

209

W  
~~file~~ 14.37  
~~sub-~~  
file subj.  
date sub-cat.  
11/72 ~~S~~

PRP ABANDONS 1972 PLANS FOR A REVOLUTION IN SAIGON

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page i
Two Letters From Sau Trung of the Bien Hoa People's Revolutionary Party	1
Resolution of Saigon-Gia Dinh Committee People's Revolutionary Party, mid-1972	8
Notes on COSVN Directive 8	13
"Plan Concerning the Motivation Task in the Immediate Future"	18
COSVN Directive 20/H, 15 October, 1972	26
Liberation Radio Report of 31 October Meeting of Saigon-Gia Dinh NLF and People's Revolutionary Committees	32

NLF / Gov  
FILE / SUBJ.  
DATE / SUB-CAT.  
11/72 / 57

Document 108

November 1972

## PRP ABANDONS 1972 PLANS FOR A REVOLUTION IN SAIGON

### Introduction

Ever since the 1945 Việt-Minh revolutionaries failed to retain their brief hold on Saigon, capturing that city has been one of the dreams of Vietnamese Communists. The capital of South Việt-Nam was a principal target of the North Vietnamese Army-Việt-Cộng offensive at the end of January (Tết) and again in May, 1968. In the "Nguyễn Huệ Campaign", as the Communists styled the southern half of their military drive against the Government of Viet-Nam (GVN) which began in April 1972, the ultimate goal was political power in Saigon. While the northern half of the 1972 action was directed from Hanoi through the Central Military Affairs Committee of the Viet-Nam Workers' Party (VWP), as captured documents revealed, the southern thrusts were under the supervision of COSVN--the VWP's Central Office of South Viet-Nam.

One of COSVN's principal components has been the headquarters of the People's Revolutionary Party, organized under its guidance in late December 1961, as a "Marxist-Leninist Party in South Viet-Nam." It promptly affiliated to the National Front for the Liberation of South Viet-Nam, (NLF), which had been created a year earlier at the VWP's behest, and was officially represented at the June 1969 founding conference of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam (PRG). (1) In fact the PRP was a merger of the Nam Bộ (Southern) and Trung Bộ (Central) Regional Committees of the Hanoi-headquartered VWP.

---

(1) For the origins of the PRP see Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 102 "The People's Revolutionary Party of South Viet-Nam". Its participation in the organization of the PRG is described in No. 101 "The PRGRSV". The resolution of the Third Congress of the Viet-Nam Workers' Party which called for the setting up of the NLF is reprinted in Document 91.

In mid-1966 the PRP's Saigon Regional Party Committee held a conference to discuss plans for a revolution in Saigon to be carried out in conjunction with the military drives of the so-called People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF), whose headquarters were the other main component of COSVN. The conference had before it a letter from "Comrade Ba", in all probability Lê Du<sup>â</sup>n, First Secretary of the VWP, who had in the late 1940s and early 1950s been secretary of the Nam Bộ Regional Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party and its successor the VWP, and director of the first COSVN. [The letter is reprinted in Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 102, Part I.] It remains the most complete exposition of the place accorded urban uprisings, and particularly the hoped for revolution in Saigon, in the concept of the "General Offensive and Uprising", which Vietnamese Communists for several decades saw as the decisive culmination of their political-military drive for power in the South.

"Ba" told the Saigon Party Committee:

"At a certain time the political and military attacks against the enemy forces will become a General Offensive and Uprising to defeat the enemy forces and seize power in all areas including the cities.... Along with the political struggles in the rural areas, there must be a political struggle movement coordinated with military violence at a definitive level in the cities to prepare for the General Offensive and Uprising movement which is the decisive step of the South Viet-Nam revolution."

He recognized that this culminating phase of the revolution could not succeed "if the ruling class is in control of a strong military force." However, he said that it was not essential that "the general uprising must wait until the general offensive is completed." In fact he thought that political demonstrations could "give a boost" to military thrusts. But "for a general uprising to take place there must be a general offensive."

The objective of the combined military and political drives, he concluded, was that:

In mid-1966 the PRP's Saigon Regional Party Committee held a conference to discuss plans for a revolution in Saigon to be carried out in conjunction with the military drives of the so-called People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF), whose headquarters were the other main component of COSVN. The conference had before it a letter from "Comrade Ba", in all probability Lê Duân, First Secretary of the VWP, who had in the late 1940s and early 1950s been secretary of the Nam Bộ Regional Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party and its successor the VWP, and director of the first COSVN. [The letter is reprinted in Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 102, Part I.] It remains the most complete exposition of the place accorded urban uprisings, and particularly the hoped for revolution in Saigon, in the concept of the "General Offensive and Uprising", which Vietnamese Communists for several decades saw as the decisive culmination of their political-military drive for power in the South.

"Ba" told the Saigon Party Committee:

"At a certain time the political and military attacks against the enemy forces will become a General Offensive and Uprising to defeat the enemy forces and seize power in all areas including the cities.... Along with the political struggles in the rural areas, there must be a political struggle movement coordinated with military violence at a definitive level in the cities to prepare for the General Offensive and Uprising movement which is the decisive step of the South Viet-Nam revolution."

He recognized that this culminating phase of the revolution could not succeed "if the ruling class is in control of a strong military force." However, he said that it was not essential that "the general uprising must wait until the general offensive is completed." In fact he thought that political demonstrations could "give a boost" to military thrusts. But "for a general uprising to take place there must be a general offensive."

The objective of the combined military and political drives, he concluded, was that:

## PRP ABANDONS 1972 PLANS FOR A REVOLUTION IN SAIGON

## Introduction

Ever since the 1945 Việt-Minh revolutionaries failed to retain their brief hold on Saigon, capturing that city has been one of the dreams of Vietnamese Communists. The capital of South Việt-Nam was a principal target of the North Vietnamese Army-Việt-Cộng offensive at the end of January (Tết) and again in May, 1968. In the "Nguyễn Huệ Campaign", as the Communists styled the southern half of their military drive against the Government of Viet-Nam (GVN) which began in April 1972, the ultimate goal was political power in Saigon. While the northern half of the 1972 action was directed from Hanoi through the Central Military Affairs Committee of the Viet-Nam Workers' Party (VWP), as captured documents revealed, the southern thrusts were under the supervision of COSVN--the VWP's Central Office of South Viet-Nam.

One of COSVN's principal components has been the headquarters of the People's Revolutionary Party, organized under its guidance in late December 1961, as a "Marxist-Leninist Party in South Viet-Nam." It promptly affiliated to the National Front for the Liberation of South Viet-Nam, (NLF), which had been created a year earlier at the VWP's behest, and was officially represented at the June 1969 founding conference of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam (PRG).<sup>(1)</sup> In fact the PRP was a merger of the Nam Bộ (Southern) and Trung Bộ (Central) Regional Committees of the Hanoi-headquartered VWP.

---

(1) For the origins of the PRP see Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 102 "The People's Revolutionary Party of South Viet-Nam". Its participation in the organization of the PRG is described in No. 101 "The PRGRSV". The resolution of the Third Congress of the Viet-Nam Workers' Party which called for the setting up of the NLF is reprinted in Document 91.

"...During and after the uprising, concurrently with establishing control of the masses and the administrative organs at the base level, we must materialize a form of front for a broad coalition government at the top, a national, democratic, peaceful and neutral coalition government. These are the transitional forms designed to divide the enemy and drive him into a passive position, defeat the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, and realize the immediate objectives of the revolution in South Viet-Nam."

The Tết 1968 attack, conducted more or less simultaneously against cities and military installation throughout South Viet-Nam, was an attempt to realize "Ba's" General Offensive and Uprising strategy, and was so proclaimed at the time. It failed, militarily and politically. For one thing the political preparations by the PRP had been inadequate. The populace of Saigon and other South Vietnamese cities was asked to rise up in support of massive terror attacks rather than in support of grievances of their own strongly enough felt to make them willing to see their government replaced by a regime based upon terror. Furthermore, the government was still "in control of a strong military force."

✓ The documents presented here show that the PRP endeavored in theory at least to activate the people, particularly workers and students, in the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Định-Biên Hòa urban sprawl in 1972 prior to launching military incursions into the area. But there was little evidence of widespread agitation, and even less of popular response to it, between the end of March 1972 and the end of October when U.S.-D.R.V. negotiations in Paris seemed to promise an end to military action in South Viet-Nam. During those seven months the Vietnamese Communists did not issue a call for a General Offensive and Uprising, as they had in 1968, although occasionally phrases like "the general offensive and uprising spirit" were used in Liberation Radio broadcasts.

✓ Numerous captured documents demonstrate that in the early months of the 1972 campaign most major cities in South Viet-Nam were targetted for military and political seizure by the Communists. For example Huế, Đà Nẵng and Quang Ngai Party Committees were assured that "Liberation Army" units would be available to help them. The Quảng Ngãi PRP was

told to be ready to initiate a local offensive and uprising in June 1972. Its first phase was to be the positioning of Party members in legal organizations; the second the seizure of power in "the city's outskirts" plus intensified agitation in the city itself while awaiting the arrival of "Liberation forces." Two "steering elements" were to be established, one to direct agitational work and assassinations inside the city. The other in the "city fringe" area would maintain contact with "our troops" and assume overall leadership when the final drive on the city materialized.

A subsequent issue of Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes will show that Communist leadership in V.C. Military Region V and Quảng Nam Province devised a detailed and elaborate plan for seizing power in Đà Nẵng city at the moment a cease fire was agreed.

Unlike Tet 1968 the Communists did not envision military-political moves taking place against all of their urban targets simultaneously. The PRP in each city was to be ready to move from one action phase into another when "main force" military developments on the front closest to it permitted Communist troops--North Vietnamese or Việt Cộng--to advance toward its "fringe areas."

As early as December 1971 the political officer of a Việt Cộng sapper battalion was instructing his men to the effect that: "We realize that the revolutionary movement in Saigon is a protracted one" but there may be "internal dissension among the enemy. A sudden development may occur." Meanwhile the battalion was given eight days of instruction on "the complex Saigon battlefield," according to a notebook kept by one of the men. Sometime in early 1972 the Party Committee of COSVN Sub-Region 6, the V.C. designation for Saigon and its "fringe area" in Gia Dinh Province, drafted its "Resolution Bình-Giã 5" (named after a V.C. victory in Phước Tuy Province in 1965.) The text of it, unfortunately, is not available. It seems to have called for new attempts to organize the workers and students in the capital area and for the activation of additional secret guerrilla cells in each suburban hamlet.

told to be ready to initiate a local offensive and uprising in June 1972. Its first phase was to be the positioning of Party members in legal organizations; the second the seizure of power in "the city's outskirts" plus intensified agitation in the city itself while awaiting the arrival of "Liberation forces." Two "steering elements" were to be established, one to direct agitational work and assassinations inside the city. The other in the "city fringe" area would maintain contact with "our troops" and assume overall leadership when the final drive on the city materialized.

A subsequent issue of Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes will show that Communist leadership in V.C. Military Region V and Quảng Nam Province devised a detailed and elaborate plan for seizing power in Đà Nẵng city at the moment a cease fire was agreed.

Unlike Tet 1968 the Communists did not envision military - political moves taking place against all of their urban targets simultaneously. The PRP in each city was to be ready to move from one action phase into another when "main force" military developments on the front closest to it permitted Communist troops--North Vietnamese or Việt Cộng--to advance toward its "fringe areas."

As early as December 1971 the political officer of a Việt Cộng sapper battalion was instructing his men to the effect that: "We realize that the revolutionary movement in Saigon is a protracted one" but there may be "internal dissension among the enemy. A sudden development may occur." Meanwhile the battalion was given eight days of instruction on "the complex Saigon battlefield," according to a notebook kept by one of the men. Sometime in early 1972 the Party Committee of COSVN Sub-Region 6, the V.C. designation for Saigon and its "fringe area" in Gia Dinh Province, drafted its "Resolution Bình-Giã 5" (named after a V.C. victory in Phước Tuy Province in 1965.) The text of it, unfortunately, is not available. It seems to have called for new attempts to organize the workers and students in the capital area and for the activation of additional secret guerrilla cells in each suburban hamlet.

"...During and after the uprising, concurrently with establishing control of the masses and the administrative organs at the base level, we must materialize a form of front for a broad coalition government at the top, a national, democratic, peaceful and neutral coalition government. These are the transitional forms designed to divide the enemy and drive him into a passive position, defeat the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, and realize the immediate objectives of the revolution in South Viet-Nam."

The Tết 1968 attack, conducted more or less simultaneously against cities and military installation throughout South Viet-Nam, was an attempt to realize "Ba's" General Offensive and Uprising strategy, and was so proclaimed at the time. It failed, militarily and politically. For one thing the political preparations by the PRP had been inadequate. The populace of Saigon and other South Vietnamese cities was asked to rise up in support of massive terror attacks rather than in support of grievances of their own strongly enough felt to make them willing to see their government replaced by a regime based upon terror. Furthermore, the government was still "in control of a strong military force."

The documents presented here show that the PRP endeavored in theory at least to activate the people, particularly workers and students, in the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Định-Biên Hòa urban sprawl in 1972 prior to launching military incursions into the area. But there was little evidence of widespread agitation, and even less of popular response to it, between the end of March 1972 and the end of October when U.S.-D.R.V. negotiations in Paris seemed to promise an end to military action in South Viet-Nam. During those seven months the Vietnamese Communists did not issue a call for a General Offensive and Uprising, as they had in 1968, although occasionally phrases like "the general offensive and uprising spirit" were used in Liberation Radio broadcasts.

Numerous captured documents demonstrate that in the early months of the 1972 campaign most major cities in South Viet-Nam were targetted for military and political seizure by the Communists. For example Huế, Đà Nẵng and Quang Ngai Party Committees were assured that "Liberation Army" units would be available to help them. The Quảng Ngãi PRP was

In March, shortly before the military campaign got underway, and again in April the Biên Hòa Province Committee instructed its subordinates in Biên Hòa city, the site of an important military base, about 10 miles north of Saigon, to prepare for an uprising. Two of these letters are reprinted here. Other captured documents addressed to the Củ Chi District Committee of the Party in V.C. Sub-Region 1 (in GVN Hậu Nghĩa Province) and to V.C. Long An Sub-Region in the summer of 1972 stressed the importance of their intensifying activity, because they are on routes leading to Saigon and contain hamlets defined as part of the Saigon "fringe area". Better coordination between Party organizations in the areas encircling Saigon was called for, but one of the documents stated that in fact there were no Party cells in a number of "rural" hamlets not far from the capital. (2)

A directive, apparently written by the Sub-Region 6 Committee in mid-August identified three types of "rural areas in Gia-Dinh Province: city outskirts, surrounding rural areas and intermediate areas"--those between the hamlets in the metropolitan area, broadly defined, and the V.C. bases. The rural areas surrounding Saigon, the directive estimated, had a population of 1,000,000 people, mostly families of workers and farmers, many of whom the Committee thought were sympathetic to the Party. But even there organization was admittedly weak, with cadres being, for the most part "military personnel" rather than politically trained activists. As late as the fifth month of the offensive the Committee was urging that quite elementary organizational and propaganda jobs be undertaken to facilitate troop movements through "surrounding rural areas" towards Saigon. Party chapter work had been poor, and had failed to enlist any number of people in "liberation organizations", which it also dubbed "subordinate organizations."

A number of the documents upon which the foregoing summary of PRP planning in the greater Saigon area is based have not yet been completely translated. Unfortunately, as has been noted, Sub-Region 6's original plan has not been obtained.

---

(2) For V.C. military regional designations see Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 93 "Việt-Cộng Political Geography of South Viet-Nam

However a summer 1972 update of it has been. It is reprinted here as is an undated supplement to either it or to the earlier "Bình Giả 5", which stressed "the motivation task" and propaganda work in the Saigon area.

The first of the two Bien Hoa letters shows Sau Trung, either the secretary or a member of the Standing Committee of the provincial PRP, confident, a week before the North Vietnamese forces invaded the South, that economic discontent would make workers, laborers and war invalids and widows susceptible to Party appeals "if we possess the basic organization serving as the nucleus and starter for the movement". COSVN itself had put forward such an assessment, he noted. But while he hoped that "we can expand the movement to other social classes" he looked to students "as starter for the struggle movement." Guerrilla warfare "must be initiated in cities," he wrote. However the city organization had not informed him "how many contacts we have established and how many agents we have recruited." In short, on the eve of the offensive the Biên Hòa PRP was not in fact ready to embark on the first phase of the uprising movement.

Three weeks after the invasion hit South Viet-Nam, Sáu Trung was emboldened to instruct his subordinate, Ba Ngon, to activate the struggle movement. "Do not wait until we have sufficient forces to conduct a struggle," he wrote. "The developments on various battlefields indicate that we are in the most favorable position to carry out the determination of the Party Central." He identified specific grievances of various social strata that he thought had made them ripe for revolt, and laid down propaganda lines to be popularized among the Biên Hòa people generally. The PRG's "ten point military proselyting policy" was to be publicized. Preparations were to be made to move on to the next stage in the revolutionary process:

"Resolutely and daringly employ self-defense and secret special action units to destroy a number of puppet tyrants, ring-leaders and policemen in hamlets, wards, labor areas, trading agencies, and schools. Study a plan to attack the enemy's storage areas."

However a summer 1972 update of it has been. It is reprinted here as is an undated supplement to either it or to the earlier "Bình Giả 5", which stressed "the motivation task" and propaganda work in the Saigon area.

The first of the two Bien Hoa letters shows Sau Trung, either the secretary or a member of the Standing Committee of the provincial PRP, confident, a week before the North Vietnamese forces invaded the South, that economic discontent would make workers, laborers and war invalids and widows susceptible to Party appeals "if we possess the basic organization serving as the nucleus and starter for the movement". COSVN itself had put forward such an assessment, he noted. But while he hoped that "we can expand the movement to other social classes" he looked to students "as starter for the struggle movement." Guerrilla warfare "must be initiated in cities," he wrote. However the city organization had not informed him "how many contacts we have established and how many agents we have recruited." In short, on the eve of the offensive the Biên Hòa PRP was not in fact ready to embark on the first phase of the uprising movement.

Three weeks after the invasion hit South Viet-Nam, Sáu Trung was emboldened to instruct his subordinate, Ba Ngon, to activate the struggle movement. "Do not wait until we have sufficient forces to conduct a struggle," he wrote. "The developments on various battlefields indicate that we are in the most favorable position to carry out the determination of the Party Central." He identified specific grievances of various social strata that he thought had made them ripe for revolt, and laid down propaganda lines to be popularized among the Biên Hòa people generally. The PRG's "ten point military proselyting policy" was to be publicized. Preparations were to be made to move on to the next stage in the revolutionary process:

"Resolutely and daringly employ self-defense and secret special action units to destroy a number of puppet tyrants, ring-leaders and policemen in hamlets, wards, labor areas, trading agencies, and schools. Study a plan to attack the enemy's storage areas."

In March, shortly before the military campaign got underway, and again in April the Biên Hòa Province Committee instructed its subordinates in Biên Hòa city, the site of an important military base, about 10 miles north of Saigon, to prepare for an uprising. Two of these letters are reprinted here. Other captured documents addressed to the Củ Chi District Committee of the Party in V.C. Sub-Region 1 (in GVN Hậu Nghĩa Province) and to V.C. Long An Sub-Region in the summer of 1972 stressed the importance of their intensifying activity, because they are on routes leading to Saigon and contain hamlets defined as part of the Saigon "fringe area". Better coordination between Party organizations in the areas encircling Saigon was called for, but one of the documents stated that in fact there were no Party cells in a number of "rural" hamlets not far from the capital. (2)

A directive, apparently written by the Sub-Region 6 Committee in mid-August identified three types of "rural areas in Gia-Dinh Province: city outskirts, surrounding rural areas and intermediate areas"--those between the hamlets in the metropolitan area, broadly defined, and the V.C. bases. The rural areas surrounding Saigon, the directive estimated, had a population of 1,000,000 people, mostly families of workers and farmers, many of whom the Committee thought were sympathetic to the Party. But even there organization was admittedly weak, with cadres being, for the most part "military personnel" rather than politically trained activists. As late as the fifth month of the offensive the Committee was urging that quite elementary organizational and propaganda jobs be undertaken to facilitate troop movements through "surrounding rural areas" towards Saigon. Party chapter work had been poor, and had failed to enlist any number of people in "liberation organizations", which it also dubbed "subordinate organizations."

A number of the documents upon which the foregoing summary of PRP planning in the greater Saigon area is based have not yet been completely translated. Unfortunately, as has been noted, Sub-Region 6's original plan has not been obtained.

---

(2) For V.C. military regional designations see Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 93 "Việt-Cộng Political Geography of South Viet-Nam

The Saigon-Gia Định Party Committee met sometime in the late spring or early summer 1972. The resolution adopted at that meeting has been captured and is reprinted here. Attached to it was a set of notes on COSVN Directive 08. They too are reproduced. In COSVN's opinion, "Our achievements are still unsatisfactory. Our strength is still low." But, it declared, the "enemy's oppressive control... has already been loosened in some slum areas" and the Party should endeavor to develop a base in them from which it could spread its influence to other parts of the metropolitan area. Propagandistically, efforts were to be concentrated "on demanding Thiệu's resignation and the formation of a national concord government."

So far as the City committee itself was concerned, the main task was to provoke violence throughout the area--violence by secret Party guerrilla units, by "the masses in Saigon" and by students who "must use sticks to defeat policemen." This policy was to be implemented during the "spring-summer" period according to the resolution which was designed to cover the autumn months as well. It may have been prescribed by COSVN Directive 04 or 07 which were before the committee along with 08.

The committee admitted, however, that organization was still poor both in the city proper and in the outskirts, although the resolution states that in the "outskirts and bordering areas" its "revolutionary forces" included "armed units." It continued: "All revolutionary forces must be reorganized and must adopt appropriate operating procedures under a covert status. We must spare no efforts in building and consolidating leadership nuclei." The Party's acknowledged weaknesses did not detract from its leaders' resolve to maintain firm control of any revolutionary movement that might emerge.

While improving its revolutionary organizations and stimulating violent demonstrations by students and workers, the Party also wished to establish more connections with "different religions and political parties and concentrate efforts on the overthrow of Thiệu, compelling him to accept defeat and the restoration of peace." This, in turn, should lead to the formation of a new "leftist front consisting of different popular organizations and uncommitted social strata." The resolution also speculated

that "our diplomatic and military offensives" could result in the enemy's accepting "defeat and our conditions" and "the war can be ended within this Summer-Fall period."

The "Plan Concerning The Motivation Task In The Immediate Future" was concerned primarily with extending the Party's influence throughout the capital area rather than with Party internal problems. Its objective was to prepare "public opinion" for "the outbreak of a revolution, because only a revolution can bring a change to the people's life." Overthrowing the GVN, withdrawal of all U.S. troops, and the establishment of a "government of national concord" were listed as key points around which "a general political mobilization" should be sought. But, the plan reiterated, this attempt to broaden the Party's influence did not imply any compromise with "reformist concepts" or a disavowal of "decisive revolutionary acts with a high degree of organized violence."

Propaganda themes were outlined, target audiences specified, and the organization of "propaganda cells", to be directed by an area-wide propaganda and training section rather than by local Party Chapter Committees, was called for. These would include "armed propaganda units" which would "collaborate with underground agents" in preparing selected neighborhoods, particularly slums, for Party control. Infiltration of the Saigon press was discussed, and the publication of a Party daily and a weekly paper was envisioned. Meanwhile the people were to be urged to listen to Radio Hanoi and Liberation Radio broadcasts.

While neither the "Plan" nor the city committee's mid-year resolution specified the timing of "the climaxing phase", the "Plan" does mention the possibility of "armed propaganda units from the outside" coming to Saigon to assist the local effort. Despite all the effort that the PRP had put into planning for a revolution in Saigon there was virtually no evidence in the city in mid-November 1972 that even the preliminary agitational requirements of the plan had been effectively met.

that "our diplomatic and military offensives" could result in the enemy's accepting "defeat and our conditions" and "the war can be ended within this Summer-Fall period."

The "Plan Concerning The Motivation Task In The Immediate Future" was concerned primarily with extending the Party's influence throughout the capital area rather than with Party internal problems. Its objective was to prepare "public opinion" for "the outbreak of a revolution, because only a revolution can bring a change to the people's life." Overthrowing the GVN, withdrawal of all U.S. troops, and the establishment of a "government of national concord" were listed as key points around which "a general political mobilization" should be sought. But, the plan reiterated, this attempt to broaden the Party's influence did not imply any compromise with "reformist concepts" or a disavowal of "decisive revolutionary acts with a high degree of organized violence."

Propaganda themes were outlined, target audiences specified, and the organization of "propaganda cells", to be directed by an area-wide propaganda and training section rather than by local Party Chapter Committees, was called for. These would include "armed propaganda units" which would "collaborate with underground agents" in preparing selected neighborhoods, particularly slums, for Party control. Infiltration of the Saigon press was discussed, and the publication of a Party daily and a weekly paper was envisioned. Meanwhile the people were to be urged to listen to Radio Hanoi and Liberation Radio broadcasts.

While neither the "Plan" nor the city committee's mid-year resolution specified the timing of "the climaxing phase", the "Plan" does mention the possibility of "armed propaganda units from the outside" coming to Saigon to assist the local effort. Despite all the effort that the PRP had put into planning for a revolution in Saigon there was virtually no evidence in the city in mid-November 1972 that even the preliminary agitational requirements of the plan had been effectively met.

The Saigon-Gia Định Party Committee met sometime in the late spring or early summer 1972. The resolution adopted at that meeting has been captured and is reprinted here. Attached to it was a set of notes on COSVN Directive 08. They too are reproduced. In COSVN's opinion, "Our achievements are still unsatisfactory. Our strength is still low." But, it declared, the "enemy's oppressive control... has already been loosened in some slum areas" and the Party should endeavor to develop a base in them from which it could spread its influence to other parts of the metropolitan area. Propagandistically, efforts were to be concentrated "on demanding Thiệu's resignation and the formation of a national concord government."

So far as the City committee itself was concerned, the main task was to provoke violence throughout the area--violence by secret Party guerrilla units, by "the masses in Saigon" and by students who "must use sticks to defeat policemen." This policy was to be implemented during the "spring-summer" period according to the resolution which was designed to cover the autumn months as well. It may have been prescribed by COSVN Directive 04 or 07 which were before the committee along with 08.

The committee admitted, however, that organization was still poor both in the city proper and in the outskirts, although the resolution states that in the "outskirts and bordering areas" its "revolutionary forces" included "armed units." It continued: "All revolutionary forces must be reorganized and must adopt appropriate operating procedures under a covert status. We must spare no efforts in building and consolidating leadership nuclei." The Party's acknowledged weaknesses did not detract from its leaders' resolve to maintain firm control of any revolutionary movement that might emerge.

While improving its revolutionary organizations and stimulating violent demonstrations by students and workers, the Party also wished to establish more connections with "different religions and political parties and concentrate efforts on the overthrow of Thiệu, compelling him to accept defeat and the restoration of peace." This, in turn, should lead to the formation of a new "leftist front consisting of different popular organizations and uncommitted social strata." The resolution also speculated

In the latter half of October, fragmentary captured documents suggest that the pre-1968 V.C. Military Region 4 may have been reactivated to coordinate military movements throughout the greater Saigon area, thus subordinating the Sub-Region 6 committee at least temporarily to the political structure of the P.L.A.F. command of the units infiltrating towards Saigon from Binh Long, Binh Duong and Hau Nghia provinces.

About the same time several documents were found on the body of a political cadre killed on one of the approaches to Saigon. Included among them was Directive 20/H, of October 15, 1972 presumably issued by COSVN, signed "Chinh Vinh", a pseudonym which has been used by Maj. Gen. Tran Do of the North Vietnamese Army, an alternate member of the Viet-Nam Workers' Party Central Committee. Trần Độ has been a ranking military-political officer at COSVN for nearly a decade.

The directive was titled "Ideological task in the new situation." It was one of a number of documents captured in South Viet-Nam since October 15 which showed that the VWP had notified its leading echelons in the army and the Party in the South that a cease fire and an end to fighting between North Viet-Nam and the United States was possible before the first round of the October negotiations in Paris between the two had been completed. At least one of these documents indicated that this contingency was signalled to the cadre even prior to the presentation of the October 8 Hanoi peace proposals to the U.S. in Paris.

"A settlement of the war in Viet-Nam may be reached in Paris in the near future between us and the Americans" began Directive 20/H, which is reprinted in full in this research note. It proceeded to outline a very rough, simplified version of what was agreed in draft in Paris, as summarized in the DRV statement issued on October 26. The agreement meant, said "Chin Vinh" that "we have entered a new phase of struggle to accomplish our national democracy revolution in South Viet-Nam and unify the country."

Listing its assets in the "new phase of struggle", the directive noted, first, "we have...strong people's armed forces, especially the main forces," and a "political force, a complete system of leadership from high to low levels and a time-tested infrastructure; we have the National Front for the Liberation of South Viet-Nam, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam...and we will occupy a position of equality in the administration of national concord." Thus, in Chin' Vinh's view, there were in South Viet-Nam "two mutually-contesting and mutually-extermimating administrations and armies."

The "new situation" in the contest for power provided the Communists a "great opportunity" to alter the "balance of forces" in their favor during this "period of transition between two struggle phases of the revolution in South Viet-Nam", which could be "greatly affected by our subjective dynamism."

After summarizing anticipated "enemy schemes", the COSVN writer continued with a description of the "Missions Of Our People's Armed Forces." Prior to a cease fire they "are to work against time and strive hard to intensify military attacks in coordination with political and military proselyting attacks so as to win great victories on the battlefield, chiefly in the counter-pacification field.... After a cease fire has gone into effect, our forces must become good civic action groups," at least for the period immediately following the hectic first few days of the cease fire.

There would be a propaganda duel between the GVN and the Communists as to which side had "won" the war, the directive predicted, with the GVN telling "our local comrades" that the Northern troops were returning to the DRV. By implication Chin' Vinh denied that this would be the case. Therefore the Communist forces must become skilled propagandists themselves: "Overcome rightism and negativism; be alert for indications of passivism, declining combativeness, complacency, shirking attitudes, lack of aggressiveness, fear of combat, hardships and difficulties, and hesitation toward and dereliction of duty, etc."

In short Chin' Vinh feared that a cease fire might undermine the discipline of a badly battered army, some of whose Northern units had been fighting a long war far from home, and

Listing its assets in the "new phase of struggle", the directive noted, first, "we have...strong people's armed forces, especially the main forces," and a "political force, a complete system of leadership from high to low levels and a time-tested infrastructure; we have the National Front for the Liberation of South Viet-Nam, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam...and we will occupy a position of equality in the administration of national concord." Thus, in Chin Vinh's view, there were in South Viet-Nam "two mutually-contesting and mutually-extermimating administrations and armies."

The "new situation" in the contest for power provided the Communists a "great opportunity" to alter the "balance of forces" in their favor during this "period of transition between two struggle phases of the revolution in South Viet-Nam", which could be "greatly affected by our subjective dynamism."

After summarizing anticipated "enemy schemes", the COSVN writer continued with a description of the "Missions Of Our People's Armed Forces." Prior to a cease fire they "are to work against time and strive hard to intensify military attacks in coordination with political and military proselyting attacks so as to win great victories on the battlefield, chiefly in the counter-pacification field.... After a cease fire has gone into effect, our forces must become good civic action groups," at least for the period immediately following the hectic first few days of the cease fire.

There would be a propaganda duel between the GVN and the Communists as to which side had "won" the war, the directive predicted, with the GVN telling "our local comrades" that the Northern troops were returning to the DRV. By implication Chin Vinh denied that this would be the case. Therefore the Communist forces must become skilled propagandists themselves: "Overcome rightism and negativism; be alert for indications of passivism, declining combativeness, complacency, shirking attitudes, lack of aggressiveness, fear of combat, hardships and difficulties, and hesitation toward and dereliction of duty, etc."

In short Chin Vinh feared that a cease fire might undermine the discipline of a badly battered army, some of whose Northern units had been fighting a long war far from home, and

In the latter half of October, fragmentary captured documents suggest that the pre-1968 V.C. Military Region 4 may have been reactivated to coordinate military movements throughout the greater Saigon area, thus subordinating the Sub-Region 6 committee at least temporarily to the political structure of the P.L.A.F. command of the units infiltrating towards Saigon from Binh Long, Binh Duong and Hau Nghia provinces.

About the same time several documents were found on the body of a political cadre killed on one of the approaches to Saigon. Included among them was Directive 20/H, of October 15, 1972 presumably issued by COSVN, signed "Chinh Vinh", a pseudonym which has been used by Maj. Gen. Tran Do of the North Vietnamese Army, an alternate member of the Viet-Nam Workers' Party Central Committee. Trần Độ has been a ranking military-political officer at COSVN for nearly a decade.

The directive was titled "Ideological task in the new situation." It was one of a number of documents captured in South Viet-Nam since October 15 which showed that the VWP had notified its leading echelons in the army and the Party in the South that a cease fire and an end to fighting between North Viet-Nam and the United States was possible before the first round of the October negotiations in Paris between the two had been completed. At least one of these documents indicated that this contingency was signalled to the cadre even prior to the presentation of the October 8 Hanoi peace proposals to the U.S. in Paris.

"A settlement of the war in Viet-Nam may be reached in Paris in the near future between us and the Americans" began Directive 20/H, which is reprinted in full in this research note. It proceeded to outline a very rough, simplified version of what was agreed in draft in Paris, as summarized in the DRV statement issued on October 26. The agreement meant, said "Chinh Vinh" that "we have entered a new phase of struggle to accomplish our national democracy revolution in South Viet-Nam and unify the country."

whose mixed Northern-Southern V.C. contingents were largely made up of politically ill-trained youths. Therefore, he continued, it was necessary to "improve the class viewpoint and political asset [sic] of our cadre and combatants," and to maintain strict discipline.

The directive does not suggest that "main force" troops operating along the corridors to Saigon, over which COSVN maintained its authority, were to make a dash for Saigon in what might be the last weeks of fighting before a cease fire went into effect. In short, their failure to close in on Saigon, in force, between April and October 1972 precluded a "general offensive and uprising" to seize the Southern capital and doomed, or at least postponed, the PRP's plans for a revolution in Saigon. The future contest for the city, and for the mastery of South Viet-Nam was to be left to the political processes which would emerge during the "period of transition. "

Several weeks later, on October 31, this perspective was accepted by the Saigon-Gia Dinh NFLSV Committee and the People's Revolutionary Committee, according to a Liberation Radio broadcast of November 4, 1972. If Liberation Radio summarized the meeting adequately, the Committees were, at least for the time being, principally interested in forming a broader front of people in the metropolitan area to demand that "the U.S. imperialists" sign the peace agreements as they had been drafted in October, and stop supporting GVN President Thiệu. There was in the statement, which is reprinted here, a ritualistic call to "urgently and calmly step up the political and armed struggles", but only to "create a new position for the revolutionary movement in our localities. "