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criticism 1 (normass/deepe)

SAIGON, SEPTEMBER 3--The Communists, now winding up for a third <sup>military</sup> offensive/drive, have concluded some scorching criticisms of their previous country-wide thrust in May.

These criticisms of subordinate units range from chewing out <sup>FN</sup> individual gunners who wasted ten round of 75 millimeter <sup>Recoilless Rifle</sup> fire by missing <sup>HS</sup> the assigned targets, ~~and~~ a unit which went "on a walking exercise in the jungle" rather than rushing in to reinforce its comrades in battle, <sup>units</sup> fleeing in battle leaving munitions, heavy weapons and wounded soldiers behind, refusal of commanders to <sup>execute</sup> carry out orders "without hesitation" and senior unit commanders <sup>fabricating</sup> ~~lying~~ their battlefield reports to superior headquarters <sup>by</sup> minimizing Communist casualties and exaggerating Allied losses.

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criticism 2 (normass/deepe)

A major part of the Communist ~~diffi~~ difficulty in the May offensive was the defection of a senior Communist-Party officer, Lt. Col. Tran Van Dac, who outlined portions of the Communist battle plan to the Allied command shortly before the assault. Since then, the Communist command has taken steps for intensive indoctrination sessions of their troops as a means to prevent defections to the Allied side.

However, Allied intelligence sources report <sup>that</sup> following the May offensive, a number of Communist cadre and officers have continued to voluntarily defect to the Allied side or have been captured on the battlefield. More significantly, these sources report that since the May offensive, as many as ten to twenty per cent of the troop strength from some badly battered Communist units have deserted the Communist ranks, returning to their homes.

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criticism 3 (normass/deepe)

At the strategic level, the four major weak points stressed by the Viet Cong High Command following the May offensive were: "Militarily, our attacks were concentrated upon main targets, whereas secondary ~~are~~ targets were neglected.... The uprising of the people was slow and scattered. Troop proselyting was deplorably weak. Development of our political and armed forces and the strengthening of rear areas was poor."

The usual Communist procedure is to follow-up a military action with criticism and self-criticism sessions at each echelon as a means of correcting mistakes in the future. ~~es~~

As the Allies wait for the Communist third offensive to roll in--a key question will be if the Communists have corrected enough of their previously analyzed weaknesses.

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criticism 4 (normass/deepe)

During the May offensive, the 1st Viet Cong Regiment, ~~was sharply~~  
~~criticized~~ a pivotal spearheading unit, was sharply critiqued by  
its superior headquarters. One Communist gunner was criticized for firing  
ten rounds of 75 millimeter recoilless rifle fire at the Allied shipping and  
wh warehousing complex outside Saigon and "he missed all the targets and then  
abandoned his weapon and ran," ~~one~~ captured document ~~revealed~~ revealed.

The criticisms of the document continued:

"The forward command post changed position without informing  
its subordinate units. It was supposed to be at the head of the  
formation--and it switched to the tail. As the first rounds opened the  
battle, the commanders of the subordinate units could not communicate  
with the command post. When the command post gave the signal to begin  
the battle, the ~~so~~ subordinate units were not ready--some units opened  
fire; some did not; some ran in disarray, abandoning their dead,  
wounded and equipment. That's how we lost 400 sampans, plus rockets  
and heavy equipment.

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criticism 5 (normass/deepe)

"The commander of one unit of the 1st Regiment was told to go ~~back~~ back and fight; he said he could not because he did not have a sampan. When a subordinate found him a sampan, he said he was sick. The ~~sub~~ subordinate <sup>HAEN</sup> asked if he would designate someone to replace himself as commander. <sup>LYING</sup> <sup>a</sup> ~~lying~~ on the bed, the commander just rolled his heavy body to the wall and refused to answer."

Another unit of the 1st Regiment responsible for attacking the huge Bien Hoa bridge leading into Saigon was also subjected to searing criticism by its superiors. "Not only did the unit delay its after-action report following the attack," the captured document said, "but it lied in its report. Our <sup>Actual</sup> ~~action~~ personnel casualties were ten times higher than the report stated; our weapons and munitions ~~are~~ abandoned on the battlefield was ten times higher than the report stated; the loss of enemy (Allied) casualties and ~~equip~~ equipment was ~~being~~ exaggerated in the report. The report claimed to have destroyed alot of equipment and hardware at the Newport installation—but in fact all rounds missed the target."

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criticism 6 (normass/deepe)

The document, however, praised one squad leader who, on his own initiative, blew up a segment of the Bien Hoa bridge while he and some of his squad were standing atop the structure. Their bodies were also disintegrated in the explosion.

But, the senior commanders of the Communist sub-region four, ~~and its units,~~ were given a ~~sizzi~~ sizzling critique in the document. These commanders were "afraid of being killed and they were afraid of the ~~vill~~ violence of war... This is the decisive period of the war and its always more violent than normal times. These commanders dared not to fight during the second offensive.

"The commander shifted position without informing his subordinates. The subordinates withdrew without orders from their superiors, instead of hanging on. A number of units assigned to slow down the enemy's counter-offensive, ~~did not~~ bother to slow down the enemy's sweeping operations, but reat retreated before the enemy even showed up. For example, the headquarters of the sub-region found out a number of orders were not carried out during the attack. The cadre of the Party as well as military commanders of ~~6~~ at the company, battalion and regimental level <sup>EVEN</sup> dared to discuss the order. This is not a period of discussion. This is a period of execution. ~~And they dared to discuss the order of their superiors in order to refuse in the end to assa~~ And, not only did they discuss the order of their superiors, but they refused to carry out the order, making up all kinds of excuses.

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criticism 7 (normass/deepe)

"So to conclude this session of criticism, we found out alot of cadre lost morale, <sup>FIND</sup> became <sup>2</sup> ~~im~~ undisciplined; they lack efficiency and their determination is bankrupt."

Another unit was criticized for being reluctant to cross the Dong Nai River, in order to reinforce other units fighting closer to Saigon. "That unit walked ten times around the jungle," the document read, "and it dare not to cross the river to reinforce ~~others~~ others. These regulars were just wandering around in the jungle for fun. But, <sup>a</sup> the battlefield is not the period of a walking exercise--they should have crossed the river."

(Hank: We'll probably try to cable regularly for the next two <sup>WEEK; while watching</sup> days; <sup>then we'll see if military action resumes around Saigon.</sup> Tomorrow, I'll send in a military analysis, but a rather ~~cautious~~ cautious one,

wrapping up the past events, <sup>W.I.I</sup> ~~not~~ rather than trying to predict if and when the offensive happens. <sup>BASED ON</sup> Some of this is the Bien Hoa story and some of this is <sup>BASED ON</sup> Saigon interviewing. I think we can resume making quick trips out of Saigon for a ~~major~~ if ~~there's~~ a good story <sup>BASED ON</sup> shapes up. Regards Bev).

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