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POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN TRI-THIEN REPORTED

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In the general offensive and uprisings that began since early spring 1968, the political struggle movement of the Tri-Thien-Hue people continued to develop strongly. Hundreds of thousands of urban and rural people in Tri-Thien have risen up all as one to attack and lay siege to enemy outposts and district capitals, to search and hunt for collaborationists, spies and cruel puppet officials, to fight for the right to mastership and to expand the liberated area.

In the first ten days of February 1968 alone, tens of thousands of people in Hue and nearby areas, fighting for their right to mastership, had destroyed and smashed 169 platoons of self-defense militia, wiped out whole puppet "pacification" teams and smashed the entire puppet military and administrative network which the American aggressors and their Vietnamese lackeys had set up around Hue several years ago to control the people. Tens of thousands of people in Phong Dien, Quang Dien, Phu Vang, Phu Loc districts have risen up, laying siege to, wiping out or forcing American and puppet troops to surrender or to withdraw from scores of outposts. In a period of five days only, more than 40,000 people in the district of Phu Loc have gained back their right to mastership in nearly every village and established their people's revolutionary committees.

In Quang Tri, people in the districts of Trieu Phong, Hai Lang, Gio Linh and Cam Lo have risen up all as one to lay siege to enemy outposts, destroyed the remaining "strategic hamlets," and smash the puppet administrative network right in the enemy-controlled areas like Dao Dieu, An Tru, Ngo Ka Dong, Ngo Ka Tay, Tham Trieu, Tra Tri, Tra Loc and the district capital of Cam Lo, and liberated more than 62,000 of their compatriots.

Following the early spring campaign, the Americans and the puppets hurriedly increased their forces, launched wild counter-attacks and committed innumerable atrocious crimes, such as the levelling off of hundreds of villages in Tri-Thien. In some cases, they killed more than 100 people within minutes, like the massacre in Pho Trach (Phong Dien) for instance. In other cases, they

committed low acts of vengeance, killing hundreds of people, such as the massacres in Hue, Huong Tra, Huong Thuy, etc. But the Tri-Thien-Hue people remained undaunted, continued to surge forward on the momentum of their victories, remained determined to prevent the enemy from committing more crimes, continued to maintain firmly their control and to fight for their human and democratic rights. Following the Pho Trach and Huong Dien massacres, people in Phong Dien have participated in many rallies to heighten their hatred for the enemy. They have also participated in 17 large and 646 medium and small demonstrations in villages and districts. By staging protest demonstration against the enemy, they have gained back tens of thousands of baskets of rice. They have also protested strongly against the enemy's attempt to set up economic blockades and to restrict freedom of movement, and demanded hunger relief. People in the liberated areas and people in the enemy controlled areas have united closely in all these struggles. People in enemy concentration areas have also demonstrated against military draft, against the "anti-communist" program, against family classification, against the inter-family system, against the "civil self-defense" program, etc. The political struggle movement in Hai Lang has developed to an unprecedented extent and has been closely organized and guided. Most outstanding is the movement to protest against the enemy's programs of concentrating people into one area, levelling off the land and destroying villages. People in many villages have acted to stop enemy tanks and tractors from coming into and destroying their villages. In one such case, eight old men had stopped a group of enemy tanks and armored cars, saving hundreds of hectares of rice and secondary crops and protecting cadres and guerrillas. Hamlets and villages have cooperated closely with one another to organize this struggle movement.

Many villages in Trieu Phong have also struggled resolutely against the enemy attempt to destroy villages and to concentrate people, or demanded the return of their dead for burial.

People in villages K., H., and T., have successfully forced the enemy to give the rice back to them and at the same time forced him to give relief supplies to 200 families victimized by his action, and demanded he rebuild their dams and pay for damages.

In the first five months alone, people in southern Quang Tri have staged 31 large demonstrations forcing the enemy to pay more than six million piasters for damages.

Gio Linh and Cam Lo have mobilized the people to build 40 newly-liberated villages.

People in concentration areas like Quan Ngang, Cua Viet and Tan Tuong have staged many demonstrations against the enemy, demanding improvement of living standards. In one such case, the enemy had to pay 180,000 piasters for damages. The people here have also protested against the enemy's attempt to concentrate them into one place. Thousands of families have returned to their villages.

People in Phu Loc (Thua Thien) have refused to let the enemy displace them. People who have been concentrated have demanded food and housing of the enemy or have demanded to be returned to their villages to live or get food and personal belongings. People in Phu Vang, Huong Tra, and Huong Thuy have successfully fought against enemy terrorism and successfully prevented them from displacing their compatriots and taking away their rice.

The political struggle movement in Tri-Thien-Hue last year have become widespread, attracting large numbers of people with its many rich forms. The people have risen up continuously, using violence and sharp arguments to repel enemy armed attacks and to force the enemy to make concessions. These political struggles have been closely linked with the guerrilla warfare movement, which attacks the enemy resolutely, fights the enemy for every inch of land, every grain of rice and every potato, fights for the control of power, expands the liberated area, and controls strategic positions around the cities and along important communication lines.

Last year our people completed the elections of people's revolutionary committee in practically every district, village and hamlet in the two provinces of Quang Tri and Thua Thien. The Tri-Thien liberated area was expanded to cover 271 more villages with a total population of 210,000. Thus, Tri-Thien now has 764 liberated villages, representing four-fifth of the area's population, with a total population of 480,000, or two-third of the total population in both provinces.

After having gained back the power, the people have built a new way of life dedicated to the anti-U.S. fight for national salvation. On the momentum of their victories, the Tri-Thien people are now trying to overcome every difficulty and hardship, launching continuous attacks and uprisings and moving forward to achieve complete victory.

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