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QUAN DOI NHAN DAN ASSESSES CURRENT CAMBODIAN SITUATION

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[QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 July commentary: "The Vigorous Offensive Posture of the Cambodian Armed Forces and Peoples"]

[Text] The struggle of the heroic Cambodian armed forces and people is developing rapidly, vigorously, and continuously in the rainy season amidst the U.S. Air Force's intensive, barbarous, and prolonged bombing.

HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM

IV. 25 Jul 73

Since early June 1973, although U.S. aircraft have daily conducted an average of 200 sorties, including 30 to 60 B-52 sorties, and dropped more than 90,000 tons of bombs, the CPNIAF has repeatedly and intensively attacked the enemy on all fronts and has constantly driven the U.S. aggressors and the Phnom Penh puppet clique into a serious predicament. The Cambodian armed forces and people in the rural areas have achieved close coordination between offensives and uprisings, attacked and seized nearly 200 positions--including many towns and district capitals--and wiped out the enemy in many large areas near various cities. It is noteworthy that the CPNIAF have liberated the entire district of Samrong Tong in the suburbs of Kompong Speu city, the entire (Prek Kuadam) area including its town, and the (Chumrou Prasat) area located right at the northern gate of Phnom Penh.

The patriotic Cambodian soldiers have repeatedly launched coordinated attacks against the enemy and cut the Lon Nol puppet clique's strategic communication lines over a long period of all six routes leading to Phnom Penh and along the Mekong River.

The liberation troops have attacked and controlled many 20 to 50 kilometer-long portions on Routes 5, 4, 6 and 3. All of Route 26 and a major part of Route 38, and even the road from Ang Chanh to Ba Kheng, barely 8 kilometers from Phnom Penh, have fallen into the hands of the revolutionary troops.

The French paper LE MONDE on 17 July noted that Lon Nol's troops were putting up a desperate fight on the main communication lines, some of which are only 15 kilometers from Phnom Penh.

Along with the offensives launched on the rural front and along the communications lines, the CPNIAF, denying intense B-52 raids, sneaked deep into and launched many successful assaults on enemy airports, storage facilities, and base camps in Phnom Penh and nine other towns and provincial capitals. Pochentong airport has been attacked three times. For the first time, the (Bekchiao) airfield and puppet administrative agencies in Battambang municipality were strongly attacked, resulting in 38 aircraft destroyed and nearly 400 enemy troops killed.

A siege has actually been laid around Phnom Penh and the cities of Kompong Cham, Kompong Speu, Kampot, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Kompong Thom, Siem Reap, Pursat, and others.

At present the puppet Lon Nol clique's defensive lines have shrunk to only 7 to 14 kilometers from the heart of Phnom Penh. By launching violent offensives in many directions and on all fronts, in the past 2 months of the rainy season the Cambodian army and people have successfully frustrated all schemes of the U.S. aggressors and their Phnom Penh lackey clique and continues to win new, significant victories.

The United States has intensively used its air force in the hope of enabling the Lon Nol army to stand on its feet. Although many counterattacks have been launched by the enemy with the aim of expanding the areas under its control and halting or breaking the CPNIAF's offensives, the Cambodian combatants, overcoming all fierce ordeals, have continued to move forward and have destroyed entire brigades and many battalions of the Phnom Penh army right in their strongest defensive perimeters, thus extending the liberated areas to embrace many important and populous areas.

Faced with a serious shortage of troops, last week the Lon Nol clique had to order an urgent general mobilization to conscript youths in a disorderly manner. But the new conscripts will not be sufficient to make up for the losses.

Far from shrinking, the liberated areas of the Cambodian revolutionary forces have been quickly expanded to cover nine-tenths of the territory with 5 million out of the total of 7 million people.

Dealing with battlefield developments, REUTER on 19 July observed: U.S. bombing has reached its peak, but it has been unable to check the advance of the Red Khmer troops, that is, the CPNLAF.

The battlefield situation in the past 2 months further demonstrates the firm position and strong forces of the Cambodian revolution, and the predicament and weaknesses of the U.S. aggressor enemy and the Lon Nol clique. The offensive position of the Cambodian people and troops has expanded and stood firm in the rural areas, and the CPNLAF have unleashed offensives near and executed deep thrusts into cities.

Composed of three categories of the Cambodian revolutionary forces, the CPNLAF are physically fit and are maturing rapidly. They have strong assault units and large reserve forces. They have satisfactorily developed their ranks in fighting. With their firm battle position and strong forces, the CPNLAF have victoriously coped with a war which Nixon has extensively Americanized with the U.S. Air Force.

On the other hand, the Lon Nol clique's position is unstable. Its forces are a long way from recuperating, and are in fact disintegrating. The Lon Nol clique has encountered innumerable military, political, and economic difficulties.

The setbacks suffered by the United States and its lackeys on the battlefield have brought about mounting world protests against Nixon's bombing and military involvement in Cambodia, thus driving the U.S. warmongering clique into tragic isolation and embarrassment.

Confronted with its critical situation, the Nixon clique still stubbornly refuses to accept the reasonable and fair proposals for a peaceful settlement of the Cambodian issue in accordance with Samdech Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk's five-point statement. It is seeking all ways and means to strengthen the puppet army and patch up the ragged Phnom Penh puppet administration by intensifying the activities of the U.S. Air Force and sending Thai mercenaries to cooperation with the Saigon troops in continuing the war of aggression in Cambodia.

The violent struggle of the Cambodian troops and people is continuing. However, faced with a very favorable war situation, the heroic Cambodian troops and people are determined to overcome all difficulties and obstacles, closely coordinate all aspects of the struggle, and advance toward winning more victories of strategic significance in the near future.