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TRUONG SON ON LESSONS OF NLF SV VICTORIES

Hanoi in Vietnamese to South Vietnam 1200 GMT 2 June 1967--S

(Text) In an article sent from South Vietnam and published in QUAN DOI NHAN DAN magazine, Comrade Truong Son (previously identified by VNA as a "well-known military commentator of the South Vietnam Liberation Forces" --ed.) clearly revealed the feats of arms of the 1966-1967 period and five successful lessons concerning strategic military leadership.

Dealt a stunning blow in the 1965-1966 dry season and the bitter failures in both zones of our country in the rainy season, the Johnson-McNamara clique, although still reluctant to open their eyes to reality, cannot help feeling that the U.S. strategy of local war of aggression, with the U.S. expeditionary armed forces as a trump card, has gone through a stormy period full of difficulties and that the concept of a quick fight and early victory no longer holds water.

The short-lived optimism brought about by the dispatch of U.S. troops to save the puppet troops in 1965 gradually vanished and gave way to a new nightmare, causing a headache to the U.S. imperialists and forcing them to answer various difficult questions concerning war leadership, such as what is the prospect for the war of aggression in the south, how to get out of the war with a military victory, how to solve the political problem in the south, what to do in the immediate future, and so forth.

Faced with this situation, although they have become discouraged, the Americans continued to remain stubborn and to place their hopes on a military solution on the battlefield. Therefore, in entering the 1966-1967 dry season, the Americans made a big decision: to launch one more strategic counteroffensive, with the strength of their armed forces 1.5 times greater than in the past dry season, and with their firepower, war means, and resources two to three times greater than in the past dry season.

This time, their strategic objectives remained basically the same as those set forth in Westmoreland's five-point strategy. The only differences lay in a number of formulas, operating methods, and the scale of using forces. What was noteworthy in the strategic decision this time was that the U.S. ambition was to strive to achieve important successes in search-and-destroy and pacification operations in order to create a turning point, in the hope of advancing toward achieving a decisive victory in a short period of time.

The U.S. plot was shrewd; the U.S. armed forces were very numerous; U.S. efforts were very great; and U.S. ambitions were very high. However, diamond cuts diamond. If there was a thieving and bloodthirsty vulture, there was also a heroic combatant named Thach Sanh (passage refers to a Vietnamese fairy tale in which Thach Sanh kills a vulture--ed.).
On their part, at the beginning of the dry season, under the leadership of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front Central Committee, our South Vietnamese armed forces and people took their own strategic decision with these basic objectives: resolutely defeat one million U.S. puppet troops, defeat the so-called large two-prong strategy, resolutely smash the enemy's second strategic counteroffensive, drive the U.S. and puppet troops further into their already passive and deadlocked position to a failure 10 times greater, and create for us a new strategic situation as a premise to surge forward to win greater victories.

With the greatly victorious momentum in the past dry and rainy seasons, firmly holding to their leading role, with their great subjective efforts, and enjoying the harmonious coordination and the wholehearted aid of the North Vietnamese armed forces and people, the 14 million South Vietnamese compatriots entered this winter-spring period with an intensive vigor and vowed to overcome all difficulties and ordeals, to execute their strategic decision at all costs, and to achieve great successes in the life-or-death fight against one million enemy troops.

Now, yet another dry season has passed; the enemy has sustained another big defeat and we have won another major victory, which has strengthened our determination, strength, and position. The contrary is true with the enemy. Fighting in a not very large area and with a not very big population, we have defeated one million U.S., puppet, and satellite troops, tipping the balance of force more and more in our favor. How great this victory is, and how important its significance.

If one proceeds from the bourgeois military point of view, the old outlook, and formal logic to analyze the balance of forces, it is difficult to understand why we are winning and why the United States, with one million troops and enormous firepower, modern weapons and techniques, and a colossal array of modern means of transport and communications, 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. Immediately after they started their local war of aggression in both parts of our country, the U.S. aggressors gleefully contended that it was a good step. Yet their words now sound so bitter.

The statistics published by the U.S. Defense Department itself and Western reports, although far below reality, can give enough grounds to demonstrate the U.S. failure. The more U.S. troops 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 seven percent in 1965 to 11 percent in 1966, and to 14 percent in 1967. Not counting those 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 every week. According to
statistics covering the first quarter of 1967, the U.S. troops suffered 6,000 to 8,000 casualties per month, which makes a total of from 70,000 to 100,000 a year.

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

The more the United States sends in troops, 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 180,000.

At the recent Guam conference, Westmoreland himself conceded that out of the 150 battalions of puppet troops, only seven retain their combat ability. 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 Liberation Front -- still controls 80 percent of South Vietnam's territory. Nguyen Van Thieu recently 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 the situation, the worse it 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 become even more dislocated. According to U.S. sources, inflation is aggravating in South Vietnam. In 1967, it is estimated, Saigon must import one million tons of rice, the cost of living continues to rise, industry is at a standstill, and cultural and social life is depraved. This is eloquent proof that after two years of U.S. local war, the economy of Saigon has gravely deteriorated. This 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 Vietnam -- that is, our main forces -- has not only been preserved but also has 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 hundreds of thousands. That is a great menace to the United States.

According to comments by 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 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 hatching many wicked schemes. 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.

In this winter-spring period, the heavier the enemy's failure, the greater our successes and the more important their significance. According to incomplete figures, between October 1966 and the end of April 1967, we annihilated 175,000 enemy troops, including 70,000 Americans, 15,000 satellites, and 90,000 puppets. Some 49 infantry and artillery battalions and armored companies, and 230 companies and 352 Platoons of the Americans, puppets, and satellites were annihilated. A total of 1,800 planes, 3,985 military vehicles, including 1,785 tanks and armored vehicles, 340 artillery pieces, 100 ships and vessels, 2 train convoys, 31 locomotives and 60 cars, and nearly 270 bridges and 200 posts were destroyed.

The number of enemy troops annihilated was 1.5 times greater than in last year's dry season, and the number of enemy weapons and war means.
destroyed also increased considerably. The liberated areas continued to comprise four-fifths of the territory and three-fourths of the population of all of the south.

The achievements of the 1966-1967 winter-spring period were unprecedentedly great achievements and were of very important, deep significance in the political and military fields. These achievements have made the enemy come to the realization that his limited war of aggression, which has lasted for more than two years now, not only failed to achieve any strategic success but has been gradually plunging deeper and deeper into a tunnel without end. These achievements have made the enemy come to the realization that with one million U.S. and puppet troops available, not only has he failed to regain his strategic leading role, but he has become more passive, his fighting efficiency as well as the effect of his campaigns has been reduced, and his armed forces cannot act freely to create the necessary strategic effect in accordance with his hopes.

These achievements have made the enemy come to the realization that with the scale of the limited war greater than forecast in Taylor's flexible reaction strategy, he cannot turn the tide and has even been driven into a political and complicated strategic situation, worse than in any previous period in South Vietnam, on the international plane as well as in the United States.

These achievements have made us come to the realization that the absolute political preponderance of the South Vietnamese revolution has been firmly maintained and developed in a very vigorous manner, and that the absolute moral preponderance of our people and Liberation Armed Forces, through our fight against one million U.S. and puppet troops, has become steadier than ever and has constantly been in the position of overpowering the enemy.

These achievements have made us come to the realization that, confronted with one million enemy troops and a huge heap of iron and steel, we have constantly attacked the enemy in a very effective manner. We have constantly and firmly maintained our leading role in the strategic field and on the battlefields. We have constantly maintained our leading role in conducting campaigns, fought in a creative manner, and the more we fight, the stronger we become.

It is obvious that these achievements have led us to a steady political and strategic situation which is better than in any previous period and which contains new elements, new capabilities, and new premises for us to fight and to certainly score far greater achievements, although we still have to hardily and fiercely counter the new wicked schemes of the enemy.

We have relied on the unshakable revolutionary determination of a whole nation to fight and defeat one 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 have endured innumerable trials and sufferings and have fought with matchless heroism in this momentous confrontation. Our people have stepped at no difficulty and feared no sacrifice, because in the face of foreign aggression we, millions as 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.

From ancient times to the present, this has been the great ideology, profound sentiment, pure thought, and most intimate aspiration of our people. This is also a synthesis of all laws of development of our people, who, with their 4,000 glorious historic years and through their ups and downs, have, when faced with foreign aggression against our independence and freedom, risen up and set out to fight and have always been victorious.

This determination contains a strong and inexhaustible vitality, because today this determination is built on the basis of ardent patriotism, internally buttressed by positive and strict revolutionary thoughts coupled with genuine internationalism. This is the main motive force leading the South Vietnamese revolution forward, and in this winter-spring period, first of all, our determination has defeated the enemy's determination.

We not only have the determination to fight the U.S. aggressors, but also know how to fight and fight victoriously, using both military and political means and combining these two aspects into the invincible strength of a comprehensive strategy.

Proceeding from the study of the features and character of the U.S. neo-colonialist 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 experience 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 our combat methods, the principle of utilizing 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 between mountain and jungle areas, rural areas and urban areas, the pattern of organization and disposal of our forces on the battlefield, the way to win, and so forth.

This is made possible because, proceeding from our deep knowledge of the realities in South Vietnam, we have grasped the laws of development of South Vietnamese society, the laws of revolutionary struggle and uprising, and the laws of people's war, and 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 Vietnamese
revolution can advance with steady and vigorous steps and even by leaps and bounds. At the same time, we have grasped and correctly assessed the capabilities of the U.S. troops. Thus, our victory in the 1966-1967 winter-spring is the result of correct strategy and skillful use of strategy.

As a result the U.S. imperialists, although they have one million troops at their disposal, have been unable to act at will, to hold or regain the initiative, or to control the battlefield; furthermore, they have no hope of controlling the battlefield. 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, to 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 have inflicted on him evermore bitter defeats.

With regard to our forces, entering this winter-spring season in a steady strategic position, we have been able to hold the initiative on the battlefield. As a result, we have secured the objective bases with which to act freely as we choose, to fight according to our own style and compel the enemy to fight according to our wishes, and to achieve an ever greater fighting efficiency, ever bigger results in each phase 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 the political aspects.

Victory belongs to the one who holds the initiative. 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 once again 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 frontline very closely coordinated in all fields. Our successes are also closely associated with the wholehearted support and assistance of the socialist countries and of our friends all over the world. These very great successes have made us more experienced and much more mature, and, at the same time, have brought about valuable lessons of experience which we must summarize.
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 enemy action can we rightly build our own strategic determination and our fighting pattern.

To know the enemy and know oneself is a principle of 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 and to firmly grasp the laws and capabilities of enemy action. Only by so doing can we correctly determine our strategic determination. In any battle, campaign, or phase of attacks, the primary task of the leading echelons is to firmly grasp the enemy's situation and to base oneself upon the experiences acquired and upon the data collected, so as to anticipate the enemy's schemes and laws and capabilities of action.

In the summer of 1966, the South Vietnam National Liberation Front Central Committee and various other echelons concentrated efforts on studying matters concerning the enemy's front, such as: In the dry season, what is the enemy's strategic intention? How many troops will he have? What are the capabilities of these troops, and where are they going to be used? What are their laws of action? And so forth. Of course, at that time, we could put forth only a preliminary evaluation. However, this evaluation had to be basically accurate, or else our actions would not (words indistinct) and would easily lead to strategic and tactical passiveness.

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.

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 following rainy season 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 one 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 proved 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 one million men, he could by no means stem the tide.

Entering the rainy season, after examining the all-round situation of the battlefield and the general situation of the south and of the world,
we came to the following conclusions, which served as a basis for assessing the enemy’s strategic determinations:

1 -- The situation in the south from the beginning of 1965 -- that is, when the Americans started their local war of aggression -- to mid-1968 developed in a direction favorable to us and unfavorable to the enemy. 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) On the battlefield, although the Americans and puppets have not yet sustained very serious defeats (chua bi du that dam), they have not been able to reach any strategic objective. The puppet army has further weakened. Although the American troops still have strong points and reinforcements, they have been driven into a political, strategic, and tactical crisis. Particularly, the strategic concept of quick fighting and quick victory can no longer hold water. This situation has caused the Americans to become confused in exerting leadership over the war.

c) The armed forces and people of South Vietnam defeated the U.S. and puppet troops right at the outset, and the more they fight, the stronger they become. We have firmly held and still hold the initiative on the battlefield, and we continue to be the masters on the battlefield. We have not returned to guerrilla activities, as the enemy wanted. On the contrary, all three categories of our troops have developed strength and have acquired conditions for fighting small-scale, medium-scale, and large-scale battles.

2 -- In North Vietnam, the basic scheme of the U.S. war of destruction has also failed. The enemy has not been able to meet his requirements, whereas we have satisfactorily met ours. North Vietnam’s defense and economic forces have increased considerably.

3 -- In the world and in the United States, the Americans’ launching of the local war of aggression, their escalation of the war against the north, and their serious defeats in both parts of our country have generated an increasingly serious chain reaction. These facts have made the Americans more isolated and more strongly opposed than ever, made them lose face because they have continued to sustain defeats, despite their dispatch of hundreds of thousands of expeditionary troops to South Vietnam, and made them impatient and bewildered because they have failed to find ways to achieve rapid success and uneventfully settle the Vietnam question in a short period of time.

4 -- Though somewhat discouraged by their repeated defeats, the U.S. aggressors, out of stubbornness and because they have large forces, still hope to secure a military solution and decisive victories on the battlefield, and so forth.
On the basis of these conclusions, we foresaw that the enemy would make great efforts, muster large forces, and 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' ambition is to turn the tide and even secure a decisive victory within a short time to settle the Vietnam problem. Otherwise, their future in Vietnam and in the world, and even that of the U.S. Democratic Party and Johnson's race for the presidency, will be seriously threatened.

As a result, in pursuing these same basic concrete objectives, the U.S. aggressors have complex motives. Their political intentions and the coordination of the military, political, and diplomatic struggle are also complex. Therefore, 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, they are fraught with many weak points, great confusion, and serious loss of initiative. In other words, the forces and measures taken to materialize their 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 strongpoints which must be taken into account. We must make energetic preparations to 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. This victory will be of tremendous significance; it will create for us new bases for winning yet greater victories.

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

Efforts to understand the enemy must not be made in an unorganized manner. The important problem is to try to understand the enemy. This is a labor-consuming task, because it requires data, the ability to recapitulate, and judgment. One of our successes during the past two years was that at first we did not know the U.S. aggressors, but gradually we have found out the laws of their activities. This constitutes a basis for us to assert our own way to fight the U.S. aggressors.

The fight on the battlefield between us and the enemy is a fight between two forces affected by opposing laws of war. In the south, although our enemy has many weak points, he has paid considerable attention to studying both his and our techniques, tactics, and strategy. In trying to understand the laws of the enemy's military activities, we must base ourselves primarily on his strategic intentions and objectives -- military, political, and diplomatic -- his armed forces and their capabilities, the general situation on the battlefield, our own strongpoints...
and weaknesses which the enemy knows, and so forth. Following are some of the enemy's actions which we have foreseen:

A -- Coordinating the two prongs -- search-and-destroy, and pacify. In the south, the enemy's so-called search-and-destroy and pacification operations consist mainly of using both the U.S. and the puppet armed forces for military actions. In the dry season of 1965-1966, the enemy set these two tasks as their strategic objectives and conducted them simultaneously. At that time, the enemy concentrated on search-and-destroy by striking hard at our main forces in an attempt to break their backbone.

In the current dry season, besides sticking fast to his search-and-destroy objective, he pays great attention to pacification and tries to combine these two aspects as best he can. This is a very important law of the enemy's action.

The manner in which the enemy posed the problem seemed correct. It sounded good. Yet, despite the fact that the old Staley-Taylor plan was much better, it too failed. To utter good words is one thing, but translating words into deeds is another. Even the correctness of the manner in which the U.S. aggressors posed the problem has given them no enthusiasm, because: first, they have had to deploy their forces in even more scattered positions; second, their strategic objectives have been equated with one another, with no key points to be emphasized; third, they have been embarrassed in the use of U.S. and puppet mobile forces and occupation troops; and fourth, the political situation has worsened.

The result is that everything has been done, but the prospects of winning a decisive military victory have become even dimmer, and it is not yet known how much longer the U.S. expeditionary troops will remain in South Vietnam.

The enemy has carried out his actions according to this law, with quite large forces which are very cruel and insidious. He will repeatedly carry out these actions and will constantly change his tricks and concrete methods, which we should not take lightly. Yet, this law was not established from a strategically strong position, but from a weakened strategic and political position and from a wary mental state arising from (seven) years of continuous defeats in pacification and search-and-destroy operations. This law has had and will have many loopholes which we can utilize to realize our own strategic objectives.

B -- Combining offense with defense. In the previous dry season the U.S. aggressors laid more emphasis on offense. In the current dry season, however, they pay attention to both offense and defense, with a view to insuring firm defenses and protecting their forces, defensive zones, and bases. They make sallies outside their perimeters in an attempt to foil our preparations for attack, disengage the areas under pressure from the liberation forces, and widen the safety corridors around their bases.
At the same time, they have launched attacks in an attempt to prevent and blunt our major offensives.

The basic U.S. concept of defense is mobile defense, unlike the French colonialists. Yet after two years, the U.S. aggressors' rear bases remain insecure, and they have been compelled to engage in a more protracted war. As a result, to adapt themselves to the situation they have resorted to a number of new tricks, such as making sallies outside their perimeters, widening the areas under their occupation, increasing the number of (prefabricated) structures, establishing white corridors around their bases, and so forth.

The U.S. offensive concept remains unchanged. Yet to make it more appropriate, they have paid attention to conducting both large-scale and medium-scale attacks, to carrying out long-term activities in many areas, and to continuously combining pacification with defense in an attempt to fight effectively and vigorously, to drain the water and then catch the fish, to catch the fish while draining the water, to attack and restrain our forces, to gnaw at and annihilate our vitality, and to encircle and wipe out our forces.

The United States is doing in South Vietnam what the French did but failed to achieve in both Indochina and Algeria. This is only a passive adaptation, and not the best policy for the aggressors, 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, as 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, and 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-negotiations 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.

These are the broad outlines of the main laws of the enemy's actions. It is because our southern armed forces and people succeeded in grasping these laws that they have had correct policies and (adequate) determination, have been prepared to defeat all of the enemy's actions from the outset, and have inflicted greater and greater defeats on him.
To assess correctly the strategic abilities of one million enemy troops in order to decide on a good method of fighting:

In preparing to fight and defeat one million U.S. and puppet troops, by following lessons of the 1965-1966 dry season and considering the balance of forces and the strategic positions of both sides from a revolutionary and scientific viewpoint, the armed forces and people of South Vietnam have come to the conclusion that, although the enemy had considerably increased his troops and war means, his combat efficiency had not increased. In their losing and passive position, the enemy's one million troops have not been able to achieve considerable results in their campaigns, nor to formulate fighting methods which have a strategic effect, as they formerly did on various battlefields in Europe and the Pacific.

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 a shortage of troops. But in the early days of the current dry season, when he already had nearly one million troops at his disposal, an ideal number for him, he began to admit 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 American 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. The following points may be raised:

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 could end the war by launching major attacks, so as to enter the period of pacification, stamp out the guerrilla war, and consolidate the rear base. The large-scale concentrated attacks by the main forces of the Liberation Army would then 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 ahead and regain the initiative. It is in this sense that the United States regarded as a most important task the concentration of big forces on repeated search-and-destroy operations against our main forces in the key operational theaters. They conducted these operations in both the previous and the current dry season.

2 -- They hoped to compel our main forces to spread on some main frontline in unfavorable conditions so that they might use their own way of fighting and their superior firepower 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 would also be a way
to change the balance of forces in favor of the United States, helping 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, and upset and narrow down our rear, thus consolidating their foothold to launch military counteroffensives. By so doing they hoped to nibble away at 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 the guerrilla movement as a whole. It is with this end in mind that during the current dry season the enemy has made great efforts at pacification and has combined his search-and-destroy operations and pacification campaign into a big pincers movement. The enemy has high hopes that the pacification plan (will enable him—ed.) to breach the favorable position of our people's war and, thereby, create a strategic position favorable to him 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 encircle and 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 in 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 would 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. This failure is evidence of the true strategic value and effect of U.S. troops on the South Vietnam battlefield. A number of Western military experts, after studying U.S. strategy in the south, remarked that the Americans' use of their troops in South Vietnam was a joke.

In World War II, 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 thrown into battle for two years now, without having achieved any strategic objective. Why?

To answer this question, many profound and complicated causes must be taken into consideration. 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 lost its strategic initiative right at the start; 3) the U.S. troops are not so strong as some people thought they might be. They have some strong points, but at the same time they 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, as are their social and political bases there, and the lackeys’ political ruling foundation, a support for the Americans, is rotten to the core; and 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.

In short, the victory or defeat of any war is always decided by two basic factors: subjective laws and objective efforts. One can therefore come to the conclusion that the strategic effect of the 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 and mediocre subjective 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 U.S. imperialists might eventually succeed in landing a man on the moon, but they decidedly cannot reverse the essential laws of social development; still less can they replace it by other laws to be bought 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 numbers and their 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 most conceited about 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 in Vietnam have met with failure after failure.
Analyzing the second successful lesson with regard to military strategic leadership, maintaining and developing the position of continual offensive, holding firm and expanding the initiative on the battlefields, and forcing the enemy to fight on our terms, Comrade Truong Son said:

At the beginning of the 1966-1967 dry season, in our victorious position and in expanding the scale of our attacks, we have vigorously developed the speed and scale of our attacks against the enemy and have held firm and expanded the initiative on the battlefields.

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 them, we organized counterattacks against the enemy's search-and-destroy operations and his large-scale and medium-scale terrorist raids, and launched attacks close to or deep into the enemy's rear bases. With their strong victorious mettle, and after careful preparations in all fields, ideological, organizational, and technical, the South Vietnam armed forces and people started their offensive early, mounted simultaneous attacks on many battlefronts, from Quang Tri and Thua Thien in central Trung Bo to the high plateaus, and further south to eastern Nam Bo and the Nam Bo delta.

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 countryside, 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 enemy'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 their pacification raids on key points, conducting repeated and protracted search-and-destroy and pacification operations in the jungle areas, the delta, and around 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
He increased considerably the number of combat operations and pacification raids compared with the previous dry season, and doubled the division-size operations compared with last year. The result, however, is that after the dry season, the South Vietnam 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 Vietnam 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:

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

The South Vietnam armed forces and people are in a victorious and offensive position. The U.S. aggressors and their lackeys are in a losing, defensive position. Both we and the enemy have deployed large forces with firm strategic intentions. We have many experiences, but the enemy, too, has endeavored to gain experiences. Both we and the enemy waged a bitter struggle; we to maintain and develop our initiative and the enemy to regain his.

The South Vietnam armed forces and people hold that in conditions in which 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 and in which we are not determined to open continuous attacks to maintain and develop our initiative on the battlefield, not only will we not be able to annihilate the enemy and win greater victories, but we will also be worn down 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.

If the already gained strategic initiative position is the objective basis of the revolutionary war, continuous attacks on the enemy on the battlefields are a subjective condition for constantly maintaining and moving forward to expand the strategic initiative position. Even if the Americans send in 400,000 to 500,000 troops or more, the strength of our continuous attacks is the combined strength of the military and political forces, all forces on the battlefields, all combat methods, and all offensive levels and aspects designed to constantly maintain the position of overpowering the enemy and developing our initiative in the revolutionary war.

The South Vietnam armed forces and people, 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, first of all, it is true that our very strong, quiet, harmonious, and continuous offensive position caused one million U.S. puppet troops to meet with a series of strategic difficulties. They fielded an army of many men, but it is thinly scattered and its mobile force is not proportionate to its total strength. It is true that the United States tends more and more toward the defensive and has been forced to send its troops everywhere to cope with the Liberation Armed Forces, from Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces to the Mekong Delta. It is true that our position of continuous offensive has insured the initiative for the South Vietnam armed forces and people in their combat plans. This represents a great success in the leadership and materialization of our strategy and tactics. This reflects the steady possession of the positive thought of maintaining initiative and of resolute offensive in the revolution and the revolutionary war. This reflects the close combination of the objective requirements of the South Vietnamese revolutionary war with our subjective conditions, which are to make strenuous efforts and to overcome all difficulties in order to constantly win greater victories and to lead the anti-U.S. national salvation revolution forward.

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 unbreachable 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 from the start found himself in an absolutely inferior position, politically and morally. He is beset with political crisis in South Vietnam, the world, and in the United States itself. The morale of the U.S., puppet, and satellite troops has been deteriorating. That is the inevitable result of the unjust nature of aggressive war. This weakening political and moral position has become particularly more and more serious due to big defeats on the battlefields — more and more bodies of U.S. troops have been sent back to the United States, the puppets have met death in greater and greater numbers and have been more seriously disintegrating — and due to deep contradictions created by the policy of U.S. war escalation. 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 Vietnamese armed forces and people, aiming at these fundamental weak points of the enemy, stepped up their all-out political and military offensive, thus deepening the contradictions of the enemy and making his political position worse. Only by...
satisfactorily fulfilling this task can we have a steady base to firmly maintain and develop our initiative on the battlefield (words indistinct).

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, despite 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 their strong 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 the combat and tactical methods of the U.S. aggressors, drive them into a great crisis in the operational and tactical fields, and reduce to a minimum the combat efficiency and the results of the 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:

(1) Upholding the determination to fight and defeat one million U.S. and puppet troops.

Entering this winter-spring period, 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. The entire south was seething with the flame of hatred for the country-invaders and country-sellers and with a vigor to annihilate the Americans and the puppets and score feats of arms. Everywhere, thousands and tens of thousands of valiant, marvelous, tenacious, and indomitable fighting examples were set among the people and the armed forces. These represent a shining manifestation of the determination to fight and defeat one million U.S. and puppet troops and are typical shining examples of revolutionary heroism with incommensurably great strength. 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 one million enemy troops in this dry season.

(2) Broadening the nationwide 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, and achieve at all costs the following three strategic goals: wipe out enemy forces, defend and enlarge the liberated zones, and firmly maintain and develop the people's authority. Through their actual experiences, the South Vietnam armed forces and people hold that only by doing this can they maintain the initiative on the battlefield and that to achieve this also means to be the masters on the battlefield.

(3) Stepping up attacks on the enemy in all three zones: jungle and mountain, 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 in 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. Only by doing this, can we maintain the initiative on the battlefield, and to achieve this also means to be the masters of the battlefield.

(4) Constantly holding the initiative on each battlefield in close coordination with all others and achieving harmonious coordination between battlefields.

Continuous and good fighting on the battlefield is a strong point but is not enough. Only if we fight well and skillfully and achieve mutual close coordination will we be able to create considerably greater strength. Although isolated attacks also have an effect — we have done this sometimes reluctantly — coordinated attacks in each phase and operation will lead to better general results and will develop to a full extent the effect of the people's war, the three kinds of troops, and the military and political struggle. Through practical experiences, the South Vietnam armed forces and people hold that only by doing this can they maintain the initiative on the battlefield and that to achieve this also means to be the masters on the battlefield.

(5) 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 more stable.
We must do many things at once: attack the enemy and consolidate the liberated zones in all fields by building fighting villages, reinforcing the militia and homeguard 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. Satisfactorily fulfilling these points means waging a fierce struggle between maintaining and disputing the initiative position during the entire war. In the military strategic field, particularly in armed struggle and combat, the initiative position must be concentratedly reflected by the fighting methods and (words indistinct). The basic spirit of these fighting methods is to positively force the enemy to fight on our terms and to keep him from developing his strong points.

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

This is also a condition for becoming master of the battlefield. Forcing the adversary to fight on our terms is a military principle for any commander and for 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 one million enemy troops in the current dry season, the following remarks may be made:

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 areas while keeping sufficient forces of our own to attack the enemy everywhere and, when necessary, to concentrate our forces in the key areas. This has been 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 has had to scatter his troops from Highway 9 to the Mekong Delta, thus finding himself stretched thin strategically, 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 forces of the two sides drawn up along a clear-cut line. Such a method requires a safe rear so as to permit completely free movement of troops and well-set combat and operational objectives so that it may make full use of its superior firepower and high mobility to wipe out its opponent both in individual battles and in entire campaigns. For our part, we choose to fight where there is no clear-cut line nor clear targets.

Our method is to concentrate and disperse our troops rapidly, making sudden appearances and vanishing instantly; fighting now small battles, now big ones, or combining the two kinds in attacking the enemy in all places and from all directions at once; fighting 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 other hand 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 our and the enemy forces are dovetailed, to create a strategic encirclement and splitting of the enemy forces.

We attack the enemy from the front, rear, inside and outside, fighting and moving quickly, not allowing the enemy to react in time, and constantly split 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 wonderfully attacking the enemy in various ways and on different scales, as in Tay Ninh, Quang Nam, Ben Tre, the high plateaus, Quang Tri - Thua Thien, and Tan An, Cholon, and so forth.

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.

F -- 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, terrain, 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, the enemy 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
The 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.

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 breached our attacks on the enemy in all three zones, combining the annihilation of enemy forces with the liberation of land and extension of the people's right to be masters, 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 on our terms, or, according to local jargon, 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 this predicament, the greater his confusion. We have constantly developed 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's 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 army times weaker in equipment, a first-rate modern million-dollar army, theoretically speaking, should have fought some battles to turn the tide, has lost its freedom of action. While the whole of that huge army has right from the start become a prisoner of its own passive strategic position, 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 winter-spring season.

Third lesson: Closer combination of armed 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 Liberation Armed Forces 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 Liberation Armed Forces. 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 Liberation Armed Forces' 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 neo-colonialist 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 Binh Dinh and An Giang Provinces.

Such large-scale search-and-destroy operations as Attleboro, 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 Liberation Armed 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 of 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 inter-related: to wipe out enemy forces, liberating and holding land, and defending and liberating the people. The South Vietnam people's war has its own characteristics, and is not completely similar to the other people's wars. Our people's war has its own methods and measures, which originate in the characteristics and laws of both the liberation war and the revolution. Our country is not big and its population 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 warfare maneuvers.

In the south, the relationship between the task of annihilating enemy forces and firmly maintaining the people's authority has always been linked to the real situation of the South Vietnam revolutionary war and has been dependent on our strategic line and direction. 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, which are always closely linked to one another.

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.

Long An, Quang Nam, and Cu Chi became the first in the movement to smash the enemy's pacification operations and have made the armed and political struggle movement develop vigorously, annihilated a considerable part of the enemy's political and military forces, and developed our own forces in an outstanding manner, because these localities have firmly grasped the woven relationship between the task of annihilating the enemy and maintaining the people's authority and have demonstrated great initiative, creativeness, and resoluteness in satisfactorily settling this relationship.

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, although 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 that if we cannot hold on to and annihilate both the military and political forces of the enemy we cannot hold the ground and defend and develop the people's authority. Moreover, annihilating enemy forces, holding land, and maintaining the people's authority are also tasks which are contained in a common strategy and which sometimes are not satisfactorily performed in certain localities. In the final analysis, these tasks constitute a general strategy which covers many aspects of our struggle.
It is because they correctly realized and posed this problem that all echelons, localities, and units, in exerting leadership and in (words indistinct), have thoroughly grasped our view on the task of annihilating enemy forces and protecting the people, the land, and our plans, constantly emphasized positiveness and initiative, and, thereby, created many highly effective forms of struggle with a view to combining the task of annihilating enemy forces with holding land and developing the people's authority. Many localities have taken full advantage of the results achieved in annihilating enemy forces to extend the people's authority and consolidate and develop the economy, and, at the same time, have based themselves upon the achievements scored in extending the people's authority to step up the task of annihilating enemy forces and thus achieved increasingly greater successes, both military and political.

B -- 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 victoriously 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 gain strength. 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 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 and so forth.

Although the political agitation task among enemy ranks was not fulfilled very satisfactorily by some localities, it has, on all battlefields, effectively contributed to the disintegration of more than 60,000 puppet troops in this winter-spring. The results of the political agitation task among enemy ranks have greatly contributed to winning
victories in combat and operations in many localities and have, at the same time, positively contributed to the success of the political struggle of the masses of our people.

Experiences in various localities pointed out: 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 the 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.

From their actual experiences, the South Vietnam armed forces and people hold that only by holding steadfast to these struggle methods can they firmly face the enemy's fierce attacks and move forward to frustrate all enemy plots. Such is our way of posing problems. Therefore, armed and political struggles must be closely combined. Both the armed and political forces have their effect and strategic roles of equal importance. The political struggle serves the armed struggle, and the armed struggle must serve the political struggle so that victories in the war can be won according to our methods and so that, in the end, the political task of the South Vietnamese revolution can be fulfilled.

Fourth lesson: Concerning military strategic leadership: 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 proved 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 the following remarks:

A -- Our forces have fought on all battlefields and all our three kinds of armed forces have also 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 operations, and antipacification actions have ended in success. Our various combat methods have been improved and fairly well perfected and were closely combined not only on the scale of a whole operation theater but also in each locality, campaign, or battle.

The guerrilla war has developed into a wide and wonderful 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 even 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, worn down, 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, and technicians. We have not only wiped out enemy troops but also their equipment, techniques, 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 reactionary puppet administration 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 to diminishing the U.S. operation and tactical mobility, thus further weakening the already weak U.S. infantry.

C -- 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 trap 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 his fortifications, at his operational bases and his rear bases, both in the daytime and at night, on various types of terrain, from mountains to plains.

Through the realities emerging on the battlefield, 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 has shown a rational division of combat tasks among various kinds of armed forces, and it has developed to a high degree the ability of the armed forces and all 14 million people of South Vietnam to annihilate the enemy and save the country. Consider the organization of production at agricultural cooperatives in North Vietnam, where high labor output has been achieved through a rational distribution of labor. Similarly, in the organization of fighting, 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 condition and capacity of each person and each unit. Hence everybody can take part in fighting the enemy with suitable means. Everyone, from gunners, scouts, infantrymen, and transport workers to guerrillas, militiamen and women, from nine-year-old children to the aged, and even women in their 10th postnatal day, can fight the enemy successfully.

In this way, 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. This is extremely dangerous to the enemy. Therein lies the high mass character of our way of fighting. Therein 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 -- a stick, a shoulderpiece, stones -- can become weapons to kill the enemy. Our way of fighting with rudimentary weapons has been adapted very skillfully, intelligently, and comprehensively. It has trapped U.S. troops everywhere, and it has inflicted heavy losses on them.

The pampered American troops fear the spike traps and other booby traps of our guerrillas and people. The American press admitted that 25 percent of the total casualties of the U.S. Marines in the First Army Corps were caused by our spike or mine traps. But the Americans are not only afraid of our rudimentary weapons. They are also frightened by the effect of our infantry weapons, artillery, and mortars. These weapons have considerably raised the casualty toll of the U.S. troops in the first six months of this year.

Thus, in our way of fighting we have fully used the power of all kinds of good weapons available, with a view to constantly raising their effectiveness in annihilating enemy forces. In our way of fighting, we have very skillfully coordinated different units and various armed services, and thereby we have achieved strategic and operational results in various battles.

The fine character of our way of fighting lies in the fact that we have attached importance to developing all kinds of rudimentary and modern weapons. We have combined very closely the effect of these two types of weapons, and thereby we have created an overall strength which has enabled us to constantly raise our combat efficiency to attain operational results and strategic effect.
3 -- We have fought and defeated the enemy by opposing either a big force with a small force, or a small force with a big force, and by combining these two ways of fighting.

Ordinarily, in a large operation as well as in a single battle, the almost classic practice has been to oppose a big force with a small force and to defeat a small force with a big force.

In practice, we have fought and won resounding victories by varied ways of fighting: We set a big force against a small enemy force; we defeated a big enemy force with a small force; we fielded a force equivalent to the enemy's to annihilate it.

These ways of fighting are applied not only to guerrilla war, but also to large-scale fighting. When need be or when conditions permit, we use a big force to defeat a small enemy force. We fight him swiftly and we annihilate him.

We have also fully applied the way of fighting in which we use a small force to defeat a big enemy force. We have highly developed our strong points. We have minimized the strong points of the enemy's firepower and mobility in operations and in battles. We use our forces' strong position and high quality to crush enemy forces which are numerically large. We have won resounding victories.

When we use a big force to fight a small enemy force, when we use a small force to fight a big enemy force, or when we fight on a par with the enemy, we must put ourselves in a stronger position than the enemy. Without this we cannot win victory.

The problem is to understand the significance and the methods of creating a strong position. We should not be blinded by the old concept of (concentrating superior forces), nor should we merely compare the number of troops and weapons. A strong position lies not only in the number of troops deployed, but also in their combat skill, high morale, and resourcefulness. It also depends on whether we can secure advantageous terrain, use surprise, choose the enemy's weak and vulnerable points at which to strike, and so forth. We have thus been able to use a big force to defeat a small enemy force and a small force to defeat a big enemy force. We have always closely coordinated these two ways of fighting to annihilate enemy forces -- not only in battles, but also in operations.

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 out enemy forces in a wide area, to pin them down, and to scatter them in order to strike at them. Fighting on different levels has also been conducted regularly, flexibly, and resolutely, to increase constantly the rate of enemy casualties.
Facts have proved that if we only attach importance to launching large-scale attacks and do not pay attention to developing small-scale attacks and closely combining large-scale attacks with small-scale and medium-scale attacks, we will be unsuccessful in mounting large-scale attacks and will be, moreover, imperilled. However, paying only attention to launching small-scale attacks is not sound either. Because if we only mount small-scale attacks and do not resolutely create conditions to develop large-scale attacks, not only will we be unable to increase our ability to annihilate the enemy and change the balance of forces to our advantage, but we will also be unable to maintain and develop the small-scale attacks themselves.

On the South Vietnamese battlefield, we have developed our way of fighting in accordance with the following laws: going from small-scale to large-scale fighting and closely combining small-scale and medium-scale fighting with large-scale fighting. As a result, we have achieved high efficiency in both guerrilla warfare and fighting with concentrated forces. In each operation, the combination of fighting levels has been carried out in a harmonious and flexible manner. Sometimes, large-scale attacks were mounted prior to launching small-scale attacks, or vice versa. We simultaneously conducted small-scale and large-scale fighting, assured continuous fighting, made one battle prepare for another and one battle create conditions for another; and the more we fight, the stronger, we become, and the greater the victories we score.

We defeat the enemy in all circumstances, inside or outside his fortifications, at the rear bases, at night or day, and to defeat the enemy in all areas from the mountain region to the delta and the cities.

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 specified area, but also in different circumstances, any time, and anywhere. Along with attacking enemy forces by ambushes, surprise attacks, artillery shellings, when they are moving, freshly landed, or bivouacked, the South Vietnam armed forces and people also attack the enemy right inside their fortifications, strongholds, or rear bases in a suitable and extremely daring manner. That way of fighting in certain cases helped our forces win big victories with a not very large force, limit the enemy firepower, and reduce their own losses.

Along with luring the enemy onto the mountain battlefield to wipe him out, the South Vietnam armed forces and people have also resolutely held fast to the enemy and fought him in the delta and the cities. By striking at the enemy nerve organs, we have not only wiped out his vital forces and promoted armed and political struggle 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 closely 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 advantage in men, weapons, and technique.

6. Our forces are able to fight either independently or in close coordination with each other in each operation. The characteristics of our way of fighting lies in the fact that each individual, each unit can by himself or itself find the enemy and wipe him out independently or in close coordination with one another, according to coordinated plans. Thus, on any battlefield, in any locality, at any moment, and in any direction, there can be gunfire to wipe out the enemy. Where the enemy is, there are forces to attack him.

We have successfully mounted not only separate battles but also small- and large-scale operations with combined and many-day actions. Our armed forces and people have not only vigorously developed the character of attacking the enemy by each individual, cell, unit, or force in each region but have also known how to achieve unified leadership with sound plans and coordinated action on battlefields and how to conduct each operation — large, medium, or small.

It is correct to do this, and we must continue to move forward. We must not only organize good separate battles but we must also organize good operations and actions, from attacks and counterattacks to countermop-up operations and attacks on enemy communication lines and rear bases. This is an important condition for us to constantly increase our fighting efficiency and the ever greater effect of our way of fighting, to develop a continuous offensive, and to 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 the 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. and puppet commanders and the puppet administration.

The repeated attacks on the enemy communication lines, cutting off his 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 short, the way of fighting of the South Vietnamese people's war has reached a high level and has a tremendous force. This force stems not only from a spirit of resolute offensive based on a marvelously valiant spirit and from 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 good 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 Vietnam armed forces and people have become stronger and more victorious 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 tactics which the United States has taken great pains to work out and experiment with in this dry season.

The South Vietnam armed forces and people have practical bases to be proud of and to assert their absolute superiority and the strength of their unique way of fighting. This way of fighting reflects the most rational combat assignment aimed at developing the strength of the 14 million compatriots and the three kinds of armed forces which have a very high revolutionary enlightenment level and which have been forged in fighting. It is an assignment aimed at vigorously developing the masses' creative, independent character, and, at the same time, at heightening the level of organizing ever sounder plans of people's war.

It can be said that the highly successful lesson of the South Vietnam armed forces and people in leadership and strategy lies in the fact that they have creatively developed and perfected this way of fighting step by step, thus incessantly raising combat efficiency, operational results, and strategic impact on the battlefields to oppose the Americans and annihilate the puppets.

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

The victory of our army and people in defeating one million U.S., puppet, and satellite troops has by itself eloquently demonstrated our great success in building and expanding our forces. With outstanding efforts, we have 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:

1. We have powerfully and proportionately developed both our political and armed forces. In the face of the Americans' very serious new war intensification steps, in the building and development of our forces, we have not wavered in firmly grasping the strategic direction and the "military actions combined with political actions" guideline of struggle; we have always been able to determine the strategic position of the armed and political forces in the South Vietnam revolution.

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, nationality, and political affiliation into a common fight against the U.S. imperialist aggressors and their henchmen, the clique of traitors, to win national independence, democracy, neutrality, and advance toward reunifying 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 and 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 of each kind of armed forces. 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 14 million South Vietnamese people, who have been organized, equipped, provided with military training, and educated about the situation and their tasks, have enthusiastically entered the dry season with a determination to defeat one million enemy troops. Through trials, we have succeeded in building many guerrilla and self-defense teams which are skillful in production and combat. The South Vietnam guerrillas have not only a 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 support 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 gradually and quite firmly, and they have been able to 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 armored cars.

Thus, each kind of our three forces has reached a rather high level of combativity, strong enough to fulfill its function. Particularly, all the three 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, each campaign, 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 in many areas.

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 173d 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 quite 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 magic wand of any liberation war.

In South Vietnam, in the fight against the U.S. neocolonialist war, guerrilla war plays a still 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 stampede, 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 Americans and 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 one million enemy troops and basing ourselves on our strategic tasks and line, we have advocated building revolutionary armed forces 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 numbers.

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 fill the following conditions: It must have a high fighting morale, firm determination to attack the enemy. It must be organised 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 of each company, platoon, squad, three-man team, and each officer and fighter of the regular army, regional forces, as well as the 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 well 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 according to its conditions and ability, 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 the 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.

Thus, by closely coordinating our three kinds of forces rationally deployed, closely coordinating the armed struggle with the political struggle, 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 Vietnamese people and liberation Armed Forces during the past 12 years, actions which have been reviewed on many occasions by the NFLSV Central Committee, and which, in application and practice in general, have been satisfactorily carried out. There are many strong points. Yet in certain localities and at certain times, there still are pitfalls which it is necessary for us to try to overcome.

The heroic armed forces and people in South Vietnam have been winning very glorious victories over one 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 one million troops of the Americans and puppets. We are determined to fight them even if they have two million troops, even if the fight lasts for another 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! For independence and freedom, let us march forward to resolutely defeat the U.S. aggressors! We shall surely be victorious!