

2020 005

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coalition 1 (normass/deepe)

(This second article in a series discusses the prospects for peace in 1968 from the Communist viewpoint. The third and last article deals with the role of the South Vietnamese government headed by President Nguyen Van Thieu.).

SAIGON, December 27,--The Viet Cong sent Christmas cards this year to ~~the~~ leftist Roman Catholic laymen in this harried capitol. A former Vietnamese government district chief, once on a Viet Cong black-list, last year received a lunar new year card from the Communist cadre--and he expects another one in several weeks as the holiday again approaches.

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coalition 2 (nromass/deepe)

In Saigon's pagodas--curlesque-roofed enclaves of government dissidence--the Buddhist monks in robes the color of tangerine or chocolate--clandestinely advise their followers to study the Viet Cong's 14-point program, police sources reported. In Cambodia, special air-mail editions of the 14-point program, printed on thin, high-quality paper, were available for Western ~~journal~~ journalists covering the recent visit of ~~Jacie~~ Jackie Kennedy.

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coalition 3 (normass/deepe)

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The talk of the town among some politically-conscious Saigonese, including a few in the government, reveals a new mood of first-person fear, cynicism and near-~~despair~~ despair as they look ahead <sup>to</sup> for the next year. Their bleak picture of the future resembles a ~~glori~~ glorified Santa Domingo extravaganza, with Viet Cong artillery and mortar bombardments added. They envision street fighting, economic strikes, black-outs of electricity, violent anti-American demonstrations, airbases ablaze with from rocket attacks and suicide squads and Viet Cong shelling<sup>s</sup> of Saigon or other major cities. In Can Tho, the capital of the Mekong Delta, the Viet Cong have warned housewives to stockpile non-perishable foods in preparations for their upcoming attack within the next three months.

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coalition <sup>4</sup> (normass/deepe)

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The new mood is light years away, but not necessarily contradictory to, the optimistic evaluations of American military commanders. These commanders believe Communist forces within South Vietnam are slipping towards defeat to such an extent they <sup>may</sup> must shift their strategy to other radical these radical moves: 1. call for Chinese Communist volunteers in either the North or the South, or get other military fixtures from East European countries in order to escalate their military effort. This is not considered likely here by ~~serio~~s serious American or Vietnamese sources.

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coalition<sup>5/</sup> (normass/deepe)

on American terms  
2. either negotiate or else simply ~~is~~ "fade w away."

This is the current optimistic official American line, but even high-placed ~~Vietnam~~ Vietnamese government sources ~~voice~~ publicly <sup>voice</sup> skepticism about it.

3. Supplement their military attacks with overt political and economic warfare in the urban centers. This ~~strategy~~ tactic would be ~~lethal~~, and potentially catastrophic, to the South Vietnamese government as well as the American position. Since the government's pacification program has consistently failed to get off the ground, the Communists have succeeded in encircling the cities; a political-economic thrust throwing the cities in chaos, combined with military attacks into the neon-lighted storefronts would ~~seriously jep jeopardiz~~ jeopardize the Allied position. The American officialdom ~~are not talking~~ <sup>Some</sup> is not talking much about this possibility—at least publicly, but the Vietnamese, ~~are~~ who have seen ~~specg~~ spectres like this in the past, are.

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coalition 6 (normass/deepe)

"Negotiations at gunpoint"--as distinct from  
compromise at the conference table--is what well-informed  
Vietnamese nationalists believe the Communists are aiming for--  
~~and~~ these gunpoints include pistols for political intimidations  
and uprisings in the urban centers as well as Soviet-made  
rocketfire <sup>from</sup> in the suburbs and the periphery.  
Nationalist

The Viet Cong aim in ~~their~~ viewpoint is a  
"coalition government a la Communist"--then "peace" ~~or~~ or a  
Communist victory of sorts will come to South Vietnam.

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coalition 7 (normass/deepe)

The nationalists' fears spring from the 14-point program  
broadcast  
~~issued~~ by the Viet Cong in September, which is regard ~~regards~~  
they interpret <sup>d/</sup> as an all-out declaration of war against the  
newly elected constitutional government headed by President Nguyen  
Van Thieu <sup>It is also</sup> and the warning bell that <sup>for the</sup> ~~the Communists would launch~~  
<sup>Communist</sup> an all-out political offensive against it. <sup>the American -</sup>  
<sup>SUPPORTED GOVERNMENT</sup>

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coalition 8 (normass/deepe)

Captured Communist documents would seem to indicate this trend of events for 1968 is not far from wrong. The Communists no longer speak of a "total victory"—i. e. militarily "pushing the Americans into the sea." Instead, they specify a "decisive <sup>and</sup> victory"—welding together military attacks and a political-economic uprising ~~for~~ coordinated for a critical moment.

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coalition 9 (normass/deepe)

Communist documents here do not specify whether this decisive moment will unfold before or after the American Presidential elections in November. This is one of the two pivotal questions the Communist may answer in 1968, with the second question being whether ~~whether~~ they succeed or fail in this coordinated campaign.

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coalition 10 (normass/deepe)

~~This~~ ~~joint~~ coordinated military-political ~~at~~  
~~at~~ Communist strategy is a natural progression of past developments.  
On December 20, 1960, the National Liberation Front for South  
Vietnam—commonly called the Viet Cong—was founded by issuing  
a virtual declaration of war against the pro-American government  
of Ngo Dinh Diem, ~~plus the American supporting support.~~

In ~~19~~ 1963, eight days after Diem was overthrown,  
on November first, the Central ~~Com~~ Committee of the Liberation  
Front decided to ~~for~~ ask for a ceasefire and to enter negotiations  
(such as  
with those factions that overthrew Diem, ~~our particul particularly~~  
the influential Buddhist priests, and the military junta.). This  
negotiation, which would have ~~it~~ paved the way for a coalition  
on their terms, specified as preconditions ~~annunciation~~ a  
withdrawal of American advisors, an end to "mopping up operations  
which kill the people," and a ~~cut~~ curtailment of American economic  
aid.

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coalition 11 (normass/deepe)

This decision of the Central Committee was ratified  
~~and~~ by the Front's second congress ~~in~~ in January, 1964,  
but their proposed coalition never developed.

Their third congress—called a special or extraordinary one—  
took place three years later in August, 1967, from which they  
issued the<sup>1</sup> their 14-point program. This 14-point program, is <sup>A</sup>  
<sup>SUGARY ELA BORATION</sup>  
~~in general a carbon copy~~ of their 1960 program; more significantly,  
~~its main objective is~~ it is a declaration of war against  
President Thieu in the same way that their 1960 program was directed  
against Dien.

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