

W
FILE / SUBI.
DATE / SUB-CAT.
11/70

✓ COMMENTARY REVIEWS SOUTHERN URBANITES STRUGGLES IN OCTOBER

Hanoi in Vietnamese to South Vietnam 0330 GMT 9 Nov 70 S

[Commentary: "The Struggle Movement in Southern Cities in October"]

[Text] One of the new characteristics of the struggle movement in southern cities in October is that numerous struggles for salary increases and against dismissals have been successively conducted by workers at almost all factories, firms, enterprises, and construction sites of the U.S.-puppets.

The strike of Pacific [Architect and Engineer] workers which began at the end of September was the longest one, while the strike by more than 20,000 RMK-BRJ workers at the island construction site in Thu Duc, Gia Dinh, was the broadest one. As a result, 30 road- and bridge-making worksites and U.S. military bases in the provinces around Saigon have been completely paralyzed and 126 labor unions in Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh have voiced support for these strikes. It is not by accident that the workers' struggles were conducted successively in such a situation.

They were an inevitable consequence of the U.S.-puppets' unpopular economic policy of devaluating the piaster and increasing taxes in order to steal the people's money in order to fill the wide gaps in the Saigon puppet administration's war budget. Under this policy our workers are suffering miseries that have resulted from the soaring cost of living, the devaluation of the piaster, and the lack of increase of wages. Moreover, dismissals are calamities that have beset numerous workers.

In this situation, the slogan demanding a salary increase so as to cope with the high cost of living and opposing the dismissal of workers has become, more than ever, the immediate struggle slogan. For this reason, most workers have immediately participated in any struggle that has taken place at any firm, factory, enterprise, or construction site. Such struggle is no longer isolated but is part of the general struggle movement of all workers. Thus, a minor-scale struggle can become a large-scale one. In fact, the strike by 20,000 RMK-BRJ workers at the island construction site is a typical instance.

The past and present struggles of our workers in southern cities have been resolute reactions to the U.S.-puppets' brutal policy of exploitation. In these struggles, our urban workers and laborers have again manifested their spirit of solidarity, their will to struggle, and their great strength.

Along with the struggle movement by workers and laborers for a better life, all strata of urbanites have further stepped up the struggle against repression and terrorism and for freedom and democracy. Although the enemy secretly has terrorized and arrested students and repressed political detainees, our people of all strata have denounced and condemned in time the U.S.-puppets' vile retaliatory acts against the students and prisoners at Thu Duc and on Con Son Island. In particular, the committee for the struggle for the improvement of the prison system was set up with 82 members representing various religious communities, people's organizations, labor unions, notables, and intellectuals in Saigon. At a time when the U.S.-puppets' terroristic campaign bearing the deceitful label "for the people campaign" has been conducted in Saigon, the emergence of this committee is a significant event marking a new development of the well-organized struggle movement of southern urbanites against the fascist policy of terror.

Another characteristic of the struggle movement is that in past months all strata of urbanites have manifested their attitude toward Nixon's peace trick of 7 October. Although Nixon and the U.S. propaganda machinery have unceasingly and noisily publicized his 5-point peace proposal as a very new initiative, the Saigon students have considered it an old one which, though washed and whitened again, has remained unchanged.

In a communique released on 22 October, the student union of the Saigon, Van Hanh, Hue and Can Tho universities rejected Nixon's ceasefire proposal, pointing out that it was vague and impractical because U.S. troops are still occupying South Vietnamese territory and that a cease-fire under such conditions would result in maintaining their illegal presence in South Vietnam. Our students' clearcut, correct, and clear-sighted attitude reveals that our youths and urbanites are very eager for independence and peace and they are struggling bravely to achieve their earnest desire at all costs.

Together with the Saigon students, the urbanites of all strata have also manifested their attitude. In particular, seminars were organized in Saigon at which the representatives of notables, intellectuals, merchants, priests, workers, and laborers unanimously demanded that the U.S. and satellite troops be withdrawn from South Vietnam, considering this a main condition for restoring peace. They also demanded the formation of a government which really represents the South Vietnamese people.

IV. 12 Nov 70

K 5

NORTH VIETNAM

Significant is the fact that the popular front for peace, an organization struggling for an end to the war and for the restoration of peace, was set up. To repress these correct and strong demands, the U.S. aggressors and the Thieu clique ordered Tran Quoc Buu, a well-known lackey, an expert in taking bribes, and a CIA agent under the cloak of chairman of the Vietnamese Confederation of Labor to voice support for Nixon's 5-point cease-fire proposal. But public opinion in cities fully disregarded Buu's statement which could neither drown out the voice of the just cause nor represent the voice of workers and laborers in southern cities.

The struggle movement of all strata of people for a better life, democracy, and peace was forging ahead while the opposition forces were publicly working against the Thieu-Ky-Khiem clique. As a result, their contradictions became more acute. These forces, including many generals, assemblymen, politicians, and priests organized meetings and published many articles in the Saigon press, uprightly criticizing the Thieu-Ky-Khiem clique's policy and the illegal U.S. presence in South Vietnam, demanding a change of policy, the replacement of the Thieu-Ky-Khiem administration, and the formation of a broad-based government which represents all strata of people, and which opposes U.S. intervention.

The boycott of the Saigon National Assembly's opening session of 31 October by a number of assemblymen who left the conference room, in defiance of Thieu's presence, obviously revealed their opposition to the Thieu-Ky-Khiem clique and a rift in the Saigon administration machinery.

In sum, in the past month, despite the difficulties in their livelihood resulting from the soaring cost of living and from the enemy's repression and close control, all strata of people in southern cities, especially Saigon, persisted in struggling vigorously for a better life, democracy, independence, and peace. With different but correlated slogans, this struggle movement has developed into a broad front of struggle against the U.S. aggressors and Thieu-Ky-Khiem lackey clique and for a decent life and peace.

Many new forces, potentialities, and conditions have emerged from the struggle movement in cities. Meanwhile, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have encountered numerous difficulties and internal contradictions and have become weaker and more isolated. In these conditions, the struggle movement of our urbanites of all strata will surely develop more vigorously and will score new successes in the future.