

II. 8 Aug 69

K 11

NORTH VIETNAM

CHIEN BINH TELLS OF U.S., PUPPET FAILURES

A  
FILE      SUBJ  
DATE      SUB-CAT

Weak Saigon Forces

Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 1 Aug 69 B

[Chien Binh commentary, part 1 / <sup>3 parts</sup> published in 31 July NHAN DAN: "Can the Puppet Army Take Over the Heavy War Burden From the Americans?"]

[Text] Nixon entered the White House at a time when the U.S. localized war in Vietnam was doomed to failure, when the U.S. expeditionary troops were sustaining defeats, and when the Americans were caught in the endless tunnel of the Vietnam war. So, he had no other choice but to try to extricate the 550,000 U.S. expeditionary troops from that tunnel.

But, how to carry out this plan? AP, on 27 March, wrote: "Nixon has correctly mapped out a plan to end the war." Nixon's so-called "correct plan" is de-Americanization by gradually Vietnamizing the war. In so doing, Nixon believes he can achieve his scheme of bringing U.S. troops home while maintaining the U.S. aggressive war in Vietnam.

From the beginning of this year, it was apparent that the Nixon administration was using every possible means to strengthen the puppet armed forces. Because, in the opinion of the Nixon administration, whether or not the de-Americanization of the war could be achieved depended on the key South Vietnamese armed forces--the puppet troops.

First Nixon, then Laird, Rogers, and Wheeler, unanimously conceded that it was time that the South Vietnamese armed forces should shoulder the burden of the war. But, can the puppet troops be strengthened enough to take over the war burden from the Americans? Let us examine the true situation of this disorderly, undisciplined and defeatist army.

1--An army which has never known the word "victory"

First of all, let us look back to the sad and miserable background of the puppet armed forces. It is common knowledge that the present puppet army was originally a mercenary army of the French colonialists which had been handed over to the Americans. The latter had revived and nurtured it with a view to using it as a tool for implementing the U.S. neocolonialist policy in South Vietnam.

Nguyen Van Thieu himself, the present puppet President and concurrently commander in chief of the puppet armed forces, was in 1946 a (warrant officer) of the French army, and until 1952 he still was a simple assistant instructor in a school for the training of local officers.

The Americans spent huge sums of money and used large numbers of U.S. advisers to hooliganize this army to a high degree. Under the Ngo Dinh Diem regime between 1956 and 1958, the divisions of this army not only had dragged the guillotine throughout the country to massacre our South Vietnamese compatriots, but they were also trained in preparation for filling up the Ben Hai River and for launching attacks against North Vietnam. Despite all these efforts, during 1959 and 1960, the entire puppet army of 300,000 men was hopelessly unable to resist the concerted uprising of our southern compatriots.

Consequently, the Americans were forced to stage the special war which lasted from 1961 to 1965 to cope with the revolution in South Vietnam. Despite the fact that during the above-mentioned period the puppet army--which had increased to 500,000 men, and which according to their report, was 20 times larger than the Viet Cong army--had been sustaining crushing defeats. The number of puppet officers and soldiers who were put out of action, including desertion, had steadily increased year after year: In 1961 49,400 men; in 1962: 85,000 men; 1963: 118,000 men; and in 1964: 135,000 men.

With regard to the fighting power of the puppet army during this period, we need only cite as a proof the Ap Bac battle on 2 January 1963. About 2,000 puppet troops, directly led by U.S. Gen Robert York and protected by U.S. air and naval forces as well as by tanks and artillery, had launched a day-long attack against a small hamlet and tried to annihilate a force of the liberation army only one-tenth their strength. Finally, the puppets lost 500 men without achieving any positive results. UPI wrote that the government armed forces--that is the puppet army--had sustained a most shameful defeat by much smaller guerrilla force. Kennedy, then the U.S. President, was very alarmed, annoyed, and dissatisfied with the Saigon puppet armed forces.

Toward the middle of 1965, after sustaining very heavy defeats at the hands of the liberation forces in Binh Gia, Fleiku, Ba Gia, Dong Xoai, and so forth, the puppet armed forces actually were not too far from their last gasp. Confronted by such a gloomy situation, Johnson had to dispatch large numbers of U.S. expeditionary troops to South Vietnam to rescue the puppet troops who then could rely upon the Americans while recovering their breath.

The U.S. troops had to take over the defense of key positions on the inner circle while the puppet troops could lead an easy life at the outer circle. However, in the face of the irresistible strength of the people's liberation forces, the puppet troops continued to sustain defeats and to avoid fighting. General Westmoreland had to order U.S. troops to fight side by side with the puppet troops in the first dry season of 1965-66. Unfortunately, the puppet troops were of no use to the U.S. troops and even hampered the actions of the Americans. In despair, Westmoreland was forced to send U.S. troops to the exterior circle to assume the entire responsibility of the "search and destroy" operation and to serve as a shield for the puppet troops. Most of the puppet main forces were sent back to the countryside and were in charge of the pacification tasks in hamlets and villages against the guerrilla forces. Even so, they failed to fulfill their tasks, and again, the Americans had to come to their rescue.

Ever since the spring of the Mau Than lunar new year, it seems that the puppet troops have been in charge of the defense of the urban areas. But the revolutionary war continues to develop strongly right inside the urban areas and very often, Abrams has had to mobilize up to one-third of the U.S. motorized forces and send them back to the cities to rescue the puppet troops.

In sum, despite the fact that the puppet troops have been enjoying the company and the protection of the U.S. troops over the past 4 years, their key and reserve divisions did not achieve any significant results. In 1965 the puppet troops were very busy fighting the special war, and their losses amounted to 40 battalions. In 1968, even with major protection by U.S. troops, the puppet troops still lost 79 battalions, thus doubling the 1965 figures.

Concerning the puppet main divisions, let us first look at the puppet 1st Division-- the only division which has received a commendation from the U.S. President and was hailed by the Pentagon as a division which could be compared to any U.S. ground division.

The puppet 1st Division was formed in November 1955 and one of the first big puppet units entrusted with the task of defending the two provinces of Quang Tri and Thua Thien. But this division failed in its task. In the summer of 1966, the U.S. Marines had to rush to Quang Tri and Thua Thien to rescue it, and they led it by the nose all over highway 9. It still lost about 2,000 men. Finally, this division was in charge of defending the positions and bases in the vicinity of Hue Province and Quang Tri municipality and still could not prevent the loss of two battalions and [word indistinct] of squadrons.

Toward the beginning of April 1967, the units of the puppet 1st Division in Tu Ha, La Vang, although surrounded and protected by the U.S. Marines, were unable to thwart the surprise attacks by the people's liberation forces. About 2,000 puppet officers and soldiers were annihilated. Two regimental headquarters were destroyed, together with 230 military vehicles. In the spring of the Mau Than lunar new year, the puppet 1st division collapsed right at the beginning of the general offensive by the people and armed forces of Quang Tri, Thua Thien, and Hue provinces. Not only U.S. Marine, air cavalry, and the U.S. 101st Airborne Division units, but also South Korean units had to be sent to Hue for nearly 1 month to rescue the puppet 1st Division.

Reviewing the situation in 1968, the 1st Division had lost three battalions, over 20 infantry (?companies) and also an armored regiment and a battalion of the engineer corps. More recently, six battalions of this division had to accompany U.S. troops to carry out military operations in the A Bia mountainous region and about 1,000 of their men were killed and wounded. It was Ngo Quang Truong, the commander of this division, who admitted that it would take a long, long time before the puppet troops could be independent and free from U.S. support, according to AFP, 21 January 1969. Such is the situation of the puppet 1st Division. How about the other divisions?

The puppet 2d Division was also formed in November 1955. It was one of two divisions to undergo the extensive training but it showed that it was one of the most incapable. Not only was it incapable of defending the Quang Nam and Quang Ngai regions, but it also failed to defend itself. Westmoreland had to station the Americal Division and the 1st Marine Division around this puppet division for its protection. During the 2 years of 1965 and 1966, it lost exactly 11 battalions. In 1968 and during the first part of 1969, it had been repeatedly attacked from its headquarters down to other levels.

The puppet 22d Division was formed in April 1959 at a time when the revolutionary storm in South Vietnam was in full swing. This division had sustained repeated defeats in the Binh Dinh and Phuy Yen region. After the (?Deo Nhung) battle on 8 February 1965, it lost over 1,000 men. Its fighting spirit has sharply declined. Since the spring of the Mau Than lunar new year, many large-scale mutinies took place within the division. Once, patriotic militarymen placed explosive mines inside a movie theater, killing 135 persons including two U.S. advisers and four puppet officers from lieutenant to major.

The puppet 23d Division was formed in April 1959. Its forces were spread out because of the guerrilla warfare in the southern part of central Vietnam and in Darlac and Tay Nguyen. In 1968, nearly all its (companies) had suffered heavy losses. Five of its battalions were completely annihilated. This year, this division has sustained heavy defeats in Song Mai, provincial capital of Ban Me Thuat. The puppet 23d Division could not cope with the attacks by the South Vietnamese guerrilla forces.

The puppet 18th Division was formed in May 1965 and was under the firm leadership of the Americans [words indistinct] during the past 4 years. But it was famous for avoiding to fight against the Viet Cong. Having sustained a crushing defeat during May recently in Long Khanh, the number of desertions from the ranks of this division amounted to over 50 percent, a rate that caused Abrams much worry.

The puppet 5th Division was formed in February 1964 and was only entrusted with the task of guarding a number of communication sections on Highways 13 and 18 in Binh Long, Binh Duong, and Phuoc Bong, but it failed in its tasks. It was called the "blood and tears" division. In 1968 alone, it lost up to seven battalions. Because of its bad record, Thieu and Ky have repeatedly planned to dissolve this division, but the U.S. masters deemed it dangerous and did not give their nod of approval.

The puppet 25th Division was formed in June 1962 and was entrusted with the task of guarding Long An Province, the western gate of Saigon. The U.S.-puppet clique staged a trick by forming a brotherhood between this division and the U.S. troops and called them incapable. In December 1966, Phan Trong Chinh, the commander of this division, openly protested against U.S. advisers. His action was supported by a large number of officers of this division. Because of heavy losses and frequent desertions, the strength of the division sometimes dropped to under 50 percent of its fixed strength. The Pentagon once called the division the most incapable in the world.

The puppet 7th Division, formed in January 1958, was considered an exemplary division among the organized puppet armed forces, and also enjoyed the confidence of former President Ngo Dinh Diem. But this division is noted for "setting sail in the direction of the wind" and has participated in all the coups to topple the many previous puppet administrations. In the past few years, despite U.S. tutoring, it still has sustained repeated defeats at the hands of the people and armed forces in My Tho and Ben Tre provinces. In 1968, up to 14 battalions of this division had been annihilated or suffered heavy losses. Recently, being driven to the wall, the Americans planned to let the puppet 7th Division gradually take over a part of the responsibilities of the U.S. 9th Division. But, according to AP, on 14 June 1969, Abrams' staff still doubted the capability of the puppet 7th Division to shoulder its responsibilities.

The puppet 9th Division, formed in November 1962, and the puppet 21st Division in June 1959, were entrusted with the task of guarding the western and central parts of South Vietnam.

These two divisions have the responsibility of thwarting the activities of the local armed units and guerrilla forces and they have failed in their tasks. [words indistinct] the fighting power of these two divisions is steadily declining and their morale is breaking down.

Concerning the puppet marines, paratroops, and ranger units, they are considered the "spoiled children" of the puppet armed forces and are the general reserve and motorized forces of the various strategic regions. These units are the best equipped but have sustained the heaviest defeats.

The paratroops have never won any victory. They lost eight battalions and tens of companies during 1968. In February and April of 1968, they sustained crushing defeats in Hue and in Khe Sanh, and on Highway 9. In May, they were defeated in Saigon and Gia Dinh. In August and September, they were smashed to pieces in Tay Ninh. In the spring and summer of this Ky Dau lunar new year, despite strong support from the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry units, they failed to score a victory in the southwestern part of Tay Ninh. No sooner had some U.S. air cavalry forces gone to Dau Tieng to participate in another operation than 13 puppet paratroop companies either were annihilated or suffered heavy losses, thus forcing the U.S. air cavalry to return to Tay Ninh to rescue them.

The puppet marine units, nicknamed the "sea tigers," are noted for their cruelty. After sustaining heavy defeats in Binh Gia in December 1964, their fighting capability steadily declined. In 1968, they lost five battalions: four in Saigon and one in Tay Ninh. In the past 6 months, despite training by U.S. Tropical Lightning Division units, they continued to avoid engagements in battles against the liberation forces.

The puppet ranger units--the hope of the puppet military commanders, have been beaten either in the delta, the mountainous region, or in urban areas. Of the 10 battalions of the puppet Ranger units which were completely annihilated in 1968, three sank to the ground right on the streets of Saigon, Dalat, and My Tho. Recently, in May, they were dealt another heavy blow in Tay Nguyen where three of their units were annihilated.

This, then, is the fighting capability of the South Vietnamese regular army which Laird said will replace U.S. troops in the near future. In its special commentary on the situation of the puppet army, UPI on 17 March observed: "The South Vietnamese units are no longer capable of performing half of their tasks in comparison with the situation a year ago. They are similar to a tennis player who grasps a racket for the first time.

#### Changes in Policy

Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 2 Aug 69 D

[Chien Binh commentary, part 2: "The three emergency and invigorating medicines prescribed by the United States will not succeed in petting the puppet armed forces on their feet again"]

[Text] Nixon has certainly been aware of the bad state of the puppet armed forces in the past 15 years--a period in which they have sustained continuous defeats.

After his inspection tour to Saigon, (? Laird) reported to Nixon that the South Vietnamese armed forces were not yet ready to bear the brunt of the war. However, because the United States has been in a very difficult situation, Nixon feels it necessary to gradually hand over the burden of war to the puppet armed forces. Nixon is trying to cure the sick body of the puppet armed forces by giving it large doses of precious medicine: an intensive military draft aimed at increasing the numerical strength of the armed forces, urgent replacement of outdated guns and equipment with modern means, and accelerated training of officers and enlisted men.

By prescribing these three medicines, the White House and Pentagon believe the abilities of the South Vietnam armed forces will gradually increase. Let us see what improvement will take place in the puppet armed forces following this prescription.

#### 1--Intensive military draft to increase numerical strength

On 17 March U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT said Nixon intended to send U.S. troops home at a ratio of one U.S. soldier to be replaced by two South Vietnamese puppet soldiers after the latter received accelerated training. Thus, the puppet armed forces would have to increase twofold and would reach a numerical strength of over 1 million. Where can such a number of soldiers be found, considering that the areas temporarily controlled by the puppet military tribunals many gray-haired men are being prosecuted for draft evasion. Using guns, bayonets, threats, and coaxing, the puppet regime has been able to recruit a number of people--young and old--for the puppet armed forces.

But success in recruiting soldiers does not mean an increase in the numerical strength of the armed forces because each month the number of puppet troops killed or deserting creates a tremendous gap in their total strength. In the first 6 months of 1969 alone the number of puppet troops put out of action approached 185,000. Though the Saigon regime decreed general mobilization a year ago. The Thieu-Ky-Huong clique recently announced that the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam, that is the puppet armed forces, now have only 300,000 regular troops and 400,000 regional and civilian defense troops, as reported by AP on 13 May this year. These figures are [word indistinct] the ultimate ones used to draw salaries from the United States, but the figures mentioned in the files kept by Gen Cao Van Vien undoubtedly are much less. But even his figures include a fairly large ratio of ghost figures.

The Western press has revealed that fake numbers of troops have been reported daily, weekly, and monthly by commanders of the South Vietnam armed forces from the company to battalion level. Commanding officers wait a month before declaring the number of troops killed in the preceding month and usually pass over in silence the number of deserters.

The number of troops has shown at least 5 percent increase in each level's reports. Through this method, the commanding officers pocket their soldiers' salaries. Each army unit has three categories of numerical strength: the theoretical number for propaganda purposes, the ghost number to draw salaries, and the actual number. Thus, there is a tremendous difference between actual and declared numerical strength.

At Nixon's order, in the day ahead the Saigon puppet regime will resort to more savage measures to recruit soldiers and, as a result, the total number of puppet armed forces may show an increase. But since almost no standard is used as a basis for recruiting puppet soldiers, the highest degree of disorder will prevail among these forces.

According to REUTERS, British correspondents in Saigon reported that nearly one-half the people in military training camps set up by government troops were arrested by police and that most of these persons were children too young for military service. In 1 week in Saigon alone nearly 400 bonzes and Buddhist students were arrested in pagodas for the military draft.

According to another REUTERS report, a paratroop battalion received 148 (? Leprous) men as soldiers in their unit and that a day later, 80 of them deserted.

The Saigon puppet regime has officially proclaimed the so-called amnesty ordinance concerning servicemen guilty of desertion to induce them to return to the army. The regime has even recruited prostitutes for the women's officer training school. As for commanders of the puppet armed forces, the majority of field officers and generals have no combat experience; they have gotten promotions through (? bribery, flattery), and acting hand in glove with the chief Vietnamese traitors. Saigon sources revealed that the rank of colonel in the puppet armed forces can be bought for 500,000 dollars.

On 17 March UPI reported that while commanding during battle, South Vietnam high officers always heatedly discuss and simultaneously issue from five to 10 different orders or decisions so subordinates do not know how to carry them out. Concerning the [word indistinct] spirit, which is the worst enemy of ours--that is, of the Americans--a U.S. colonel named (Librey) said: The Saigon armed forces, officers and enlisted men alike, have been very affected by corruption, theft, and combat (? evasion). (Librey) told the story of pilferage of servicemen's rations in the 1st Tactical Region by the army corps headquarters led by Gen Hoang Xuan Lam. The sight of groups of puppet troops heading for [words indistinct] in February and May 1968 has become a generalized conception of the puppet armed forces in the southern towns and cities.

There have been open rumors in Saigon-Cholon commercial circles about the two famous money-making organizations--the first is the U.S. aid commodities pilferage organization belonging to high Navy officers and controlled by Thieu, and the second is the opium smuggling organization of high air force officers headed by Nguyen Cao Ky. The uncanny smuggling skill of the puppet army commanders attained such a high degree that, according to the Saigon paper CONG LUAN in its 24 October 1968 issue, even Saigon puppet deputies became jealous. Many of them pounded desks and chairs and shouted in the assembly conference room requesting the dismissal of corrupt high officers. Thus, the increasing state of disorder and corruption in the puppet armed forces is pushing their fighting power down to the lowest level.

2--Urgent replacement of guns and increase in modern equipment. The United States is prescribing the highest doses of this medicine to the puppet armed forces. The United States has handed over hundreds of thousands of M-16 rifles to the general reserve units and main force divisions of the puppet army. Recently it also turned over a number of A-37 aircraft in Nha Trang, a number of patrol ships in the Mekong Delta, and enough artillery to equip four battalions in the same delta.

After his inspection tour in South Vietnam in March this year, (?Laird) requested that the U.S. Congress allow an additional appropriation of 256 million dollars to step up modernization of the Saigon armed forces. How about the present state of equipment of the puppet armed forces? U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT has given comparative figures: for the infantry, while a U.S. division possesses 70 guns, its South Vietnamese counterpart has only 26; while a U.S. battalion has 99 army vehicles, its South Vietnamese counterpart has only 11 [words indistinct].

As for the air force, South Vietnam has only 30 A-37, AFP reported [words indistinct] together with about 100 propeller aircraft and a small number of helicopters. Concerning the navy, Western news agencies reported that it has begun to receive from the United States a number of patrol ships for use in rivers and canals.

With its huge economic potentialities and its determination to cling to the puppet armed forces, the Nixon administration, in the days to come, will certainly provide the puppet armed forces with large quantities of tanks, cannon, aircraft, and warships. However, this modern war equipment will not succeed in jacking up the puppet armed forces. In the past 15 years, the puppet armed forces have been sustaining repeated defeats not because they were short of ammunition, weapons and good equipment. In the special war, the puppet troops have sustained defeats just when the Americans were supplying them with billions of dollars worth of weapons--including large quantities of tanks, armored cars, and helicopters. As for the people's liberation forces, they got only weapons and ammunition seized from the enemy, and various home-made weapons.

Over the past 4 years in the localized war, the puppet armed forces not only have been better equipped but have still been enjoying the company and protection of over 550,000 U.S. expeditionary troops who are armed to the teeth. Despite this advantage, they have failed to score any victories. No matter how the puppet troops are equipped, they cannot be better equipped than the U.S. troops. The latter, who are so well equipped, continue to sustain defeats. Then how can the puppet troops avoid defeats?

In reality, the principal worry of the U.S. is not whether the puppet army has more or less modern weapons. On 18 November 1968, AP quite clearly said: "The Americans are particularly worried about the seriously declining fighting spirit of the South Vietnamese armed forces. The desertion situation is presently the biggest problem among the various divisions of this army." Commenting on the plan to urgently modernize the puppet armed forces, the U.S. magazine TIME in its 28 March 1969 issue wrote:

"It is true that the South Vietnamese army is being strengthened in equipment, but it is clear that technique, expertness, and firepower can never replace the lack of fighting spirit in this army."

3--Urgent training, along with desperate pressganging to increase the effective force of the puppet army and providing it with modern equipment, the Americans are conducting a campaign to urgently train the puppet forces. They call back a part of the U.S. troops from the battlefields and entrust them with the task of training the Saigon armed forces. They lower the standards for the students who apply for the military academies, with a view to training and forming tens of thousands of officers in a very short time. According to a recent issue of the Los Angeles TIMES, the Americans have also sent 5,500 puppet officers and soldiers to various English-language schools in Saigon to prepare for their training in the use of various kinds of American weapons and modern techniques.

In his (?surprise) visit to Washington at the beginning of May, Abrams had reserved a lot of time to report to Nixon on the program of training of the Saigon armed forces.

The U.S. determination to urgently train the puppet armed forces is quite obvious. But, what to train, what strategy to teach? Such problems are quite hard for the Americans to solve. [words indistinct] all the U.S. strategies, from the [words indistinct] gone bankrupt in the battlefields. All that the Americans can do is to hand over to the puppet armed forces the lessons of defeat they have learned from the battlefields. They are encountering countless difficulties in attempting to jack up the puppet armed forces.

According to UPI on 13 June 1969, the U.S. Defense Department foresees that 6.2 billion dollars and about 5 years or more are needed to equip, train, and modernize the South Vietnamese armed forces. Five years! How many terrible changes will occur for them on the battlefield during that period.

#### South's Military Burden

Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 7 Aug 69 B

[Chien Binh commentary Part 3: "Can the Puppet Army Take Over the Heavy War Burden From the Americans?"]

[Text] Like a cripple who loses his crutch, the puppet army will collapse when the war burden is shifted to it. The three medicines the United States urgently uses to build the puppet army cannot make the latter stand up. The puppet army is exactly like a body which appears gigantic from a distance, but in reality is a swelling, paralyzed body after 15 years of defeats.

Facing many difficulties and the fact that American troops are more and more impotent and are losing their fighting spirit, and that their casualties have gone higher, Nixon is forced to shift the war burden gradually onto the puppet army. Recently, the Nixon clique has planned and carried out an experiment of "puppetization" of the war in a number of areas. He hopes the puppet army will be able to fight with high efficiency; but what results did the U.S. aggressors obtain? In the Mekong Delta area, where there are only local and guerrilla forces, as the U.S. command has often said, all three puppet divisions and other puppet ranger battalions have repeatedly been defeated and are drowning deeper in the sea of people's war.

Recently, the U.S. command reviewed the situation in the Mekong Delta area and said that the outlook is bad and that the Viet Cong are very strong there. The 9 March issue of the Los Angeles TIMES remarked that the Mekong Delta is an area where many units of the South Vietnam armed forces do not like to fight. They often have a tacit agreement with the Viet Cong under the "you leave me alone, and I'll leave you alone" formula.

Long Khanh is an area within the Saigon defense cordon with many American bases around it. But here, the puppet 18th Division has been badly mauled by the PLAF. During only 12 days from 8 to 19 May, eight infantry battalions and two armored (battalions) of the division were destroyed or decimated. Abrams had to send some units of the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry Division from Thu Dau Mot to the rescue. But these air cavalry units could not save the puppet troops; they lost one battalion and a great part of another.

In the north Kontum area, soon after the Dak To base was transferred by the United States to the puppet 42d Regiment as an experiment, many units of this regiment have been repeatedly hit hard by the PLAF. Using the puppet troops in its experiment, the United States was forced to continue rescuing them. The U.S. command threw into the battle four, then six and then eight puppet mobile battalions in the rescue attempt. B-52 bombers also came to support by dropping each day 500 or 1,000 tons of bomb. At the end, 12 puppet battalions thrown into action were destroyed or severely maimed. Puppet units in Ben Het, Plei Can, were under fearful siege. The United States lost nearly 200 aircraft and more than 500 men, including a lieutenant colonel from the intelligence service. Several units of the U.S. 4th Infantry Division were withdrawn to guard communications arteries in Dak To. The U.S. command politically considered the Dak To battle a test case--to know if the South Vietnamese Army could fight alone without the U.S. infantry's support. But U.S. generals in Saigon admitted that the results obtained in this challenge are inconclusive and disappointing, according to AP on 7 July.

The United States used a number of puppet units in the experiment of shouldering combat duty in place of American troops, but this was carried out with the presence of 550,000 U.S. troops on the battlefield and support from U.S. artillery and air forces. This was an unrealistic experiment, which failed anyhow. Then, when the United States' war burden is actually shifted onto the puppet army's shoulders, what will the situation be?

The burden that the United States intends to shift onto the puppet army is so heavy that even both of them together cannot shoulder it.

This is a story of a strategy which is sinking deeply into a passive and defensive position. This strategy has been repeatedly shaken by waves of fierce attacks by the southern armed forces and people. Its "clear-and-hold" strategy has gone pitifully bankrupt.

The PLAF, since its victory in the final phase of the U.S.-puppet special war, has become stronger and has defeated the U.S. strategy of localized war. As for the puppet army, after its defeat in the special war, it has again been defeated in the localized war. In 1965, the puppet was defeated when U.S. troops took over the bulk of the war burden.

Its blind belief in the military strength of the United States in the earlier days somewhat slowed down the puppet army's collapse. Its disintegration at that time was temporarily checked. The number of deserters in the puppet army in 1964 was 8,000 and in 1965 it was 6,000.

But since the U.S. expeditionary corps has met with defeats, the puppet army's morale is sinking gravely. Desertions from the puppet army have continued increasing sharply since 1966: 100,000 in 1966; 120,000 in 1967; and more than 200,000 in 1968. According to Western sources, in just the first 6 months of 1969, the figure has clearly passed that of 1968.

The United States, through gradual de-Americanization of the war, is trying to avoid the dangerous effects on the puppet army of sudden developments in the war. But the gradual de-Americanization has pushed the United States deeper into the quagmire. It took heavier losses while trying to reduce its casualties. The high number of U.S. troop casualties in the past 6 months has become a dangerous political bomb for Nixon. The situation forces the United States to speedily de-Americanize its war of aggression, but the realities do not permit it to carry out its scheme. All three conditions set by Nixon for U.S. troops withdrawal cannot be attained.

1--The puppet army will never be strong enough to replace American troops. The 2 June 1969 issue of the New York TIMES affirmed that no matter how the South Vietnamese armed forces--that is, the puppet army--were increased and equipped, it would be only a futile effort.

2--The level of war activity cannot be scaled down, since as long as the United States commits aggression in South Vietnam, the southern armed forces and people will strike hard and uninterruptedly until all American troops are withdrawn and the puppet army and administration has collapsed.

3--The Paris conference cannot move ahead as long as the United States still stubbornly refuses to end its war of aggression, to withdraw unconditionally and completely all U.S. and satellite troops from South Vietnam, and to cease supporting the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration as its tool for implementing neocolonialism.

It is obvious that all perfidious attempts by the Nixon administration in its scheme of de-Americanization or "puppetization" of the war with a view to continuing its war of aggression in Vietnam at a cheaper price and with less difficulties are only illusions.

The path by which the United States intends to gradually shift the war burden onto the puppet army is strewn with difficulties leading to a deadlock. It is a path on which the United States will sustain heavier defeats and the puppet will collapse at a quicker pace. If the U.S. troops and the puppet army together cannot bear the heavy burden of the war, how can the puppet army alone, an undisciplined and defeated army, withstand the furious attacks of the PLAF. Like a cripple who loses his crutch, the puppet army will collapse when the war burden is shifted onto it.

#### CPR EMBASSY RECEPTION MARKS PLA ANNIVERSARY

For the Peking NCNA English accounts of Gen Vo Nguyen Giap's message to Lin Piao and a Hanoi reception given by Teng Kun-shan, military attache of the Chinese Embassy in Vietnam, on the occasion of the 42d anniversary of the Chinese PLA, see the International Affairs section of the 4 August Communist China DAILY REPORT.