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S. VIETNAMESE URGED TO FIGHT VIGOROUSLY

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 0602 GMT 17 Mar 69 B

[Text] Hanoi VNA March 17--President Ho Chi Minh's congratulatory message of March 16 to the South Vietnam PLAF and people appeared in bold-face letters in all Hanoi Dailies today and was the subject of extensive editorials exhorting the South Vietnamese people to continue to fight the U.S.-puppets vigorously and hard, till they are completely defeated and South Vietnam is completely liberated.

In its editorial, the army paper QUAN DOI NHAN DAN said: Though suffering very bitter setbacks last year, the U.S. imperialists are still very stubborn and have resorted to many brutal moves in the hope of retrieving their failure. They have re-deployed their forces with a view to reinforcing the defence of military bases and major cities; the U.S. and its henchmen have launched one police operation after another in the towns, arresting, persecuting and massacring innocent people in a savage manner. They have feverishly carried out the so-called accelerated pacification program in an attempt to destroy the revolutionary bases and tighten their control on the people especially those in areas around the towns.

They have conducted raids against Lao Bao, Van Co Dong, the Plain of Reeds, A Chau, Chu Pa, U Minh and other areas in the hope of forestalling attacks by the PLAF. The U.S. aggressors have also increased the number of B-52 raids, bombing indiscriminately even areas surrounding the cities and towns. During the days just before and after the Tet festival, the U.S. -puppets put their troops on full alert against PLAF attacks. However, the U.S. commanders who had many times taken bitter beating because of their subjective, erroneous assessment of the PLAF strength, have again made the same blunder. While they were talking big in Saigon and in Washington, the South Vietnam PLAF and people struck fiery blows at 400 U.S.-puppet positions all over the South Vietnam battlefield.

The PLAF have again surprised the U.S. as to the scale of the attacks and their capability of handing new blows just while U.S.-puppet troops were put on full alert. But the greatest surprise for them is no doubt the effective combat method and the high combat efficiency of the PLAF. Even Western observers in Saigon have noted a marked rise in the casualty toll for the Americans and the greater effectiveness of the PLAF attacks compared with last year.

The paper continued: The great victories of the South Vietnam PLAF and people during the first days of this spring bear a very important significance both militarily and politically. In a short period of time, the South Vietnam PLAF and people have wiped out a sizable portion of enemy live force totalling 45,000 U.S. puppet and satellite troops, with U.S. forces taking the hardest beating. They also destroyed a large quantity of U.S. modern war means including strategic reserve supplies.

The South Vietnam PLAF and people have not only weakened the U.S.-puppets militarily, but also aggravated the already sinking morale of U.S. and puppet soldiers. Many U.S. and puppet officers and men who have been fed up with the losing U.S. war of aggression have become more bewildered and frightened at the spiralling casualty toll on their part.

Recent Attacks

Hanoi Correspondent's Dispatch in English to PRENSA LATINA Havana 0830 GMT 17 Mar 69 B
(FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

[Report on NHAN DAN 17 Mar editorial: "Continue to strike hard and deal telling blows, till U.S. and puppets are completely defeated"]

[Text] With the liberation forces' recent attacks, the U.S.-puppet passivity in defense strategy has been more and more manifested. Not only when the liberation forces' fire rained on them, but also during the period when the situation appeared calm, were they gnawed away by anxiety, fearing that attacks would be coming. They had adopted a series of defense measures they believed to be most effective. They also resorted to allegations saying that the liberation attacks could not have taken place or would never take place because they were able to prevent them.

The liberation attacks have been launched in a very talented way and have won glorious successes, breaking through many of their defense lines and making their defense measures bankrupt. During the first ten days of the attacks, more than 400 military targets have been hit, including 36 cities and provincial capitals, 35 headquarters of units above regiment-level, 38 airfields, 17 big storage areas, more than 100 district capitals, towns and other military bases...As a result of the liberation forces' high combat efficiency, from Feb 22 to March 4, 25,000 enemy troops (23,000 GI's and 2,000 U.S. satellite troops) have been wiped out and captured, 470 aircraft of every type downed and destroyed, 170 military vehicles, 250 cannons destroyed, more than 100 bomb and ammunition fuel stores burned down, and 115 vessels and combat launches sunk and set afire....

In face of the liberation forces' attacks in a powerful, massive and widespread way, the enemy were taken by surprise in every respect--time, direction, targets, scale and fighting ways of the liberation forces. They have lost a lot of living forces, more than those of the ten days of last year's Tet attacks.

One can see more and more clearly the following basic features of the new period:

- 1--Liberation forces and people in the south have constantly maintained and developed their position of continued revolutionary offensive and their combat initiative on the battlefield, carrying out continued military attacks coordinated with political uprisings.
- 2--Enemy armed forces suffer more and more losses, they have to face unsurmountable difficulties, and are going deeper and deeper into untrievable [as received] passivity.
- 3--The successes of the liberation forces proved the correctness of lines, mottoes and methods of general offensive and uprisings in the new period. They further and further stimulate toward new progressives, toward complete victory. [Sentence as received]

Such is the natural development which is entirely in line with the lass [as received] of the people's war and the trend of the era. The liberation forces are enthusiastically pushing forward on President Ho's appeal to strike hard till the U.S. and its puppets are entirely defeated.

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