Scene of the general offensive and uprising

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Foreign languages publishing house
scenes
of the general
offensive
and uprising

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The press has released a wealth of information about the widespread offensive and uprising of the South Vietnamese people beginning January 31, 1968 and still going on to resist the American aggressors and their stooges. In this booklet we introduce to you a number of actual and lively facts in South Viet Nam during the first days of this offensive and uprising.

We hope that through these still incomplete facts the reader will further understand that the entire South Vietnamese people's valiant fight, hard as it is, will end in complete victory.

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DEAR Hai,

This morning our fight entered its third day, and is still going on unabated. I wish you could be here: you would see what miracles the legs of our fighters could perform! A funny thing happened recently: four days ago, Kinh, a young fighter who had been in hospital for a wound in the leg, came back to our unit. His wound was not yet healed, but he wanted to fight and so just slipped out of hospital without the doctors' consent. The day the unit left for the front, a festival was held. To persuade his comrades that he was fit for combat duties, Kinh volunteered to dance the part of Ong Dia, the Genie of the Earth, in a lion's dance. But after a while, his leg refused to obey him and everything went awry. We laughed a great deal, but I was very moved by the incident.
Here in combat, wounded comrades keep rushing forward as long as their legs could carry them; or they lie behind shields made up of enemy corpses and hold enemy infantry and armour at bay from morning to nightfall.

The enemy had thought that only supernatural beings could slip into this airfield. Yet this spring our troops have penetrated there in great numbers. Everything began on the night of the 30th day of the Lunar New Year, when the order for the offensive was given by the Front's Central Committee.

The hours before the battle were deeply moving. With each step we got closer to the city, leaving behind hands waving affectionate farewells and eyes filled with love. When we stopped at a hamlet, the people secretly killed an ox to offer us a big meal, but we had to leave immediately. The people ran after us with baskets full of cakes and meat, which they insistently shoved into our hands and haversacks.

About the people I met that night and later on—women, old folk, children—I thought: if our exploits are to be recorded in the books of history, many pages should be reserved for our "fathers, mothers, and sisters" who slipped through enemy encirclement and braved bombs and shells to bring us food and ammunition. It was precisely owing to this tremendous support of the rear that we were able to walk fast and firm and nothing could hinder our steps.

Now Tan Son Nhat airfield appeared before our eyes. One of our units began raining artillery shells
on it. A military post and a few blockhouses returned fire; in next to no time a few rockets from Ba's unit erased them from the earth. Then our path was blocked by about 50 armoured cars, but our detachment set dozens of them afire.

Within minutes, we had opened a breach, and penetrated deep into the airfield. Our guns of all calibers wove a dense network of fire over the whole area. And a fierce hunt-and-kill operation took place inside the enemy lair. Moving rapidly along the runways, we fired on the planes hidden in redoubts. Terrible explosions shook aircraft and tanks hit by our projectiles. Some tried to escape. One jet hastily took off but its belly and sides were shot to pieces. As it plummeted to the ground, another jet had its wings clipped by our bullets and fell like a burnt moth. In the redoubts along the runways, dozens of planes were blazing. The spring breeze fanned up the flames and turned the area into an immense line of fire. Depots storing hundreds of thousands of tons of ammunition and over 7,000 guns were burnt to the ground. The whole airfield was rocked by terrific explosions.

Taking a general view of the scene, one saw only towering flames, repeated explosion flashes and the shadows of our men rushing forward, like fighting angels. As dawn came near, the battle raged even more fiercely. Enemy artillery from every side fired thousands of shells. In the sky, aircraft came in successive waves; bombing and strafing, not sparing even their own side!
On the ground, after we had cut to pieces a para-
troop battalion, a column of nearly one hundred
tanks and armoured cars coming from east and west
of the depots rushed towards the breach we had made,
while another armoured unit tried to block the runway
where our troops were dashing forward like shooting
arrows. By this manoeuvre, the enemy hoped to
revive the airfield before dawn. But thanks to our
unyielding resolve, we succeeded in completely para-
lysing Tan Son Nhat.

After two days and three nights of fierce fighting,
today we remain masters of the airfield. As I write
to you, our guns are firing uninterruptedly. Fire and
smoke are rising and not a single plane has been able
to take off under the fire of the Liberation troops.

On this relatively narrow strip of land, we repulse
repeated attacks by well over a hundred armoured
vehicles, while bombs and shells are rained on
every inch of ground. This is a test for man's valour,
and in this test the Liberation troops' devotion to
the Fatherland is brought out into full relief.

As I resume my letter to you, I cannot contain my
emotion when thinking of such comrades as Thanh,
Hung, Cac, Nuoc, and other valiant fighters who contribu-
ted a worth part to our victory at Tan Son Nhat.
Facing enemy tanks and armoured cars which swar-
med in by the hundred, many comrades stood up to
fire rocket after rocket at them, others attacked them
with satchel charges after climbing on them, thus lay-
ing down their lives to open a breach through which
their comrades' assault could proceed. Unable to stem our advance through their inner ring of defence, the fire and steel of the enemy are even more powerless to stop the spearheads of our troops piercing their outer ring.

Dear Hai, it is very hard to describe the warm feeling of the city people for the revolution, and their immense contribution to the wonderful exploits achieved these last few days and nights in Saigon. As my unit continues to fight under showers of enemy bombs and shells, one may say that never for a moment do the people cease standing by our side. Oil drums, furniture, everything is used to build street barricades. In a street on the outer ring of Tan Son Nhat, one of our units, with the help of the local people has put out of action over 200 G.I.'s and nine armoured vehicles. Day and night, there are people standing guard, carrying food and ammunition, and acting as guides for the Liberation troops.

During these days of fighting, prices in Saigon have skyrocketed. One kilogram of pork costs 1,200 piasters, one litre of rice 400 piasters and yet our troops receive plentiful supplies; they eat several good meals a day, cooked and brought by the people. In a street, we find two houses packed full of rice, vegetables, meat, eggs, intended for the Liberation troops. Hundreds of mopeds, motorcycles, Lambretta motor tricycles, pedicabs, bicycles are put at their disposal for chasing the enemy or serving combat operations. The Americans madly bomb the residential areas, destroying houses and massacring people, but they cannot
prevent the people from staying by our side day and night, fighting arm-in-arm or bringing supplies to our troops engaged in combat inside the airfield.

Dear Hai,

I could end my letter here, but I want to talk to you about a recent happening here, a truly wonderful one. For a whole day now, the people have been telling it to each other, and consider it a source of pride for the entire Saigon population. I know it is but a small part of all that is taking place here, but I think I should let you know it all the same.

As you know, the very night we launched our major attack on Tan Son Nhat, one of our units, about 15 strong, clashed with American motorized infantry on the outer ring of the airfield. This unit was composed of young cityfolk, men and women, who had just been issued guns and organized into a fighting squad. For lack of time and also because of the need for secrecy, we didn't get in touch with them and don't know their names. But one of the men in my detachment had seen them at dusk, and he remembered catching a glimpse of several young women clad in green blouses, some with permed hair.

At midnight, as they tried to penetrate through one of the main gates of the airfield an American battalion moved out of it. Our men immediately hit the ground and were not seen. But when the last American soldier had passed, and they rose to resume their penetration, another American battalion turned up. This time they didn't have time to hide and an
exchange of gunfire broke out. The first American battalion immediately retraced their steps and their armoured vehicles tried to crush our fighters under their tracks. The odds were terrible: 15 Liberation fighters against two American battalions. And yet within minutes, our fighters had put out of action a whole U.S. company and repelled several waves of attack. In that narrow, bare area, they closed their ranks and fought doggedly for two days and three nights. The Americans lost 200 men and a large number of vehicles. Each inch of ground bore the traces of hard fighting, and evidences of extraordinary courage and valiant exploits.

We learnt from the local people that during that night, they had heard amidst the sounds of gunfire voices singing *The Call to Youth* by Luu Huu Phuoc, a song much loved by the young people of the city. They were not sure that it was sung by the unit mentioned above, but at any rate I can tell you that in these days of heroic fighting in Saigon, such epic songs are quite often heard amidst the noise of battle.
CHI Tam of Ben Tre, told a correspondent of Gia Phong Press Agency about her participation in the march on Ben Tre staged by women of surrounding areas, on the occasion of the Tet offensive.

It was New Year's Day. In the afternoon I went to a meeting, where I learned about the Front's order for an uprising. It was big news for us women. For over a month, we had been getting ourselves ready for such an event. From white-haired grandmas to little girls, everybody wanted to join. We had each a bamboo spear, and whenever we had a little spare time, we would sharpen and re-sharpen it and strengthen its ligatures. And every afternoon, at a signal given by means of a few beats of the tocsin, we would go to the field where we would assemble in small groups, and train hard.
But the next day there wasn’t to be any training session. We were to go into action. Joy was in my heart, but also no small amount of worry. Victory was of course certain, but we had to make it a complete, total one. Besides, I thought of my baby child. What would become of her if I should die in action? The thought however, didn’t linger long in my mind. Now was the time for action for we had been living a truly historic period, “one that happens only once in a thousand years”? How could I fail in my duties, as one of “the thirty one million staunch defenders of the fatherland”! These of Uncle Ho’s words were as vivid in my mind as ever. I asked a relative to look after my child, then went and got prepared for the battle.

That very night, the Liberation troops attacked the residence of the province chief, the offices of the provincial administration, the radio station, the post-office and other key points. Everywhere the enemy was put to flight.

The following morning, the “long-haired army” went into action.

It was an unforgettable sight, one that irresistibly evoked in the minds of the older generation the seething days of the August 1945 Revolution, when a forest of gold-starred red flags appeared in the city of Ben Tre!

For several years I had been participating in protest marches on the town, and the joy and excitement of victorious battles was not unfamiliar to me. But
never before had I experienced such exhilarating feel-
ings as now! It was a kind of immense and overwhel-
mimg enthusiasm.

At the Ca Loc bridge, where the police used to stop
columns of demonstrators, pounding on women and
old folk with iron-tipped clubs and cudgels, we were
no longer troubled by them. Some of the most wicked
agents of the Saigon regime had received punishment:
their bodies were lying by the roadside, like carcas-
es of mad dogs. It was fully deserved retribution for
those who had wilfully shed the blood of their com-
patriots in the hope of getting a few more dollars
from their Yankee masters.

As we approached the city, more and more people
joined our column, which surged ahead with the power
and impetus of a tidal wave, banners flapping in the
wind, signs and placards raised high. At intervals, we
heard the clatter of gunfire in the distance. It was the
Liberation troops in pursuit of the fleeing remnants
of the enemy. The people in the "strategic hamlets"
surrounding the city had also risen up and broken the
enemy's grip. With drums beating and flags flying,
they joined us as we streamed into the city.

We immediately set about hunting down the agents
of the puppet regime, who had disbanded and taken
refuge in the back alleys. Those "demons", as the
people call them, though armed to the teeth, were
only chicken-hearted rascals. When caught, they
dropped to their knees and showed their true colours
as shameless cowards.
Now the entire city had fallen into the hands of the people. Together with a group of other women, I headed for the quarters of the puppet engineers, near the Go Dong bridge, about a mile from the city. The company of puppet soldiers fleeing from their garrison there to the city had fallen into an ambush at Ap Phu: none of them escaped.

And so we stormed their abandoned quarters and took over all arms, ammunition, machinery and equipment. These were piled up on lorries and taken to the liberated areas. My team, composed of myself and ten other women, got hold of a vehicle. We loaded it full of guns and ammunition and... pushed it along the road, for none of us knew how to drive. This comic episode of epic happenings lasted only a few minutes, for very soon a comrade driver came to our help.
THE squad under command of Nguyen Thi Lien was made up of eleven girls. Lien, the eldest, was nineteen. Cuc, Hoa and Sao, the youngest, would be seventeen soon.

Since its formation, Lien's squad and the population had foiled all enemy mopping-up operations.

At the beginning of 1968, it was assigned by the city's quarter underground military command to co-operate with propaganda armed units, build revolutionary rear bases and prepare for an uprising of the population. It was in charge of an area sheltering most reputed cruel thugs. Overcoming every difficulty, the girls broke through enemy defence lines. They tried to keep the situation well in hand and carry out explanation work in every family. A few weeks later, tens of youngsters volunteered.
to join the people's armed forces to defend the city and the surrounding villages.

On the night of January 30 to 31, while the P.L.A.F. stormed the Citadel, Lien's squad and people in the quarter rose up to punish puppet cruel thugs, smash the enemy machine of repression, extend the liberated area to the suburbs and set up a steady position from which to attack and encircle the adversary.

Only on February 22 dared the enemy send to the ward a U.S. marine battalion with air, artillery and armour support.

Knowing the enemy's route, the squad laid in ambush before dawn. The combatants were determined to win at the first engagement, ready to sacrifice themselves in defending the battlefield. They calmly sustained the enemy's violent fire and waited without riposting.

As the assailants reached the Ba Trieu cross-road, they despatched six M.II3 amphibious carriers in the direction of Cho Cong. Tall G.I.'s were coming nearer and nearer. The girls felt rejoiced at the prospect of dealing the enemy a telling blow to avenge their compatriots massacred by them. The squad leader whispered to her comrades:

"Keep calm and carefully aim at them. Each of us must kill a G.I. right at the first round."

As the enemy moved on cautiously into Cho Cong, Lien ordered her mates to fire. Twenty-five Americans marching ahead fell to the ground. The others flattened themselves down and fired back at random.
Lien and her comrades watched them carefully and accurately shot at him who raised his head.

The enemy counter-attacked only an hour later. The girls took advantage of any obstacle to machine-gun, snipe, hurl grenades at the Americans, sowing confusion in their ranks. Obviously, the latter had no idea of the "Viet Cong" troop-strength involved, but realized that their visible adversary were all girls.

Pinned down, the battalion called for air support. Tens of armed helicopters screamed furiously over the battlefield for hours without being able to intervene, for there was no definite front line.

At 2 p.m., the enemy launched a new counter-attack with six M.113's to pick up their dead.

Paddies were levelled and houses razed by tanks. Across the river, hundreds of houses in the quarters of Dong Ba and Gia Hoi were being reduced to ashes by napalm. Burning with hatred, all the girls took an oath: "We pledge to throw the Yanks into the Huong River to avenge our compatriots."

They swept down group after group. Sao and Mai, the younger, calmly sniped the enemy and never missed their shots. Two G.I.'s were hit at the same time by one bullet, tens of others took to their heels, leaving behind their dead. A column of about one hundred men was checked fifty metres from the squad after having lost 17 dead.

The enemy used poisonous grenades, then their rumbling M.113's. Covering their faces with wet towels, the girls fought on.
But the M.II3's kept advancing steadily. Our combatants had no anti-tank guns and raked their brains for the best way to stop them.

A group of Liberation fighters turned up and shouted:

"Girls of self-defence units, let us help you!"

Lien answered before seeing them:

"We are strong enough to repel them."

A group of fighters outflanked the enemy. At a distance of twenty metres or so from the tanks, they let off three bullets which hit three vehicles. The other M.II3's turned round and fled away, followed by G.I.'s. The girls jumped out of their trenches to pursue the latter as far as the Ba Trieu cross-road.

Hoa was hit by a mortar shell splinter at her head but she was not aware of it. Seeing her hair wet with blood, Lien ordered Hoa to go back to be bandaged.

"Don't care for me," the latter said. "It's but a light scratch. I can fight on."

Knowing that she could not persuade Hoa, Lien said to her comrades: "Let's learn from comrade Hoa! Fire accurately at the Yanks!"

Thirty more G.I.'s fell down. The survivors fled in disorder.

After a day of relentless attack Lien's squad smashed no less than ten counter-attacks of an American battalion, wiping out 120 G.I.'s. The eleven girls
of Hue were awarded the title “Valiant anti-U.S. Fighters”.

The squad received the First Class Liberation Exploit Order and was called the “Iron Squad”.

The eleven girls of Hue are worthy of the heroic traditions of Vietnamese women and are the pride of the whole country.
unforgettable
days
and
nights

Since dusk people felt that something important would happen soon. They gave the last check to their things—coconut plated ropes, parachute ropes, electric wire, nylon strings, bamboo sticks, half-burnt beams in iron wood, poles in iron kept from the days of concerted uprisings*. For the last time they sharpened their big knives with which they would avenge their compatriots and the untold sufferings they had experienced. It was an unforgettable night...

The local Front committee took an oath in a house whose roof had been blown away by shell blasts, and whose frame remained on cracked walls. The sun darted its last rays and made the red flag blaze like a torch, reddening the

* In early 1960 (Pub.).
faces of old and young people listening with rapt attention to a cadre who was taking the floor. Dead silence. The crowd did their best to control their emotion and suppress their cries for joy. The cadre said in a grave voice:

"Comrades, a general offensive will be launched tonight throughout South Viet Nam to punish the Yankees and their lackeys."

The atmosphere became stirring.

Night was falling. Time passed away slowly. Now and then someone looked at his watch. Enemy shelling continued. But nobody paid attention to all this. The units of the "political army" streamed to the rallying-place now ringing with laughters, calls and answers. The group heads checked their effectives. Some were larger than required, the excess being due to the presence of children who at that time of the night were rather a subject of astonishment. They were urged to go home but in vain. Neatly dressed, armed with sticks and ropes to tie wicked thugs with, they meant to join their elders. It was widely known that children at Duy Xuyen, Dien Ban, Hoa Vang had put up a good show: they served as messengers and scouts, slipped into enemy posts to distribute leaflets to American soldiers, carried food and ammunition. Their footprints could be seen on all roads and paths pockmarked with bomb and shell craters. No wonder that they were present that night.

Messengers shuttled to and fro. The leaders of the political struggle who held a meeting, asked whether...
the megaphones and the nurses and hammocks were ready. Such precautions should be anticipated so as to vouch for the greatest success to the action.

President Ho Chi Minh's verse "Forward! Complete success will be ours!" penetrated deep into people's mind nobody knew when.

The wind blew from the China sea and knocked against the Truong Son range with a queer noise.

The people's armymen crossed the river and marched on Da Nang. At 11 p.m. a shock detachment had already taken position near the wall of the building housing the First Army Corps H.Q.

At 2.30 a.m. the sky of Da Nang was lit up. Thundering explosions succeeded one another, shaking earth and sky. Deafening noises belched out of something like a highly pressed chamber were heard and red flashes of lightning streaked the sky.

"The attack begins!" This first comment of the local population was followed by merry shouts spreading from one hamlet to another, from one hut to another.

"Bau Mac depot is in flame."
"Da Nang airfield is hit!"
"Nuoc Man chopper park, too."
"The light on Phuoc Tuong hill is out."
"It's the turn of La Nghi and Cam Na now. They've got a well-deserved blow!"
These comments were uttered amidst hails of rifle-shots. In the city of Da Nang, the shock groups and Liberation fighters crossed a tarred street and scaled the walls of the First Army Corps H.Q. A fierce battle took place in the very lair of the puppet brass hats.

Day was beginning to break.

A Front flag fluttered in the wind ahead a huge column of people crossing the plain in the direction of G. post on Highway No 1.

The women who took the lead called on enemy troops to lay down their arms, using Vietnamese with puppet soldiers and pidgin English with American servicemen.

It was a fine spring day. The sky was limpid. People were enraptured because of springtime or of victory, nobody knew, perhaps both.

After the attack, the number of enemy aircraft was substantially reduced. Many guesses were made on the damage caused to Da Nang and Nuoc Man airfields. The road sections between Vinh Dien and Da Nang and between Da Nang and Hoi An were cut off. Policemen of Hoi An donning plain clothes took to their heels to Da Nang. Listening to a radio set at the field C.P., some signalmen laughed when they heard puppet and American commanders in distress call for help or call one another names. The district town of Duy Xuyen was overrun, Hoi An and Vinh Dien invested...

Transistors were tuned to the *Voice of Viet Nam* radio or *Giai Phong* radio. People shouted for joy and
embraced one another in the street. Unknown passers-
by smiled to each other and gave to one another the
latest news. A cadre of the information service
hurriedly went in search of a map of Saigon and Da
Nang. Those acquainted with these two cities and Hue,
drew up a map of them and marked military opera-
tions with red arrows.

At the provincial information office—an under-
ground dug amidst bomb and shell craters, about
twenty minutes by bus from Da Nang—a mimeograph
worked day and night, releasing the latest news.
Armymen and voluntary workers in the communi-
cation trenches read them. The valiant fighters who just
broke through the enemy line defending Da Nang or
those who got control of Qua Giang and Nhon Tho,
found in these bulletins their own exploits and those
achieved on other battlefronts. Surely, in the next
battles they would win bigger victories.

Old women and young girls carried basket loads of
vegetables and poultry to armymen. The head of the
provincial office in charge of supplying the front was
busily going from one village to another; he was fre-
quently heckled by village cadres, "Our village has
five hundred tins of spare food, where can we deliver
them?"

"Don't worry," he calmly said. "A great number
of troops will be coming. Get more food if you can." he replied.

"Well, receive these five hundred tins, I'll bring
in another five hundred. The armymen stationed here
will have fresh food to eat."
"So carry your supplies to Mr Q's, hamlet B., and deliver them to comrade T. in charge of supply of X unit..."

Another cadre asked him, "Our village has a buffalo, an ox and five pigs. Which unit will receive them?"

"Can you feed two units?"

"Sure we can."

The streets in the village swarmed with soldiers, voluntary service-workers, children, cadres. Telecommunication wire ran from one bamboo grove to another, from one bush to another...

Explosions of shells were heard in the courtyard, in the garden, on the lane. People wavered a while and then resumed their walk. A spotter plane flying low was assailed by showers of bullets which formed a succession of reports from Dien Tho to Dien An. It staggered, ejected a trail of smoke and crashed in flame on Dien An plain.

The aggressors rained bombs indiscriminately, even in front of the First Army Corps H.Q. This frenzied action carried out in their death throes shows all the more their impotence. The spearhead of people's war has hit them in the heart.

_Excerpt from Van Nghe Giai Phong._
_Central Trung Bo_
FOLLOWING is a narration by political officer Nguyen Quynh who took part in the protracted fighting inside the Citadel and around Dong Ba gate. Jotted down by Van Duong, these notes were sent from Hue.

THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT

No sooner had our political commissar said, "Our unit is ordered to wipe out the enemy inside Hue" than we all shouted excitedly:

"Forward! Let's liberate the population of Hue!"

"Forward! Let's make the Yankees and the puppets pay their blood debts!"

We marched towards the ancient capital, brimming with joy and yearning to liberate and avenge our compatriots. In the pitch-dark night we crossed
rivers, fields and the network of enemy posts and garrisons.

At about 2 a.m., January 31st, we approached Huu gate. From the Citadel came gun reports, explosions of satchel charges and the whirring of L.98's. The enemy at the gate shot wantonly around them, their bullets criss-crossing the sky.

"Their fire is too high to hit us... Take your aim calmly!" somebody shouted. Then reports of our mortars and "DKZ"* began thundering and the enemy artillery at the gate was silenced. Our unit entered the city.

"We surrender... Spare our lives," wailed some puppet soldiers.

Our men rapidly disarmed them, explained the Front's policy and told them to go home.

With relative easiness we crossed Huu gate and split into many sections to encounter the enemy in every lane and every house. My bazooka section had the task of supporting Infantry Company No 13 to advance towards Bach Ho bridge. We ran past shabby houses roofed with corrugated iron then splendid buildings. In that vast quarter, the population, helped by the revolutionary armed forces had risen up to hunt wicked thugs, tear off reactionary slogans and the puppets' three-striped flags. With the coming of day more and more people were seen standing on the pavement to welcome us.

* Recoilless guns (Pub.).
Old women stared at us with tear-filled eyes as at their own sons returning from a long trip. Stirred up by these moving scenes, we pressed ahead and loudly shouted:

"Forward! Final victory will be ours!"

"Forward! Forward!" The people replied in chorus, their voices drowning gun reports.

At dawn we approached Bach Ho bridge. The heavy machinegun of the company's right wing spat volley after volley, drawing the enemy fire to our direction. Squad leader Nguyen Van Dai and gunner Dang Hong Chuan brought a bazooka some fifty metres of the blockhouse. Taking advantage of the walls our infantrymen also came nearer, some groups within thirty metres only. All the machineguns, mortars and rifles of the adversary came into action so as to check our sweeping attack. After finding a good emplacement for his weapon, beside a tottering wall, from which he could control the entrance to the bridge, Chuan aimed at a loophole of the blockhouse and waited calmly. Yesterday evening he had caught a fit of malaria and had not taken any food but had refused to stay behind. Today, when reaching a point near the bridge, he felt as though nothing had happened to him and whether he crossed a street or climbed a wall, he was quick as a squirrel.

In no time Chuan's sight was on the target. He pulled the trigger: a shell with a blazing red tail whooshed into the enemy blockhouse.

"Another shot!" ordered the squad leader.
Quickly Chuan loaded his bazooka and fired. A loophole was hit. Then other loopholes began smoking. The enemy who had taken shelter in the blockhouse since the beginning of our attack, was thus wiped out. Our infantrymen charged forward, took the whole position and collected nearly 3,000 rifles along with about 20 lorries of equipment and ammunition.

That night, Dai's group and a number of shock fighters stormed Dong Ba market. With three shots they silenced three gun-nests in three blockhouses, thus helping our footmen rapidly occupy the place.

There was no greater joy than to win a victory and no greater happiness than to be cherished by the people. The population thronged at Dong Ba gate and Trang Tien bridge to greet us after each engagement. Students and pupils pressed everyone of us with hot tea and scented cigarettes. The fighting lasted nearly a week. We held firm the positions we had captured. Our machineguns set on house roofs and right in the parks drove off enemy reconnaissance planes and armed helicopters, and at times downed one or two on the spot. The adversary's weak counter-attacks on Trang Tien bridge, Dong Ba gate and elsewhere were all repelled. Despite gun-reports and the aircraft's activities, traffic was very busy. At night, the P.L.A.F. art troupe and film-projection teams performed in populous quarters. Hue city lived in an atmosphere of festival. Every day over Hanoi Radio and Giai Phong* 

* Liberation (Pub.).
Radio we heard the news of victories scored by the population of Saigon, Da Nang, Can Tho, Ben Tre and other cities in their offensive and uprising. We were warned that changes would occur as the Yankees would try to mount bigger counter-offensives on the city. We stood ready for the coming battles.

DEFENCE OF DONG BA GATE

We got the order to go back to Mai Thuc Loan Road to check an enemy attack on Dong Ba gate. Here the fighting was extremely fierce. Day and night people’s houses were bombed by American planes and shelled by American warships off the coast. The whole quarter was set afire and crumbled into rubbles among fallen trees. After each bombing and shelling, the Yankees made a bold assault but had to leave scores of dead behind. Tuynh’s three-man team managed to kill 46 of them in one day. The fighting entered its ninth day. Dong Ba gate remained firmly in our hands. We were covered with dust all over. Standing beside burning-hot houses we pledged ourselves not to yield an inch of this land.

The gate was a height in the city much coveted by the enemy. Again and again they had crawled up to its walls but each time they had to retreat. There we had only an infantry squad fighting round the clock. One day, as our fire on the gate was spaced I took advantage of a bomb explosion to climb up. Except for company deputy political officer Zung, the other comrades had been wounded. Each of them
had in front of him several grenades already unpinned. Zung, holding an M. 79 captured from the enemy, said to me:

"I've lost contact with the battalion since yesterday. My mates are wounded, so I do not let them fight. Since morning I've been standing alone against the assailants. But look, I don't lack ammunition."

A glance at the mass of cartridges around Zung showed me how he had fought for hours on end against hundreds of G.I.'s and Pak Jung Hi mercenaries supported by tanks. Firing a shot here and another one there, he had forestalled the enemy onslaught. I looked at Ngo Mon gate: the Front’s bright yellow-starred red and blue flag was still flapping over the ancient Citadel. The road towards Mang Ca and that passing in front of Dong Ba gate were littered with the assailants' corpses. Clots of blood already turned blackish streaked the roadway. A sudden feeling of pride caught me: "Our flag is fluttering over Hue citadel... We have made the Americans and the puppets pay their blood debts right in their dens."

I told Zung:

"I'll get in touch with the battalion and send a battery to fight with you."

I was leaving when he called me:

"They're coming in numbers. Bring up the bazooka immediately!"

A peal of bombs exploded. Under the rain of debris Hong Chuan came with his weapon. I felt
very thankful to him. This fighter strictly abode by his superiors' orders and displayed a very high spirit of discipline. Usually slow in manners, he was quick as a squirrel in this critical situation. No sooner had he come than Zung told him:

"Fire a shot at the biggest gathering."

Nearly ten aggressors were mowed down, as many were wounded and helped one another to flee. Once again the attack was curbed. Now the Yankees hid themselves behind wall-corners or trees and shouted in confusion. Planes were brought in, and bombs poured in galore, which hit houses and streets or fell into the river. Dong Ba gate which had just a corner of it lightly damaged, still stood erect. Two days later, a similar assault was repelled by Chuan's and Zung's accurate fire.

The bombs and bullets rained on this battle area were so many that the splinters they sent away were within hand-reach. We dug in near the roadway, a score of metres from the gate, but, in view of the restricted ground we were only a few there. On our side stood a bazooka four-man team while across the roadway was deployed an infantry squad with a heavy machinegun... Phuc, the company deputy political officer, was with us. The bombing having set afire some neighbouring houses, he lined our shelter with a piece of corrugated iron to protect us from the heat. Each time the Yankees popped out, he shot a volley. Suddenly, Huu of the bazooka team was wounded by a shell splinter. He refused to leave us, saying that
he did not want to part from us at the pitch of the fight, especially as he had not yet smashed any tank. Though I liked him very much I could not yield to his request.

At last the adversary realized that he could not wipe us out of Dong Ba. So they called for planes to spread vomitive and tear powder, one of their most odious resorts. Before each counter-attack they showered bombs and shells without being able to make a step forward. The chemicals covered the ground with a white layer. Some comrades who were slow in putting on their masks felt a tingle in their eyes and some ailment in their body, but they all held out. At this moment Khanh, the battalion political officer, brought up an infantry squad to reinforce the defenders of the Dong Ba gate.

"We are determined to wipe out as many enemy troops as possible here," he said.

This strengthened our confidence in maintaining our position intact. Meanwhile, our squad received a good news: Chuan was admitted into the Party and proposed for a citation.

The Americans mounted a new counter-attack on a larger scale, with many tanks and armoured cars opening the way. Group leader Dai replaced Chuan (called back to a "rear base" to attend the admission ceremony). Unfortunately he got his feet crushed by a collapsing piece of wall when scaling the gate. As an anti-tank gunner was badly needed, Khanh sent for Chuan. The latter arrived just to witness a tank
roar in and smash the gate walls under its shells. He calmly waited for the vehicle to come within the most effective range of his weapon and fired. At the sight of the tank set ablaze company commander Dinh shouted:

"Chuan’s hit it! What a good shot!"

The gunner had just removed his weapon when two enemy shells fell on the spot.

The adversary caught fright and fled helter skelter, but many were mowed down by our machinegun on the gate.

From the 15th day, the fighting became increasingly fiercer. And each time the Yankees ventured to storm the gate, they had to leave behind a number of dead after withdrawing.

OUR BELOVED PEOPLE

We advanced past a populous quarter around Trang Tien bridge, the Dong Ba gate. Wherever we set foot we were given a most heartfelt welcome. A white-haired and hunch-backed old woman greeted me with tear-filled eyes:

"We’ve been longing for you. Now we’re very glad to see you in good health!"

This was a token of the revolutionary feeling the Hue citizens nurtured for us. Indeed, we were treated with a devoted care: Some mothers called at our
trenches and seeing that we took cold meals, they brought baskets of hot rice.

One of them said:

"My sons, you must take hot meals to keep up your strength and fight the enemy; I live nearby, so let me cook your rice"

"We are accustomed to cold meals and dare not bother you..." I answered.

"I understand you..." she cut short. "But helping you does not in the least interfere with my household chores..."

So saying, she collected our water-bottles, emptied them and took them away. A moment later, she brought them back, full of hot tea. This moved us to the very heart. All those "mothers" in that battlefield looked after us as our own do at home.

The protracted fighting in Hue provided an occasion for the revolutionary zeal of its citizens to reveal itself in all its magnitude. When the revolutionary troops opened fire from an end of a street the population at the other end rose up and struck at the enemy's rear, from his own ranks, which threw him into utter bewilderment. Wherever our fighters set foot, workers, youths and students volunteered to take up arms and participate in the combat. As they lacked weapons to distribute to them all, a student followed our unit and asked to do whatever job we might give him.

What makes the youth and pupils love the revolutionary fighters so much? The just cause of the Front,
of the Revolution, echoed by the radio and the people's rumour brought them confidence: "The Front will inevitably win and the U.S. aggressors and their puppets are doomed to fail". They now more clearly realize what a revolutionary, a Liberation fighter is like. Since the day the Liberation troops entered Hue, they have an opportunity to confront the enemy's misleading propaganda about the "Viet Cong" with concrete facts.

A comrade told me the story of his niece. The lessons she had learned at her college in Hue were sprinkled with things like these: "Viet Cong compel the people to live after a strict pattern"... "Viet Cong do not respect individual freedoms"... They made her vacillate. She hated the Yankees and the puppets but dared not side with the revolution. After Liberation troops entered the city she kept a wait-and-see attitude, paying attention to what they did, how they behaved among themselves and towards the people. Soon she found that in their relations with the people, the "Viet Cong" are modest, sincere and never impose their will on anyone. It happened that once they asked her to lend them a pick-axe to dig a trench. When she told them that she had not, they courteously took leave of her and called at another house. In their place "nationalist" soldiers would have threatened her and looked for what they wanted in her house without her consent. Another discovery she made was the fact that officers and men live as among equals. Quite to the contrary, "nationalist" and "allied" officers are exacting and rude towards their men; and the men are corrupt and rowdy. She
concluded: "They are as different as the day from
the night." Then she entreated her parents:

"Let me join the revolutionary army. You need not
fear."

Many a tricycle driver used his vehicle — his most
valuable property — to carry wounded armymen and
ammunition to help the revolutionary troops, very
glad as if he did a household chore. I saw another one
whistle while carrying a heavy load of munitions as
in his halcyon days...

The fighting at the Dong Ba gate grew ever fiercer.
Enemy bombs and shells exploded one after another.
For reason of sustained fighting we always kept ready
a loaf of rice and a full water-bottle. Near our gun-
nest lived a sixty-year-old man donning shabby
clothes. Unafraid of the fire he called at our position
and asked us:

"Why do you take cold meals by this weather?"

"Well! We're too busy with the fighting to prepare
hot ones..." someone replied and urged the old man
to leave this dangerous place.

One hour later, he came back with a heavy basket
which he put on some broken bricks on the trench-
edge. A flavour of hot rice and boiled chicken exhaled
from it.

"It's very risky for the old man to go to and fro
like this," I thought. He kept on glancing at us then
at the basket and rubbing his hands, apparently very
moved. Visibly, he wanted to speak but something
held him back.
“My son follows the Yankees, over there...”

He pointed at the Mang Ca fortress. It flashed upon me that the old man wanted to apologize...

“So much the worst for him... I always follow the Front and the revolution... The Thieu-Ky gang may send me to jail once you leave this place... But old as I am, I don’t mind if I have to die. I’m very glad to see you and to help you a little...”

It seemed that he did not speak to us but that he was assessing his stand. As for us, we listened calmly to this unexpected story.

At last he sat down, filled our bowls and urged us:

“Take the meals to keep up your strength and fight the enemy. I still have some chickens in store for you...”

The following days, the old man brought us hot meals until a bomb hit his small hut yesterday, and since then we did not meet him any more...

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Nguyen Quynh stopped a while as though to contain his emotion then continued relating other stories about the fighting put up by his mates and the population of heroic Hue. His were complemented by other stories counted by other fighters. In twenty-six days and nights of offensive and uprising in Hue there were so many moving ones. The aforesaid were but the first I jotted down for our friends.
IT was nightfall. The liaison girl slung a carbin e on her shoulder, gracefully re-arranged her striped head-scarf and told us: "Let's set out, comrades!"

We stood up, snapsacks on our shoulders. Like a gigantic boa, we wound our way through harvested fields bristling with paddy stumps. Darkness lowered down the sky which resembled a huge lid laid on the immense lands. We discerned a halo of dim light in the distance. That was Saigon, the fire line we were marching on.

We streamed across fields and hamlets, talking and laughing gladly. A few flares shot from a military post somewhere hovered in the sky, lighting our way. Explosions at an increasing rate were heard. Someone from ahead urged: "Quick, comrades, otherwise we'll lose
our share!” Volleys of loud and merry laughters acclaimed these words.

Suddenly, somebody started singing at the top of his voice “Let’s march onto Saigon!” The epic song so significant on the occasion, strongly inspired us. Let’s march onto Saigon! Everybody hurried up.

At last, here was Saigon! Saigon with its roads and street corners so dear to us, the Saigon of stormy demonstrations and fulminating struggles. Saigon, usually gloomy and melancholy, was now shining with starred flags fluttering in the wind.

We entered the city as its real masters. The section of the street we passed by had been cleared of enemy troops by the revolutionary armed forces. The beautiful flags of the Liberation Front hanging on wayside electric-lamp posts welcomed us. Young guards with red arm-bands stood sentry holding firm their sub-machineguns. How splendid Saigon was that day! Saigon had risen up! All this was true, still I had the impression I was dreaming. The guards waved to us. I left the ranks to shake hands with them and asked the one who looked like a schoolboy:

“How are things getting on, comrade?”

“We’ve occupied many places. They’re being harshly battered.”

“Which school do you attend, comrade?” I went on.

“No, I’m a factory worker.”
"When did you join the army?"

"Two days ago, exactly," the guard answered softly while fondling his new-brand sub-machinegun with his fingers.

Seeing I was left far behind, I vigorously shook hands with the young worker and hurried to catch up with my group. Saigon revolutionary armed forces were rapidly swelling with such young fighters.

The Saigonese had been eagerly waiting for the Liberation troops, having heard a lot about their outstanding valour and sacrificing spirit put at the service of the people. Today, their desire was fully satisfied: They saw them with their own eyes and heard their steps resound in the city's streets. They widely stretched their arms to hug them familiarly, lovingly. The Liberation fighter which formerly existed only in their imagination had now won over their hearts by practical deeds. Now Saigon townfolk not only listened to stories about him, they themselves had wonderful ones to tell.

At Binh Tien, I was told about the heroic sacrifice of comrade Luan. That day the quarter was wantonly pounded by enemy artillery. Amidst the shower of bullets, he dashed forward to bring to a safe place two little children who were playing in a courtyard. A shell splinter made him fall, his shirt soaked with blood. Yet, he tried to cover the two children with his body and was hit dead. His deed remains for ever in the hearts of the Binh Tien people.
At Ban Co, Nga Bay and elsewhere in the city, I heard a great many such stories about the Liberation fighter who safeguarded the lives of the population at the risk of his own. And all of them were told by the latter themselves. At the Le Quang Lien bus station I met old S... He showed me a child whose head was dressed with a blood-stained bandage, saying, "I lived at Nga Bay. My house was burned by the Yanks' bombs, so I had to remove here. This boy got wounded. Without our soldiers' care he would have died. Every day our nurses come up to change the bandage. Now he's much better..."

Puffing at his cigarette, he went on:

"How lovely our fighters are! Fearless in fighting the enemy and wholehearted in looking after the people. This I was told of; now can I see with my own eyes."

When reaching Thuan Kieu Street, I had to cross a road littered with bricks and tiles, stagger along house walls and hide myself behind each tamarind-tree on either side to avoid bullets and the scrutinizing eyes of an L-19 buzzing overhead. Here the battle ground was still smoking. The revolutionary troops had just repelled a frantic counter-attack of cruel field-policemen who finally took to their heels like rabbits. In the direction of the Nhan Vi Street, gunshots of our fighters hunting down the enemy could be heard now and then at the parting of the way. Police cars hit by our fire were still burning.
Like other field-works which had mushroomed throughout Saigon the ones here were very peculiar. Cross-roads bristled with barricades: everything, from cars, sugar-cane pressing vehicles, garbage trucks, to wardrobes, chairs, and the small table of the dried cuttle-fish vendor at the street corner, was used to stop the enemy. Our fire crackling from high storeys, underground defence works and side-streets, tightly encircled him. The Liberation fighters weren't alone in their field-works. There were hundreds of workers and labouring people who had gathered into armed units to repel fierce counter-attacks by U.S. and puppet troops in Phu Tho race-course area. Many schoolboys and schoolgirls stood in readiness at their position as first-aid nurses, ammunition and food suppliers or fighters themselves.

I met a combat group in the Cho Ray hospital area. A comrade in a grey shirt covered all over with dust, sat there on the ground, his back leaning against a wall, loading his gun. On seeing me, he smiled: "Hello, comrade!" His "comrade" sounded rather shy but so proud and intent.

"You're a schoolboy, aren't you?"

"Yes." Then he went on, "I'm living round there. On Tet days, some brothers of the Liberation Army dropped in, I asked to join them. They agreed and gave me this gun." So saying he patted gently the rifle which leaned upon his thigh.

"What marvellous rifles we have! A real delight to fire with!" he exclaimed.
"When did you learn shooting with a rifle?"

"When I went to school. They put us to military training. I just got some drilling or other. Now the brothers in our army teach me in earnest."

After a pause, he added: "Formerly, in demonstration clashes we had the better of them with nothing but bricks and stones. How can they oppose us now that we have guns in our hands!"

Two girls in violet bà ba pyjamas brought in a cask of water, helped everybody, then gaily asked:

"Got tired, brothers?"

"Never tired in fighting!"

The buzzing of helicopters was heard from afar. They were three coming up at different altitudes, one of them nearly touching the tops of the tamarind-trees. Their heavy machineguns let off a dense fire. Watching the flight of the copters, the young man said in indignation:

"Powerless when badly mauled by us, they send aircraft to bomb and fire incendiary bullets, burning many dwellings. And they have the cheek to say that the "Viet Cong set people's houses on fire". Those damned bandits must be duly punished!"

I left the comrades the very moment busy preparations for another fight were underway.

(Notes by the Liberation Radio correspondent in Saigon)
It was 6 a.m. on January 31. The Liberation forces got complete control of Chanh Tay, Huu Dai and Dong Ba gates, and were investing Tay Loc airfield and Mang Ca post.

In his inspection tour of the battlefield, company commander H. saw a twelve-year-old lad running from afar. Seeing a strange uniform, the child guessed it was that of the Liberation troops.

"Morning, uncle!" he greeted H. in a charming voice full of astonishment and hurried him, "It's daytime, why don't you withdraw? Here you'll lose your bearings and will be arrested!"

Not waiting for an answer, he fished some money out of his pocket and said, "I've got only this amount of money just given me by mother. Keep it for a drink. It's daytime, you'd better go away."

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Then he thrust the money into H.'s hand. Very moved, the company commander hugged him, saying, "We don't withdraw. We'll stay with our compatriots, with you, to fight the aggressors. Look, how many are our troops! Keep the money to buy sweets. We are not lacking of it."

H. put the money into the child's pocket and showed him the soldiers who were moving in the fortifications just built behind the rows of wayside trees. The little boy was as merry as a lark.

"So you stay here, don't you? How happy we are! I understand now why there was a lot of gunshots last night." Then he entreated the commander, "Let me accompany you."

"What for?" asked H.

"To do anything you like. I can guide you through the city's streets I know like the palm of my hand."

This gave H. food for thought. He went on inspecting the battlefield.

In the warm light of spring days, our fighters cleaned their weapons or strengthened their fieldworks for the next fight. H. walked to and fro in the trenches, followed by the unknown lad, the lovely image of the ancient capital, as lovely as a poem praising the beauty of the Huong River and the Ngu mountain.
AFTER Tet festival, old Nam was seen now at Kinh Xuoi, now at Cay Trom or Giong Luc or in any other place of Thanh My village where enemy posts had not yet surrendered.

Nam was a Khmer cadre of the Front organization of his native village. In these eventful days he was very busy.

His wife, Thach Thi Xuyen, though not a cadre was not idle at all. She would reply to anyone who advised her to take a rest, "Thieu and Ky have sold out the Vietnamese and Khmers to the Yankees. They've disembowelled our folk and starved the Khmers at Kinh Xuoi. My house was destroyed by them. I deeply hate them. I can no longer silently endure these sufferings. At the call of the Front, I must rise up despite my illness, to kill them so that we may be masters of our land."

an exploit of a khmer woman
In company of the Front’s cadres and other people, she would go daily to the posts of Dau Giang, Giua and Cuoi Giang, calling puppet soldiers to cross over to the people’s side. She used to shout, “You Khmers and Vietnamese, listen to me. It’s time to rise up. Don’t resist the Front, you’ll die a useless death. I am Nam Say’s wife. Do you hear me?”

Every time she said so, she would hear this answer: “Yes, we do, mother Nam.”

But one day succeeded another and none of the soldiers in the post gave up. Thach Thi Xuyen repeated the call again and again with more persuasive arguments supplied by her husband.

The puppet troops at Dau Giang said to her, “Tell the Front and Mr. Nam that we’ll surrender as soon as Thach My post is taken.”

Very angry, she brought the news to the knowledge of her husband, who said: “Tell them and their families that the revolution does not want to kill them. It only wishes that they side with the people. Not that the Front is incapable of taking that post, it only wants to wipe out such cruel thugs as those at Da Loc and the residence of the province chief.”

Old Nam told her a lot of things about the successful uprisings which had taken place in the last few days. Better armed she went on with her persuasion work.

Once she heard a call from the Dau Giang garrison: “Save us, Mr and Mrs Nam, tell the Front not to
kill us." This decision to join the Front was taken by the soldiers as a result of Thach Thi Xuyen's persevering efforts.

She spread the news of the seizure of Dau Giong to other garrisons and led the newly-rallied soldiers to take Giua post.

Upon their arrival, Giua post was in turmoil: the commander and his men rushed out with arms, ammunition and radio sets. Panic-stricken, the puppet troops at Dau Giang were about to run away when Thach Thi Xuyen told them seriously: "Don't fire at us, I'm Nam Say's wife. I advise you to join the Front just as the Dau Giong soldiers here present did."

From the post a loud voice was heard, "Save us, Mrs Nam."

The capture of Giua post over, Mrs Nam led the people and rallied soldiers to Cuoi Giong garrison, the enemy's last stronghold in Kinh Xuoi hamlet, and captured it.

Thus, in the first days of the general uprising, Thanh My village in Tra Vinh province, was completely liberated. It began to set up a local revolutionary power and build a free and happy life.

People in the region will never forget this captivating exploit of a Khmer woman. In this uprising, she and the local population liberated fifteen enemy posts thanks to their resourcefulness and the shining justice of the cause upheld by the National Front for Liberation.
A militia-girl in Quang Tri province, south of the Demilitarized Zone was selected and sent to the front as a sniper. In three days she killed 19 enemy troops. Here is a story of her exploit:

When she became a militia member, 17-year-old Tran Thi Buoi was given a rifle which filled her with the same joy as singing and skipping used to give her in her childhood. At night, on the bed she shared with her mother, being the youngest child and the pet of the family, Buoi often dreamed of hitting the bull's eye.

In the first days of February this year, the area's military command sent Buoi, as a sharp-shooter, to a Liberation Army unit. Buoi kept her mother completely in the dark, as she did not want the old woman to worry needlessly. On the eve of the big
journey, she only asked her mother to prepare for her some pressed rice.

"What for, my dear?", queried the mother.

"I'll go and do target practice, mummy."

Out at the front Buoi had quite a baptism of fire, and for three days the girl was not allowed to step out of her bunker. The fourth day, however, she was asked to give a hand to the cook.

"Well," she said, "I don't mind doing a bit of kitchen work. But my 7-day duty is almost over, and I haven't fired a single shot."

Then Buoi went to the kitchen as required of her.

"Now, girlie, do you want to go home or stay on here," asked the C.O. at the end of the week.

"I've come with a rifle, and I've eaten up my rice provisions. Still I haven't used my weapon once. What would you say in my place?"

Buoi's cautious words won her an extension of three days, and she was positioned on Hill 37 which dominated two enemy camps.

Early in the morning of the first day out, from behind the bag of sand on which she rested her telescopesighted rifle, Buoi spotted a G.I. She let off a shot. The G.I. bit the dust. A moment later he scrambled off. In her excitement, Buoi had missed him.

Half an hour had gone by, and another G.I. turned up with a bucket in his hand. Buoi's rifle crackled sharply. The Yank fell forward. He did not get up. Never again.
It was a long time before another marine could be seen. Another shot rang out. The ill-fated enemy collapsed, and his body rolled down the slope.

The second day of the big game shooting was more rewarding. With eight rounds Buoi got six kills. This, however, was not easy because the enemy riposted viciously with their machinegun fire, while their spotter planes looked high and low for the deadly sniper.

The enemy reacted even more frantically the following day. In addition to murderous machinegun fire on the ground U.S. jet fighter bombers and artillery from nearby sites pounded the suspected area relentlessly. Some of the explosions were so close that they almost lifted Buoi up from the ground, and literally buried her in dust.

After the bombardment had died out, an enemy fatigue party started repairing a house. Almost in one breath, Buoi shot a man off the roof where he was standing with a sheet of roofing, and knocked down three others. All in all, eleven enemy troops succumbed that day, Buoi's last in the field.
A mortar unit of the P.L.A.F. was ordered to attack the Yanks stationed in a school at B., a village in the periphery of Hue.

The night was pitch dark. Our fighters marched in Indian file, making as little noise as possible. Two scouts, who had been keeping a vigilant eye on the enemy’s movement ran back in a hurry and reported to the C.O., “They’ve moved to another place.” At once the officer said to their men, “Halt and disperse. Look out and wait for my orders.”

The unit split into groups. Each of them took position, and detached some men to mount guard for the others to rest.

The commanding staff held an emergency meeting with the scouts to know what was going on around the new position and work out a plan of action. As the pow-wow was in progress
a cocking was heard, then a challenge: "Who goes there? Halt! Are you Tam?"

The intruder, a white-haired old man all in sweat, answered, hemming and hawing, with the sentry's gun muzzle pressed against his chest, "No... I... I'm an inhabitant of this locality." Immediately he was surrounded by the group on duty.

A fighter asked him, "Where are you going?"

"The old man replied, "The enemy is no longer in the school. Take me to your commander at once."

"The fighters winked at one another. The men went on:

"The Yankees have changed their encampment since 8 p.m. They've left behind few empty tents to take you in. Now they've pitched camp on an open ground in the middle of our hamlet. We're suspicious of a trick, so we watched them closely. When we saw some troops go in the direction of the school, we were not clear whether they were friends or foes. So I've come to make sure of it. Now I'll show you the way. I know this locality like the palm of my hand."

The commander cast a quick glance at the two scouts who nodded. The meeting resumed. When it was over, the unit got orders to come into action. The old man was close on the heels of the commanding staff, eagerly waiting for some assignment. In the spring breeze, he could hardly hear the soft voice of

* Tam was the password.
the commander, "A tough task indeed! They're in the middle of the hamlet, near the inhabitants' huts. We must take care not to do any harm to our people."

Without hesitation, the old man cut in, "Don't worry. If need be, I will burn my hut to guide your fire."

Deeply moved, the commanding officer hugged the old man and said, "Thank you, father. We aren't yet driven to such extremity."

That night bullets rained thick on the enemy. The P.L.A.F. fire was so deadly that the people wondered whether their bullets had eyes.
By the end of January, the quiet Hue city suddenly awakened when the patriots fired their big guns, throwing the enemy into dismay.

In a villa which stood in Ly Thuong Kiet Street, the American "adviser" hastily jumped out of bed, conscious of an impending danger. But in whatever corner he tried to hide he found himself too conspicuous. Meanwhile, all his attendants also ran for cover.

By that time four Liberation fighters had made irruption into the house without, however, being able to find out any American.

"How could they have gone away so rapidly?" queried the group leader.

An old woman appeared on the scene. Living nearby she had followed on the heels of our fighters into the enemy's lair.
"There you are, my sons. I missed you so much!" said she in a broken voice while grasping the men's hands.

"O sons, how well you fought! We've been waiting for you for long years..." she continued.

Our fighters were deeply moved when hearing this from so old a woman.

"Mother, let us bring you to a secure place," a combatant suggested.

However, the old woman went on with her thought:

"They were completely caught off guard, you know. Now let's take a good look. They must be somewhere in this den."

Suddenly noticing a glittering car in the garage, she screamed:

"Ah, what did I tell you! His car is still there."

"Who is the owner of that car, mother?" a fighter asked.

"An American colonel, the 'top advisor' of the puppets in the city," the old woman said.

Then she went on with her search, which finally led her to the toilet. It never occurred to her that that brass-hat would disgrace himself by taking cover in such a place. After listening a moment, she seized the door's knob and gave a pull.

"He must be in here, lads," she called out, finding that the door was bolted from inside.

"Get out," she ordered the Yank while hammering at the door. "Get out or I'll bash your head in."
The Liberation fighters rushed forward and, together with the old woman, dragged out the Yank who stammered some English words, his face pale with fear and his hands up.

"What does he say, lads?" she asked our fighters.

"He begs us to spare him."

"Pooh! Only yesterday he looked quite smart sitting in his car and today he has to take cover in his toilet."

Now the 'top advisor' was marched off, his head bent and his foot bare...
THAT night, as the full moon was rising, we felt strangely excited. During the past days, we had learnt extraordinary news over our transistor receivers, from leaflets and loudspeakers of a Liberation propaganda armed unit, and conversations with friends, relatives and people in the area. An order had been given by the N.F.L. Central Committee:
The Americans and their henchmen came under repeated attacks and suffered heavy losses in our native provinces, in Saigon and throughout South Viet Nam. The commanding and security officers of our unit could not hide their anxiety, frustration and pessimism although they tried to ignore the people's big victories and conceal their masters' bitter failures and troubles.
Like the neighbouring posts, ours on Highway
N°7 which linked military sector Hiep Hoa to sub-sector Hau Nghia had been encircled by N.F.L. armed forces.

We came from different provinces: Can Tho, Tay Ninh, Long An. But, except for a handful of cruel thugs, we all had been pressganged or lured into the Saigon army; American shells and bombs had destroyed our native villages.

Duong Van Xuoi, who was past forty, had been drafted in early 1967. A few months later, his father was killed, his wife and children wounded in a bombing raid. By the end of the year it was the turn of his eldest son to be pressed into our unit.

Tran Van Trieu had been forcibly enrolled towards the middle of 1966. Late in 1967, his elder brother had the same lot.

No wonder that we all looked forward to an opportunity to abandon our criminal path and make our modest contribution to the struggle for national liberation.

The long-expected opportunity came at 1:15 a.m. when we started our action. We opened fire and killed immediately 14 cruel thugs, among them Lieutenant N'ghe, company commander, second Lieutenant Tu, deputy company commander and intelligence sergeant Hao. The two American advisers who tried to call for help through a radio transmitter were also liquidated. With their machineguns, Tran Van Trieu and Nguyen Van Hong felled another dozen wicked agents. The blockhouse defended by a machinegun was rapidly occupied.
Meanwhile, Duong Van Muoi and his son Duong Van Thuong killed the four non-com's in charge of the main gate. They opened the door for N.F.L. troops to go in. All the thugs were chastised next to no time, the rest lay down their weapons.

Thus, we captured the post of Rach Tien easily. The population came up to help us carry the booty away.

With Liberation troops, we searched for a platoon of civil guards hiding in the area and arrested a security agent who had killed many innocent people.

In all, we seized 74 carbins, 31 Garants, nine machineguns, two heavy machineguns, two 60-mm mortars, three M.79 guns, one radio set, 21 rifles, and many tons of ammunition.

The whole action lasted no more than an hour. We safely joined the liberated area where we received a warm welcome from the population, Front cadres and armed forces.

*(Told by the mutineers of Militia Company No 604)*
AFTER the armed forces and population of Thua Thien-Hue had captured the city, a shock group of the Liberation Art Ensemble came to entertain the townfolk while the Liberation troops’ guns were still crashing at the fleeing enemy in the outskirts. Tens of thousands of people turned out to attend the show. A great many had come from places two or three kilometres away.

The items performed—songs, dances and other specimens of a vigorous and wholesome art—gave a lively expression of the love for the fatherland and depicted the courage and resourcefulness of the people and armed forces of Hue and other parts of the country. They made the audience feel they were enjoying the happiest moments of their lives.

“Oh, what wonderful fighters you are, and what
wonderful singers too!" exclaimed an old woman, hugging a performer in her arms. An elderly professor who had been living for a long time in Hue had this to say:

"I want to express my appreciation to the Revolution and to you all, of your ability not only to fight the enemy, fire guns and wield bayonets, but also to preserve and develop the national heritage, the rich culture left by our forefathers."

After the performance, people crowded around the artistes, presenting them with bouquets, inquiring after themselves and their families. Children insisted on being taught the songs they had just heard. Everybody wanted to show his affection and admiration for the artistes of the P.L.A.F. which he had been longing to see for many years.

(From a report by Giai Phong Press Agency)
OUR troops stormed across C. bridge. The yellow-starred blue-red flag of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation was fluttering in the wind atop the bridge. On both sides of the street, from the shacks and also from the many-storeyed houses, people rushed out and stood at their doors or on their balconies watching our troops march into the city. All vehicles had pulled up along the kerb to let the fighters pass and also for the people riding on them to look more closely at those sons of Saigon whose images they had for years cherished. From the bridge, groups of young people dressed in various costumes and carrying rifles or sub machineguns stood at intervals of a few score yards on the pavements. All were wearing red armbands with this inscription.
in yellow or white letters: "Revolutionary self-defence corps". Branded as "insubordinate" or "stray" elements by the Saigon authorities, they were youngsters, school or college students, workers and labourers engaged in ensuring security for their wards and streets, and also for the revolutionary cadres and troops.

A young man in oil-stained worker's clothes was helping a friend carry a heavy bench from a house to a barricade being underway. Seeing a girl with a first-aid kit pass by, he called to her, "Hey, Nam, rush to the other end of the street. Bay's son has just been wounded by bullets from a helicopter." As the girl started running in the direction indicated, two armed young men hurriedly followed her, probably to see to her security. As the people were now masters of their wards and streets, the self-defence units and first-aid teams were busy all day long. We had won control over these quarters for only a few days and a lot of work had to be done to put things in order. The wicked agents in the pay of the Americans and their stooges had either been punished or had taken to their heels, having behind things to be cleaned up. Very few of the owners of big stores and factories had remained, and so self-defence units had to stand guard to protect their property. The people, including "stray" or "insubordinate" youngsters were keeping everything in good order. Local self-management committees were appointed to run local affairs. The first thing to do was to set up armed self-defence units to foil all counter-attacks by the adversary and liquidate
the remnants of enemy agents. Then first-aid teams and fire-brigades had to be organized to cope with the damage done by enemy artillery and air force. At the same time, workers and other people were sent to take care of stores, factories and depots. Rice, firewood and foodstuffs were distributed to the people. Cadres were sent to every street and home to advise people on how to dig trenches and build shelters for their own protection against hostile bombing and shelling.

While such urgent matters were being dealt with, enemy planes turned up. Palm-roofed huts in Binh Tien quarters were set afire by rockets and napalm. Reports streamed in:

"Some puppet soldiers have been killed by their own planes. Send men to bury them..."

"... houses have been set afire by napalm...

"A fire-brigade should be sent immediately..."

There was a lot of things to do. As a member in the ward Committee put it, "Every beginning is difficult..."

Fire-brigades were sent out. Medical workers also followed them to give first aid to the wounded.

In those days of general offensive the people had to look after everything: organizing relief to stricken areas, providing help to revolutionary cadres and troops, by either hunting down enemy agents or carrying ammunition, etc.

Y., an elderly woman at Binh Tay quarter, revealed to our troops two secret agents with many blood debts
towards the people. Two school-girls in Phu Dinh guided our fighters to wipe out a detachment of combat police plotting to counter the revolution. A Chinese youth chastised with a hammer a wicked inter-family secret agent who displayed a stubborn resistance. A docker on the Bach Dang wharf who had led the way to our troops into the rice-depot, now distributed foodstuffs to the people.

It was the first opportunity after a very long time for the people in this quarter to meet an entire unit of strong revolutionary forces. At Binh Thoi an elderly woman was seen stroking the hair of a young Liberation armyman, praising him for his good health and good look, which deeply moved everybody.

"Those puppets of the Americans have been saying that the Viet Cong are all pale and sickly. What shameless liars!"

She told him that her only son had been labelled as "insubordinate" by the Thieu-Ky administration. But after the revolutionary troops had entered the central part of the city, she said, a local cadre had told her that her son had been given a gun and armband with the inscription "Revolutionary self-defence corps".

"It is the first time I've been so happy," exulted a hoary old man, formerly a docker on Nghe wharf. Back in August 1945 he had once led a demonstration into the centre of Saigon to wrest power from the French and the Japanese. Now that he was a blind man and had to lean on a stick to grope his way, he contributed to the people's struggle by imparting his
he said: "If I'm allowed to fight, I'd be happy should I die in this street."

As the revolutionary troops penetrated deeper into the city, they had to fight for every house, every street corner. But even then, people came out of their houses, bringing to our fighters cakes, fruit, beer and other refreshments. A young girl with permed hair was seen handing a lemonade through a window to a Liberation armyman and stammering with emotion:

"Brother Viet Cong! Drink this before carrying on..."

"Why do you call me Viet Cong?"

"What should I call you then?"

"I'm a revolutionary fighter!"

And both of them laughed... Right at this moment, her mother handed her a water-melon and told her to pass it on to our fighter.

That day, the fight lasted until nightfall.

The cadre who told me the above story added:

"The support and encouragement given us by the Saigon people have instilled into us even more enthusiasm and pride. And that is why we are determined to fight to the end, until the aggressors and traitors are all destroyed."
experiences, boiling water and collecting bread for our fighters, or appealing to the puppet officers, soldiers and policemen to cross over to the people’s side and turn their guns at the Americans and the Thieu-Ky-Loan traitors to save the country and redeem their past misdeeds.

From Rach Ong (District 8) to District 7, through Binh Tay, Binh Tien, Phu Lam, Binh Thoi, Phu Tho Hoa (District 6) and from Dong Khanh, Hong Bang, Trang Tu, Nguyen Tri Phuong to Chi Hoa, Truong Minh Giang, etc., everywhere old folks, young people and even children belonging to all social strata actively took part in the Saigon uprising. There were instances in which revolutionary units fought for many days and nights on end without having time to look after their own supplies: the people brought them food and drink. “It is our duty to help the army as they help us to liberate our native land,” they said. And so everybody tried as best he could. Cakes and balls of rice carefully wrapped and bearing the words “Supplies for the Liberation troops” were piled up in front of every house. These gifts reminded our fighters and cadres of the bonds between the army and the people, between the revolutionaries and the compatriots living in the enemy’s grip.

“Supplies for the Liberation troops,” these words written on a small piece of paper pasted on a cake that a comrade who saw to our security had just picked up, stirred him to ask for a part in the fighting. After our group leader had explained him that his present assignment was also a revolutionary duty,
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