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1969 VICTORIES OF LIBERATION ARMY REVIEWED

/Article by Nhat Tan: "South Vietnam Wins Famous Victories in Early Spring of 1969"; Hanoi, Tuyen Huan, Vietnamese, No. 3, 1969, pp 43-47/

In 1968 the South Vietnamese revolution made outstanding progress. From the general offensive and uniform uprising of the early spring, the army and people of South Vietnam pushed the aggressive army deeper into a strategic defensive position throughout the battlefield. Suffering a very serious strategical defeat, the American imperialists were forced to call an unconditional halt to the bombing and destruction of the entire territory of North Vietnam, and were forced to hold talks with the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NFLSV) at the Paris Conference. However, the American imperialists still refused to abandon their aggression in South Vietnam, but continue to struggle insanely and to perpetrate more violent crimes against our people.

Stepping into 1969, the army and people of South Vietnam are continuing their violent offensive and uprising, have launched many attacks on the cities, towns, communities, and major bases of the Americans and puppets, have achieved many glorious victories, and are advancing with an iron will and unshakable determination to "drive off the Americans and overthrow the puppets."

I. The More They Struggle Insanely, the More the Americans and Puppets Expose Their Weakness

Since being forced to call an unconditional halt to the war of destruction against North Vietnam, the American aggressors have intensified their "sweep and hold" strategy in South Vietnam in the hope of stopping new offensives and uprisings by the army and people of South Vietnam in order to avoid more serious defeats and to gradually create a position of strength for them at the negotiation table. To achieve this goal they increased the following activities:

1. Quickly reorganized their forces on the battlefields in the hope of relieving pressure from the most critical areas such as Saigon, Hue, Da Nang, and the Mekong Delta. They moved the 1st U.S. "Flying Horse" Division from Quang Tri and Thua Thien into eastern Nam Bo, continued bringing the 9th U.S. Infantry Division into the Mekong Delta (one brigade was sent to My Tho and another to Ben Tre), and withdrew a number of U.S. Marine units from Route 9 to hold the areas surrounding Hue and Da Nang.

2. Strengthened the defenses of the important cities and military bases, especially around Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang. They built more fortifications, underground shelters, and pillboxes, and strengthened internal and external defenses with a system of bases in conjunction with minefields, barbed wire, and cleared perimeters.

3. Launched more relief and holding operations. In the cities they conducted many house-to-house searches and made many arrests. In some places such as Gia Dinh, in a very short period, they searched more than 30,000 buildings. They also terrorized and arrested hundreds of students, intellectuals, businessmen, religious leaders, and so on. Outside the cities, along with increasing attacks, they continuously launched many joint U.S.-puppet-satellite operations to destroy many villages and hamlets. In base and liberated areas the concentrated forces -- sometimes as many as 2-3 U.S. and puppet brigades and regiments with hundreds of aircraft, cannon, and tanks in support -- to conduct many assaults over a period of several days, such as in the Huong Hoa and A So areas of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces, Chu Pa in the Western Highlands, War Zones C and D in eastern Nam Bo, Dong Thap Muoi in central Nam Bo, and U Minh in western Nam Bo in the hope of destroying the latent revolutionary forces as well as the military plans of the Liberation Army.

4. Stepped up air attacks. Each day strategic B52 bombers dropped thousands of tons of bombs around the cities -- especially Saigon -- along corridors, and along the Lao and Cambodian borders.

5. Urgently implemented the "intensified pacification" plan, primarily by using military measures to destroy villages and concentrate civilians into the areas around the cities and military bases so they could be controlled more easily. They killed thousands of women, old people, and children; burned thousands of homes; placed tens of thousands of persons in concentration camps; and committed extremely wicked crimes against our people in Ba Lang An in Quang Ngai Province, Dien Ban in Quang Nam Province, Cam Lo and Gio Linh in Quang Tri Province, and Duc Lap in Long An Province.

Along with the activities mentioned above, they also tried to consolidate the puppet army and puppet regime. They urged their lackeys to increase demagogic political activities in order to rally the reactionary forces to support the puppet Thieu-Ky-Huong regime. The American aggressors also equipped the puppet army with hundreds of additional aircraft, armored vehicles, and cannon and dozens of warships; they also urged the puppet army to die for them on the battlefield in order to cut down American losses and to implement their so-called policy of "de-Americanizing" the war.

Along with the above-mentioned activities, the U.S. and puppet propaganda machine tried to make up imaginary military victories for them. They boasted that "the Viet Cong does not have enough strength to launch a new offensive"; "the puppet army is strong enough and the United States can begin withdrawing troops in the next few months." They bragged that "the Republic of Vietnam (that is the puppet regime) controls 83 percent of the population of South Vietnam"; "the pacification program was never better"; and Thieu also announced that in 1969 he would "control 100 percent of the population in South Vietnam."

The Americans and puppets hope that with these plots and actions, they can stop new offensives by the army and people of South Vietnam and they can use the numbers generated by electronic computers to support their cunning stand at the Paris Conference. However, since they have always been in a very weak defensive position, they are constantly afraid of and are trying to prevent major offensives by the armed liberation forces against their major cities and bases, which could occur at any time.

II. Violent Offensives Directed at the Aggressors

Continuing the offensive and resolved to punish the oppressive U.S.-puppet gang, since the beginning of 1969 and on all battlefields, the army and people of South Vietnam have continued to kill and eliminate much of the enemy's manpower and materiel. The people's armed liberation forces have broken up enemy operations, have defeated his "intensified pacification" plan, and continued to step up activities, maintain bases, and smash attacks in the areas around the cities. Within the cities, armed activities have continued, and political movements against terrorism, demanding the people's livelihood and democracy, demanding the overthrow of the Thieu-Ky-Hong regime and the establishment of peace negotiations with the NFLSV continue to develop.

In eastern Nam Bo, the people's armed forces have continuously fought the enemy around Saigon, Tay Ninh, Binh Long, Thu Dau Mot, Bien Hoa, and along the Van Co Dong and Vam Co Tay Rivers. From the end of December 1968 to the middle of February 1969, the army and people in this region caused heavy losses to ten battalions and 30 companies, destroyed much war materiel, and sank or damaged nearly 100 warships. The victories of the Liberation Army continue to mount. On 25 and 26 January 1969, the Liberation Army attacked U.S. forces at Tra Cao, wiping out an American infantry battalion and an American artillery company, destroying 38 military vehicles and four cannon, and shooting down five helicopters. On 27 January 1969, Tay Ninh attacked two puppet battalions, killing 400 men. On the night of 31 January 1969, the Liberation army ambushed American forces at the Thi Tinh Plantation in Thu Dau Mot; in only 1 hour, 35 minutes they killed 1,400 men including one infantry battalion and two artillery companies, and destroyed 14 tanks and two helicopters.

In the Mekong Delta, the army and people of My Tho, Ben Tre, Can Tho, Tra Vinh, and Rach Gia provinces were continuously and widely active. The army and people of Kien Tuong broke up several enemy operations at Dong Thap Muoi. Ca Mau and Rach Gia defeated a puppet operation in the U Minh area, killing thousands of men. Can Tho attacked the Lo Te airfield, destroying 78 aircraft in one night. Along land and water routes, the local army and people destroyed hundreds of military vehicles and sank and damaged many enemy warships.

In Zone 5, from November 1968 to the end of January 1969, the People's Liberation Armed Forces attacked nearly 200 military targets from Quang Nam to Khanh Hoa. On 31 January 1969, the army and people of Binh Dinh attacked and destroyed 40 ammunition dumps and three gasoline depots containing 8 million liters at Deo Son. Qui Nhon destroyed 2,000 metric tons of ammunition in an attack on 20 January 1969. From 30 December 1968 to 21 January 1969, the army and people of Quang Ngai killed 1,300 men, shot down and destroyed 22 aircraft, and damaged 26 military vehicles.

In the Western Highlands the army and people defeated three major U.S.-puppet operations -- called the Binh Tay 48, 49 and 50 -- in the Chu Pa area in northwestern Pleiku Province from 10 January 1969 to 2 February, killing 2,500 men, wiping out two U.S. puppet battalions, inflicting heavy casualties on eight other battalions, destroying and damaging 106 military vehicles, shooting down and destroying 42 aircraft, and burning and blowing up eight gasoline dumps and many ammunition dumps.

Quang Tri and Thua Thien also achieved many victories by destroying the command headquarters of the 9th Regiment and the 3rd U.S. Marine Division at Co Ca Va; more than 400 enemy troops were killed.

In summary, during the first few months of 1969, the army and people of South Vietnam attacked the enemy continuously throughout the country and achieved great victories on all battlefields. Guerrilla warfare continued to be intensified; all three types of forces launched closely coordinated attacks, more forms of waging war were devised and the military, political, and proselyting forces coordinated closely in the highlands, rural areas, and cities. In particular, the movement to demand the overthrow of the Thieu-Ky-Huong regime and the establishment of peace negotiations with the NFLSV attracted many people from all strata of society in the cities, including a number of officers and men of the puppet army and members of the puppet regime. The above total and firm victories have created favorable conditions for the army and people of South Vietnam to deal heavy blows to the Americans and puppets from 22-23 February 1969.

Regardless of how many forces the enemy concentrates, how much materiel he accumulates, or what actions he uses to stop the violent offensives of the army and people of Vietnam that are occurring almost continuously and in nearly all places, the army and people of South Vietnam

have attacked hundreds of military objectives from Quang Tri and Thua Thien to the Nam Bo lowlands, from the Western highlands to the coast of central Trung Bo. The enemy has had to admit that this is a "huge, bloody" offensive that has caused them heavy losses. The Baltimore Sun, an American newspaper, wrote on 27 February 1969: "In the week ending on 1 March 1969, American casualties may be the highest since the beginning of the war."

During the first 10 days of the offensive, the army and people of South Vietnam attacked the enemy in 36 cities and communities, more than 100 towns and military sectors, 38 airfields, and 35 commands and headquarters (regimental and above), killing nearly 45,000 enemy forces (including 25,000 Americans and satellite troops). The number of American dead surpassed the number killed during the first 10 days of last year's offensive.

The People's Liberation Armed Forces repeatedly attacked the enemy defense centers which they thought were the most secure, such as at Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang. The defense perimeters in the major cities were penetrated. Both the internal and external perimeters were assaulted repeatedly. The Cam Ranh base, which they felt was "impregnable", was attacked twice by the Liberation Army and suffered heavy losses. A number of strong enemy bases such as Dong Du in Gia Dinh Province, Dau Tieng and Ben Tranh in Thu Dau Mot, and Tra Cao in Tay Ninh were attacked many times by the Liberation Army; many units and thousands of Americans were killed. Many important American and puppet bases such as Dong Tam and An Hoa, and Special Forces camps at Pleican, Duc Co, Cong Ho Rinh, and Thuong Duc are surrounded by liberation forces and being attacked night and day. Many towns such as Phuoc Long, Quang Ngai, and Chau Doc have been attacked continuously.

These offensives have struck at American divisions, such as the 1st U.S. Marine Division in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces, the American Division in Quang Nam and Quang Ngai Provinces, the 25th U.S. Infantry Division in Thu Dau Mot Province, the 1st U.S. "Flying Horse" Division in Tay Ninh Province, the 9th U.S. Infantry Division in the Nam Bo lowlands, and the 2nd, 25th, and 7th Divisions of the puppet army. Note that the People's Liberation Armed Forces attacked and inflicted heavy losses on eight division and brigade headquarters, 13 infantry and artillery battalion headquarters, and 60 U.S., puppet, and satellite company headquarters. This was a very painful blow to the enemy,

causing them many serious difficulties in restoring the combat strength of their units, especially while they are being attacked continuously on the battlefield.

The People's Liberation Armed Forces also concentrated attacks on important enemy logistics installations in Long Binh, Bien Hoa, Da Nang and Cam Ranh, inflicting heavy losses. In only 10 days, the army and people of South Vietnam shot down and destroyed 470 airplanes; 1,170 military vehicles (including 500 tanks and armored vehicles); destroyed 250 artillery pieces and heavy mortars; burned more than 100 ammunition and gasoline dumps; sunk or damaged 115 warships and military craft; destroyed 35 bridges. Routes 1, 14, 19, and 4, strategic lines of communication, were cut in many places; water routes supplying Saigon and the Cua Viet River which supplies Dong Ha were often attacked and ambushed.

The recent offensives were a marvelous feat of coordination among the three types of forces, among all branches, and with many lively and intelligent forms of warfare; therefore, the army and people of South Vietnam inflicted the heaviest losses on the enemy but also limited their own losses to the minimum. Wheeler, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, was forced to admit: "The newest offensives (by the army and people of South Vietnam) have obviously been carefully prepared and are being carried out better than the Tet offensives last year."

Coordinating closely with the continuous offensives on the battlefield, the people on the outskirts and inside the cities and in the concentration zones around the enemy bases rose up to destroy the control of the enemy, punished wicked enemy leaders, dispersed civil defense organizations, seized control and dispersed concentration camps, and returned to their old villages to fight and build liberated areas.

The repeated attacks of the people's liberation forces continue to strike the Americans and puppets, causing them to become more frightened than a fish on a chopping board. General Simpson, commander of the 1st U.S. Marine Division, had to admit: "Surely the enemy (that is, the Liberation Army) is capable of doing more than they have done and they also have more forces which they have not used."

These new offensives and uprisings have manifested the strong development of the general offensive and uprising of the South Vietnam Revolution. Clearly the army and people of South Vietnam are becoming stronger and more victorious the more they fight. Every new offensive increases their strength and changes the comparison of forces more in their favor.

The great success of the offensive and uprising of early 1969 by the army and people of South Vietnam is defeating the new plots of the Americans and puppets, causing them new difficulties which they cannot overcome, and forcing them deeper into a defensive, passive position from which they cannot escape.

Although Abram's "sweep and hold" strategy has been intensified, it continues to be defeated and proved ineffective. The Saigon defense system, consisting of hundreds of U.S. and puppet battalions, was recently strengthened by the 1st "Flying Horse" Division and supported by B52 bombers which drop thousands of tons of bombs on the areas surrounding Saigon; however, it is still unable to stop the major assaults of the Liberation Army. The important strategic bases and the major centers of the puppets and Americans in Saigon and surrounding areas are still attacked repeatedly and continue to suffer heavy losses. On the battlefield, not one parcel of soil can be safe for the Americans and puppets. The western press has had to point out these bitter truths after a year of America trying every means to implement its "sweep and hold" strategy. According to the admission of the AP, an American news service, the new offensives of the people's armed liberation forces "are creating chaos in American defense systems" and "tying down American forces." The U.S. Command in Saigon is confused and harrassed by the repeated, continuous attacks of the Liberation Army. On 28 February 1969, AP was forced to state: "America will be unable to avoid the occurrence of any forthcoming offensives."

This year's early spring offensive and uprising has also dealt a serious blow to the so-called "intensified pacification program" of the Americans and puppets. The British newspaper The Observer, on 2 March 1969, reported: "In Saigon, everyone is afraid that the current offensive will defeat the newest efforts of South Vietnam and the United States in increasing government control of the rural areas." The uprisings of the people in the areas surrounding

the cities and enemy bases, with the great strength of hatred and with the support of the people's liberation forces, are destroying series of U.S. and puppet concentration camps. Because of this, they must concentrate forces to deal with the Liberation Army offensives in their important bases, which has caused their "pacification" plan to be upset once again.

The success of the new offensive and uprising has stimulated all classes of people in the cities of South Vietnam to step up their struggle to overthrow the Thieu-Ky-Huong regime and to establish peace negotiations with the NFL. The people of the cities in South Vietnam continue to realize the strength and great prestige of the Front, and realize the weakness and unavoidable failure of the Americans and puppets. The new, serious defeats of the Americans and puppets have caused a widening of the split between the ranks of the puppet army and regime, as well as an increase in the conflict between the American masters and their puppet servants.

The brilliant success of the current offensive by the army and people of South Vietnam has pointed out the deceit and cunning of the American and puppet propaganda machine. It is also a serious blow against the Nixon administration which is stubbornly sticking with America's neocolonialist policy in South Vietnam. Suffering these painful blows, the American aggressors and their lackeys are confused and passive but continue to throw out insolent threats. However, the army and people of South Vietnam have answered them with violent offensives on all battlefields. In the seventh session of the Paris Conference on Vietnam on 6 March, Tran Buu Kiem, leader of the NFLSV delegation, emphasized: "As long as America continues its war of aggression, the people of South Vietnam, under the leadership of the NFL, will resist that aggression and will have the right to punish them anywhere and any time."

Developing the 1969 early spring victories, the army and people of South Vietnam are courageously advancing, continuing to attack and rise up, and are resolved to carry out the appeal of President Ho: "As long as there is an aggressor in our country, we must continue to fight to sweep him away."

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