TITLE AFTER TET

DATE Feb 1968

Description:

Two low level reports made during 1968 Tet offensive.
AFTER TET: THREE VIET CONG ASSESSMENTS

Background

Since their Lunar New Year attacks, many Viet Cong agencies and headquarters have issued reports analyzing the offensive, assessing the successes and failures of the movement and stating the actions which must be taken to overcome the setbacks suffered.

Three such reports, captured by U.S. Ninth Infantry Division units, are presented below as further background on the Tet campaign carried out in late January and early February.1/

The first document, which was captured in Bien Hoa Province during March, contains a critique of VC units in that area. Issued by the Provincial Standing Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP), the assessment says that although certain initial results were obtained, none of the assigned objectives was finally achieved.

On the military side, the committee noted losses claimed to have been inflicted on Government of Viet-Nam (GVN) forces and their allies. Based on "incomplete reports", it credited the VC troops with destroying three helicopters, four 105-mm howitzers, 22 armored vehicles and one large ship, and with putting 375 enemy troops out of action.

Politically, the committee said, propaganda was successfully distributed. The materials included an appeal from the National Liberation Front Central Committee, an order from headquarters of the South Viet-Nam Liberation Army, a letter from the Central Office of South Viet-Nam (PRP headquarters) and "victory news".

However, in overall assessment, the committee found that political agitation and proselyting were unsuccessful in inspiring a popular uprising. "The people's spirit for uprising is still very weak when compared with the requirements and with the new capabilities and advantages," it said. "It [the uprising attempt] was not well coordinated with the military offensive."

Commenting on another aspect of the attacks, the critique concluded, "The mobilization of manpower and resources to build up and expand our forces brought about good results at some places but still lagged behind the fast developing situation."

The second document presented is a circular which outlines the post-Tet mission of VC units active in a Mekong delta province. Captured February 25, the circular was originally issued by the PRP Standing Committee of VC Can Tho Province (GVN Phong Dien Province).

The committee claimed that VC forces of the area had "displayed high determination to overcome difficulties and won spectacular victories" during what it called the "first step" of the general offensive. It warned, however, that another phase of the offensive should be expected and that "fierce, see-saw attacks" might lie ahead, for "the enemy, arrogant and stubborn, will counterattack in an attempt to regain the initiative."
"It is of primary importance to realize that this /first/ phase of the general offensive is not a battle which lasts some two or three days," the committee said. It called on all elements to carry on and launch "daring attacks" in order to secure the "final victory in as short a time as possible.

For future actions, rural attacks were deemed as essential as urban attacks. "We should closely coordinate our activities, and center our efforts on the liberation of cities and towns, and simultaneously on rural areas," the committee said. "We should not take the rural areas lightly; nor should we think that if the cities and towns are liberated, the rural areas will also be liberated without difficulty."

The appeal and plan stressed that victory is not to be achieved instantaneously, and the circular ended with the warning that all should "be aware that this is a general offensive launched to win the final victory in the shortest period of time, which, may, however, be three or four months."

The final document below is a political and proselyting directive. Dated February 9, it was apparently distributed to VC elements in Hau Nghia Province, west of Saigon. It urges greater emphasis on political struggle and on attempts to inspire enemy troops to desert or revolt.

Proselyting efforts earlier in the Tet offensive had not been impressive, the document notes: "...from the outbreak of fire at X hour until now, our political and troop proselyting movement, on the whole, has not yet been brought into full force and we were not very successful..."

As methods of encouraging defections, the directive recommends that mass meetings be organized "to denounce the enemy's crimes"; pressure be exerted on the dependents of GVN troops; and secret agents "not only join the armed forces to kill the enemy but also take this opportunity to propagandize and motivate the enemy troops to revolt."

1/ For earlier, related materials, see Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes Nos. 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28 and 29.
RESOLUTION
PASSED BY PARTY PROVINCIAL STANDING COMMITTEE
ON 10 FEBRUARY

On February 10 the Party Provincial Standing Committee held a meeting to study the resolution by the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) and to assess the province situation during the past eight days and to work out plans of activity for the future.

I - Studying COSVN's Resolution: An excerpt has been made and sent separately.

II - Reviewing and Evaluating the Situation in the Province in the Eight-Day Period. (Between January 31 and February 7).

A - Friendly Situation: Even though orders were issued to us very late, we had fairly good preparations in various fields. One of our elements was out on a mission and failed to return in time, but from the highest to the lowest level and in both military and political fields, we all did our best to overcome difficulties, develop plans and deploy forces to carry out our combat missions, and achieve the following preliminary successes.

1 - Military Field: We continuously attacked the town of Long Thanh, the Thu Duc Reserve Officer School and enemy guard posts and watchtowers. We killed tyrants and broke the enemy control over several hamlets and villages in two towns. We counter-attacked and opposed a number of enemy counterattacks in Loc An, Long Thanh, Long Binh and Thu Duc. We attacked continuously on Route 15 and cut off enemy lines of communications in many places and at many moments. We also encircled many enemy posts and watchtowers and forced them to either surrender or withdraw.

According to incomplete reports, we put out of action 375 enemy troops (U.S., puppet and satellite troops) and one C/Company/ of civil guards (exact number of casualties not known). Enemy casualties suffered in Long Thanh Town, Hang Xanh intersection, Phu Loc Long, Phu Huu and Phuoc Khanh are likewise not yet known. We destroyed and levelled seven enemy watchtowers and guard posts, not including those in Phu Huu and Phuoc Khanh. We destroyed 22 enemy armored vehicles, three helicopters, four 105 mm howitzers and sank one 10,000 ton ship. A bridge and a culvert were also destroyed. We forced three enemy posts and two enemy watchtowers to either surrender or withdraw.

While weakening and destroying a number of enemy forces, we also achieved certain good results in expanding and developing our forces. Aside from the people who volunteered to fight, some villages expanded their forces from one cell to one squad of guerrillas. We also gained 197 recruits. This is an unprecedentedly good result.

2 - Political Field: The task of disseminating the appeal from the Front Central Committee, the Order of the Day from the Headquarters, South Vietnam Liberation Army (SVNLA), the letter from COSVN, the propagation of victory news to inspire our party, our armed forces and the masses have been uninterruptedly conducted on a broad front. This has created varying degrees of fervor within our party and among our people. This enthusiasm materialized in the three front attack to destroy the enemy's control, kill tyrants, and weaken the enemy forces to gain supremacy.

Almost all party chapters and guerrillas remain close to the people — they are cooperating with the people in the disruption of the enemy's control and destruction of tyrants. (In Long Thanh and Non Trach they killed eight tyrants and punished many others.) They also destroyed strategic hamlets, roads, bridges, and all forms of oppressive governmental functions. They are also contributing their human and material resources to the task of gaining and extending our authority in many places. At other places, they have taken positions close to enemy posts.

Elsewhere, our people are engaged in direct, face-to-face struggle with the enemy officials in the posts and district headquarters, asking compensations, for war damages. We gained initial success in mustering 200 people in Phuoc Thien to demand compensation for war damages amounting to ------ thousand piasters / TN: Part of paragraph was burned out/
Together with leading the uprising, we also paid attention to developing our real political forces.

3 - Enemy Troop Proselyting: We coordinated our armed activities so as to encircle and harass the enemy at many places. We made use of loudspeakers for propaganda and motivated the troops' dependents to appeal to soldiers in the posts and watchtowers to surrender, thus causing them to vacillate and confusing them into indifference. Especially in Long Phuc and Long Thanh we made use of enemy troops' dependents in propaganda action in conjunction with political actions. This effort resulted in the surrendering of one post and the capture of ten enemy weapons.

4 - Mobilization of Manpower and Resources in Support of the Frontline:

Certain places achieved fairly good results during the initial phase:

- Several villages south of Long Thanh succeeded in recruiting five people per village in the task of sabotage.

- We recruited about 200 youths in the Long Thanh and Nhon Trach Districts.

- In ten days, we raised more than 100,000 piasters and more than 300 gia of rice in Nhon Trach District.

5 - Development of Our Forces: We have just learned that in the ten villages of Long Thanh and Nhon Trach we have 19 new Party members, 82 new guerrillas and certain numbers of liberation cells.

Aside from the foregoing results and advantages, we still have the following great shortcomings:

1 - We have not reached any of the objectives assigned to us by higher headquarters and have not fully accomplished missions in the local area as directed by the Province Party Current Affairs Committee.

- Regarding Objective Number One, we have not yet cut off the enemy's main land and water lines of communication. With regard to Route 15, we did attack and cut many sections, but we could not meet Requirement Number Two.

- The people's spirit for uprising is still very weak when compared with the requirements and with the new capabilities and advantages. It was not well coordinated with the military offensive. Though our control has been widened, it is not yet consolidated.

2 - We have not mastered the "two-step, three-prong plan." The political and enemy troop proselyting prongs are still very weak and we have failed to coordinate our three-pronged tactics for each objective in each hamlet and village. This poor coordination hampered the employment of our combined forces in the offensive against the enemy. For that reason, our revolutionary movement in certain villages, including those villages subjected to enemy strangulation, could not arouse the enthusiasm required to put en- relling pressure on the enemy.

3 - The mobilization of manpower and resources to build up and expand our forces brought about good results at some places but still has lagged behind the fast developing situation. In some villages, only a few liberation cells have been activated and only a few new guerrillas, one or two party members and an insignificant number of Youth Group members were recruited.
NGHỊ-QUYẾT

Thượng ủy Tỉnh ủy ngày 10-2.

1. Hợp tác NQ, TNC. - Có trách nhiệm riêng.

II. Kiểm điểm đánh giá tình hình trong Tỉnh trừ (từ 31-1 đến 7-2).


Theo số liệu chính, ngày cự ta lọa ri ngoài vòng chiến đấu 375 tên (kể cả lý, nguyễn và chủ nhân) 11 bao an chua, rõ bỏ nhiều. Ngoài ra số dịch diệt 2 thi truyền Long-thành, có ngư từ làm, kinh, thủy lăng và nhơn-khánh, và ở-kiên, chủ một chuyện chu áo chua, can bằng, kíp đù và tấn hạ, đơn vị, chung các số đơn vị ở Thu-Duc. Hỗ trợ hùng hổ, họa bao 22 xe bò hiệu, 2 trực thăng, 1 phăng 157 ly, 1 thứ 10,000 tân 1 tiêu và 1 công, di chuyển bằng bắc rút 3 bot và 2 tua.

1. Đối với tiêu hao tiêu diệt 1 số sĩ quan, lực dịch, ta cùng thu được 1 số kẻ quan và xay, đủ công và phát triển lực lượng. Ngoài số quan chính tình nguyện cùng sử dụng chiến đấu, 1 số đã phát triển từ lọ đến 12, 14, còn thì ra diệt 157 tăng binh, 1 kẻ quan ta từ trước chưa có thể giải náo dat quan tạo.

2. Về vấn đề:

- Việc giác, di tích biên hiệu tiêu cụ của UBTW, LT, như lính sự bộ chỉ huy miền, bộ tiêu tư quan, việc tuyên truyền tìm chính-tháng nhắm phát động trong nội bộ Đảng, trong các lực lượng và trong quân chính, đối tiêu lành lành, sân hiền, nhiệm vụ tiêu diệt giỏi nội ngoại, diệt nguyên, trong quân chính với mỗi đó khác nhau, thì hiện trong nội địa đầu tranh 3 mặt, phát kem, diệt ac, tiêu hao tiêu diệt diệt diệt gian - quyền làm chủ.

- Hầu hết chi bộ và đầu kí hiệu đều bám trụ trong quân chính - cùng với quân chính phát kem, diệt ac (ở Long-thành và Nhiêm trạch, diệt 8 tên Trần, áp nhiều tên khác) phá, áp chiến lược, phá cách chính, kinh kinh, phá cầu đường, đồng số, distr ngăn sức, gian hàng và sự rực quyền chủ ở nhiều nơi với sức do khác nhau, 1 số nơi lần sat đơn bot diệt.
TO: HIV'S AND KI'S /sic /

Although the General Offensive Order was suddenly disseminated by the Party, the people and armed elements displayed high determination to overcome difficulties and won spectacular victories during the first step. The enemy was heavily defeated. In Can Tho, we succeeded in paralyzing his posts and annihilating his sectors. In some areas, the enemy was routed or withdrew. He was faced with difficulties and driven into confusion while we continued our attacks and won successive victories. In the face of such a success, "Ti" and "Hi" extend their warm congratulations to all comrades in the Party Headquarters, to the people and to the armed elements within "H" /sic/. In order to carry out successfully the directive of the Hi Standing Committee, It is recommended that the following matters concerning leadership be thoroughly understood:

1. It is of primary importance to realize that this phase of the general offensive is not a battle that lasts some two or three days. Therefore, we should consolidate our ideological concept and strengthen our forces in order to accomplish the mission fully. During this phase of activities, daring attacks should be launched to win the final victory as soon as possible. Victories were scored in Can Tho City and in other towns and cities in Western Nam Bo during the first step of the general offensive. However, the enemy, being arrogant and stubborn, will counterattack in an attempt to regain the initiative. Therefore, we must take advantage of recent victories to launch continuous and daring attacks for the annihilation of the enemy forces and the control of cities and towns. We must hold the battlegrounds and be highly determined to defeat the enemy, even though we have to stage fierce, see-saw attacks at times. It is to be remembered that the situation is extremely favorable for us to accomplish our mission successfully and develop our forces.

- We must be resolute in advance, and not step back. We must sacrifice our lives to win victories during this phase of attacks. Fear of death, hesitation or withdrawal from any battlefield are grievous mistakes.

- We must thoroughly realize that this phase of attacks may last three or four months in big cities and towns. In the course of this phase we must launch continuous and vigorous attacks to win the final victory.

- We must concentrate our efforts to annihilate the enemy's main installations such as division headquarters, sectors, province seats, U.S. airfields, storage facilities, and especially ammunition depots -- etc. /sic/. Simultaneously, we must make every effort to encircle and pin down the puppet main force battalions by waging the three-pronged attacks and using guerrilla forces to wear down and annihilate them.

2. In the course of our attacks on cities and towns, it is of great importance to take interest in our activities in rural areas. We should closely coordinate our activities, and center our efforts on the liberation of cities and towns, and simultaneously on rural areas. We should not take the rural areas lightly; nor should we think that if the cities and towns are liberated, the rural area will be also liberated without difficulty. Although some indications for a move to success were noted in the first step, a vacillating attitude and hesitation still exist. It should be understood that the complete liberation of the enemy-controlled rural area will give close support to the control of towns and cities. The current situation is extremely favorable for us to liberate the rural area by waging the three-pronged attack. We should motivate the entire Party, army and people to rush forward, fight the enemy, disintegrate his army and government, control the remaining sectors and posts and cut his lines of communication. If the liberation of the rural area is delayed for one day or one hour, the enemy can concentrate his forces against us. Once an area has been occupied, we should immediately develop our forces to reinforce or attack other areas and simultaneously establish our administration in newly-liberated areas.

3. In the course of the offensive and uprising to liberate towns, cities and rural areas that are still under enemy control, we should motivate the people in liberated rural areas to demonstrate their revolutionary strength in the support of the offensive and uprising. Parallel to this, we must pay attention to agricultural
production by rapidly harvesting paddy and storing it in concealed places. Moreover, we must properly use manpower in order to maintain a well-balanced activity plan for those who operate at the front line, work in farm production or participate in other activities in liberated rural areas. Generally speaking, we should accelerate the development of the rural areas in every field, in order to provide timely reinforcements, food, provisions and equipment to the armed elements, and keep them from suffering shortages of any kind. While sending troops to the front, we should never neglect the strengthening of the liberated rural areas. If we do, when the enemy counterattacks us, the people will be confused. Therefore, while we are intensifying our attacks to gain greater victories, we should mobilize manpower and material resources in the liberated rural areas and motivate the people to support the Revolution effectively. We should intensify all activities in support of the front. We should make a special effort to transport equipment and food to supply the front successfully under all circumstances.

4. In the offensive launched in towns, cities and enemy-controlled rural areas, we must thoroughly understand the guidelines concerning the "three-pronged attacks in the mountainous and delta areas". We must accelerate the activities of each prong (military, political, and troop proselyting) to its climax. We should try to develop political and troop proselyting activities in this new and favorable situation so that we can gain greater victories with fewer casualties. Presently, political and troop proselyting activities are still weak. While the armed elements attack the enemy, the people should participate in the troop proselyting mission. Political and troop proselyting should be intensified in enemy military posts, sectors and puppet main force battalions in local areas.

5. Immediately develop armed forces within a period of three days. Each village must activate at least one company. Part-time guerrillas should be developed. In addition, we should broadly develop the Party and Group, including Workers', Farmers' and Women's Associations and Youth Groups. Party members and Group members must act as key personnel in order to stabilize these organizations. We must rely on the popular organizations in order to be strong enough to attack the enemy.

6. The assessment of the situation requires a proper plan and sound organization. Communication and liaison must be well maintained. From now on, K1 and HIY are requested to report their activities to the Standing Committee of Hi twice a day. In addition, special information during the day must be immediately reported. All comrades should thoroughly understand the above directives made by the Standing Committee of Hi. High determination to fight is of primary importance. We should advance, but never step back. We should be ready to sacrifice our lives, hold the battleground, fight the enemy and win the final victory. In the face of this extremely favorable situation, we should display firm resolution to win. In this connection, we should provide timely support and reinforcement to the armed elements, and be aware that this is a general offensive launched to win the final victory in the shortest period of time, which may, however, be three or four months.

Awaiting further reports on victories, Hi hopes that continued achievements will be made.

6 February 1968
For the Standing Committee of Hi

MUOI KY

True copy:
10 February 1968
The Standing Committee of M.30
Kính gửi: Cõc HƯ, Cõc KI.

1- Căn quan nghĩa đày là 1 mặt đoạn tông đồ, không phải là 1 cuộc chiến độc, trong vậy 3 yếu, nội phỉ cách chiến, đây đủ tò tò tức tò tò, lụy lụy vợ chét ở đó như giành thắng lợi hoàn toàn.

Trong chiến đồ nhiều phải tông công liên tục kiện cụng đủ cân thức bố, tông công đơn đơn, giữ trắng lợi sơ có còn chưa hết thông thấy, để giành thắng lợi tức bùa dâu ở chằng chân chỉ con nước. Tại tông chiến độc và liên hoàn, imbalance không có ra sức phần khích, nên thể phát thời thắng xứng làn tông công một đơn độc, bại bẩm truy và tiếp tục triển khai để đủ thời cơ để tự giữ theo mục đích của lũy lợi phát triển lục chiến, công thịnh chạng, ở đó trong chỉ đạo phải chú ý.

- Phải có quyết tâm thật cơ, chinh phục kẻ địch, hồi phục chỗ đang lỗ, để sinh thêm lợi thế trong mục Nguyễn, ngự giải thể vùng do đâu không bao lợi lợi hoặc rất ra lên nhất lại lên lại.

- Chớ quên trận chiến tông công ngày ở chỗ kêu đại 3 văn, đúng và đã lơn lớn của 4 chiến thắng trên đây đẹp công một đơn độc, e còn định công lợi phần chiến phải ở đâu thì thạo lợi biết nhiều và thời lợi chiến lợi vào tổ chức Lịch tiến chiến.

Trong trận chiến, phải tập trung đánh dứt đứt chiên cho giữ được đủ về tiếp tục, định kiện không bị kéo dài, giữ được chiến lụy, và Chiến tranh công thịnh-trương bồn, đã hay khó tính nhất là chung chi, cùng và khi v.v..., nhưng rất sự bố vây cùng chúng, chỉ toàn công và lụy nhiều thì mới nên còn đúng quan sát ở bên vây để tiến nước đi đạt chiến lợi lục cánh, từ trung tiêu đột chung.

2- Trong khi trơn lơn sức tông còn mà, phải lợi sức, vừng ngon thọ, sát bò chung để giữ lẫn cội đột, không nên chỉ thả tông công nên mạo 1 lợi hình ảnh đầu, nên vân; thế thì nên ở giữ phần thốn trong tổn cốt kẹp bằng 2 nài nghĩa công trong tình hình nên này để phán vấn nossa thốn chờ trung giữ, Chí xanh, thiền đỡ tổn nơi đúng, nên muốn giữ phần, hiện nay ở nồng thơn tuy hư đâu ở biên viền, nên cần phải ể kỷ chức chỉ đạo.