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KRASNAYA ZVEZDA COMMENTS ON VIETNAMESE SITUATION

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Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Apr 75 p 3 LD

[Col A. Leontyev and V. Vinogradov international military review: "The Inevitable Denouement"]

[Text] Reports on the hostilities in South Vietnam are being front-paged under banner headlines in U.S. newspapers. Correspondents paint pictures of the panic-stricken flight of a beaten and disintegrated army whose soldiers have gone crazy with fear and become looters and pillagers. Thousands of them have fought their way aboard aircraft, which have taken off with people grabbing hold of doors and hanging from wings and the undercarriage. Thousands of others have tried to get to the U.S. warships standing offshore, where they have been received as "refugees." Many of the soldiers, AP reports, traveled "barefoot and weaponless."

According to preliminary figures, the Saigon command has lost six of its 13 combat divisions. The retreating soldiers have abandoned over 200 heavy guns, 300 aircraft and helicopters, 315 armored transports and tanks and 6,500 trucks worth a total of more than \$1 billion. According to these same figures, all the Saigon regime has left is four divisions in and around the capital, three divisions in the Mekong Delta, a few tank battalions and 400 combat aircraft and helicopters.

There is panic, chaos and confusion in the South Vietnamese capital. The ruler Thieu has ordered that his palace--which has already been transformed into a fortress--be surrounded by another wall of sandbags. The only thing that is not clear is who he thinks he is going to be defending himself from behind this wall. The advancing patriotic troops? Or the inhabitants of the capital angry at his crimes? Or his own generals, who are demanding his replacement? As yet Thieu has not yet fled like the Phnom Penh dictator. But he can glance at the helicopter and armored transport kept under guard and ask himself: What better way is there?

"I can see the situation here taking the same turn as in Phnom Penh," a Western diplomat in Saigon told a New York TIMES correspondent recently. The general view is that the bloody Saigon regime and its army can survive for only a matter of weeks, if not days. The words "rout," "catastrophe" and "end" are to be found increasingly frequently in assessments of its position.

As a result, as the newspapers report, "an atmosphere of despair and utter hopelessness" reigns in Washington. Defense Secretary J. Schlesinger himself is gloomy, according to the Washington POST, and his statements "reflect...confusion at the speed with which the South Vietnamese defenses are collapsing over vast areas." "A number of eminent Pentagon experts," the newspaper writes, "are convinced that Saigon has virtually no chance left of halting a massive offensive" and that "the Saigon government and the troops it has left could suffer total collapse within the next few weeks."

Thus, the prospects are quite clear. But what about the reasons for what has happened? In Pentagon Offices generals are poring over maps. Aboard ships of the 7th Fleet admirals and officers are looking at the South Vietnamese coast through binoculars. Both are bewildered about what has happened. Why are they witnessing the disintegration of a regime on which the fantastic sum of \$150 billion has been spent in support in the past 10 years? Why are they witnessing the flight of an army armed with American weapons, trained by American instructors and clothed, shod and fed by American quartermasters? [paragraph continues]

Noteworthy in this connection are the plans being put forward in the United States and countries allied with it for the mass evacuation of the Vietnamese population abroad. Thus, on 3 April, U.S. Senator Helms advanced a proposal to evacuate "2 million refugees" on ships of the U.S. 7th Fleet for the time being to military bases on Okinawa, Guam, the Philippines and Taiwan, and later still further away. Meanwhile, a certain "independent air transport company" has already evacuated from Saigon to the United States 500 children up to 6 months old, and "one private agent" has organized the evacuation of 400-500 babies to Australia, although representatives of the Australian Government have stated that they greeted this news "with alarm."

A curious detail: As the New York TIMES reported on 1 April, the Pentagon has admitted that "among the refugees there will be military personnel separated from their units. Military people who no longer belong to an organized military unit will be considered civilians" (!). This may mean that an attempt will be made to evacuate Thieu's soldiers from the coastal cities surrounded by troops of the Provisional Revolutionary Government [PRG] to the Saigon region for regrouping. It is natural that the PRG issued a sharp protest against the dispatch of ships of the U.S. Navy into the territorial waters of South Vietnam under the pretext of "evacuation for humane purposes." The Soviet public supports this stand.

All these actions are being undertaken to the accompaniment of false allegations that the "communists" are conducting "aggression" in South Vietnam in an endeavor to "capture" Saigon. It is all the more important now to recall that in reality the NLFV and the PRG, as they declared on 21 March, are only striving for strict fulfillment of the Paris agreement, which has been and is being violated most flagrantly by the Thieu clique and its patrons.

On 3 April Nguyen Thi Binh, PRG foreign minister, once again stated that the government continues to advocate the political settlement of all South Vietnamese problems through talks on the basis of the Paris agreement. She confirmed that the condition for any resumption of political talks was the replacement of the Thieu regime by another administration advocating peace, independence, democracy, national concord and strict observance of the Paris agreement. As soon as this is done, Nguyen Thi Binh declared, the PRG will immediately begin talks with this administration.

The new situation taking shape in South Vietnam opens up a clear prospect for the establishment of peace.

Just now the Soviet people are expressing their solidarity with the courageous people of Vietnam, who are struggling for their freedom and independence. As L.I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said in his speech in the Kremlin on 30 January 1975, "Upholding the right to be the master in their own home, our Vietnamese brothers have displayed great selflessness, endurance and courage. The victory of Vietnam shows how narrow the potential of imperialism has become in our times. There are now no means with whose help it could turn history back!"

These words sound particularly topical today.

A few days ago the New York TIMES calculated that this army had a three-to-one advantage in numerical strength and a seven-to-one advantage in firepower--not counting air forces--over the enemy. Why then is the army fleeing?

The newspaper came close to answering this question when pondering all this. "If Saigon is incapable of holding its positions despite such tremendous superiority over a period of so many years, it means there is something wrong with the system itself." Just so: It is a question of "the system," that is, of the antipopular nature of the Saigon regime, which has never had the people's support.

Today we are observing the denouement of a tragedy which began 10 years ago when the first U.S. soldiers were landed in Danang to impose a puppet regime on South Vietnam. Half a million American soldiers spent almost 8 years trying to do this but were unsuccessful. "To achieve this objective," the New York TIMES notes, "we extended the war to Cambodia, lost thousands more American lives and hundreds of thousands more Vietnamese and subjected the whole of Indochina to bombing raids. This policy failed."

Following the failure of intervention, the United States was compelled to sign the Paris agreement on ending the war and restoring the peace in Vietnam and to withdraw its troops from that country. However, the "Guam doctrine" and the policy of "Vietnamization" were brought into play. With the Pentagon's knowledge and support, the Saigon army, blatantly violating the Paris agreement, continued the war against the patriots. The Saigon regime is now having to pay for its treachery, and no matter how sympathetic the Washington politicians and generals may feel, they must admit that this payment is just. The Pentagon's strategy in Vietnam has come to its inevitable denouement, which one of its authors--General M. Taylor--has compared with Waterloo.

This denouement cannot be averted by fresh arms supplies to Saigon, the presence of aircraft carriers, landing craft and marines off the coast of South Vietnam, or the threats to resume bombing sometimes uttered by certain U.S. circles.

The way toward lasting peace and a just settlement in South Vietnam has been determined quite clearly. It comprises the complete cessation of U.S. interference in South Vietnamese affairs and the creation of a new Saigon administration advocating the solution of domestic problems on the basis of national reconciliation and the strict observance of the Paris agreement on Vietnam. There is no other way.

#### ILINSKIY DISPATCH SPECULATES ON THIEU REGIME'S SURVIVAL

Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Apr 75 Morning Edition p 3 LD

[Correspondent M. Ilinskiy dispatch: "The Patriots' Mighty Onslaught"]

[Text] Hanoi, 4 April--The South Vietnamese patriots' offensive continues. All the Hanoi press today reports the liberation of yet another South Vietnamese province--Iam Dong. Saigon's soldiers have also retreated from the coastal city of Phan Thiet. Fighting is breaking out around Bien Hoa where one of the biggest airfields in South Vietnam is situated, 30 km from Saigon.

Every new report of the liberation by the patriots of provincial centers, big cities and villages has a demoralizing influence on Saigon dictator Thieu's army and official apparatus.

Military circles are suggesting that, within the framework of the prevailing situation, Thieu's army may very shortly prove incapable of resisting the South Vietnamese patriots' offensive actions. More and more representatives of the Saigon generals and politicians are expressing distrust of the dictator Thieu and demanding his removal from power. Representatives of the third political force resolutely advocate the creation of a new administration in Saigon capable of fulfilling the provisions of the Paris agreement and which would advocate peace and national concord.

On 3 April the majority of members of the Saigon "Senate" and "House of Representatives" advocated replacing the "government" in Saigon. Reports are arriving from the South Vietnamese capital that Thieu himself is keeping a military transport aircraft ready on Tan Son Nhut airfield and has ordered the pilots to be ready to take off at any time. It is not ruled out in Saigon that Thieu is preparing to flee Saigon.

The inhabitants of South Vietnam totally approve of the activity of the organs of the people's revolutionary power in the newly-liberated areas. The PRGRSV program which clearly formulates the patriots' political line regarding the newly-liberated areas, the observance of national interests, the principles of democracy and respect of the provisions of the Paris agreement has been welcomed with profound satisfaction. The PRGRSV's statement on the opening of the airfields and ports of Danang, Nha Trang and others for foreign states' civil aircraft and ships to land or call at in case of necessity has also been greeted with great satisfaction both inside the country and abroad.

#### SAIGON, PHNOM PENH DOOMED FOR LACK OF POPULAR SUPPORT

Moscow in Greek to Greece 1600 GMT 8 Apr 75 LD

[Viktor Glazunov commentary]

[Text] Political observers are speculating in various ways as to how and when Thieu's Saigon regime will fall. Nobody doubts that it will in fact fall. The situation is hopeless, the New York TIMES notes. Next week or the week after next will be decisive.

The days of the puppet regime of Phnom Penh are also considered to be numbered, in particular as the latter's leader has already departed abroad. The typhoon of the popular liberation struggle which developed in South Vietnam and Cambodia has already shaken the unstable thrones of the dictators of Saigon and Phnom Penh. Now they are on the point of collapse. At the same time the imperialist line of war, diktat and world support for reactionary regimes is becoming bankrupt, as both Thieu in Saigon and Lon Nol in Phnom Penh are puppets maintained in power through the will and support of the United States.

Now that it has become clear that their fall cannot be averted, the matter of the causes and consequences and of the importance of the crisis in Indochina--as they say in the United States--comes to the fore. The pertinent questions are tormenting for the American generals, although, to the objective observer, the situation appears clear enough. The regimes of Thieu and Lon Nol are collapsing because they are not supported by the people. These regimes were based solely on arms, and on arms from abroad. The Saigon and Phnom Penh regimes were doomed because they did not have support among their own people. At the same time the political support of these regimes was also doomed.

To all appearances, there are circles in the United States that have the courage to see the realities with sobriety and draw the corresponding conclusions. Mike Mansfield, leader of the majority in the American Senate, is calling for a review of American policy in Indochina. He states that the new era demands a new policy in the world, which, as he said, is changing fast and with which we must coexist.

But the hawks also make themselves felt. Giving vent to emotion which borders on hypocrisy, they raised a hue and cry about the tragedy in South Vietnam, U.S. honor and prestige and sacred American commitments. Their explanations of what is happening in Indochina have nothing in common with reality. Neither dollars nor arms can now save the rotten regime.

What explanation, for instance, does this new [word indistinct] tale about a stab in the back provide? They say that the U.S. Congress is responsible for what has happened because it refused to grant to the regimes of Saigon and Phnom Penh additional credits for the supply of arms. It is well known that prior to this the United States spent \$140-150 billion on the Vietnam war [word indistinct]. Could those \$300 million which the Congress refused to approve have saved the situation? It is neither a question of dollars nor of arms because, according to the data of the Pentagon itself, Thieu's army had a numerical superiority over the other side of about three to one: and as regards fire power, the superiority was even greater--seven to one. As for the fact that despite all this Thieu's units fled in panic under the blows of the patriotic forces, the causes must be sought in the Saigon system itself, as American Congressman McCloskey rightly noted. All this hot air about insufficient American aid to the puppets of Indochina is aimed at covering up the true causes of their defeat.

This hullaballo has been whipped up moreover in order to create the right psychological atmosphere for the continuation of the bankrupt imperialist line of the United States in Indochina. Appeals were once again heard for a display of American power, in favor of American military presence. At the same time, near the coast of South Vietnam, a concentration of U.S. warships with Marines is taking place. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Brown, himself (?foresaw) the possibility of an immediate armed intervention in Vietnam. Is it possible that there are circles for whom the lessons of history means absolutely nothing? Even the lessons of the American armed intervention in the affairs of Indochina?

At the height of the American attack in Vietnam, the United States used in their military operations 70 percent of their ground forces, 60 percent of their air force and 40 percent of the naval forces. Fifteen million tons of bombs and missiles were dropped on Vietnam. It was of no use. The desire of the Vietnamese people for freedom and independence was not swayed. The United States was forced to sign the Paris agreement which allowed it to extricate its campaign corps from the Vietnamese swamp.

However, even after this, the United States did not relinquish its imperialist line toward Indochina. It thought that it could achieve its aim through the aid of the strategy of the Vietnamization of the war. Once again they were afflicted with failure-- a fact which has become so very clear these days. Is it not time that the correct conclusions be drawn from these failures of the various variations of the imperialist strategy? Many people in the United States speak now of the illusion of American supremacy; essentially they are admitting the fiasco of the policy of military diktat. Let us hope that a review of this policy will follow, no matter how tormenting it may be.

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PRGRSV ISSUES STATEMENT DENOUNCING U.S. INTERFERENCE

Moscow TASS in English 1713 GMT 8 Apr 75 LD

[Text] Hanoi, April 8 TASS--The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam resolutely denounced the participation of the United States in forcibly driving peaceful population from areas which the Saigon army is fleeing.

The statement says that now that the South Vietnamese people and its armed forces are winning great victories in the struggle against the Thieu clique which violates the Paris agreement on Vietnam, the U.S. Government actively assists the Saigon regime in driving masses of population from South Vietnam so that Thieu should have greater manpower and materials resources to continue the war. For this purpose, the United States has created an airlift and sent warships to the shores of South Vietnam including aircraft carriers. The United States and Thieu organized kidnapping of thousands of South Vietnamese children. They are carried to the United States and other countries. Reports are spread that U.S. Marines are ready to land in South Vietnam allegedly to evacuate and protect Americans.

What the U.S. Government describes as the problem of refugees in South Vietnam and a plan of "evacuation" of Americans is actually new interference of the United States in the internal affairs of South Vietnam.

The thesis about a "flight from communists" is a crude hoax fabricated by the U.S. Government, says the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam. The absolute majority of the South Vietnamese population was not taken in by this hoax and stayed in the newly liberated areas.

Forcibly evacuating the population, the United States grossly violates the Paris agreement on Vietnam, basic national rights of the Vietnamese people, the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination and international law.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam strongly condemns these criminal actions of the U.S. Government and resolutely demands an immediate end to them. The United States must immediately pull out all its warships from the territorial waters of South Vietnam. And every military participation and interference in the international affairs of South Vietnam and respect and stringently observe the Paris agreement.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam urges all the progressive people of the world, including progressive Americans, to condemn the actions of the United States in South Vietnam.

The DRV Foreign Ministry today made a statement expressing complete support for the stand of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam.

USSR TO AID DRV IN BUILDING, TRAINING OF MERCHANT FLEET

Moscow in English to South Asia 1000 GMT 9 Apr 75 LD

[Text] The Soviet Union will help Democratic Vietnam in the building of her merchant fleet and in the training of navigators. Agreement on this has been reached in Moscow between Soviet Fleet Minister Timofey Guzhenko and DRV Transport Minister Duong Bach Lien.