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# MILITARY OPERATIONS

THE Saigon front still hit the headlines during this week in reports on the fighting in South Viet Nam. Meanwhile the vast, fertile and populated Mekong Delta also is given prominence by bold successful actions conducted mostly in My Tho province, more than 40km South-Southwest of Saigon.

## SAIGON FRONT

VC 1/20/69

— 4 ambushes in 3 days in the Hon Quan area: 43 military vehicles destroyed and 6 enemy companies put out of action or decimated.

— A company of the First Cavalry wiped out and another decimated in the Tay Ninh sector.

— 13 U.S. vessels (including several 10,000-12,000-ton freighters) burnt or damaged.

A series of 4 ambushes were successfully laid by the PLAF against enemy road convoys in Binh Long provinces, at different points not far from Hon Quan, a provincial capital 96km North of Saigon, *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported.

On Jan. 8, a 28-vehicle convoy comprising 7 tanks, 20 military trucks and a jeep was completely destroyed North of the city while 3 helicopters sent in to its rescue were brought down by the patriots. Next morning, at another point, the latter intercepted a U.S. armoured column, destroying 5 of its tanks and M. III armoured troop carriers. All told, the enemy lost in these two days 2 U.S. and 2 puppet companies put out of action. The following day, Jan. 11, again on Route No 13, a mixed U.S.-puppet battalion ran into an ambush and had one company wiped out and another decimated. The same day, South of Hon Quan, 10 vehicles of a column heading for this city were destroyed in a 4th ambush.

Further West, in Tay Ninh province, the PLAF won two battles on Jan. 7. While the GI's were being landed by helicopters at Bau Sen, West-Southwest of the provincial capital, the PLAF mounted a surprise attack on them and decimated one of their companies. When enemy reinforcements arrived at the scene, the patriots immediately sprang into action and engaged them in

heavy fighting, put out of action a U.S. company and shot down 7 helicopters loaded with GI's. At the same time, mid-way between Tay Ninh and Saigon near Trang Bang, in a 15-minute battle, regional troops of the PLAF killed or wounded 80 GI's freshly landed by helicopters.

It is further reported by Western new agencies that during the past week, other bloody ambushes for the U.S.-puppet forces were set by the patriots on Jan. 14 and Jan. 15 around Tay Ninh and on Jan. 10 near Ba Ra, another provincial capital 44km East-Northeast of Hon Quan. The same sources reported a series of poundings against various U.S.-puppet positions: on the night of Jan. 8, a base of the U.S. 25th Infantry Division at Dau Tieng (64km Northwest of Saigon) and a position at Lai Thieu (12km North of Saigon); on the night of Jan. 10, the An Loc helicopter parking ground near Hon Quan and an operational CP 35 km West of Saigon received 40km and 100 shells respectively.

The PLAF attacks on enemy waterways also inflicted serious losses on the U.S.-puppet forces. Below Saigon, 4 cargo ships from 10,000 to 12,000 tons and 3 war vessels were burnt or heavily damaged on Jan. 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9 while on the Oriental Vam Co river, Northwest of Saigon, 6 smaller vessels were sent to the bottom on Jan. 5 and Jan. 10.

## MEKONG DELTA

— Heavy enemy losses during PLAF attacks against 3 provincial capitals in one night.

— At least 34 helicopters destroyed by the patriots' artillery fire on 2 airfields, one of them subjected to 3 successive attacks.

— 3 companies (one American) put out of action within 10 days.

— Intensive poundings of enemy CP's and bases.

**T**HE PLAF were particularly active in the province of My Tho, especially along Highway No 4 running through the province to link the rich rice-growing provinces to Saigon. On the night of Jan. 10 to 11, they struck at many military targets in My Tho city (including the HQ puppet Division 7 and a military training centre, one of the country's most important), the U.S. base at Binh Duc, the HQ of the U.S. 9th Infantry Division 5 km West of the city with its helicopter parking field where 10 engines were destroyed (according to Western reports) and 3 mili-

tary sub-sector HQ's. Meanwhile, local people rose up, hunting down traitors, erecting road blocks or flying NFL flags on roofs and walls, etc...

At the same time, respectively 65 km Northwest and 80 km West of My Tho, similar incidents took place in Moc Hoa and Cao Lanh, two other provincial capitals where the enemy also sustained heavy losses.

Engaging the enemy involved in "pacification" along Highway No. 4, regional people's forces of My Tho province violently assaulted

a U.S. company encamped at Hau Thanh (90km Southwest of Saigon) completely wiping it out after having killed or wounded more than 100 GI's, occupied the camp and seized many weapons. Meanwhile, guerillas blew up an important road bridge mid-way between this area and My Tho city and cut Highway No 14.

Artillery shelling against military bases was intensified substantially in this area, especially on the nights of Jan. 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14. The Binh Duc base (already mentioned) came under fire 3 times, losing in all 16 helicopters destroyed including that of the 2-star general commanding the U.S. 9th Division. 18 other engines were put out of action on an airfield near Can Tho city (the biggest in the Mekong Delta, 130 km Southwest of Saigon) which was shelled twice on Jan. 13 and 14. The Soc

Trang airfield, the HQ of puppet Division 25, 2 military sector HQ's and 1 sub-sector HQ, etc., were also bombarded.

In the Plain of Reeds, village guerillas on Jan. 6 intercepted an enemy flotilla of 3 vessels on the Oriental Vam Co river, sinking 2 vessels along with 2 platoons of GI's on board and burning the 3rd.

In the southernmost peninsula of the country where a large-scale "accelerated pacification" operation was in progress, regional armed forces of Ca Mau province, between Dec. 22, 1968 and early Jan. 1969 inflicted more than 300 casualties, shot down 3 choppers and sank or damaged 6 vessels, while those of Rach Gia province destroyed puppet company 186 at Cai Moi, near the Gulf of Thailand on the night of Jan 2.

Jan. 14. On Jan. 7, a violent attack was launched against the newly-established post of Sar Pa, near Duc Lap and 200km Northeast of Saigon, causing heavy losses in men and material.

In Southern Trung Bo, near Hoa Da district, 58km Northeast of Phan Thiet and 200km East-Northeast of Saigon, the PLAF intercepted a puppet company, putting 30 of its men out of action. Beating off enemy reinforcements, they destroyed 2 of the 3 companies moved in to rescue the battered company, wrecked 3 vehicles and downed 3 copters.

In the Da Nang sector, an operation conducted by puppet troops against 2 villages of Dai Loc district some 30km Southwest of this city, is reported to have ended with 120 puppet rangers killed or wounded by guerillas.

As in the Mekong Delta, Liberation gunners were very active. They scored direct hits at the airfields of Kontum and Buon Me Thuot (night of Jan. 8 to Jan. 9) of Quang Ngai (night of Jan. 9 to Jan. 10) of Pleiku and the H.Q. of the U.S. 4th Infantry division in this city (night of Jan. 15 to Jan. 16), the H.Q.'s of the sub-sectors of Duc Lap and Buon Ho (night of Jan. 13 to Jan. 14) etc...

## OTHER SECTORS

— 200 puppet troops killed or wounded Northwest of Pleiku.

— 2 puppet companies put out of action Northeast of Phan Thiet.

— Heavy mortaring of enemy bases in Kontum, Pleiku, Buon Me Thuot, Duc Lap and Quang Ngai.

**O**N the Western Highlands, Northeast of Saigon, the PLAF hit hard at puppet troops in the Chu Pha area, 38km North-

west of Pleiku and killed or wounded 200 adverse troops, shot down 3 choppers and destroyed 2 heavy mortars between Jan. 10 and