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people 1 (normass/deepe)

(This is the first of a three-part series on the multi-faceted war in South Vietnam, as Washington-Hanoi peace talks begin).

the Evolution of
SAIGON, APRIL 10—As the world watches for high-level peace talks on Vietnam, the Communists at the rice-roots level continue to fuel up their people's war.

Even on the doorstep of Saigon, the Communists are re-organizing, molding, sh twisting, bending the suburbanite and peasant rural peasantry to carry forward their war to a more bloody and bloodier andf fiercer dimension.

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people 2 (normass/deepe)

A two-line Vietnamese Communist jingle is ~~being~~ racing like a flash-fire through the population in the provinces outside of Saigon; the English translation of the jingle is: "Blood will flow in May. Peace will come in June."

"The third phase of the war will come soon and the people should be ready for it," the Communists are reportedly telling the Vietnamese peasants and ~~v~~ suburbanites in Gia Dinh province, the donut-shaped province surrounding Saigon.

"This Tet offensive is a six-month campaign in 1968," the Communists are reportedly saying. "These six months of continuous offensive ^{are} ~~is~~ to prepare for the future revolutionary government by the people."

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people 3 (normass/deepe)

Reliable sources indicate the Communists are telling the Vietnamese population in Gia Dinh that the first phase of the Tet offensive was the physical attacks upon the cities beginning in late January; the second phase of rocketing and shelling installations has now passed; March is ^{it} was the month of ¹ preparation for the third phase--and now the third phase, without ^H ~~descrip~~ description of the form it would take, is soon to be begin.

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people 4 (normass/deepe)

These developments appear to be a Vietnamese enactment of Mao Tse Tung's dictum that "political power comes out of the barrel of a gun." ^{Si And} ^{REPT} ^{PLACED} significantly, since the Tet offensive the Communists have moved and maintained their guns closer to Saigon and other urban centers without returning to their frontier base areas, reliable sources report. The Western standard Western observation that "the Saigon government does not have the support of the people," already appears ^{as passe} ^{as the} ~~govermen~~ government at the rice-roots level is either accomodating, in exile because of increased Communist military pressure, or is accomodating with the Communists in a sort of state of co-existence, or else has been outright executed strong hard-line anti-Communist officials have been executed outright. Reliabel Reliable sources report the Communists ^{are attempti} attempting ~~t~~—with some success—to chop off the Vietnamese government's organization and officialdom at the ^{rice} rice roots level, and then ~~beginning to set up their own administrative machine~~ ^{to fill the vacuum} setting up its own administrative machine to bend the will of the population to suit their purposes.

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people 5 (normass/deepe)

In other cases where the local Vietnamese government officials still administer the edicts of Saigon, the population appears to get caught in a ~~corrs~~ crossfire of between contradictory instructions from the government on the one side and the Communists on the other.

One ~~example~~ ^{NIPA} current example is reported by reliable sources to involve the cutting of palm trees around canals and streamlets, and clearing out the brush, where the Communists often seek cover. Recently, local government officials in Gia Dinh ~~pro~~ province ordered the population to clear out these vegetated areas, since these areas could not be defoliated; the Communists countered ~~this order~~ by ordering the people not to do it saying "we'll shoot anyone who dares to cut and clear this area--and in particular do not touch the nipa palm trees because we have our men in ~~their~~ and there and they'll shoot you," reliable sources report.

In Gia Dinh and other provinces, all dogs in the villages have

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been ordered to be killed, to forestall the possibility they will bark at strangers ~~passing through the area~~ ^{same} --the Communist troops--passing through the area. This practice was also ~~suppl~~ ordered by the Viet Minh during the French Indo-China War more than a decade ago.

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people 6 (normass/deepe)

For weeks, the population w/in Gian wa Dinh was also caught in another ~~squed~~ squeeze play in what amounted to a low-level rice battle between the government and the Communists. The Communists had forbidden the population to ~~seel~~ the sell their rice unmilled rice ~~padi~~ ^{paddy} to the government, and the government had forbidden ~~the people~~ ^{Paddy} to v mill the un raw ~~padi~~ ^{paddy}, which would make it edible not only for themselves, but also for the Communist troops. The Communists pushed the population and the rice millers to protest against the government, saying their lives were being disrupted. But, the Communists lost this round and then reportedly ordered the p various ~~families~~ ^{families} by hand to construct individual rice grinders from hardened ~~clay~~ ^{clay} slabs enclosed in rattan siding. Evidently, this did not work; in early April, the Communists advised to ~~sell~~ the peasants to ~~sell~~ their ~~padi~~ ^{paddy} for the government, ^{to} since there was not shortage of rice in the cities because of the American import program. However, the peasants were specifically forbidden to sell any other produce send any other produce into the cities--their chickens, pigs, e vegetables, in order to strangle economically the government-held areas. And to ~~multifac~~ placate the worried peasants, the Communists promised them that when the Communists attacked the ~~goterme~~ ^{goverment} areas agi again, they would capture the American rice warehouses and distribute the rice free to the people--a feat they a performed in the Chinese-held section of SAIGON DURING THE 1st ATTACKS.

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people 12 7 (normass/deepe)

In the other cases, however, the Communist policy and the government's execution of its own program a programs are not in direct conflict--in fact, they rather compliment each other. For example, on the question of trenchlines besides dug by each family near their homes. The government has ordered the people not to dig trenches in Gia Dinh, knowing it indicates the government has failed to provide adqua adequate security--but the local officials, knowing the population is afraid, ^{are} is lenient in letting them dig shallow trenches. The Communists have then through propaganda and word-of-w word-of-mouth messages, ^{Began} begun a sort of civil defense course, advising the people to dig zigzag trenches, or L-shaped, or cross-shaped ones, which offer better protection. Still following the government's within the government's allowances for shallow trenches, the Communists have then advised the peansa peasants to stock pile banana tree logs, mud and water nearby so that when fighting breaks out, they can quickly build siding and a roof above the shallow trench. The Communists have also advised the people that they should watch for smoke grenades, which signal American fighte bombing strikes, and run for their holes then--other wise they should not worry too much about American bombing and helicopter gunships.

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people 7⁸ (normass/deepe)

Communist monthly and annual production taxes in Gian

Dinh province have also reportedly jumped in some villages from fifty to seventy per cent since Tet on their surplus of goods after the family's needs and expenses have been deducted.

In pro-Communist-held or contest areas of Gia Dinh, Communist

a cadre have begun calling on the families of government soldiers and officials, persuading or ordering them to have their relatives working for the government "or come back home within ten days or you will be punished." The punishment form of punishment was not described, reliable sources report, and some leeway was given for explanations if the family failed to carry out the order.

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people & (normass/deepe)

However, "American ~~the~~ agents spying on the people"—the revolutionary development cadre, provincial reconnaissance units and census grievance team members—are to be "shot without discussion", the Communists have stated, according to reliable sources; ^{and} as a consequence, some of these operating even in provincial towns have begun sleeping in a different house each night. In some of the poorly-defended division headquarters cities, also, government civil servants, still shock up after the Tet attack and informed of Communist orders, are also known to ^{be} hide out at night in different homes.

In Gia Dinh, families of hamlet and village officials have been told by the Communists that their relatives should resign from their government post and ~~you~~ return home; ^{If not} the official will be killed; ^{If he does,} he will be granted a "guarantee of safety" by the Communists without any discussion of his past activities for the government, or "his crimes against the people." As a consequence, an estimated seventy per cent of the government's hamlet and village officials are considered "operating in exile," refusing to live in their assigned ^{AREAS,} particularly at night; some return to ^{from THE VILLAGE} their assigned areas during the day; Some have set up their village office several ~~from~~ miles away in the district headquarters, sources report.

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people⁵⁰ (normass/deepe)

Wherever possible in Gia Dinh, the Communists established six months before the Tet offensive a people-~~parti~~ portering system, with very precise organization and regulations. Since Tet, mouth-to-mouth propaganda, as well as Radio Hanoi and Liberation Radio have praised the people who acted as porters during the ~~of~~ their country-wide ^{Tet} offensive.

The Communists have ordered that any family with five or more persons—men or women or children—between the ages 15 to 50 should make available two persons each ~~day~~ night that the cadre asks for porter help. Any family with four persons or fewer in the same age grouping should contribute the services of one member of the family.

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people ¹¹ ~~20~~ (normass/deepe)

These men, women, or ~~or~~ children ~~to~~ have been instructed to be in their homes following the 6 p.m. curfew, and are to be on call, ~~at the cre a when requested by the cad village cadre,~~ to work in six hour shifts, ~~the~~ either from 6 p.m. to midnight or from midnight to 6 a.m. For security reasons, these people-porter crews are ~~in~~ guided by a liaison agent and are not told where they ^{SHOULD} go; after carrying the supplies for six hours, another relay force picks them up and leapfrogs them ^{thus} ~~on a progress~~ towards the destination, giving the Communists a tight security. OVER MASSES of People.

Villagers ~~a~~ have been specifically ordered that they can not hire ^{Substitute} anyone to ~~stand in~~ for them; "you must do this yourself to contribute to the revolutionary cause," reliable sources report.

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people IT (normass/deepe)

In organizing this people-~~port~~ ~~pore~~ portering system, the Communists have reportedly ~~lay~~ laid out very precise regulations. For example, women are given lighter loads--generall ^{9/} a 22-pound case of ammunition. Men, whether 15 or 50, are ~~instructe~~ instructed to carry roughly 50-pound loads--four AK-47's or AK-50's hidden under a stack of rice straw, carried on their ~~ba~~ backs. Or each person, man or woman, is assigned two ^{two} .60 mm. mortar rounds or B-40 rocket rounds. Heavier and longer 122 mm. rocket ~~sheis~~ shells are carried by two persons per shell.

These portering crews, maximum of 50 persons per crew, have been instructed to wear ~~black japa pajama thetra~~ ^{the} traditional black-pajama costume and to walk along the top of a dike near ~~the~~ foliage ~~covera~~ covering in the area. If they hear American fighter aircraft or helicopter ~~ba~~ gunships, or if they become ~~illimi~~ illuminated with ^{American} high-powered flares, the porters are ordered to drop down on ~~thet~~ top of the dike, and form ^{BLACK} a single line to melt into the ~~lines~~ ^{ge} configuration of the ~~R~~ dikes.

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people 12 (normass/deepe)

"If by chance an ~~air~~ airplane swoops down and just starts shooting at you, just take it," the Communists have reportedly told the villagers. "No one is to move; no one is to break the line. Even if you're hit, don't break the line. If you do, you ~~can be~~ punished."

(Hank: I had intended to query you about this three-part series on the operation piece, but the military didn't release ~~this~~ operation until today. It was supposed to be released Monday, I ~~thought~~. Anyhow, I've tried to put in a series the three major components of the situation here, since we can't cover negotiations. Next piece will be on Communist military strategy countrywide, based on my weekend interviews, which I mentioned in my letter-memo to you. Third article, is Thieu and Vietnamese political side. But, these ~~don't have to be run as a set~~ ^{3 pieces} can be run separately, though I think the series gives more of a framework. I've gotten some high-level quotes on Khe Sanh, but am waiting for our weekly military briefing, which was supposed to be Tuesday, but now is Thursday. So, I'll file Khe Sanh interpretive Thursday, as well as ~~the~~ second article of ~~series~~ series, with third article sent ~~Friday~~ ^{will cable Friday} ~~Friday~~ ^{Friday}. Regards and some focus pieces over the weekend. Regards Bev).

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