

# P.L.A.F. PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES IN SOUTH VIET NAM

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THE daily *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* (People's Army), organ of the Viet Nam People's Army, has recently carried an article headlined: "Resounding Victories, Immense Possibilities" by its military commentator Chien Thang.

The article begins by noting that since mid-August, the P.L.A.F. have been assailing some hundred towns and townships, in the countryside and along key communication lines. Combining armed attacks of various size with political actions, they have raised to a high degree the effectiveness of their revolutionary onsets and achieved high combat efficiency in every theatre.

In less than two months, the P.L.A.F. successes have assumed far-reaching significance and opened up large prospects of development for the revolutionary forces, paving the way for more splendid exploits.

## 1 - A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF ENEMY MANPOWER AND MATERIALS WIPED OUT

ACCORDING to still incomplete statistics, 47 U.S. and puppet battalions and over 100 companies have been wiped out or decimated. Worthy of note is the fact that those crack units have been struck in their very bases or in the key defence network around Da Nang and Saigon. In the same period, 2 generals have been killed and another wounded. A large quantity of war means -- particularly tanks and armoured cars -- have been destroyed.

In putting out of action enemy manpower and materials, the P.L.A.F. have aggravated their weakness and rapidly tilted the balance of forces in favour of the revolution. They also have dealt a telling blow at U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategic plan.

## 2 - ENEMY DEFENCES BROKEN THROUGH

WITH their successes, the P.L.A.F. have from the beginning foiled the plan of defence in depth adopted by the enemy. They have infiltrated into the heart of Da Nang and successfully attacked the provinces around Saigon particularly Tay Ninh, thus breaking through Abrams' 3-belt perimeter around the puppet "capital." Two-thirds of the battalions wiped out during the past two months have been put out of action in this area. The 1st, 9th and 25th U.S. divisions defending Saigon have suffered heavy losses.

Meanwhile, in other places, particularly in important country areas, the enemy military defence structure has also proved ineffective and sustained high casualties.

The following conclusion can be drawn: though the U.S. and puppet command has changed its strategic

objectives and though instead of trying to "break the backbone of the V.C.," it is "holding" and making its troops fall back on certain positions with a view to limiting losses it has not been able to reverse the tide and its final failure is left in no doubt. Their plan of defence in depth has turned out to be ineffective and become a great burden. Its execution requiring a much too strenuous military effort, it has exacerbated the contradictions inherent in the strategy of the U.S. army: contradictions between the need of dispersing and that of concentrating troops, the defence of the towns and that of the countryside, the heavy tasks of the troops and their limited possibilities...

## 3 - THE LIBERATED AREAS ENLARGED AND CONSOLIDATED. THE N.F.L. POSITION STRENGTHENED AND THE ENEMY'S ONE INCREASINGLY SHAKEN

OVER the past two months, the South Viet Nam people and armed forces, coupling armed struggles with political actions, have liberated extensive rural areas. In the plains of Trung Bo, 248 concentration camps and "strategic hamlets" have been destroyed, and nearly 120,000 inhabitants freed from the enemy's yoke. In U.S. - Saigon-controlled areas, numerous petty tyrants have been duly punished. The machine of repression has been weakened and even smashed to pieces in certain places.

Revolutionary administration has been set up at village and district level and at provincial level in some places. This fact is highly significant from many viewpoints. It makes possible the consolidation of revolutionary bases in the countryside and the conquest of power on the whole territory of South Viet Nam. The prestige of the N.F.L. has risen ever higher. The recent founding of the **Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces** and the massive participation of Cao daist believers to popular uprisings in Tay Ninh testify to the increasing expansion of the United National Front against the U.S. aggressors.

## 4 - A NEW STEP FORWARD AND WIDE PROSPECTS

OVER the past two months, in the framework of the attacks of the revolutionary forces throughout South Viet Nam, the people and armed forces of Da Nang and Tay Ninh have recorded substantial progress.

After Saigon and Hue, Da Nang has risen up against U.S. puppet rule.

The uprisings of the urban population have strongly shaken the enemy's position in the towns.

Recent successes in Tay Ninh province provide evidence that new and great possibilities have emerged: possibility for "regular" and local forces to fight large-scale annihilation battles, possibility of boosting combat efficiency, possibility of carrying out protracted fighting.

The advances made by the P.L.A.F. are also illustrated by the accurate execution of fighting instructions, the clever choice of fighting methods and the efficient combination of large-scale with medium and small-scale actions, which has resulted in the destruction of important enemy forces.

THUS the military situation has changed in favour of the P.L.A.F. and to the detriment of the enemy. Though still persisting in their aggression, they will never be able to overcome the enormous difficulties that beset them.

1 - The U.S.A. has found no way to reinvigorate the puppet administration for the relation of forces in all theatres has definitely shifted in favour of the South Viet Nam people and armed forces. The prestige and the influence of the N.F.L. have been growing. More people from various strata of the population in the countryside as well as in the urban centres have rallied around the revolution to struggle resolutely for their liberation. The revolutionary forces have by far surpassed the counter-revolutionary forces. The U.S.A. cannot reverse the situation.

2 - The U.S.A. has not been able to find a working strategy suitable to the situation and capable of helping it achieve the political objectives of its neo-colonialist war of aggression. In spite of their great military efforts, the U.S. and puppet armed forces cannot meet the expected strategic requirements.

As a consequence of the alarming deterioration of the military and political situation, the political objectives assigned to the U.S. war prove far beyond the reach of any U.S. military plan. The favourite strategy of the U.S. expeditionary forces -- offensive and counter-offensive -- has gone bankrupt. The hastily adopted "clear-and-hold" strategy has not worked either and has given little indication of viability.

In the neo-colonialist war of aggression, no U.S. military strategy can make up for the lack of balance between the military and the political aspects, the disproportion between U.S. and Saigon troops. No U.S. strategy can match the invincible strength of the people's war.

The longer the U.S.A. persists in its war, the heavier its casualties and the more disastrous its military setbacks. However great it may be, U.S. military potential is not unlimited. Contradictions between the U.S. strategy of

"limited war" in South Viet Nam and U.S. counter-revolutionary global strategy grow ever more irreconcilable. The recent U.S. heavy defeats show that the U.S.-imperialists, no matter how wilful they may be, cannot play on their criminal game. It is patent that their military failures are getting more serious with every passing day.

3 - Washington is incapable of placating dissenting opinion, in the world as well as in the U.S.A., which demands the end of U.S. aggression. Beaten in Viet Nam, L.B. Johnson has been forced to "dismiss" himself and to resort to the "limited bombing" trick. But it has not worked, and its narcotic effect on public opinion has rapidly vanished, while the indignation it has set off has given a strong impulse to the movement against the Johnson war. Defeatism has affected governmental circles in Washington. The United States is more "disunited" than ever because of the unjust character of the war and the U.S. reverses in Viet Nam. No magician can work miracles and save it as long as the war goes on.

**C**OMMENTATOR Chien Thang in his article foresees a host of difficulties ahead for the South Vietnamese people in their march toward victory for the struggle will grow harder and the trials grimmer. But the favorable factors remain numerous and fundamental. Our difficulties are tenfold smaller than those besetting the enemy now driven to a corner. Inherent in a process

of development, they can be surmounted by us.

For the Vietnamese people's national resistance to U.S. imperialism, the hardest time was when Washington massively despatched U.S. troops to South Viet Nam. The Vietnamese people have successfully tided it over and have been gaining resounding victories.

At present, their situation being a world more favourable than previously, in the flush of their past victories, they will certainly win through all difficulties, however "insurmountable" they may seem. The recent achievements have testified to the new and great possibilities of the South Viet Nam people and armed forces, **great and psychological possibilities** founded on a motivated resolve and an unshakable confidence; possibility of improving their **new strategic position** resulting from their unqualified military initiative; possibility of increasing qualitatively and quantitatively their new forces, which growth promises great achievements and will bring about high combat efficiency; possibility of taking advantage of the compound strength made up of all the forces brought into play by the revolutionary war in the military, political, economic and cultural field.

Consequently, the recent victories won by the South Viet Nam people and armed forces are very momentous ones and the possibilities of the South Viet Nam revolution are great. The prospects of the Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, are equally bright.