained, with a firm resolve to oppose the U.S. aggression, with the rich experiences gathered from our victories, and with careful preparations, the South Vietnam armed forces and people as a whole were stirred with the determination to fight and defeat the U.S. aggressors. Our absolute political and moral superiority is precisely the firm basis for continuous offensive and for the maintenance of the initiative, the most important cause of all victories of the South Vietnam armed forces and people and their wonderful strength which plays the decisive role in defeating 1 million enemy troops in this dry season.

B--Broadening the nation-wide and all-sided people's war and developing it to a high degree.

We use the overall strength of a highly developed people's war to defeat the professional aggressor troops, firmly maintain and develop our control over the battlefield, strengthen our three kinds of armed forces, achieve at all costs the three following strategic goals: Wiping out enemy forces, defending and enlarging the liberated zones, and firmly maintaining and developing the people's authority.

C--Stepping up attacks on the enemy in all three zones: jungle, rural and urban areas.

The practice of the South Vietnam revolutionary war has convincingly demonstrated that attacks on the enemy must be mounted simultaneously in the three zones and on both the political and military fields. We must not only develop our initiative of action in the jungle and rural areas, but also resolutely maintain and broaden step by step our initiative of action in the cities.

D--Constantly holding the initiative on each battlefield in close coordination with all others. (No amplification on this point--ed.)

E--Consolidating the rear areas and the liberated zones, firmly maintaining and expanding our bases, transforming the liberated zones into a solid rear area in all fields, military, political, and economic, and making our base ever steadier.

We must do many things at a time: Attack the enemy and consolidate the liberated zones in all fields by building fighting villages, reinforcing the militia and home guard units, settling the land problem, maintaining security, wiping out enemy informers and spies, consolidating the mass organizations, and particularly stepping up production and practicing economy along the line of a national and democratic economy.

F--Forcing the enemy to fight on our terms.

Forcing the adversary to fight on our terms is a military principle for any commander, of either side. But the question is: Are there objective conditions for its realization?
How can we force the enemy to fight on our terms, keep him in constant passivity while firmly holding the initiative? From our victory over 1 million enemy troops in the current dry season, the following main remarks may be drawn:

A--We have forced the enemy to split and scatter his forces. In other words, we have stretched the enemy forces out to strike them in all places while keeping sufficient forces for ourselves to attack the enemy everywhere, and, when necessary, to concentrate our forces in the key areas. This was made possible because we have made the fullest use of our initiative position and of our three kinds of forces which have already been deployed in a rational manner on all battlefields. The enemy had to scatter his troops (along) Highway 9 (Quang Tri Province--VNA editor) to the Mekong Delta, thus finding himself in a highly scattered strategic position, hesitating between concentration and dispersion, mobility and static occupation, defense and attack, and the more he tries to unravel the skein, the more he gets tangled.

B--We did not allow the enemy to fight in his own way. The usual combat method of the United States is to fight pitched battles with the two sides ranging their forces along a clear-cut line. Such a method requires a safe rear to enable complete freedom of troop movement and well-set combat as well as operational objectives so that it may turn to full account its superiority of firepower and high mobility to wipe out its opponent both in each battle and in each campaign as a whole. For our party, we choose to fight where there is no clear-cut line nor clear targets.

Our method is to concentrate and disperse our troops rapidly, make sudden appearances and vanish instantly, fighting now small battles, now big ones, or combining the two kinds, attacking the enemy in all places and from all directions at a time, in front, in the rear and on the flanks, striking into his formations and in the midst of his operations, using our courage and intelligence to defeat the enemy in the most unexpected ways.

C--We have prevented the enemy from encircling and splitting our forces. We have on the contrary encircled and split the enemy forces in his overall strategy, in each campaign as well as in each battle, expanded to a high degree the pattern of battlefronts in which ours and the enemy forces are dovetailed, to create a strategic encirclement and splitting of the enemy forces.

We attack the enemy in front, in the rear, from inside and outside, fighting and moving quickly, not allowing the enemy to react in time, and constantly splitting his forces to wipe them out quickly. That is why many big operations conducted by the enemy in the current dry season with the aim of encircling our forces turned out to be only punches in the air. Instead, it is the enemy who was besieged, split and battered.

D--We have prevented the enemy from strengthening his defense and launching successful attacks by developing the effect of our strategic combat methods of people's war such as guerrilla attacks, fighting with rather big units, attacks on communication lines . . . repeatedly and powerfully attacking the enemy in various ways and on different scales, as in Tay Ninh, Quang Nam, Ben Tre, the high plateaux, Quang Tri-Thua Thien, and Tan An-cholon.

In this dry season, our brilliant surprise attacks, such as those on the airfields at Da Nang, Tan Son Nhut, Can Tho, Pleiku, Chu Lai, Quang Tri . . . the ammunition storage at Long Binh or our artillery attacks along Highway 9 have upset all defensive schemes of the enemy in South Vietnam.
E--We have prevented the U.S. soldiers from playing the role of a shield for the puppet troops. We continued to hit hard at the aggressor troops and at the same time resolutely wipe out more puppet troops and hasten their disintegration, because, though looked down upon by the United States, the puppet army remains a prop and valuable politico-military asset for the neocolonialist policy of the United States in South Vietnam.

We have prevented the enemy from organizing battles that could bring him some combat efficiency, operational results or strategic effect. We have made the fullest use of our advantageous strategic position, and our favorable conditions with regard to the weather and popular support to heighten constantly our combat efficiency, the results of our campaigns and the effect of our strategy.

The result is that in spite of his superiority in the number of troops and weapons, the enemy has suffered heavy losses and achieved a low combat efficiency in terms of capitalist calculations because he has paid too high prices in blood and money and lost too heavily in the deal.

For our part, we often won big or very big victories, by fielding not very big forces, as was the case of our attacks on enemy airfields and ammunition storages, attacks which actually proved as effective as raids by big air force units.

G (as received)--We have prevented the enemy from gaining control over the battlefield, even in areas close to big U.S.-puppet military bases and cities. We have broadened our attacks on the enemy in all three zones, combining the annihilation of enemy forces with the liberation of land, coordinating military and political attacks with political agitation among enemy troops, combining fighting with popular uprising, defeating the enemy search and destroy operations and at the same time frustrating his pacification program in the key areas.

By fulfilling these tasks we have forced the enemy to fight on our terms, or as the South Vietnamese people say, forced the Americans to eat soup with forks. As a result, we have pinned down the enemy troops in an increasingly passive strategic position. The more he tries to extricate himself from his predicament, the greater his confusion.

We have constantly (few words indistinct) favorable strategic positions, firmly maintained and strongly developed our initiative in attacking the enemy. This is a key problem, a good point of ours and a weak point of the enemy in the leadership as well as execution of military strategy on the South Vietnam battlefield.

This is a strange phenomenon difficult to understand if we are to go by classical military experiences, but it is a reality on the South Vietnam battlefield. In fact, in its confrontation with an opponent inferior in number and many times weaker in equipment, a first rate modern million-strong army which theoretically speaking, should have fought some strategically decisive battles to turn the tide, has lost its freedom of action. Because the whole of that huge army has right at the start become a prisoner of its own passive strategic position, (words indistinct) the Liberation Armed Forces of South Vietnam have gained complete freedom of action.

The understanding of this point helps us assess more clearly the great value of our victory in the 1966-1967 dry season.
Third lesson: Closer combination of armed and political struggle with political agitation among puppet troops.

In his neocolonialist war of aggression in South Vietnam, the enemy has been combining military activities with political and economic maneuvers according to a pincers plan for carrying out simultaneously search-and-destroy operations and the pacification program. This has three strategic objectives: To wipe out the liberation armed forces, occupy land and enslave the people. These objectives are linked to one another. The enemy holds that without annihilating the LAF he can neither occupy land nor enslave the people, and without occupying land he cannot deploy his forces and narrow the scope of activities of the LAF. But the enemy also knows that to occupy land without enslaving the people only amounts to dispersing his forces and making them more vulnerable to the LAF attacks and consequently his aggressive war has no immediate rear to rely on. However, all the plans of the enemy to materialize these three strategic objectives have failed at their root—that is, the strategy of neocolonialist war of aggression.

Drawing a lesson from their defeat in the previous dry season, the U.S. aggressors have made many new efforts in pacification, doing their utmost to combine closely the search-and-destroy operations with the pacification of rural areas.

To attain these two strategic objectives, the United States assigned the pacification job to the bulk of the puppet regular army, made a clearer division of work between the U.S. troops, puppet army and pacification cadres, the latter being recruited from among the most bloodthirsty local thugs. Their new pacification program centered on four key areas—the surroundings of Saigon and Da Nang cities and Zinh Dinh and An Giang (formerly LONG Xuyen and Chau Doc) Provinces.

Such large-scale search-and-destroy operations as "Atteboro," "Cedar Falls" and "Junction City" were all aimed at enlarging the areas under U.S.-puppet control and providing security for the puppet troops and pacification cadres. On the other hand, the extremely barbarous acts taken by the enemy in execution of his policy of "burn all, kill all, and destroy all during his raids and pacification nibbling attacks were all combined with the search-and-destroy operations, made full use of the results of these operations, and were intended to serve directly the plan to search and destroy the liberation armed forces.

But the U.S.-puppets have met with repeated and powerful attacks and counterattacks by the South Vietnam patriotic forces and people. Their pincers campaign has been broken up, their pacification program has bitterly gone bankrupt with large military forces and numerous pacification agents wiped out.

Through the reality of the struggle to defeat the enemy on both fronts on the pincers plan, the South Vietnam liberation forces and people have drawn the following practical lessons:

A—They must grasp firmly and solve satisfactorily the relationship between the task of annihilating enemy forces and firmly maintaining the people's authority in accordance with the characteristics of the South Vietnam revolutionary war and in conformity with our strategic line. All liberation wars have their strategic goals which are closely interrelated, namely to wipe out enemy forces liberating and holding land, defending and liberating the people.
Our country is not big and its population is not very large. On the other hand, the enemy is seeking by all means to encroach upon the liberated areas and enslave our people through his cruel military activities and many crafty political and psychological war maneuvers. In such a situation, the South Vietnam liberation forces and people have always held that besides the task of wiping out the enemy, to occupy and hold land and liberate and defend the people are also very important strategic tasks.

The revolutionary movement and victorious development of the people's war in South Vietnam are closely linked to the people's authority. This is also the problem of the frontline and the rear, of fighting the enemy and preserving our forces, of fostering our resistance potential and destroying the rear and war potential of the enemy. It is to maintain and develop the people's authority that we must wipe out enemy forces. Inversely, we must maintain the people's authority in order to wipe out more enemy forces. That is why we should not put the emphasis only on the necessity to annihilate enemy forces and lose sight of our objective of occupying land and protecting the people. Through annihilating enemy forces is the foremost task in any war. Because in practice if the people's authority is not maintained and developed, we cannot succeed in annihilating enemy forces. At the same time, we should not overemphasize the importance of the task of occupying land and protecting the people and minimize the task of annihilating enemy forces, because, it is clear, if we cannot hold our land and annihilate both the military and political forces of the enemy we cannot hold the ground and defend and develop the people's authority.

We regard the combination of armed and political struggle—the three-pronged attack, that is, military and political struggle and political agitation among the enemy troops—as the fundamental mode of struggle in order to step up the annihilation of enemy forces, defend and develop the people's authority and foil the enemy's pacification plan. The combination of political and armed struggle is one of the basic means of the South Vietnamese people to carry out their revolution.

It is also a law for the South Vietnam revolution to win victory and a fundamental mode of struggle if enemy forces are to be annihilated, the ground to be held, and the authority of the people to be achieved. Our victories have testified to the tremendous strength of this principle. In coordination with the armed struggle which is developing vigorously in all localities, the movement of political struggle has surged up.

In 1966, 11 million people participated in political struggle. That is a twofold increase over 1965. The ideological and organizational work among the masses in the countryside and in the cities and towns continued to strengthen, the allotment of land and the struggle to demand reduction of land rents and usury rates bore an extremely important significance.

The campaigns to boost production in the plains and mountain areas also had a tremendous effect. The policy of rallying all forces opposing American aggression into a united front and the policy on the solidarity and equality among the various nationalities in South Vietnam has also recorded outstanding achievements. The political attack on the puppet army and administration has become more and more effective. The political agitation among enemy ranks on the battlefield has effectively contributed to the disintegration of more than 60,000 puppet troops in this winter-spring.
Only by making full use of all our forces and all forms of struggle, by closely combining political and armed struggle, can we defend our land and the people in face of the deployment of enormous forces by the enemy to form a thick network of occupation strongholds. That is why it happens that in certain areas where the enemy had set up nearly 100 posts or strongholds, the people remained the master and were not enslaved by the enemy. Our people call such an area a liberated area with enemy posts.

Fourth lesson: Constantly raising the capacity of our way of fighting specifically to the people's war to yield higher combat efficiency, high results in operations and high strategic effect.

A bitter confrontation between our way of fighting and that of the enemy has taken place in this winter-spring. The way of fighting of our people's war has proven its marked superiority. This way of fighting has been further enriched and improved and has repeatedly foiled all tactical initiatives of the United States. Nothing can demonstrate this fact better than the reality on the battlefield. We can draw some following remarks:

A--Our forces have fought on all battlefields and all our three kinds of armed forces have fought well and won great victories. Be they big or small battles, big or small campaigns, our protracted military operations have achieved good results. Our attacks, counterattacks, counterraid and antipacification actions have ended in success. Our various combat methods have been fairly perfected and were closely combined not only on the scale of a whole operation theater but also in each locality, campaign, or battle.

The guerrillas war has developed into a wide and powerful movement; it scattered the enemy forces and pinned them down on many battlegrounds from Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces to the Mekong River delta. Fighting made steady progress while surprise attacks also got ever better results. The enemy bases and nerve centers were attacked repeatedly, vigorously, and with higher accuracy. We have continuously and effectively attacked the enemy communication lines and logistical bases.

B--This way of fighting has become more and more effective as we have rightly chosen our opponents and targets. As a result we have annihilated, decimated, or disintegrated both the military and political forces of the enemy while continually reducing our losses.

In annihilating enemy forces, we spearheaded our attacks at the most important elements such as officers, pilots, armored car drivers, gunners, technicians. . . . We have not only wiped out enemy troops but also their equipment and other important war means. Not only have we attacked headquarters and airfields of the enemy but also logistical bases and communication lines, causing great difficulties to transport and supply. We have not only wiped out American troops but also puppet and satellite troops, cruel agents of the U.S.-puppet, reactionary administrative personnel and pacification teams.

In fighting the U.S. aggressors, we have attached importance to preventing large-scale cooperation between the various armed branches and services of the United States, for example between the air and ground forces, between the infantry and motorized units, between the infantry and artillery . . . and diminishing the U.S. operation and tactical mobility, thus further weakening the already weak U.S. infantry.
More varied and flexible tactics have been adopted. New ways of fighting have been created on all battlefields, all localities and by all kinds of our armed forces. Our tactics have taken most diversified forms, from spike or mine traps to nibbling attacks, sniper fire, ambushes, surprise attacks, mobile attacks, artillery attacks, attacks on air-dropped troops and on motorized units, attacks on the enemy outside and inside their fortifications, at their operational bases, their rear bases, both in the day time and at night, on various terrains from the mountains to the plains.

Through the fighting, the superiority, originality, and high effectiveness of the way of fighting specific to the people's war in South Vietnam have manifested themselves in the following points:

1--It shows a rational division of combat tasks among the various kinds of armed forces and the entire 14 million people of South Vietnam to annihilate the enemy and save the country. In the organization of the fighting, the high combat efficiency and high results of operations are closely linked to the rational division of combat tasks. Due to its multiform character, our way of fighting is suitable to all kinds of forces, the army and people alike, to all strata and all ages, and to the physical conditions and capacity of each person and each unit, hence everybody can take part in fighting the enemy with suitable means. From the gunners, scouts, infantrymen, transport workers... to the guerrillas, militiamen and women, from the children to the aged, everybody can fight the enemy and win exploits.

With that way of fighting, our 14 million compatriots in South Vietnam have been organized into a steady bloc and rationally assigned combat jobs, thus creating a very effective battlefield of people's war to wipe out the enemy. There lies the high mass character of our way of fighting. There also lie the creativeness, originality, and high effectiveness of the way of fighting of the people's war in South Vietnam.

2--Developing the effectiveness of all weapons from the most rudimentary to modern ones, creating a tremendous force to annihilate enemy forces. With our way of fighting, anything in our people's hands becomes a weapon: a stick, a shoulder pole, a heap of stones... Our clever way of fighting with rudimentary weapons, which has developed to a high degree, has trapped the U.S. troops everywhere and at any time and inflicted heavy casualties on them.

It is not fortuitous that the American troops are so scared of the spike traps and other body traps of our guerrillas and people. The American press admitted that 25 percent of the total casualties of the U.S. Marines in the 1st Army Corps were caused by our spike or mine traps. But we have not only primitive weapons. Our infantry weapons, artillery, and mortars have considerably raised the casualty toll of the U.S. troops in the first months of this year.

3--We have fought and defeated the enemy by opposing either a big force to a small force, or a small force to a big force and combining these two ways of fighting.

In an operation, as well as in a single battle, the almost classical practice has been to oppose a big force to a small force and defeat a small force with a big force. But we have fought and won resounding victories by varied ways of fighting: Now we opposed a big force to a small enemy force, now we defeated a big enemy force by using a small force, now we fielded a force equivalent to the enemy's.
These ways of fighting are applied not only in the guerrilla war but also in big fighting. Either to fight a big enemy force with a smaller one or, inversely, to fight on a par with the enemy, we must put ourselves in a stronger position than the enemy.

This strong position lies not only in the number of troops deployed but also in their combat skill, their high morale and resourcefulness. It also depends on whether we can secure an advantageous terrain, complete secrecy as to when and where we are to strike at the enemy.

4.--We are able to fight small and big battles, and to coordinate small, medium, and big battles. In South Vietnam the widespread small actions of the liberation forces have enabled them to decimate and wipe our enemy forces in a wide area, pin them down and scatter them to strike at them more effectively. Big fighting on different scales has also been conducted regularly flexibly and resolutely, constituting heavy punches to increase the rate of enemy casualties.

On the South Vietnam battlefield, we have developed our way of fighting in accordance with the objective law of the liberation war, going from small scale to big-scale fighting so that we could achieve high efficiency in both guerrilla warfare and fighting with concentrated forces.

5.--To defeat the enemy in all circumstances, inside or outside his fortifications, at the rear bases, in day time or at night, in all areas from the mountain region to the delta and two towns.

Our way of fighting is flexible, multiform and highly efficacious because we can defeat the enemy not only in specific circumstances, in a specific period and in a specific area, but also in any circumstance, any time, any where. Along with attacking enemy forces by ambushes, surprise attacks, artillery shelling, when they are moving, freshly landed or bivouacked, the South Vietnamese armed forces and people also attacked right inside their fortifications, (strongholds or rear bases) in a suitable and sometimes in an extremely daring manner. That way of fighting in certain cases help them win big victories with a not very large force, limit the enemy fire power and reduce their own losses.

Along with luring the enemy onto the mountain battlefield to wipe him out, the armed forces and people in South Vietnam have also resolutely held fast to the enemy and fought him in the delta and the cities. By striking at the enemy nerve organs inside the cities, we have not only wiped out his vital forces and promoted the armed and political struggle there but also achieved what amounts to thrusting a sharp knife into the enemy’s heart.

We must raise the efficiency of this way of fighting in order to develop the strategic role and effect of different battlefields and different regions and create a position of coordinated and repeated attacks on the enemy. We must pin down the enemy and scatter his forces everywhere and at the same time deal him heavy and devastating punches, making it impossible for the enemy to react, despite his big advantages in men and equipment.

6.--Our forces are able to fight either independently or in close coordination with each other. The characteristics of our way of fighting lies in the fact that each individual, each unit can by himself or itself find out the enemy and wipe out independently or in close coordination with one another, according to plan. Thus, on any battlefield, in any locality, at any moment, and in any direction, there can be gunshots to wipe out the enemy.
By Hanoi 1967

Where the enemy is, there are forces to attack him. We have successfully mounted not only separate battles but also big operations. We have recorded successes in varied circumstances: from attacks on enemy posts, counter raids, to attacks on enemy communication lines and rear bases. This is an important condition to unceasingly heighten our combat efficiency and the results of our military campaigns, develop our position of continual offensive and unceasingly preserve and develop our initiative of action.

7—To attack the enemy in all fields, military, political and economic:

Our way of fighting is that of people's war, that is to fight the enemy in all fields. Each of our modes of combat, each of our tactics is conceived in the light of these goals. In fact, some of our battles bear a not very great military significance but have a great political or economic value. Thus, the attacks on the enemy in heart of Saigon and Quang Tri provincial capital on 6 April 1967, for instance, not only resulted in the annihilation of a number of enemy officers and men and the destruction of some of their equipment, but also created serious political consequences for the U.S. aggressors and the puppet administration.

The repeated attacks on the enemy communication lines, cutting off its transport and movement from Ca Mau to Saigon, not only had a military significance but also compelled the Saigon puppets to import nearly a million tons of rice, thus creating many difficulties to them. There lies the combined strength of our attacks on the enemy in all fields, military, political, and economic.

In a word, the way of fighting of the people's war in South Vietnam has reached a high level and has a tremendous force. This force stems not only from a spirit of resolute offensive and the eagerness of the masses to wipe out the enemy but also from a high level of organization and distribution of work and a high standard of strategic and tactical planning as well as of combat technique of the South Vietnam armed forces and people. Due to the high revolutionary character, the high scientific and broad mass character of their way of fighting, the South Vietnamese armed forces and people have become stronger as they fight. This way of fighting is developing continually and has become more and more varied and flexible. It has repeatedly defeated all the combat methods of the enemy from the search and destroy and air mobile operations to the security raids and defensive enclaves and foiled all the techniques which the United States has taken much pains to work out and experiment with in this dry season.

Fifth lesson: To pay attention to the building and development of the two forces (political and military—VNA ed.) and the three armed services and solve correctly the relationship between number and quality.

The victory of our army and people in defeating 1 million U.S. puppet and satellite troops has by itself eloquently demonstrated our great success in building and expanding our forces. This success has been made possible because we have firmly grasped the strategic guideline in building our forces and creatively solved the problem of building our forces in a way suitable to our practical conditions, our fighting methods, and the law on the development of the revolutionary war in South Vietnam so as to defeat an enemy bigger in number and superior in material and technical means. In the current winter-spring this success can be seen in the following points:
We have powerfully and proportionately developed both our political and armed forces. We have satisfactorily settled the relationship between the two forces in the course of our buildup, making them develop powerfully and proportionately and bringing into full play their great strategic efficiency in the revolution. In fact, never before has our political force developed so powerfully as in the current winter-spring campaign. It has drawn all strata of the people, all patriotic Vietnamese irrespective of class, party, religious belief, and political affiliation into a common fight against the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, the clique of traitors, to win national independence, democracy, neutrality, and reunify the fatherland.

On the basis of the enlarged political forces, the political contingent of the masses which constitutes the hard core of the political struggle has also been strengthened both in number and quality. The political front and the political contingent have developed powerfully in the mountains, rural, and urban areas. This force has brought great successes to the political struggle and made an active contribution to the building and fighting of the armed forces. Besides stepping up the building of the political force, our army and people have made great efforts in the strengthening of their armed forces. All our three kinds of armed forces have been fostered and developed in a planned way, evenly, proportionately, and in conformity with the practical conditions on the battlefield and with the combat tasks.

Stemming from the people's political movement and political force, the guerrilla movement has widely developed in many suitable forms of organization and has brought into full play the entire people's strength in their attack on the enemy. The South Vietnam guerrillas have not only marvelous courage and fairly good equipment, but also very clever and efficacious methods of fighting that help them wipe out whole U.S., or puppet squads or platoons.

On all battlefields, the strengthened regional forces have become powerful mobile units of their localities. They can develop high independence in combat, closely coordinate with the regular army and guerrillas in concentrated fighting to wipe out enemy forces, defend the people, develop the guerrilla war and assist the political struggle. Along with the even development and effective actions of the guerrilla movement, the combat level of the regional forces has also been raised steadily. They can now quickly wipe out whole U.S. companies or puppet battalions.

The strengthened regular army has become well-trained units with high combativity and mobility, capable of fighting the enemy in all tactical forms and combat methods, on all scales and all terrains. They are now strong enough to annihilate quickly from one to many battalions of U.S. puppet and mercenary troops supported by tanks and armoured cars.

Thus, each kind of our three armed services has reached a rather high level of combativity, strong enough to fulfill its function. Particularly, all these forces have been rationally deployed on all battlefields and can now bring into full play their strategic role and effect.

That is why, in the current dry season, our three kinds of forces have closely coordinated with one another on every battlefield and in each major drive of action, as well as in each battle, creating a position of continual attack on the enemy. At any time these three forces can replace one another in holding fast to the enemy and attacking him.
Thus, by closely coordinating our three kinds of forces, rationally deployed, closely coordinating the armed struggle with the political struggle, and turning to full account the advantageous position offered them by the people's war, and particularly by developing the high efficiency of their combat methods, the South Vietnam armed forces and people, using an appropriate number of troops with a high quality, are fully in a position to defeat enemy forces far superior in number.

These are some reflections on the five lessons on the success of our strategic military leadership. This success is the result of the creative actions of the 14 million South Vietnam people and liberation armed forces over the past dozen years, actions reviewed on many occasions by the Central Committee of the NLPNV.

Meanwhile, the enemy troops were dog-tired after being sent from one place to another to cope with our forces in many strategic directions. According to the U.S. commanders, U.S. mobile units operating in the eastern part of Nam Bo, such as the 1st Infantry Division, the 25th Division, the 172d and 196th Brigades . . . were given no respite by the liberation forces.

In the people's war in South Vietnam, the strategic role of our three kinds of forces has been brought into full play and made itself felt clearly on the battlefield through the quiet even and harmonious development of both guerrilla warfare and fighting with rather big units. Reality has shown that without guerrilla war there can be no concentrated fighting. Guerrilla war is the number one magic wand of any liberation war.

In South Vietnam, in the fight against the U.S. neocolonialist war, guerrilla war plays a yet more important and fundamental strategic role. At the same time, when conditions are ripe and objective demands of the revolution are raised, this also bears the character of a law—we must resolutely and creatively develop battles with rather big units, otherwise the revolution and people's war would stagnate, could not expand, and even would cause the guerrilla war to dwindle. In such conditions, of course there can be no hope of victory. That is why in our own way of fighting against the U.S. puppets to win victory, fighting with rather big units also plays a very important and urgent strategic role. Guerrilla war must be combined with concentrated fighting and vice versa, both having a decisive effect on the success of the armed struggle of our people's war at the present time.

2--In the course of building up our forces we have correctly handled the relationship between number and quality. In preparing ourselves to defeat 1 million enemy troops, and basing ourselves on our strategic tasks and lines, we have undertaken the building of a revolutionary armed force with a broad and powerful guerrilla movement and a well-trained regional and regular army with appropriate numbers. This pattern of organization enables us to make full use of the strength of our armed forces and people to win big victories. It suits the fighting methods of our people's war, our economic, demographic, and geographical conditions and insures protracted fighting, development of production and fostering of the people's strength, thus helping us to grow stronger as we fight on and guaranteeing our victory over an enemy superior in number.
One of the key problems to turn to full account the strength of these comprehensive organizations is to improve their quality. An army with high quality must fulfill the following conditions: It must have a high fighting morale, firm determination to attack the enemy. It must be organized into small but strong units with good equipment, have a high technical and tactical standard. Its command staff and officers must have a high organizational capacity. It must have a high sense of discipline, creative methods of fighting, and have good and appropriate material and technical conditions... 

That in essence is the problem of heightening further the fighting capacity, not only of each big unit but also each company, platoon, squad, three-man team, and each officer and fighter of the regular army, regional forces as well as militia and guerrillas.

On this basis, we have always heightened our combat efficiency and the results of our military campaigns with a view to achieving the strategic tasks of the armed forces in the war. The armed forces and people of South Vietnam also hold that an army with a high quality must not only fight and work but also take part in production, according to the practical conditions and circumstances. Not only the guerrillas and home guard units but the regular army must also take an active part in production as it can in order to help improve its own material life and reduce the contributions of the people.

The great victories of our armed forces and people have shed more light on the guiding principles in the building of the forces of revolutionary war, in fighting the enemy, and at the same time building our forces, closely combining these two tasks to fight victoriously and inversely fighting victoriously in order to build and develop our forces under the motto: The more we fight, the greater our victories and the stronger we become.

The heroic armed forces and people in South Vietnam have been winning very glorious victories over 1 million U.S. and puppet troops.

The heroic armed forces and people in North Vietnam have been winning very glorious victories over the U.S. War of destruction.

The U.S. aggressors have suffered heavy defeats. Their forces have been seriously decimated. They are running short of arguments and are finding themselves in tight straits. But they have some strength left, remain stubborn and cruel. We have won yet another round and now have more favorable conditions than ever in our fight against U.S. aggression and for national salvation. However, to win new and greater victories, we must overcome many difficulties and hardships, including difficulties we have never met before.

But pure gold can be tested in all fires. We have fought 1 million troops of the United States and the Saigon puppet administration. We are determined to fight even if it lasts 5, 10, 20, years or longer.

Our people have undergone so much bitterness in slavery. They have also enjoyed the invaluable happiness of independence and freedom. Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. For the independence and freedom of the fatherland, let us march forward to fight resolutely against the U.S. aggressors! We shall surely be victorious!
U.S. FORCES VIOLATE BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY TRUCE

Liberation Radio (Clandestine) in Vietnamese to South Vietnam 2330 GMT 26 May 1967

(Text) On 22 and 23 May, the Americans, Thieu, and Ky brazenly violated the NFLSV cease-fire order by repeatedly bombing and shelling various hamlets and villages where Buddhist believers were celebrating Buddha's birthday. According to initial reports, enemy bombs and bullets not only destroyed this year's Buddha's birthday ceremony, but also caused losses to the Buddhist compatriots.

In Ben Tre, on 22 May the U.S. aggressors bombed, strafed, and razed the An Hoi hamlet, Binh Khanh village, No Ray district, while the Buddhist compatriots were celebrating Buddha's birthday. On the night of 22 May, U.S. helicopters (words indistinct) violently strafed the pagoda area in Giong Trom district.

At 0715 23 May the U.S. aggressors shelled various areas along the Co Chien River, in Thanh Thoi village, in an attempt to destroy Buddha's birthday ceremonies. At midnight on 23 May, U.S. aircraft twice bombed the areas where Buddhist believers were celebrating Buddha's birthday ceremonies in Binh Khanh village, Mo Cay district. On 22 and 23 May the U.S. aggressors stationed at the Binh Duc base continuously fired artillery rounds on various liberated villages in Chau Thanh district and sent aircraft to prevent Buddhist believers from celebrating Buddha's birthday ceremonies.

In Camau, at 0900 on 22 May, (word indistinct) U.S. jet aircraft dropped 11 large bombs and 6 napalm bombs and violently strafed the (words indistinct) hamlet, in Dam Doi district. U.S. bombs completely burned three houses of our compatriots, seriously damaged four other houses, and caused 200,000 piasters worth of damage. Almost all altars set up to celebrate Buddha's birthday ceremonies were completely burned or destroyed.

NFLSV BUDDHIST URGES USE OF 'THREE VIRTUES'

Liberation Radio (Clandestine) in Vietnamese to South Vietnam 1100 GMT 23 May 1967

(Speech by the Venerable Thich Thien Hao, chairman of the South Vietnam Luc Hoa Buddhist Association and member of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front Central Committee Presidium, delivered at a meeting held on Buddha's birthday, 23 May)

(Text) Hail Shakyamuni Buddha.

Venerables, bonzes, monks, nuns, Buddhist faithful, and gentlemen: Today, Buddhist faithful celebrate the 2,511th birthday of Buddha in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and confidence in the very important achievements of our people and the very encouraging progress of the great patriotic anti-U.S.-Thieu-Ky movement of the South Vietnamese Buddhist believers.

We express our boundless gratitude to the compatriots and Liberation Armed Forces for doing their best to help us commemorate Buddha's birthday in maximum safety and protect it from sabotage by the U.S.-Thieu-Ky clique. We heartily applaud the NFLSV Central Committee's 28 April 1967 statement and consider it as marking the fine tradition of solidarity and patriotism of the majority of bonzes, monks,
nuns, and Buddhist faithful in the struggle to protect the fatherland from foreign aggression and confirming the front's unalterable policy of truly respecting the freedom of faith and achieving religious solidarity. We heartily applaud the front's humane order on suspension of military attacks, and we are determined to struggle to force the U.S.-Thieu-Ky clique to comply with that order, because it is consistent with Buddha's desire and people's aspirations.

Gentlemen, in the past 12 years, in implementing their policy of aggression in our country, the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys have played an extremely wicked and cunning trick against the Buddhist believers: stamping out the national spirit and extinguishing the patriotism of Buddhist faithful in the hope of transforming them into slaves that know nothing but docilely gathering into fake Buddhist organizations to serve as an instrument for the enemy to betray the fatherland and the people.

To attain that goal, the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys have resorted to their usual trick of terrorizing, oppressing, and controlling the people and Buddhist faithful in an extremely ruthless manner. At the same time, they have not spared any other perfidious schemes such as deception, seduction, and bribery. They have always tried to sow dissension among the Buddhists, between Buddhism and other religions, and between Buddhism and the great national unity bloc. They have trained secret agents and spies, such as Thich Tam Chau, to coerce believers to follow false doctrines that are harmful to Buddhism and the people's life and run counter to the sacred anti-U.S. national salvation struggle of the people.

Therefore, in the past 12 years hardly a day has gone by without pagodas being damaged or destroyed, and hardly a day has gone by without Buddhist followers being arrested or killed by the criminal hands of the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys. In particular, on Buddha's birthdays from 1963 to 1966, the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys used armed forces and police to attack pagodas in the hearts of cities where Buddhist flags were trampled underfoot, Buddhist statues destroyed, and monks and nuns killed indiscriminately.

The U.S. aggressors and their lackeys are plotting to burn our Buddhist believers in a furnace of tyranny and bury them in a pit of disasters. Stimulated by the move among co-religionists and compatriots, and burning with a hatred for and feeling strong indignation against the enemy, our Buddhist faithful, comprising about 4 million South Vietnamese people, have united and displayed their heroism in a resolute struggle against the ruthless and tyrannical U.S.-rebel clique to avenge the country and protect the people and Buddhism. Thus, it is obvious that the U.S. aggressors and Thieu-Ky clique, which is like the former Diem-Nhu clique, are the deadly enemy of the people and the Buddhists.

Our Buddhist faithful were born and have grown up with a love of the people. They have been trained in the spirit of heroism and bravery of the people. Their correct conduct toward the people is humane. In a small but self-reliant country, which has been famous for its struggle against foreign aggression, that humanity of our Buddhists primarily consists of loving the people and the country and fighting foreign aggressors.

Buddha has taught us three great virtues: mercy, wisdom, and bravery. The mercy, wisdom, and bravery of our Vietnamese Buddhists in the present situation in which the country is subject to aggression, and Buddhism is suppressed, must also primarily consist of loving the people and the country and fighting foreign aggressors. For the sake of the people, the country, and our eternal Buddhism, our Buddhist faithful must join the people in moving forward to annihiliate the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys.
By not entertaining any illusions about the Americans or any of their devoted lackeys, our Buddhist faithful will display these three virtues, which are also the reflection of the humanity of our people.

Only after annihilating completely the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys will South Vietnam enjoy independence and freedom and will our Buddhism develop. In the glorious history of our people, many a bonze, nun, and Buddhist devotee has sacrificed his life for the country, the people, and Buddhism. Among the fallen venerables were bonzes Van Han and Khu Viet, and recently the late Venerable Thich Quang Duc handed his name down to posterity.

We must foster these three virtues in our struggle against the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys. It is insufficient to have only mercy and bravery, but there must also be wisdom. Our enemy is not only ruthless, but also very highhanded. While killing our people, they have not stopped clamoring for a deceitful peace. Wisdom will help us expose the enemy's peace farce.

Our people love peace very much, but the peace our people are fighting for must be closely related to independence and freedom. We cannot have genuine peace when our country is not yet independent and our people are not yet free. In other words, if we have peace when we are not independent, that peace will be an enslaved peace, and there will be no peace at all when we are slaves. Our people consists of bringing security and happiness to the people [as received]. To achieve this, we must resolutely struggle to annihilate the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys.

We must also extol wisdom, which is our great virtue. We should consider wisdom equal to mercy and bravery in order not to be deceived by the U.S. Thieu-Ky clique and not to let ourselves be fooled by their henchmen who wear Buddhist priest clothing to play tricks on our countrymen. We should not have peace illusions. Now, the American enemy is being defeated shamefully and is in a deadlocked situation. But because of their inhuman nature, they are stubborn and do not give up their attempts to enslave our country. They are frantically enlarging their aggressive war to slaughter our people from the south to the north. But our compatriots are not afraid, because the historic experience of our national salvation resistance has shown that (the reason for) our successful resistance from one generation to another has been the people's spirit, the national solidarity for the long resistance to gain independence and freedom for the fatherland. For the independence and freedom and real peace of our country and for our traditional Buddhist law, we pledge to follow our previous heroes' good examples, continue to raise high the banner of our great national cause, unceasingly improve the three basic virtues of the Buddhists, and side by side with our entire people and our friendly religious churches patiently fight and defeat the U.S. aggressors.

We may have different ideas, but all of us are our country's children, Vietnamese Buddhists understanding the three sublime virtues of Buddha. So, we always have patriotism in our heart. We pledge to try our best to fight by all possible means and to endure lasting difficulties. For our personal as well as national interests, we must not let ourselves be fooled by the religious traitor and life-harming Thich Tam Chau. We must use Buddha's three bright virtues to defeat all evil minds and false doctrines in order to brighten our country's honor and Buddhist law. At present, for one reason or another, a number of Buddhists are still in the puppet troop ranks and in the Saigon government. You know that our liberation front has suspended military attacks many times to satisfy your aspirations.
We order this truce because we respect our Buddhist compatriots' religious freedom. Living near the enemy, certainly our compatriots should distinguish more clearly than the others between who is wrong and who is right, who is inhuman and who has the great cause. Without hesitating, you should take turns lighting our colored lanterns and use our three basic Buddhist virtues to overcome all obstacles. Together with our compatriots and your coreligionists, you should contribute real patriotic acts to our people's anti-U.S. national salvation resistance.

On the occasion of Buddha's birthday, representing our southern Buddhists, I sincerely thank the Buddhists of all the countries in the world, the socialist countries, the Asian countries, and especially the Buddhists of the two fraternal countries—Cambodia and Laos—for often showing their sympathy towards our people's anti-U.S. national salvation struggle. I severely condemn the crimes committed by the U.S.-Thieu-Ky (clique) against our southern Buddhists. We also thank sincerely the priests and organizations of various religions in the world and in the United States for exposing unceasingly the American imperialists' aggressive crimes in our country and for opposing the aggressive war.

Gentlemen, on the occasion of the great Buddhist ceremony this year, all the southern Buddhists sincerely wish all the people of both southern and northern regions—from the countryside to the cities, all the cadres and fighters of our Liberation Armed Forces and our front committees at all echelons—good health and every success. Let all the southern Buddhists advance for the national cause and the Buddhist future. Let us, along with all the people, firmly defeat the U.S. aggressive enemy, liberate the south, defend the north, and advance toward the reunification of our fatherland.

MOTHERS ASKED TO OPPOSE U.S. AGGRESSION

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 1500 GMT 29 May 1967--B

(Text) Hanoi, 29 May--On the occasion of international children's day, the South Vietnam Association for the Protection of Mothers and Children (affiliated with the South Vietnam National Liberation Front sent a letter to mothers all over the world calling on them to oppose ever more resolutely the U.S. aggressive war in Vietnam.

The letter, released by the L IBER AT ION PRESS AGENCY, said: Everywhere the U.S. aggressor troops go, they sow death and mourning. Besides massacres with napalm, steel pellet, phosphorus and heavy explosive bombs, the U.S. aggressors have committed many other barbarous crimes such as raping pregnant or newly confined women, old women or little girls.... Tens of thousands of young girls in South Vietnam have been driven into a depraved life and gravely affected by venereal disease....

The message voiced the South Vietnam women's pledge to fight unremittingly under the banner of the NPLSV. After thanking all members of the Bertrand Russell international tribunal for condemning the U.S. aggressive war in Vietnam and the American mothers and children for having voiced their support for the Vietnamese children, the letter earnestly called on mothers and children in all countries, especially American mothers, for the sake of peace and justice and for our children's freedom and happiness, to oppose resolutely the U.S. imperialists with practical deeds to compel them to end their dirty criminal war of aggression in South Vietnam.
SOUTH VIETNAM

SOUTH VIETNAMESE UNITS REFUSE U.S. RAID ORDERS

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 0552 GMT 29 May 1967--B

(Text) Hanoi, 29 May--Four companies of puppet commandos stationed at the Khe Sanh position, Duc Hoa district, Cholon Province, next door to Saigon, on 11 May resolutely refused to take part in a raid, thus thwarting the U.S. aggressors' scheme to persecute the population and plunder their property, according to LIBERATION PRESS AGENCY.

The report said many men who were against the raid had declared they preferred to go in jail rather than be killed in a raid. Other acts of opposition to war took place previously in several parts of Tan An and Cholon Provinces.

On 9 April, puppet troops at the Binh Thanh post, Thu Thua district, refused to go and pick up the wreckage of a U.S. aircraft shot down by guerrilla fire. On 2 May, a platoon of puppet civil guards stationed at the Thanh Phu Long crossroad left their post to avoid being taken as cannon fodder for the G.I.'s at a nearby position.

In addition, in March this year nearly 1,300 puppet troops in Ben Tre Province, 86 kilometers south of Saigon, refused to participate in raids against the population or in rescue missions. In the first days of May alone, 107 puppet armymen in this province returned home or crossed over to the people's side.

LAP UNITS DECORATED FOR ATTACKS AT BRIEN HOA

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 0211 GMT May 1967--B

(Text) Hanoi, 30 May--The command of the Liberation Armed Forces has decided to award a "Liberation Military Order," second class, to the units which won a brilliant feat of arms 12 May in simultaneously attacking the U.S. strategic airbase at Bien Hoa, the U.S. 173d Airborne Brigade headquarters in the same area, and the two nearby positions, according to LIBERATION PRESS AGENCY.

In these attacks the decorated units killed or wounded nearly 700 enemy troops, among them 500 G.I.'s, destroyed 95 aircraft, blew up an aircraft repair shop, an arms depot containing more than 1,000 guns of various types, and a lot of other war materials.

UNION FEDERATION SUPPORTS HONG KONG WORKERS

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 0132 GMT 27 May 1967--B

(Text) Hanoi, 27 May--The South Vietnam Liberation Federation of Trade Unions has sent a message to the All-China Federation of Trade Unions voicing complete solidarity with the Chinese workers and people in Hong Kong in their struggle against the British authorities' barbarous acts of repression, according to LIBERATION PRESS AGENCY.

The message, dated 25 May and signed by Phan Xuan Thai, president of the federation, said: The actions of the British authorities not only brazenly trampled upon the rights and interests of the Chinese workers and people in Hong Kong and challenged all Chinese people; they were also designed to weaken the spirit of struggle of the Chinese workers and people there against the British authorities' policy of tailing after the United States in its aggressive war in Vietnam.

After voicing full support for the just struggle of the workers and people in Hong Kong for welfare and democratic freedoms, the message demanded that the British