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1968, A YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED VICTORIES OF SOUTH VIET NAM'S REVOLUTIONARY FORCES

South Viet Nam PLAF Command's Dec. 20, 1968 communiqué
(Excerpts) *

VICTORIES IN ALL FIELDS

In the military field, according to still incomplete figures, the revolutionary forces :

— inflicted on the enemy 630,000 casualties including more than 230,000 U.S. and satellite troops. Besides, hundreds of thousands of puppet troops deserted or were disbanded ;

— wiped out or heavily decimated one brigade, 7 regiments and multi-battalion units, 187 battalions, 18 armour squadrons and over 750 U.S., satellite and puppet companies ;

— shot down, destroyed on the ground or damaged 6,000 aircraft of various kinds ;

— destroyed or damaged 13,500 military vehicles including more than 7,000 tanks and armoured cars ;

— sank or set afire 1,000 vessels, combat launches or cargo ships, 40 of which with a displacement capacity of 10,000 tons or more ;

— wrecked over 1,100 artillery pieces ;

— set ablaze more than 700 ammunition storages or fuel dumps ;

— blew up over 700 bridges ;

— and razed to the ground or forced the enemy out of 1,500 military sub-sectors and posts.

These achievements by

far surpass those in 1966 and 1967 put together. In particular, the number of U.S. troops wiped out in 1968 nearly equals that for the whole 1961-1967 period.

These figures spell out the great successes of the South Viet Nam liberation forces and people in a one-year period. They are all the more significant since they were recorded at a time when the enemy still had more than one million U.S. and puppet troops. What is remarkable is that all the crack units of the enemy have taken casualties of fifty per cent of their strength upward. All the cities and towns in South Viet Nam including Saigon, the last hide-out of the enemy, came under fire again and again.

Almost all of the enemy nerve organs from central to grassroot levels suffered heavy losses. All the vital communication lines of the enemy were repeatedly attacked or cut off.

All the three kinds of our armed forces—the regular army the regional and guerilla forces—have grown up in the course of the fighting and building. Their successes have been on the increase in size and in number on all battlefields, in the highland area, the plains as well as cities and towns. They have completely defeated the two-pronged “search-and-destroy” and “pacifi-

cation” plan of the enemy and foiled all their strategies and tactics as well as their large-scale operations.

On the political plane, the widespread uprisings of our people are a momentous and creative outcome of the fierce and dauntless progress of the South Viet Nam revolution. Tens of millions of our people have resolutely risen up to win back the right to be masters of the country.

The development supplies the most eloquent expression of the heroic stand and earnest aspiration of our entire people who had rather die than be enslaved and who prize independence and freedom more than anything else.

Our people's great uprisings are credited with the liberation and complete control of more than 1,000 additional hamlets. Over 2 million more people have been freed from the enemy's grip. Revolutionary power has been set up in many villages, districts and provinces, which politically has dealt a mortal blow at the U.S.-puppets, shattering their control by big chunks, and knocking off the “legal and constitutional” varnish of the puppet reactionary Thieu-Ky administration which, in fact, represents

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* Sub-heads and emphases are ours Ed.



The Viet Nam People's Army, founded on Dec. 22, 1944, is now 24 years old.
Photo : An infantry unit on the move.

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S MESSAGE

TO THE AMERICAN FRIENDS WHO OPPOSE THE U.S. IMPERIALISTS' WAR OF AGGRESSION IN VIET NAM

On the occasion of New Year 1969, I would like to extend to you my most cordial wishes for peace and happiness.

In the past year, the U.S. government had to stop unconditionally the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. That is a great victory common to the whole Vietnamese people, the progressive people in the United States and the peace- and justice-loving forces in the world.

However, the U.S. ruling circles still indulge in acts encroaching on the sovereignty and security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. In South Viet Nam, they intensify the war of aggression, impelling over half a million young Americans to massacre the civilian population, committing monstrous crimes. But the more obstinately they cling to South Viet Nam and maintain in power their Saigon puppets, the more they impair the interests of the United States, increase the number of young Americans sent to a useless death on the Viet Nam battlefield, and cause sufferings to many families in your country.

For the United States, the way to an honourable solution is to withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam and let the South Vietnamese people settle themselves their own affairs in accordance with the Political Programme of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, without any foreign interference.

The Vietnamese people, having gone through over twenty years of uninterrupted war, deeply cherish peace, a peace in genuine independence and freedom. But so long as their country is subjected to aggression, they are determined to fight on till total victory. With the invincible strength of their national unity, and the warm support of their brothers and friends in all continents our people are sure to attain their objectives : to liberate the South, to defend the North, to proceed to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, thereby contributing to the maintenance of peace in Asia and the world.

I warmly hail the courageous struggle of our American friends whatever the colour of their skin, to demand that the U.S. government stop the aggressive war in Viet Nam ; that is a struggle which, while supporting our people's resistance fight, defend the interests and honour of the American people and safeguard the life of their boys.

I wish you further successes in this just struggle.

Good health and good luck for the New Year.

HO CHI MINH

NFL AND DRVN DELEGATIONS' JOINT COMMUNIQUE on U.S. Puppets' Holding Up Paris Conference

THE delegation of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation led by Mr. Tran Buu Kiem and the delegation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam led by Minister Xuan Thuy to the quadripartite Paris Conference on Viet Nam on December 24 held talks at the seat of the delegation of the NFL. The two delegations published on December 25 the following joint communique :

“1. After U.S. President L. Johnson was compelled on October 31, 1968 to declare the unconditional cessation of bombardments on the whole territory of the DRVN and, at the same time, proposed that the Paris conference on Viet Nam be held on November 6, 1968, the government of the DRVN and the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam N.F.L. respectively issued on November 2 and November 3, 1968, declarations reaffirming their position to resolutely

struggle for independence and freedom, and accepting to participate in the four-delegation Paris conference including the DRVN, the South Viet Nam, NFL, the U.S. and the Saigon administration. On November 4, 1968, Mrs Nguyen Thi Binh, the representative of the NFL came to Paris, ready to take part in the conference. But the Saigon administration, by means of tortuous arguments, refused to send its representatives to the conference on schedule. Confronted with this situation, the representatives of the DRVN and of the NFL proposed to the representatives of the U.S. that the three delegations already present in Paris should start the conference and that the representatives of the Saigon administration would join in as soon as they arrived in Paris. The U.S., however, did not accept this proposal, therefore over one month has

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1968, A YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED VICTORIES OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S REVOLUTIONARY FORCES

(Continued from page 1)

nobody. Even in its infancy, the people's revolutionary power is full of vitality, and brilliantly vindicates the superiority of a revolutionary power of the people and for the people.

The emergence of the **Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces** has given the national front against U.S. aggression, for national salvation a substantial push forward while further aggravating the isolation of the enemy and causing, deeper splits in their ranks, narrowing down their political following into a mere gang of cruel agents with many blood debts to our people, a clique of dirty reactionaries who depend for their survival on the U.S. imperialists' neo-colonialist policy.

For North Viet Nam, the year was also a year of tremendous achievements, with the people and armed forces successfully thwarting all U.S. moves in its war of destruction, shooting down over 3,250 modern U.S. aircraft, and finally forcing the U.S. into the unconditional cessation of all air, naval and artillery bombardments on the whole DRVN territory.

In the diplomatic field, the general offensives and widespread uprisings in the past year have had wide repercussion in the whole world and in the United States itself. The South Vietnamese people's iron-like determination to liberate the country is enlisting more sympathy from millions of people of different races and languages.

Under the impact of the South Vietnamese people's enduring struggle the U.S. has been forced to agree to negotiate with the NFL in Paris. The NFL has been enjoying wholehearted support from the world peoples who see in it the inspirer, organizer and leader of the South Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, the spokesman of the South Viet Nam people's aspirations for peace and independence, the authority fully competent to see to all matters related to the political settlement of the South Viet Nam issue. On both the diplomatic front and the battlefield, the N.F.L. — genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people — is pressing attacks on the U.S. imperialists — chieftain of imperialism — while the whole progressive mankind including the peace- and justice-loving people in the United States, is militating for an immediate end to the U.S. war of aggression and the pull-out of all U.S. troops.

IMPORTANT SIGNIFICANCE OF THOSE VICTORIES

1 — **THE** great and all-sided victories in 1968 have brought about for the South Vietnamese people a new strategic position and endowed them with a new strength and a new ability. They have given an impetus to the combined strength of the people in the new mili-

tary situation, and have given rise to new and favourable opportunities for the continuation of the general offensives and widespread uprisings till complete victory.

The dramatic changes in the war situation have found a concentrated expression in the following points:

The enemy are bogged down neck-deep in their defensive strategy in South Viet Nam. Before he had time to redeploy after the failure of his 1968 "search-and-destroy" and "pacification" plans he had to switch abruptly to the passive "hold-and-clear" strategy which has been receiving crushing blows right from the beginning and is torn by internal contradictions: contradiction between the purpose of the aggressive war — to defeat the opponent by military offensive — and the present defensive strategy contradiction between the role of U.S. troops now bearing the brunt of the war and the need to "de-Americanize" the war to ease the tension in the United States; contradiction between the weakening puppet army and its duty of taking over the burden of the war; contradiction between concentration and dispersion of forces respectively to defend the towns and pacify the countryside; contradiction between the ambitious designs of the aggressors and the sinking morale and low combat efficiency of both U.S. and puppet troops who get disgusted with the war and want peace now; contradiction — between the political objectives of neo-colonialism and the barbarous war methods, etc.

Outwardly the enemy's defensive perimeter looks firm enough, with layer after layer of defensive lines. But in fact it is *vulnerable*, and has exposed the enemy to repeated attacks, and continual strategic encirclement on the whole battlefield, especially in urban areas.

Militarily, the enemy's strategic posture is brought about by the over-all weakness of position and difficulties of the U.S. in the political, economic and diplomatic field in Viet Nam, at home, and elsewhere. This has placed the enemy on the horns of a dilemma, making it impossible for him either to attack or to hold his ground. If the U.S. stubbornly persists in its war, it will not escape heavier and more humiliating setbacks.

2. — The great, all-sided victories won by the South Vietnamese people and their armed forces in the past year have triggered off serious upheavals in the U.S., and conditioned the failures of the chieftains of the U.S. warmongers right on the political front in the United States. Divergences have been growing between the U.S. people and the U.S. government, between different ruling circles and even among government officials of the U.S. The U.S. has become more and more isolated in the world and more alienated from even its allies apart from innumerable economic

and financial difficulties which exert a deteriorating influence upon the already unstable political situation.

3. — The Viet Nam people's considerable and comprehensive achievements have dealt a mortal blow at the Saigon puppet administration, rendering its fabric looser, and making its doom all the more inescapable.

Under the impact of the onslaughts of South Viet Nam's revolution, the confusion among U.S. puppet ranks has increased, and so have the differences among the traitors. By stepping up pressganging, repression, looting, the enemy is directly harming the interests of many strata of the people, thereby exacerbating their hatred and strengthening their resolve to overthrow the puppet clique of traitors already torn asunder by rivalries and personal ambitions.

4. — The South Vietnamese people's victories give a strong fillip to the world revolutionary movement especially to the struggle of the people against imperialism, first and foremost against U.S. imperialism. They have brought home to the world's peoples with greater force that under present-day historic conditions, a nation, small but united and having a sound political line, a closely-knit organization and a firm resolve to fight for independence and freedom, is fully capable of defeating any colonialist or imperialist army of aggression.

The movement against U.S. aggression and in support of Viet Nam has spread to all parts of the world and in the United States as well where the front against the ruling circles and in support of Viet Nam is broadening.

THE above brings out in bolder relief the magnitude of the successes scored by South Viet Nam revolutionary forces in 1968. The significance of their victories lies in the fact that the results of a long and arduous struggle, the fruit of sustained and unusual efforts and of lofty and immense sacrifices of the entire South Vietnamese people; they are a vivid illustration of the undauntedness of the Vietnamese nation.

These victories are of special significance in the sense that the Vietnamese people and armed forces not only dare to fight but also know how to fight against the most up-to-date strategies and tactics and all modern war theories of the present capitalist world.

Bygone is the time when imperialism ruled the roost over the five continents. The chieftain of the imperialists — the U.S. imperialists — is unable to reverse the wheels of history. Viet Nam's victory over the U.S. imperialist has filled with pride and self confidence not only the Vietnamese people but also the whole progressive mankind.

THE U.S. continued acts of war against the DRVN during the first half of Dec. 1968 were denounced by the Commission for Investigation of the U.S. Imperialists' War Crimes in Viet Nam in a most recent communique.

The communique pointed out that while in South Viet Nam, the U.S. was speeding up its "accelerated pacification" programme which mainly consists in wholesale destruction, especially with B52 raids, and herding of the people into disguised concentration camps, in North Viet Nam it intensified provocations and more blatant violations of the sovereignty and security of the DRVN and committed new crimes.

The U.S. acts of war in this period were characterized by the following:

U.S. steps up provocations against DRVN in December First Half

1. Intensification of reconnaissance flights.

430 sorties of manned and robot planes conducted 345 spy missions over 24 provinces, cities in the north and Vinh Linh area as compared with 140 sorties in the first 15 days of Nov. 1968. The lowest figure was 18 missions on December 5 while the highest, 44, was reached on Dec. 15. In the area stretching from Nghe An to Ben Hai river, there were as many as 300 spy sorties carried out by U.S. planes. Hanoi airspace was violated 4 times, Haiphong's 3 times.

2. Attacks against populous areas, new crimes in Quang Binh, Ha Tinh, Nghe An and Vinh Linh area.

On the strength of such arbitrary declarations as "using many means necessary including suppressive fire to rescue its reconnaissance pilots who may go down in North Viet Nam", the U.S. has sent many groups of F4s, F105s... to bomb and strafe populous villages and hamlets located in Quang Binh, Ha Tinh, Nghe An and Vinh Linh area, and in 38 raids, U.S. planes dropped 50 demolition and blast bombs, over 100 CBUs and fired numerous missiles, rockets and zomm shells...

on a State farm and 3 villages in Vinh Linh area, 17 villages in Quang Binh, one in Ha Tinh, one in Nghe An.

1. **Quang Binh** on Dec. 4, 7, 8, 9 and 12, U.S. planes flew 29 attacks with demolition and steel-pellet bombs against 17 villages in 5 districts (out of a total of 6 districts) killing 3 people, wounding 55 others, destroying 30 houses and other property and many crop fields.

There were 9 strikes on Dec. 7 alone and 7 on Dec. 9. On Dec. 7 in two raids on Nghia Ninh village, 4 "Phantoms" released 8 demolition and blast bombs killing 5 people, wounding 8 others, most of them women and old folks, and burning down 15 houses. On Dec. 9, at 10 hours, 2 F4s dropped 4 CBUs on Canh Duong village, Quang Trach

district, making 15 casualties.

In Ha Tinh on Dec. 7, two F4s dropped 4 CBUs on Ky Lam village, killing or wounding 10 people working in the field.

In Nghe An on Dec. 9, at 10.55 hours, U.S. planes fired 2 Shrike missiles on Nghi Khanh village, 12 kms north-east of Vinh city.

In Vinh Linh area on Dec. 1, 2, 3, and 4 U.S. planes attacked 7 times with demolition and steel pellet bombs a State farm and 4 populous points in Vinh Son village located in the Demilitarized Zone and two adjoining villages.

Besides, U.S. artillery based south of the Demilitarized Zone and from U.S. warships made nine shellings in three days (Dec. 4, 5 and 13) firing 130 rounds on 3 villages in the northern part of the Demilitarized Zone; the USS New Jersey on Dec. 3 and 5, slammed twelve big shells into Vinh Son village, causing considerable damage to the people's property.

THE communique remarked in conclusion that such frantic acts of war belied the words of peace of the U.S. ruling circles.

THE outgoing year is thus a year of unprecedented victories of the South Vietnamese people and armed forces.

These tremendous successes can be ascribed to:

— The sound revolutionary line worked out by the NFL.

— The matchless valour and efforts of the entire South Vietnamese people who have brought into full play their tradition of thorough revolutionary spirit, their undauntedness and their supreme heroism in the struggle for independence, freedom, democracy, peace and national

reunification.

— The wholehearted support of socialist North Viet Nam — the great and solid rear area of the whole country.

— The sympathy and support and substantial assistance of the socialist camp and the growing sympathy and support of the world's people and of the U.S. progressives as well.

THE communique ended with a call for watchfulness in face of the utter obduracy of the U.S. imperialists whose defeat is but a foregone conclusion!

THE NORTH—GREAT REAR BASE OF THE SOUTH

ARMY AND PEOPLE IS ONENESS IN FIGHTING

FIGHTING was raging. The A-A battery thundered away in deafening blasts while American bombs fell in thick clusters.

Le Thi Lien gently placed her dozing daughter on the bamboo bed and, after edging her way out of the shelter she made directly for the village border. Eagerly she seized an ammunition case and swung it onto her shoulder. That made her completely tilt on one side. Hardly noticing the heavy weight, she began running as fast as her legs could carry her in the direction from which came the "command" tocsin, just as in the days of her maidenhood. The front part of her shirt was caked with a thick layer of milk.

An elderly co-op farmer called out:

"Hey there, who asked you to come? Your babe is just a few months old!"

Lien replied:

"Nobody asked me, but I thought of Sung and I couldn't not bear staying home. And I do not carry much, you see!"

THE man Lien referred to as Sung was company political instructor Dang Ngoc Sung of the anti-aircraft regiment X. On June 9, 1966, in the thick of a battle against U.S. aircraft, as he was standing at his command post high on a gun site, a bomb fell nearby, burying him under half a metre of earth. No sooner had he struggled out than another bomb knocked him down into a combat trench a dozen yards away. His ears were all drumming. He tried to rise to his feet but in vain: a bomb splinter had sliced off part of his left heel, baring the bone. Another splinter stuck in his side. The command staff ordered him to leave the gun emplacement. But he insisted on being allowed to stay and continue directing the fight. The sun was blazing scorchingly. Sweat and cough-

lated blood made stiff patches on his clothes. As he could not walk, Sung who was also Party secretary of the company, crawled to each gun site to instil the strength of the Party leadership into each fighter and pass them the order from higher quarters.

The sun had sunk behind the mountain range. The fight stopped after three American planes went down in the area.

Only then did Sung let himself be placed on a stretcher and taken to hospital. Many local people who were also under treatment there came to inquire about his feats. But Sung only smiled and said unassumingly:

"Well, it was nothing very unusual."

And he recounted to them the courageous deeds of many other men in his regiment.

The patients, after recovery, went back to their village and spread round the stories told by Sung.

ONE day, as they returned from a grass-cutting trip, three girls, Lien, Dao and Kinh, saw a row of cooking pots filled with rice and vegetables lined up along the bamboo groves whose tops had been truncated by American bombs. They quickly gathered that the men of Regiment X had just left for an emergency mission, having no time to take their lunch. It was nearly noon. The girls were themselves tormented by hunger and at first decided to go home for lunch then come back and carry foods to the army men. But the story of army cook Kiem which they had just heard

at the medical station was fresh in their mind. It is like this: Kiem returning from a supply mission stopped off on the way to visit his family with 50 kilograms of food for his unit dangling on his shoulder pole when enemy planes raided his village. He came home only to find that his brother had been killed by an American bomb and his wife who had just been taken out of a smashed shelter was still unconscious. However, overcoming his grief, after burying his brother and cheering up his wife, he set out again, crossing the field while the bombing was still going on, to catch up with his unit which by now had gone a score miles away. The example set by the army cook made the girls almost completely forget their hunger. And they eagerly placed the cooking pots into the baskets and off they went after the gunners guided by the traces left by the gun carriages.

THEN there was the story of Miss Hoan calling a meeting of her production team to discuss measures to combat pest. Before she had any clear idea of what should be done, Hoan reminded all present of the action of four members of Regiment X who used an anti-aircraft gun to sink an American commando boat.

That day Ba's crew consisted of barely four men from four different branches. Tinh was a worker at an arms manufacture. An came from a signal unit. Lien was scout. Only Ba was a gunner. The four were engaged in drilling to become "versatile fighters" when a U.S. commando boat,

taking advantage of the misty weather, approached the coast. What a fat target! Should they let the chance slip when the enemy had brought himself up to right in front of their gun muzzle? But had any book ever taught them to fire at a ship with an anti-aircraft gun? Nevertheless, keeping to the ground rule of revolutionary war, namely to fight the enemy with any weapon at your disposal and be always on the offensive, the four decided to open up at the ship. The barrel of their gun lowered slowly. After carefully taking aim, they let off the first round which bore into the ship's cabin. Without hesitation, they now fired a long burst. The marauding craft, hit almost at point blank, was ripped open and went to the bottom instantly before it could return a single shot.

All members of Hoa's production team called back to mind the story and felt stronger in their determination to combat the insects with their own means—insecticide, herbs, soot, kitchen ash—and finally the crops were saved.

LEARNING from, and emulating, one another, the armed forces and people in Vinh Linh have honourably fulfilled their tasks and have defeated the U.S. war of destruction against their locality. Anti-aircraft Regiment X alone has shot down 109 U.S. planes, effectively defending the lives and property of the people. In return, the people in Vinh Linh, enjoying effective protection from the army, have achieved good results in production, and successes in the fighting, and supplied good help to the fighters.



Sword-drill by Y. village (Ha Tay province) militiamen

The "Radar Boy"

EDITOR'S NOTE: Within over 1,000 days, the U.S. carried out nearly 600 air and naval bombardments on a village in Nghe An province, North Viet Nam. Yet, only a few persons were injured. A share of this civil defence exploit goes to a little boy whose story is told by Nhan Dan's correspondent in the province. Following is a slightly abridged version of it:

EVERY day, after class time, Ta Quang Ty, 11, loitered around the combat positions of his village militia and insisted on being given something to do in the fight against U.S. planes.

"Let me stand guard so you may have one more fighting man!" he told Nguyen Van Son, the plane-hunting group leader.

The request was referred to the Secretary of the village Party Committee. After weighing the pros and cons, he said to the group leader:

"All right, there can be no age limit when it comes to fighting the U.S. aggressors. Give him an alarm gun."

The militiamen soon brought back a dud bomb, 196k off the

explosive charge, and hung it on a solid tripod installed on an air-raid warning shelter.

Ty was overjoyed at the assignment, not only because it suited his temperament. An American missile had killed Hai and Thang, two close class-mates of his. American bombs had also killed a dozen other pupils and levelled his school.

"What right have the Yanks to come here, and why are they so cruel?" The question came back every now and then to his mind.

He wished he could quickly become a jet pilot or an anti-aircraft gunner to give the U.S. air pirates the punishing blows they deserved.

Unfortunately he was still a small boy...

"Well," he said to himself, "I'll use my eyes, my ears and my hands to give prompt warnings to the villagers against in-coming planes."

On late afternoons, when the sky turned light blue and the breeze briskly pushed the brown sails towards the shore, Ty, standing at his look-out, wished he could give just one stroke at the bomb shell, indicating that no plane was in sight and that the villagers might go on with their work. Unfortunately such afternoons were very rare!

On rainy nights, when the howl of the sea wind mingled with the roar of warplanes or the rumble of warships, Ty would come out of his shelter and try to distinguish between the murmur of his "native sea" and "the noise made by the enemy."

What a difficulty, indeed! How to sound the alarm pro-

perly so the villagers could go on sleeping when they could, or get up and out to the shelters when they had to.

"Keep your ears pricked up and your eyes skinned." This counsel from group leader Son was always in Ty's mind.

By continually watching the movement of enemy planes, Ty gradually got used to every one of their tricks and could make rather good guesses of what they were up to.

Every time he struck the bomb case twice, the villagers understood that the planes were only flying past. When the planes were about to dive, he gave three beats. Often, after sounding the alarm he had just time to jump into the shelter before the bombs exploded. The bomb-tocsin itself was hit many times by bomb splinters. Once the enemy fired a burst of 20mm cannon fire on his shelter. The bullets whizzed a few feet past the back of his neck. But Ty was not scared for he was able always to see the enemy's intentions. Once the planes were virtually skimming the coast. Yet, Ty struck only twice. In the hamlets, the hand-locks continued click-

ing, while on the river the boats continued to ferry passengers.

That pattern of life has been going on for nearly four years now in village T., Quynh Luu district, Nghe An province. Ta Quang Ty has for more than 1,000 days stood guard beside his bomb-tocsin and has used up five hammers striking at the bomb shell which itself has carved in on one side. U.S. planes and warships have carried out nearly 600 bombardments against the village, but only a few among the villagers were wounded. This was thanks to the good shelters, the good defence, and also the prompt alerts sounded by the cool-headed little boy.

Once Ty saw no plane but only a flash of fire streaking out of a high and distant altar. He struck three times. The villagers jumped into the shelter and before they knew where they were, an air-to-ground missile had crashed into the village, followed by an enemy plane.

Since then, the villagers have been thinking more highly of Ta Quang Ty and his hamlet from the "Radar Boy".

EIGHT YEARS OF STRUGGLE, EIGHT YEARS OF VICTORIES

Ed.— On the occasion of the 8th founding anniversary of the South Viet Nam NFL, Gai Phong Press Agency has just released a long article reviewing the achievements of the NFL in the struggle against U.S. aggression over the past 8 years.

We give below an abridged version of the article. As for its last part devoted to the year 1968, we shall give only brief excerpts. Our readers are invited to see for more details, excerpts of the PLAF communiqué in this issue.

THESE last 8 years constitute a decisive period in the history of the South Vietnamese people's revolutionary struggle, a period marked by two opposite processes which have wholly changed the initial situation:

— As far as the U.S. aggressors and their flunkies are concerned, it has been a downhill march. They began with the massive dispatch of U.S. troops to South Viet Nam with a view to a quick victory, and now they are seeking to "de-Americanize" the war of aggression. They began by trying with all means to annihilate the South Viet Nam people's armed forces and now they admit that a military solution to the South Viet Nam problem is not feasible and are striving hard to seek a political solution advantageous for them. They began by obstinately refusing to recognize the NFL and now they agree to enter into talks with it.

— As far as the South Vietnamese people are concerned, it has been an upward climb. They began with guerilla actions by scattered forces supplied with rudimentary weapons and now they have at their disposal big and well-armed units capable of attacking even the most strongly guarded lairs of the enemy. They began with isolated uprisings against a numerically superior enemy and now they stage generalized uprisings, overwhelming the enemy everywhere. As for the National Front for Liberation, at the beginning it gathered only a restricted number of people and today it has become a powerful force, rallying under its banner different social classes and strata and revolutionary organisations in South Viet Nam, is doing the duty of a real people's administration and enjoys the confidence and protection of the popular masses and a high prestige in the world.

It is an undeniable fact that, from weak, the South Vietnamese people's position have now become strong, and that for the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys, the process has just been the other way round.

OVER these past 8 years, the South Vietnamese people, who have been resisting the biggest army of aggression history has ever known, have been winning tremendous victories.

Preliminary statistics show that during this period, reckoning up to the beginning of Oct. 1968 only, close to 2 million enemy troops were killed, wounded or captured, and a large number of others disbanded. American and satellite casualties alone ran to the region of 500,000 men. Enemy material losses included more than 13,000 planes and helicopters shot down or destroyed on the ground, about 26,000 military vehicles among them nearly 12,000 tanks and armoured cars destroyed, more than 1,100 war vessels, combat launches and military freighters sunk burnt or damaged.

Political actions by the civilians have been staged concurrently with military operations of the armed forces and have greatly contributed to the latter's victories. In those 8 years, an estimated aggregate 140 million turn-out has been recorded in political demonstrations in varied forms and on various scales.

At first, the slogans were meant to denounce enemy crimes, demand payment of compensations, boycott reactionary policies and measures, secure democratic liberties and vital economic rights.

Today they are aimed at the overthrow of the puppet administration, the withdrawal of all U.S. troops, the people's right to sovereignty, independence and freedom and the re-establishment of peace. Since last "Tet", this movement has been gaining fresh momentum and has turned an armed insurrectional drive in the whole of South Viet Nam. It has reduced to failure a strategic plan of the aggressors: conduct aggression under a neo-colonialist form.

Agitation work among enemy troops has also yielded great successes. According to still incomplete figures, by Sept. 1968, more than 467,000 puppet soldiers had deserted or had been disbanded. Developments on the battlefield today clearly show that the puppet army is not viable without the backing of U.S. troops.

The victories recorded in all fields by the South Viet Nam armed forces and people in the period under review have made possible the emergence of a vast liberated zone stretching from the 17th parallel to the Ca Mau point over four-fifths of South Viet Nam's territory with two-thirds of the population. In these liberated areas, a new

political power, revolutionary power, really representing the legitimate interests and aspirations of the people, has been established or is in the making in many localities. In fact, the puppet administration now controls, and superficially at that, only some sectors, in the cities and along a number of arteries.

The NFL leads, organizes and mobilizes the South Vietnamese people in the resistance to U.S. aggression. It finds growing favour in the eyes of various strata of the people, including those in the cities and areas still under enemy control. The coming into existence of the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces which approves the Political Programme of the Front and its 5 points has spelled out the Front's influence among the urban population and marked a new expression of the bloc of national union in the struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

In the international arena, the credit of the Front also constantly grows. Up to now, the Front has established 21 representations and 2 information bureaux abroad and has sent 168 delegations to international, regional and national conferences and 237 delegations on friendly visits to many countries. Its affiliated organizations are members of 11 international organizations.

Although the U.S. aggressors still refuse to recognize the Front, they have been compelled to accept talks with the Front's representa-

tives, in Paris, to seek a political solution to the South Viet Nam problem. Thus, willy nilly, they have had, in fact, to recognize the decisive role of the NFL in the settlement of the South Viet Nam problem.

In this period of 8 years of struggle waged by the South Vietnamese people against the U.S. aggressors, for national salvation, under the leadership of the NFL, the year 1968 incontestably, occupies a particularly important place.

The South Vietnamese people have won, since the launching of the generalized attacks and uprisings on the night of Jan. 30, 1968 great, multilateral and strategically significant victories. Their resistance to U.S. aggression has thus entered into a new period, the period of outburst of impetuous and sustained attacks and uprisings, forerunners of final victory. For the enemy, this is a period of irresistible gliding toward his ultimate doom.

Parallel to the prodigious growth of the Liberation Army in all fields, the guerilla has also made enormous progress. In the first 6 months of the generalised attacks and uprisings, the militia, guerillas and armed population took a toll of nearly 60,000 enemy casualties, shot down, destroyed or damaged 450 planes and helicopters, wrecked 1,300 military vehicles, razed more than 700 posts and seized about 3,000 weapons of different types.

Backed by the impetuous widespread attacks by the PLAF, the armed uprisings of the people in turn provided support for the latter's operations by making away with cruel thugs, breaking the enemy's grip, cutting communication lines and besieging enemy posts.

Like the armed uprisings, the unarmed political struggle of the popular masses has experienced a new development. According to still incomplete statistics, since

last "Tet", the aggregate total participation in political struggle in South Viet Nam has reached the 20-million mark.

One of the striking features of the situation is the ever more active share of the people in the movement of agitation among the puppet soldiers.

Immediately after the launching of the Tet generalised attacks and uprisings, tens of thousands of officers and men of the puppet army, responding to the NFL appeal and persuaded by the popular masses, left the enemy ranks. In the sector Northwest of Saigon alone, the action by the masses and by relatives of puppet armymen provoked, in 8 months, a disintegrating process which affected 7,000 enemy soldiers.

Compared with the previous years, the total number of mutinies and revolts staged by officers and men of the puppet army has increased substantially.

The morale of U.S. troops has also been sinking critically. In all U.S. divisions, numerous GI's, seized with fear, sought to avoid combat with the PLAF, deserted to take refuge in major cities, refused to take part in military operations, and demanded repatriation. Cases of GI's surrendering to the PLAF were also recorded.

The victories of the South Viet Nam people and their armed forces, the enlargement of the liberated zone and the growing prestige of the NFL, at home and abroad, have made it possible to establish revolutionary power at various levels. This new event has given rise in the liberated rural areas to a new atmosphere of overflowing zeal and enthusiasm.

The new power continued to distribute land to those peasants who lack it and helps them, in particular, to organize themselves into mutual-aid teams with a view to boosting production. Great attention has been paid to the development of education, health and cultural work.

Eloquent Figures

South Viet Nam Liberated Areas Constantly Strengthened and Widened

In the first 45 days of the generalised attacks and popular uprisings in early spring this year alone, thousands of enemy-built "strategic hamlets" were destroyed and more than 1.6 million people liberated. In the Quang Tri — Thua Thien — Hue sector, the local armed forces and people liberated most of the rural areas and even seized control of key populated areas on the outer fringe of Hue city: 330,000 of the total 380,000 inhabitants were freed.

From Aug. 22 to Sept. 20, people in the coastal plain of Central Trung Bo launched simultaneous and widespread attacks, destroying 248 concentration areas and "strategic hamlets" and

liberating 13 more villages and 51 more hamlets with a nearly 119,000 population.

— By the end of Oct. 1968, nearly 200 village people's liberation committees had been set up in Central Nam Bo; in Central Trung Bo, revolutionary power had been established in 450 villages. In Quang Ngai alone, by the end of Aug. 1968, revolutionary power had been instituted in 107 of the total 150 villages. Provincial and municipal people's liberation committees have been elected in Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Hue, Gia Lai, Quang Nam, Da Nang, Ca Mau, My Tho and Kien Phong.

— From 1960 to 1968, more than 2 million out of

the total 3 million hectares of cultivated land had been allotted to peasants in the liberated areas. The majority of the peasants has taken the path of co-operative farming (mutual-aid and work-exchange teams...)

— In 1966, the liberated zone had 5,994 general education schools with an over 500,000 enrolment. In 1967, general education further developed and many more schools were built in the liberated hamlets and villages close to enemy posts. In Western Nam Bo, there are at present 1,671 primary schools and 10 elementary schools with nearly 100,000 pupils. In Central Nam Bo, 1,250 new primary and elementary classes have been opened for 42,000 pupils.

"ANY AGGRESSOR WHO PERSISTS IN HIS ATTEMPT AGAINST OUR COUNTRY WILL INEVITABLY COURT SHAMEFUL FAILURE"

(From General Vo Nguyen Giap's Speech at the ceremony commemorating the founding of the Viet Nam People's Army)

THE 24th anniversary of the founding of the VNPA, one of the principal instruments of our people's revolutionary struggle for national independence and socialism, was solemnly observed in our country at the same time with the 23rd anniversary of the First National Resistance. At a grand meeting held in Hanoi on Dec. 21 in the presence of President Ho Chi Minh and leading Party and Government officials, General Vo Nguyen Giap, member of the CC of the Political Bureau of the CC of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, Vice Premier and Minister for National Defence, delivered an important speech.

The speaker, with his usual insight, made an analysis of the military successes obtained by our people in their struggle against U.S. aggression in both parts of our country and drew therefrom the indispensable lessons.

In the South, the General said, the people and their armed forces have been going from one victory to another and are sure of still bigger successes and of final victory; for its part, "the socialist North has proved to be a steel rampart and our whole Viet Nam a fortress. Any aggressor who shuts his eyes to this reality and who, under illusions, persists in his attempt against our country, will inevitably court shameful failure."

From the victories of our people, he drew a historic, clear-cut conclusion: "In our era, a people, even with a not very vast territory and

not very large population, but courageously standing up in the struggle for their independence and freedom, armed with a correct line, fired by a great determination to fight and at the same time knowing how to fight, will defeat any aggressor, be it U.S. imperialism."

The speaker pointed out that the successes won by the Vietnamese people originate from two primordial factors: "the correct and creative line of our Party" and "the centuries-old history of our nation."

For more than 20 centuries now, the Vietnamese have been waging a relentless struggle against foreign aggression to build up an independent State and Nation. This struggle has forged a very profound national sentiment and an unshakable will to safeguard the independence and unity of the Fatherland.

The general then dwelled on the revolutionary and the military line of the Viet Nam Workers' Party.

"These lines", he said "are Marxism-Leninism imaginatively applied to Vietnamese realities. They reflect the spirit of thorough-going revolution of the working class of our country, the traditions of struggle of our Nation against foreign aggression, the courage and intelligence of the passionately patriotic Vietnamese man. They are at the same time the expression of the finest revolutionary virtues of progressive mankind".

The VNWP, in general

Giap's words, has defined our Resistance to U.S. aggression as "a revolutionary people's war, a war of national liberation versus a neo-colonialist war of aggression of U.S. imperialism (...), a people's war fought under the leadership of the working class and on an unprecedented scale, a war waged by the entire people, in all fields, of long duration and by relying essentially on their own forces, an inevitably winning war".

Enlightened by a penetrating understanding of the character of our epoch and the offensive strategy of the world revolution, our Party has resorted to this strategy in Viet Nam and to revolutionary violence of the people by combining armed struggle with mass political action in a resolute and uninterrupted offensive in all fields and in all forms.

It has thus defeated the U.S. aggressors in spite of their ferocity and their enormous economic and military potentials.

By enhancing the patriotism of our people with Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, our Party has developed and raised to the highest degree the revolutionary heroism of our people — the source of our present irresistible strength.

It is on this political and ideological basis that a Vietnamese military science and art has been developed with a strategy, tactics and a guiding thought in the conduct of the operations

and in the building of the people's armed forces, judicious, effective and suitable to the conditions of our country, our means and our epoch.

In the concluding part of his speech, General Vo Nguyen Giap warned us against the obduracy of the U.S. imperialists who, though battered without let-up, still nurture aggressive designs against our people in both zones and stop at nothing to realize them. He reaffirmed the certainty of our total victory — the inevitable outcome of the realities in Viet Nam, as well as the determination of the

combatants and cadres of the people's armed forces to completely defeat the Yankee aggressors to whom he gave this stern warning: "In this beautiful land of Viet Nam is the millenary legacy of our people; the Yankee aggressor will be utterly unable to find any cover".

★

In our next issue, we shall publish large excerpts from General Vo Nguyen Giap's important speech.



U.S. bomb and mines have never succeeded in hampering the traffic of ferries over Nghe An Province rivers

MORE PUPPET ARMYMEN OPPOSE WAR OR RUN AWAY

UNDER the impact of the great military, political and diplomatic successes of the NFL, a growing number of puppet army-men have been turning their guns on U.S. advisers and wicked thugs or staging collective mutinies, and crossing over to the people's side.

In Tay Ninh province, on Dec. 8, 1968 soldiers of Ranger Company 343 stationed at Katum (110km Northwest of Saigon) rebelled. They opened fire on the CP, killing a U.S. major, adviser to the unit, and number of cruel U.S. agents. Next day, Ranger companies 344 and 345 were called to replace the revolting unit. Shocked upon their arrival by the drastic repression of the U.S. advisers and their confederate, the two companies followed suit with anti-war actions: they burnt their uniforms, flung away

their weapons and demanded their return to their native villages. Earlier, on Dec. 2, two war-resisting puppet Ranger platoons had disobeyed their commanders' order to go on a foray mission.

In Long An province, 5 collective rebellions were recorded in November, staged by many soldiers of Battalion 1 and Battalion 3 of Regiment 49, puppet Division 25, who resisted marching orders, declared their break-away with the Thieu-Ky administration and asked to return to their families. All told, 360 men of the said division left their ranks for home or joined the PLAF.

What is most remarkable is that in the 3 months ending Oct. 31, 3,065 puppet army-men stationed in Can Tho deserted or mutinied. A number of them fought in coordination with the

PLAF, wiped out 270 cruel agents and U.S. troops then went over to the PLAF with their weapons. In November alone, one main force company and one civil-guard company deserted. So did 140 soldiers of another 200-man unit. On Nov. 10, as many as 145 puppet army-men ran away in Can Tho.

In Soc Trang province, 104 soldiers of puppet regular Regiment 31 deserted in a week (Nov. 8 — Nov. 15) and on Nov. 9, 58 men of Battalion 1, Regiment 31 left for home.

Hundreds of other puppet army-men ran away or mutinied in My Tho, Rach Gia and Ca Mau provinces.

In My Tho, Security Forces Company 172 broke away en masse on Nov. 28. Three hundred officers and men at the Hung Vuong

Military Training Camp deserted in November. In the capital of this province, 23 puppet policemen left their unit and rejoined their families.

On Nov. 30, members of Battalion 3, puppet Regiment 32 ran away while moving out on a raid in Ca Mau province. Hundreds of puppet army-men left their ranks in Rach Gia in the 6 days ending Nov. 9.

These mutinies and desertions are only samples of a widespread break away movement throughout South Viet Nam in recent days. They reflect the anxiety, fear and dejection now rampant among South Vietnam puppet army-men, as an effect of the successive victories of the PLAF. They also confirm the increasing realization of puppet army-men of the justice of the NFL's cause.

— In the liberated zone, three-fourths of the total number of districts have each an assistant doctor and on an average there is one assistant doctor or one doctor for every 10,000 inhabitants, and one nurse for every 1,200 inhabitants; each village has from 10 to 30 medical workers. Dispensaries, infirmaries, hospitals are found in all areas. At present, there are in the liberated zone a medical college and 6 schools training doctors.

— In the first 3 months of 1968, the Liberation Publishing House printed more than 15,000 books of different kinds; more than 45,000 copies of newspapers and more than 40,000 leaflets and posters were put out. The Liberation Film Studio distributed many valuable documentaries. There are now in the liberated areas 49 papers and reviews run by central, regional, provincial and municipal authorities. Major papers, such as *Giai Phong* (Liberation), *Quan Giai Phong* (Liberation Army) and *Tien Phong* (Vanguard) have been widely circulated, even in areas still under enemy control.

From May 17, 1964
to Dec 13, 1968



900 U.S. planes downed in Laos

THE U.S. has been for more than 4 years now committing its air force to a direct aggression against Laos and savage bombing on its territory. At the same time, it has been pushing Lao puppet troops to nibble at the liberated areas under the control of the Neo Lao Haksat and the patriotic nationalist forces. Thus the U.S. "special war" has been considerably escalated. Since early Nov. this year, the U.S. imperialists have been stepping up their air raids in Laos. Hundreds of sorties by jet planes of various kinds and tens of missions by B52 superfortresses have been carried out daily, wantonly raining bombs over villages and townlets in the liberated areas. In its Dec. 10 issue, the "Baltimore Sun" disclosed that U.S. aircraft had made in Laos 3,071 sorties in Sept. 1968, 4,749 in Oct. and 12,724 in Nov; that the intensity of their activities had increased, probably with the agreement of the Lao "government", that U.S. B52 bombers flew an average of 32 missions a day in Dec. 1968 against a total of five in the whole of 1967. UPI on Dec. 13 disclosed that the

United States had more than doubled its air raids over Laos since Nov. and up to 400 jet fighter bombers flew into Laos daily.

The U.S. imperialists have committed innumerable crimes against the Lao people in a hope to subdue them, but they have sustained very heavy defeats over the four years, and the Lao patriotic forces and people recorded the biggest victories ever in their history of fighting for independence and freedom. More than 100,000 U.S.-fostered puppet troops were wiped out and 900 U.S. aircraft shot down or destroyed on the ground in that period.

From the beginning of November to mid-December, more U.S. planes were knocked down in Laos than in the five-month period of the 1968 rainy season. From Dec. 4 to 13, the Lao patriots in Pa Thi, Sam Neua province, grounded 8 U.S. aircraft with infantry guns.

Prince Souphanouvong in his letter of congratulation to the Lao patriotic forces and people on the occasion of the downing of the 900th U.S.

plane in Laos, said:

"The downing or wrecking on the ground by the Lao patriotic forces and people of 900 U.S. aircraft proves the complete correctness of the line of people's war mapped out by the Neo Lao Haksat Central Committee and the unbending spirit of the Lao people fighting for independence and freedom".

The Vietnamese people enthusiastically welcome the new successes of the patriotic forces and people of Laos. They fully support the Political Programme of the Neo Lao Haksat which has laid down the correct basis for the settlement of the Lao problem. We resolutely demand that the U.S. stop immediately its bombardments of the liberated zone of Laos. The U.S. must strictly implement the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos, respect the sovereignty, independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Laos, and let the Lao people settle their own internal affairs on the basis of the 1962 Geneva Agreements and in accordance with the present realities in Laos.

Why Did the NFL Secure the Control of Such An Extensive Area in South Viet Nam?

Editor's note: We reprint below the views of Dr. Benjamin Spock, the famous American paediatricist and staunch war resister, who received a five years' jail term last July for his participation in the movement against the Viet Nam war. These views are to be found in his book on Viet Nam published in New York in March 1968.

AS night falls on the other side of the globe, the armed forces of the strongest nation in the world surrender 85 percent of the South Vietnamese countryside to the Viet Cong.

What does this mean?

"The military flatly refuses to classify any road in the country as safe at night", reports the *New York Times* (July 13, 1967), "not even the fourlane, 15-mile expressway that links Saigon with Bien Hoa".

Only one out of every six Saigon-appointed hamlet chiefs feels safe enough in his own hamlet to stay overnight.

At the end of a 'search-and-destroy' operation, the Viet Cong slip back into the villages under cover of night.

A *New York Times* reporter quotes a young American officer at the close of such a day: "Time to turn the country over to the VC".

How has the National Liberation Front (NFL or Vietcong) gained this kind of control?

Our government says that the answer is terrorism — that the South Vietnamese support the Viet Cong only because they are afraid. This is false. Even former Premier Ky, now Vice-President of South Viet Nam, admitted that the people of South Viet Nam support the Viet Cong for positive reasons, not just out of fear. In 1963 he told *New York Times* reporter James Reston that the Viet Cong "are closer to the people's yearning for social

justice and an independent life" than his own government (*New York Times*, Sept. 1, 1965).

U.S. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge said much the same thing: "For years now in Southeast Asia, the only people who have been doing anything about the little man at the grass roots — to lift him up — have been the communists" (*New York Times*, Feb. 27, 1966).

Ambassador Lodge was mistaken in implying that the Viet Cong is entirely made up of "the communists" — as the surveys reported by the *New York Times* make clear, most Viet Cong soldiers do not consider themselves communists. But he was right in saying that they have been the only ones concerned about the common man in Viet Nam.

Unlike the government in Saigon, which tolerates exploitation of poor farmers and workers, favoritism, inflation, profiteering and lack

On the Pueblo Incident

Korean People's Victory Hailed

IN a commentary on Dec. 25, 1968 the Hanoi daily *Nhan Dan*, central organ of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, hailed the decision of the DPRK Government regarding the U.S. spy ship *Pueblo* and its crew.

The paper said:

After lame denials the U.S. Government at last had to acknowledge that its armed spy ship *Pueblo* had conducted espionage and hostile acts after intruding into the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, U.S. Army Major General Gilbert H. Woodward on behalf of the U.S. Government signed an apology to the DPRK Government on Dec. 23, 1968.

Thus, all U.S. "menace" and diplomatic "pressure", have not been able to save the U.S. Government humiliation of admitting its crime, the paper added. As pointed out by the spokesman of the DPRK Foreign Ministry, this means an ignominious defeat for the U.S. imperialist aggressors and constitutes another great victory for the Korean people who have shattered the myth of U.S. might. The *Pueblo* incident proves that the time has gone for the U.S. to use with impunity its "gun-

boat" policy against Asian peoples. Formerly the U.S. could, with a tiny warship, intimidate a small nation. But now, although such a most up-to-date armed ship and its entire crew had been captured by the Korean people's armed forces under the very nose of the U.S. imperialists, the latter could only utter ridiculous "threats" and finally had to apologize for their crime.

The *Pueblo* incident, therefore, is a hard blow at the so called U.S. "might".

Recalling that the U.S. ruling circles retracted their admission and apology soon after the *Pueblo* crew had been sent home, the paper commented: "Such baseness only sheds a stronger light on the obstinate and treacherous nature of the U.S. imperialists".

Together with the world peoples, the paper concluded, the Vietnamese people warmly welcome the Korean people and their armed forces for having taught the U.S. a good lesson. The Vietnamese people consider this a common victory for the two peoples over the same enemy, and an incentive for the Vietnamese people in their fight against U.S. aggression for national salvation.

of schooling except for the rich, the NFL is facing up to South Viet Nam's problems.

Once the Viet Cong run the government troops and officials out of a district, the civilian arm of the NFL assumes the responsibilities of government. In some areas, the NFL has been the real government for years. Perhaps once in two years the Saigon army moves through the area and tries to reassert control over the people. But as soon as the army moves on, the NFL moves back in. In these areas it maintains order, collects taxes, runs schools and administer the courts. According to Drew Pearson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk admitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that even American oil companies have

been paying tolls to the NFL to allow their trucks to pass through Viet Cong territory.

Iowa Republican Senator Hickenlooper has estimated that the area the NFL controls is on the order of two-thirds of South Viet Nam. In these areas, they have begun to deal with the basic social and economic problems.

The schools which they have established all over South Viet Nam are free, and a bright Vietnamese child will go as far as his intelligence and industriousness can carry him.

Their land reform is straightforward: "To the tillers belongs the soil". If a man and his family work a certain piece of land, it belongs to them.

NFL and DRVN Delegations' Joint Communiqué on U. S. Puppets' Holding Up Paris Conference

(Continued from page 1)

elapsed without any result being achieved.

2. Not until December 8, 1968, under the pressure of the South Vietnamese people and of world public opinion, did the Saigon administration send to Paris a delegation headed by the bellicose puppet Nguyen Cao Ky who has never failed to express his worship for Hitler that he considers as his master. Since then, the attitude of the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration has more and more proved to be a great obstacle to the holding of the conference.

They have even availed themselves of the procedural discussions, usual and natural before any conference may begin, to hamper the conference. Both the Saigon administration and the U.S. have stuck to their absurd viewpoint of a "two-side" conference - the U.S. and the Saigon administration on one side and the DRVN and the South Viet Nam NFL on the other - whereas there are in fact four delegations. They have refused to recognize the Front as an independent and equal party to the conference, thus trying to deny the just struggle of the South Vietnamese people and refusing to admit the role of the South Viet Nam NFL, the organizer and leader of the South Vietnamese people's struggle against the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys, and the authentic representative of the South Vietnamese people. This is precisely why the U.S. and the Saigon administration have demanded that the seats of the four delegations be arranged along two sides, at a long rectangular table, or at an oval or round table split into two parts, thus carrying out into effect their erroneous viewpoint.

For its part, with the consent of the Delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL, and basing itself on the fact that there are actually four delegations to the conference, and on the principle that each delegation is independent and has equal rights, the delegation of the DRVN has suggested that the seats be arranged on the four sides of either a square or a diamond-shaped table, each delegation occupying one side,

TO THE READER

We are aware that there is much room for improvement in the wording of our paper. We apologize for this shortcoming and highly appreciate all your suggestions as they will help us to serve you more efficiently in future.

without any discrimination. But the U.S. and the Saigon administration have turned down such a sensible arrangement. Once more to show its goodwill, the delegation of the DRVN, with the consent of the delegation of the NFL, proposed that that the four delegations be seated around a circular table. According to this proposal, the four delegations will sit around a non-split circular table, each of them sitting where it chooses. If the problem of the conference table can be solved in such a reasonable and sensible way, all other procedural problems will no doubt be settled rapidly and easily. But to this day neither the U.S. nor the Saigon administration have accepted this seating arrangement.

In the meantime, the U.S. and the Saigon administration have perpetrated new crimes in Viet Nam. In the South, they have intensified the war, carried out the "accelerated pacification" plan, tried to concentrate the population, increased indiscriminate B-52 bombings on populous areas, and stepped up toxic-chemical sprayings. Moreover, the Saigon administration is doing its utmost to pressgang youths into the army, persecuted all groups of people and individuals that stand for peace, neutrality and talks with the South Viet Nam NFL. In North Viet Nam, in contradiction with U.S. President L. Johnson's October 31 declaration, the U.S. has continued reconnaissance flights and air-attacks against a number of localities lying between the 17th and 19th parallels, thus infringing upon the sovereignty and jeopardizing security of the DRVN.

The above-mentioned facts prove that the U.S. has not yet renounced its scheme of aggression and is still trying to maintain the Saigon administration as an instrument for the furtherance of neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam, and that the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique are still trying to cling to the U.S. aggressors so as to continue the war and to live on the people blood and sweat.

3. The Delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL and the Delegation of the government of the DRVN reaffirm their serious intent and goodwill towards the Paris conference and reaffirm that the position of the Vietnamese people on the peaceful settlement of the Viet Nam problem is the four points of the government of the DRVN, reiterated on November 2, 1968 and the five points on the political settlement of the South Viet Nam problem, expounded on November 3, 1968, by

the South Viet Nam NFL. The two Delegations strongly condemn and denounce to world public opinion the fact that the U.S. and the Saigon administration have availed themselves of the procedural discussions to delay the Paris conference on Viet Nam. If the U.S. really wants the Paris conference to open in order to proceed rapidly to substantial discussions leading to an "honorable peace" in Viet Nam as it has often declared, the representatives of the U.S. and of the Saigon administration must immediately sit at the circular table proposed by the Delegations of the DRVN and of the South Viet Nam NFL.

So long as the U.S. maintains the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique—a puppet, dictatorial, bellicose and corrupt administration which is trying by all means to sabotage the Paris conference on Viet Nam—it will be difficult for the conference to start and even if it can start, it will be difficult for it to bring about any result, due to the obstacles created by the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique. The South Viet Nam people are passionately fighting for the overthrow of the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique, and for the immediate establishment of a peace cabinet that would approve of talks with the South Viet Nam NFL and of the participation in the four-party conference in order to find a peaceful settlement of the South Viet Nam problem. This is a legitimate demand which enjoys the support of large sectors of public opinion.

All peace- and justice-loving people in the world including the American people are looking forward to the early holding of the four-party conference in Paris, and are demanding that the U.S. put an end to its aggression, definitively stop all infringements upon the sovereignty and threats to the security of the DRVN, withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam, and let the South Vietnamese people settle themselves their own affairs, without foreign interference, so that they can build an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam and advance toward the peaceful reunification of the country in conformity with the fundamental principles of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. If the U.S. and the Saigon administration keep to their present obdurate attitude, they must bear full responsibility and will necessarily meet with failure."

On the release of 3 American POW's

PLAF Eastern Nam Bo Command Ready To Meet Again U.S. Representatives

As earlier reported by Gai Phong Press Agency, the Command of the PLAF in Eastern Nam Bo on December 19 fixed the time and place for a meeting with the representatives of the Command of the U.S. forces in South Viet Nam to discuss the procedures concerning the release of 3 American prisoners-of-war.

On Dec. 25, the U.S. Command sent their representatives to the agreed place, but those representatives refused to discuss the procedures required for the preparation of the release of the

POW's. That is why the meeting failed to achieve any result.

On Dec. 28 the spokesman of the PLAF Eastern Nam Bo Command in a statement announced that they agreed to a new U.S. proposal for a second meeting with a view to discussing procedures concerning the release of the 3 American POW's. The statement emphasized, are anxious to see that the U.S. Command adopt a correct attitude at this new meeting so as to enable their prompt return to their homes.

Saigon and Can Tho...

(Continued from page 2)

Thieu Ky Huong clique, formation of a peace cabinet and serious talks with the NFL to re-establish peace and end the war, Gai Phong Press Agency reported.

Every day, more than 500 people representing student associations, religious communities and trade unions gathered at Khanh Quang pagoda for sit-ins. The participants voiced the unanimous view that the Saigon puppet administration installed by the U.S. was a "regime rotten from top to bottom", like a "threadbare skirt which is worn out beyond repair". Many speakers pointed out that the delegation led by Ky to the Paris conference represented nobody, that it was "masterminded by foreigners" (i.e. the Americans) and that it had been sent to Paris only to sabotage the conference. They demanded the formation of a peace government which "really wants to negotiate with the NFL" so as to bring real peace and independence to

South Viet Nam. They also condemned the U.S. imperialist aggressors and demanded that they quit South Viet Nam and remove their military bases there. Many speakers were of the opinion that "because of foreign (i.e. U.S.) interference, the Vietnamese people suffered destruction and death from the war. To end the war and restore peace, foreign (i.e. U.S.) troops must be withdrawn from South Viet Nam and all foreign military bases dismantled. South Viet Nam must have peace and independence and be made free from foreign influence. Every Vietnamese must work for these goals."

All the representatives expressed approval and support for the just cause of the NFL. Some of them said, "The Front advocates the setting up of a coalition government and neutrality for South Viet Nam. This position is unequivocal and widely known at home and abroad."

Read:

VIETNAMESE STUDIES

No 18—19: South Viet Nam: Data and Prospects.

You will find articles on:

- The essential characteristics of the South Vietnamese revolution;
- The setting-up of the U.S.-Diem regime;
- The period from 1954 to 1960;
- The "special war" (1961—1965);
- The three years of "local war" (1965—1968);
- American crimes in Viet Nam;
- The policy of the National Front for Liberation and the bases for a valid settlement.

ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT

MILITARY OPERATIONS

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HEAVY U.S. - PUPPET LOSSES IN 3 DAYS

(Dec. 21-Dec. 23)

- A position completely destroyed near Tay Ninh: 1 battalion and 2 companies wiped out, more than 600 men put out of action.
- Another puppet battalion completely wiped out East of Saigon.
- Two road convoys ambushed: 36 vehicles including 7 tanks and armoured troop carriers destroyed, 160 GI's killed or wounded and 8 aircraft brought down after 25 minutes' fighting near Tay Ninh; 22 lorries and 5 helicopters wrecked and some 100 GI's put out of action by PLAF artillery near the 17th parallel.
- Da Nang, Kontum and Cu Hanh (Pleiku) airfields heavily pounded in the same night (Dec. 22 to Dec. 23).

THE most remarkable event of the PLAF last week's military operations in South Viet Nam through news reports released by *Giai Phong* Press Agency was incontestably the great annihilation battle of Ben Cau on the night of Dec. 21 to Dec. 22 last. A mixed U.S.-puppet position established in this district town, 70km Northwest of Saigon, in Tay Ninh province, was rushed and completely destroyed by the PLAF while defenders of nearby enemy positions were pinned down by artillery bombardments and guerillas' harassing actions. At Ben Cau, a U.S. battalion and 2 puppet Ranger companies were completely wiped out, suffering more than 600 casualties. The enemy also sustained other losses including three 105mm howitzers, six 106.7mm heavy mortars, 4 military vehicles, the entire billet, tent or brick houses and casemates destroyed, a fuel dump burnt and many weapons seized.

On Dec. 17, at a point about 20km from Ben Cau, on Route 26 between Tay Ninh and Dau Tieng, a deadly ambush laid by the patriots cost the Americans 36 vehicles destroyed (among them 1 tank and 6 armoured troops carriers) and 160 GI's killed or wounded. In addition, 7 helicopters and 1 jet plane were downed in this 25 minute battle.

On the night of Dec. 20, at 10km East of Long Thanh, a district town located 28km east of Saigon another PLAF lightning attack wrote off the muster roll a puppet battalion comprising 3 companies and their commanding officers. Meanwhile, in Saigon itself, on the occasion of the anniversary of the NFL, many NFL flags appeared in the streets, especially in the 5th and 6th districts.

On December 22, in broad daylight, a puppet company was wiped out at about 20km East of Saigon and 8km West of Long Thanh. Further North in the Western Highlands, other enemy units were badly mauled. On Dec. 21, an enemy company stationed at Kong H' xong (13km

Southeast of Dakto and 160km South of Da Nang came under a PLAF artillery-infantry attack and had to abandon the post. On the nights of Dec. 22 and Dec. 23, heavy artillery bombardments were mounted against the airfield of Kontum (190km South of Da Nang) where 4 U.S. copters were destroyed, and that of Cu Hanh, near Pleiku, 16km South of the former, where 3 C.47 transport planes met with the same fate.

In the Da Nang sector, Western news agencies reported a violent attack by the patriots against a mixed U.S. puppet position, 8km West of the City, on Dec. 22. The same sources said that U.S. marines and puppet rangers rushed into the rescue of the battered troops were intercepted. Enemy losses were given as heavy. On the night of Dec. 22, the big U.S. Da Nang airbase was again pounded and the HQ of the 1st Marine Air wing was hit by PLAF shells.

Giai Phong Press Agency has just released the balance sheet of the wave of offensives that took place in this sector on the night of Dec. 15 (see our last issue) and resulted in 420 US-puppet casualties.

In the Northernmost sector of South Viet Nam, near the DMZ and on Highway No 9, an extraordinary feat was achieved on Dec. 23 by Liberation gunners who caught a whole US lorry convoy by surprise as it was delivering goods at a warehouse between Tan Lam and Sa Mua, close to a helicopter parking ground. A deluge of fire rained on the enemy who, within minutes, lost more than 100 GI's killed or wounded and 22 lorries, 5 choppers, 2 fuel depots and some 20 tent and brick houses destroyed or burnt. A fire raged over the whole sector for hours. On the waterway linking Cua Viet port to Dong Ha and the enemy outposts in this sector, on Dec. 16, 17,

20 and 21, 11 landingcraft of the LCU type with their cargoes and 1 patrol boat were sunk by the patriots.



PLAF men pursuing the enemy on a river in the High-Plateaux

REVOLUTIONARY POWER SET UP IN QUANG NAM

EARLY in Dec. 1968, a congress was held in Quang Nam to establish people's power at provincial level after people's councils and people's committees had been returned in a large number of villages and districts. The gathering was attended by representatives of all strata of the people, nationalities, religious communities and revolutionary organizations in the province. It elected the provincial people's council and the provincial people's committee, comprising 7 members with Dao Duc Trinh as its chairman.

More than 1,500 people staged a meeting to welcome

the emergence of revolutionary power. The provincial revolutionary people's committee formally took office and read its declaration, strongly condemning the abominable crimes perpetrated by the U.S. imperialist aggressors and the puppet administration.

"The entire people and armed forces of Quang Nam province", the declaration said, "express full confidence in, and all-out support for, the NFL, and undertake to address themselves to the historic task of liberating South Viet Nam, defending the North and achieving the ultimate reunification of the country".

Saigon and Can Tho: Big Demonstrations against Puppet Clique

REPORTS from Saigon said that on the night of Dec. 24 a large number of placard-carrying university and college students staged a street demonstration for restoration of peace, serious talks with the NFL, dismissal of the Thieu-Ky-Huong regime and formation of a peace government.

Starting from the Saigon Students' Headquarters, the demonstrators marched through many streets and were stopped by police barely 800 metres from the residence of

puppet chief Nguyen Van Thieu. Fierce clashes took place between the demonstrating students and suppressive cruel police who made about 100 arrests.

Panic-stricken, the Saigon mayoralty next day hurriedly made public a communique putting much emphasis on the fascist law 10-68 promulgated by the Thieu Ky Huong administration in early Nov. this year, which threatens to bring demonstrators before a military tribunal in compliance with emergency proce-

dures, in a bid to intimidate the people of Saigon, Hue and other South Vietnamese cities.

FOLLOWING the more than 10,000 strong Dec. 4 demonstration, for 3 days in a row ending Dec. 10 thousands of people from all walks of life in Can Tho city held sit-ins during which they openly demanded dismissal of the obdurate and bellicose

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