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Document : HOW TO BUILD UP A STABLE REAR BASE
TO SUPPORT THE FRONT

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Saigon, August 31, 1970

Chief of Cabinet
s/s TRAN VAN HUONG

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Document Number 9

HOW TO BUILD UP A STABLE REAR BASE TO SUPPORT THE FRONT

Since the beginning of the year, our armed forces and population have reaped outstanding victories. Besides the performance of controlling nearly the whole country-side; our armed forces have blasted all the logistic bases of the Communists beyond the Cambodian frontier.

The above Victory has neutralized the Communist military pressure upon the III and IV military regions and at the same time, has created favorable conditions for the achievement of vast programs aimed at increasing the population's standard of living and the preparation of the post-war economic development planning.

From the day we have destroyed the hidden stocks of Communist weapons and foodstuffs and halted the Communist flow of supplies from the North to the South through Cambodia, the military situation became quieter for a long while in many areas of the national territory. This precludes our final victory.

The problem we have to face at the present time is to continue collecting more victories on the battlefield in order to strike off all the Communist abilities to wage the war and simultaneously, we have to make greater efforts to build up a stable rear base.

The armed forces will take care of winning more military victories, but to build up a stronger rear base, we must rely on ourselves and not wait for others to do the job in our place. The job is as important and as urgent as the mission of exterminating the enemy on the battle front, because the front and the rear bases are two facets of the same problem. And the problem is to fight against the Communists.

The front cannot achieve spectacular victories without a stable rear base. Vice-versa, the rear base cannot enjoy security and produce normally if the front is not able to stand against the enemy.

For the above-said reasons, the front and the rear bases must compete in equal efforts to exterminate the Communists, the sooner the better, and bring back peace to our beloved fatherland.

But, what is a stable rear base?

I. ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR A STABLE REAR BASE.

The rear base is that part of land where there is no war. Its mission is to provide the front with manpower, resources and finances. The rear base is also the place where fighters can relax, recover their vigor after terrible times spent at the battle front.

A stable rear base must include the following three essential factors.

a/ Stability and Security: A rear base is stable when it has not disturbance, no "calling names", no separation among the citizens. Every one living in the rear area must be united and love one another. No action can be misunderstood as against the soldiers, against the people. Every split in opinions must be settled with an understanding spirit, in a sense of high respect toward the laws and regulations and above all, no violence.

A rear base is secure when it has not destruction by mines, no kidnapping, no murder and no struggles of a destructive nature, aimed at our production potentials and our economy in general. All this benefits only our enemy: The Communists.

b) Ability to support the front: It means that the rear base must be able to fully supply the front with all its needs and also, must be able to cut off the secret system of supply of the enemy.

The needs of the front are composed of:

Needs of manpower, to set up new units, to replace those who are demobilized, hospitalized or killed.

Needs of resources, finances to cover the expenses of weapons and ammunitions, military equipment, gas-oil and lubricants, etc.

Moral needs, characterized by the visits to the soldiers, aimed at comforting and exhorting them and applauding their deeds.

The needs of cutting off the Communist secret supply system in our rear base are composed of:

Exterminating all the intelligence, undercover agents, and Communist cells within our ranks, so they cannot communicate information on our friendly situation.

Exterminating all the economic, financial and supply cells of the Communists who used to collect taxes, do business and purchase commodities for the Communist supply organization.

Exterminating all the destruction cells who used to commit assassinations, spread terrorism over the population and destruct our civilian and military structures.

Exterminating the Communist propaganda cells who used propaganda as a medium for subversive actions among the population, creating dissidence among the different classes of the society.

Outside the above needs, the rear area must be also a place where the soldiers can find a strong belief in our ideal of anti-communism and a strong faith in the future of our Fatherland.

c) Ability to produce means the rear base must be as much as possible self-sufficient for most daily-use commodities, and not rely too much upon foreign aid.

To have the ability to produce means also that the individuals and the small communities of the Nation can produce for themselves a part of the development needs without depending too much on help from the Government. Example: The families must make efforts to increase the production from which they derive extra income which, in turn, will better and strengthen their standard of living. The village and hamlet communities must strive to self-develop with their own means, not waiting for the subsidies from the national budget. The Government then will be freer to devote efforts on large production projects in order to increase the national production and reduce the degree of dependence on foreign aid.

To build up such a stable and strong rear base, with the above-said factors, we must make outstanding efforts in the fields of ideas and organization as well as technics.

II. HOW THE COMMUNISTS INTEND TO DESTROY OUR REAR BASE

Until now, though defeated militarily, the Communists continue to stick to their intention of invading South Vietnam. They only divert their targets: from a struggle based on military operations, they shift to a struggle based on political subversion, combined with small military actions. This change would help protect their forces and under-mine our vitality.

The main target of the Communists is to start again the guerrilla offensive combined with political struggle in order to deteriorate our rear base.

Such combined actions are aimed at:

1. Make pressure for us to withdraw a number of military units to protect our cities. By this, they hope to reduce our over-whelming superiority in the country-side and in Cambodia. They would have opportunities to rebuild their infra-structures and their supply channels which have been killed by our "Operation Eagle". And, in doing so, they will try to make preparations for a new wave of offensives.

2. Use any popular violence to create difficulties within the military and the production fields for the Government and the People. They also try to blacken our regime, the officers in the Government and the members of anti-communist political parties roughly, all the nationalists - to give the impression that everyone on our side is inefficient, corrupt, belligerous, and not intent in serving the Country.

3. Make the best of every trouble to transport their weapons, move their weapons, move their troops and assassinate the officers of the Government and the members of anti-communist parties.

4. Make the best of our legal forms of struggle and the freedom in our democracy to disseminate the so-called ideas for peace, 'peace-now' and for a coalition with the Communists.

The targets for the struggle of the Communists -- military and political combined -- have been stated clearly in Resolution No. 14 of the Central office of South Vietnam, seized recently by our troops. The weak points of the Communists are described by the Resolution as follows: "Generally speaking, the widening of guerrilla tactics has been conducted too slowly and in a restricted area, and so, guerrilla activities cannot be of any help to the needs of a general offensive and general uprising, that is guerrilla activities are not yet so strong and so wide-spread to serve their purpose. In the cities, guerrilla actions are still too weak and too scarce, not able to stand against the puppet troops and to upset the control of the Government and take over power. Guerrilla operations in the country-side and along the roads, in some places, are weak and inefficient."

The Communists confess their loss of morale and the fall into decay of their guerrilla troops in these terms:

"Before new developments in any area, it is clear that our guerrilla activities, because of severe weakness, have no ability to help the revolution. The enemy has increased his military offensive, his pacification activities and his hold on the Government while we are committing important faults in the command and guidance of the guerrilla war."

"... We must correct immediately these faults, such as the popular base for guerrilla actions with its many facets, the role of many organizations in backing guerrillas. This lack of concept has caused the head staff to tear

off from the village military commander and the guerrillas from the people. As a result, the guerrillas are obliged to operate without the help of the people. They cannot benefit from the force of the people and the movements which have influence on the people. Instead, they meet with many difficulties when trying to live with the people, from which they can find new sources of manpower to replace the gaps in their ranks. Without the people, they cannot extend their strength. This situation explains why the guerrilla is easily fought back by the enemy, suffering many losses!"

Facing military defeat, Resolution No. 14 of the Communists sets up new missions for the Communists cadres as follows:

"... The urgent mission of the guerrilla war is to start a wide movement, enrolling the people into a military and political struggle which will become a general uprising in three areas. At the same time, efforts must be made to consolidate our military forces, to push forth guerrilla activities in the districts and provinces, in order to undermine the enemy troops, to exterminate them continuously and in a wide area, to defeat the enemy plan of pacification and development, to deteriorate the enemy rear area."

About the policy of a military political combined struggle, Resolution No. 14 wrote:

"Only with a guerrilla movement all over the three areas-use of violence combined with the co-operation of the people - that we can have a strong basis to gain victory. In favorable cases, we can immediately spread our armed forces over all the battle fronts to reach the highest point of victory!"

"... The only way to fight against an enemy stronger in number and in equipment is to use guerrilla tactics to undermine its force and this, on a permanent basis. We must hinder the advance of over one million enemy troops by spreading our men, the thinner the better, obliging them to spread also their men and their equipment.

"So, our military operations must rely on the guerrillas to protect and consolidate our rear, while we create trouble in the enemy rear and bring into decay the enemy's units."

"... The mission of the guerrillas and the self-defense cells is to attack the village officers, the policemen, the rural reconstruction cadres, the members, of the people's self-defense organization and the militiamen because they are those who assist the oppressors in the localities."

"Stress must be put upon the use of small cells and armed communities, with good weapons, to perform the venturous missions within the enemy controlled areas!"

The above-said Resolution No. 14 confirms that the Communists intend to destroy the security of our rear area. Right now, we must be very careful and stand ready to crush their intentions and above everything, we must avoid to create, even inadvertently, favorable conditions for the Communists to destroy our rear areas.

III. HOW TO HAVE A STABLE REAR FRONT.

In order to have a stable and secure rear front, we must make much effort in our way of thinking, organization and techniques.

In our way of thinking: Everyone must have a clear concept that our country is fighting to death with the Communists and the Communists are taking advantage of our democracy and freedom and try to destroy us.

From this basic concept, we must have appropriate attitudes and actions in the present situation, face-to-face in this war against communism, that is:

a/ Strengthen our anti-Communist efforts. - For example, we have decided not to accept a coalition with the Communists. This decision must be transferred into concrete actions, such as not to accept the claims for 'peace now', 'peace without conditions', 'neutralism', 'reconciliation', all this has been set forth by cowardly political men who content themselves with being the Communists' instruments. We also never attend meetings, demonstrations or seminars organized by the Communists' agents with the aim of creating troubles. We should never ask for something beyond the possibilities of the Government, because we are aware that our country is poor and still devastated by the war.

b/ Respect the national laws. - Everyone must know that the Communists try to make use of all kinds of our troubles to suddenly attack us with their destruction units. Every action, every speech of ours violating the national laws, becomes a golden opportunity for the Communists to enter into their destructive actions.

c/ Stand ready for more contributions to bring this war to final victory.

For example, pay taxes to contribute to the expenses of the nation, attend military training courses, accept hardship, in order to be able to continue the war without depending too heavily on foreign aid.

d/ Be determined to safeguard our democracy and our constitution.

Examples: Denounce to any security agency every Communist or their agents who are conspiring to overthrow our regime. Participate in any election for our democratic structures. Never vote for the Communists or their agents or doubtful political men, because they can abuse our legal means to disturb and sell out South Vietnam to the Communists.

Regarding the organization: We need to strengthen and consolidate the organizations for our defense and for production:

a/ Reinforce and modernize the Armed Forces, giving them more strength to protect the rear areas.

b/ Reinforce and increase the efficiency of the 'people's self-defense' force because it is able to check the terrorist actions, the sabotage, and assassinations committed by the Communists. This force can also neutralize the supply channels, the medicines, manpower and information sources of the Communists. If these channels are not available, the Communist regular army will not be able to operate, because they will have no eyes, no ears, no one to guide them, no place to bury their weapons and no surface in which to disperse their men.

c/ Positively co-operate with the "Phoenix Operation", the operation which is well-equipped to exterminate the infrastructure of the Communists in the hamlets and villages, because these cadres are Communist under-cover agents, guiding the Communists in the sabotage of our country side.

Besides the individual and family self-sufficiency, we need also the creation of self-sufficient communities at the level of groups of houses, hamlets and villages, to begin with. For example, the hamlets and villages can build up, with the Communalistic development method, the structures of public utilities, such as schools, hospitals, roads, dams etc.... At the same time, the hamlets and villages can be sufficient themselves in the mission of fighting against the Communists. This will help the Armed Forces to be more mobile and to concentrate their forces to strike upon the big Communist units at the fronts.

Self-management: That is to take care by oneself of a number of matters concerning one's life. For example, to volunteer as a candidate when there is a vote for the commanding positions in the organization of the village, to participate in the elections and make a careful choice of one's representative, never vote for the corrupted, worth-nothing men or the agents of the Communists.

Besides, everyone has to attend the discussion sessions at the villages, speak out the initiatives in order to decide on the constructive projects and to gather all the dissiminated means into production plans, such as breeding co-operatives, the co-operatives for tractors, the co-operatives for agriculture, etc.....

Self Defense: That is to protect oneself, to protect one's family and hamlet and village against the Communists, no matter whether they come from outside or from inside.

This job is necessary, not only because it will bring security to the village, but also because it will help the Government in stopping new engagements by the Army. The money saved will be use in industrial investments.

To reach these objectives, everyone must:

- Rally to the 'people's self-defense' forces, attend the military training courses and be ready in a fighting position against the Communists.
- Be highly aware of the situation, keep the secrets unviolated, look out for the traitors and the under-cover Communist agents.
- Organize a permanent watch over the village, repair the bunkers, take good care of the weapons, stand ready to repulse all Communist attacks.
- Cultivate mutual love, mutual aid between the people and the troops, and between the citizens themselves, in case of natural disaster or whenever the Communists attack.

To sum up, if we build up a strong rear base, we can shorten the war because the Communists are defeated on the battle front. They must give up their intention of invading Vietnam once they find out there is no hope for them to use our rear areas as a breeding area for their war.