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REPORT GIVEN OF VINH CITY BATTLE AGAINST U.S.

[Article by Nguyen Thi Hanh, Hanoi, Quan Doi Nhan Dan, Vietnamese, 5 October 1968, p 3]

(Report of the battle in the evening of 6 September 1968 by the people and the troops of Vinh City who shot down one A-6 aircraft and captured the pilot invader.)

At 2030 hours, from a corner of Vinh City, projectiles zipped up into the darkness of night. Their short trajectories crossed each other in the sky, then a mass of flame lighted up, increased in brightness and quickly fell down and down to the ground.

"It burns! An enemy aircraft is burning!"

"Bravo for the AAA unit defending the city which has fought so well! Bravo, bravo!"

Following the minutes of happiness watching the U.S. aircraft shot down in the night, in their native sky, the people and troops of Vinh knew what to do in the next fight.

From the office of the city party committee to military city committees and organizations, all leading comrades directed party sub-committees, governmental structures, militia and self-defense forces of every city ward and suburbs to reinforce themselves so as to shoot enemy aircraft coming to the rescue of the pilot invader.

The fighting atmosphere was tense. Enemy aircraft roared, dropped flares and antipersonnel pellet bombs all over the area. The militia and self-defense forces of townships T and D, of the Ferry Y quickly formed a unit for crossing the river to capture the pilot invader, reinforcing the combat strength and supporting the fight.

Cooperative P sent youngsters to the battlefield to help the troops. In answer to Chairman Ho's call on 20 July 1968, the combat-duty unit of

the militia force of Township D which had recently shot down a F-4 aircraft on the spot and captured its pilot invader, also carried automatic rifles voluntarily over many kilometers' distance to ambush and shoot U.S. aircraft.

At this moment, many more enemy aircraft came. They circled furiously in order to prevent us from capturing the pilot invader. But weapons of all calibers of the militia and self-defense forces of the AAA unit defending the city, closely coordinated with each other, fired with accuracy and formed a fire net and thus kept them from entering the city airspace and committing crimes.

Amid this intense combat situation, the first boat going after the pilot invader quickly crossed the river. On board, besides the four crew members Hoang The Truc, Tang Ngoc Huynh, Hoang Nghia Cu, and Vo Trong Nhi who were party members and labor youth members of the Ferry Y -- a unit which firmly held the combat position and managed the ferry boats back and forth over the river for over 1,000 continuous days and nights -- were Tran Ngoc Thai, leader of water resources unit of township T and Ngo Van Dan, PFC of the brave Engineer Unit X.

As the boat landed, they rushed in the direction where the pilot invader's parachute had landed. Armed with a rifle, Thai led the way. Dan and Cu, armed with oars, followed him closely with Comrades Huynh, Truc, and Nhi. They fought their way through dense reeds higher than their heads. Abruptly, two flare signals were fired 300 meters ahead. All muttered unanimously, "There is the pilot invader," and rushed forward. A helicopter appeared in the sky, its humming becoming louder and louder.

"The pilot invader must be captured quickly before the enemy aircraft arrives" was a self-imposed order of these hearts devoted to the revolution, deeply loving the country, and hating the enemy. Everybody ran forward hurriedly in spite of thorns and reeds. About 200 meters from the enemy, they saw two more flare signals light up above their heads. The pilot invader showed up and pointed his weapon in the direction of our men. He planned to put up a fight.

"Down!" shouted Thai (to his men), and in no time aimed at the aggressor's arm, pulling the trigger. An explosion. The invader screamed savagely. Immediately the six fighters jumped forward, and with the oars and their solid workers' hands, apprehended the tall and big pilot invader fully armed and equipped. The enemy helicopter kept approaching noisily, its rotor pushing masses of air and bending the reeds. But it was too late. A series of projectiles of all calibers from our positions zipped up all around it, and it had to flee straight to the sea.

Only then did the pilot invader collapse, discouraged and sobbing under our brave fighters' feet.

The result of tonight's beautifully coordinated battle of Vinh's people and armed units was remarkable. With the aim of achieving meritorious deeds to congratulate the South's heroic people and troops who continuously fought strongly and won greatly, they shot one A-6 aircraft down on the spot, just after their first salvo. Then they quickly crossed the river, captured the pilot invader in the middle of a swamp at night, far from inhabited areas and in spite of enemy aircraft trying by all means to rescue its unfortunate friend. All was accomplished in 30 minutes of intensive fighting.

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