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strategy 1 (normass/deepe)

(This is the ~~first~~ last of a two-part series on the military situation in the Vietnam war. This article discusses the war from the Communist viewpoint).

SAIGON, AUGUST 6—A few weeks after the ^{tumultuous} ~~rampaging~~ Communist Tet offensive, a ^{brother} ~~very~~ veteran journalist, who had also covered the French Indo-China War, made ~~one of his many visits~~ ^{another periodic} to Vietnam. He shook his head & lamented, "No one here has read Truong CHINH Chinh. "The whole Tet offensive is spelled out in his book—lightning attacks into the cities. But. " "

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strategy 2 (normass/deepe)

Truong Chinh's writing maps out the political strategy of Communist revolutionary warfare—but the great rhythms of military strategy are still best defined, systematized and articulated by Mao Tse Tung, who left on an indelible print stamp on the military thinking of North Vietnamese strategists and tacticians. Truong Chinh, as well as other Ho Chi Minh and other Party leaders, all fled to China at various times when suppression campaigns exiled them from Vietnam. The name Truong Chinh is simply a Party alias which itself means "The Long March."

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strategy 2 3 (normass/deepe)

Read together, Mao and Truong Chinh, their writings provide not only complementary political and military components of revolutionary warfare of a by-gone era--but components still applicable, as the ~~ver~~ veteran journalist ~~indicated--~~ indicated, in providing a sense of direction for the future. So Specifically, Mao's guerrilla warfare principles--the dynamics, movements and progressions of this unconventional and complex kind of warfare--is still the foundation of the Communist military policies of fighting in the South, in general the use of ^{the} peasantry waging warfare in the countryside as a means to encircle and finally defeat the urban centers. But, Truong Chinh's political strategy of the August Revolution is much closer to the Russian ~~putsch~~ Communist putsch of 1917, by ^{INC + NG} ~~applying the power of~~ the urban working class to seizure power in the streets of the cities. These two Mao-ist-Moscow components thus seem to ~~reflect~~ be equal or ~~unequal~~ unequal parts of the whole embodied in today's current Communist appeal in the south: a call for the "general offensive and the general uprising."

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strategy 4 (normass/deepe)

This duality of stre strategic lines in achieving victory now gives the Communists a split-level war at this time in the South--a differentiation between the big-unit military formations and the imperceptible, yet omnipresent clandestine and quasi-military structures which are necessary in igniting an uprising.

As of this writing, the Communist big-unit formations--mostly of North Vietnamese origin--are on the strategic retreat; the hidden half of the split-level war, forming the insurgency side, are on the strategic offensive. The North Vietnamese have reportedly withdrawn up to possibly as many as fifty per cent of their main-force strength from the South, thus v creating the conspicuous lull in this strata of the war. Truong Chinh's book does not mention strategic retreats, but Mao defines them with clarity and pres precision. He wrote:

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strategy 5 (normass/deepe)

"A strategic retreat is a planned strategic step taken by an inferior force for the purpose of conserving its strength and biding its time to defeat the enemy....The object of strategic retreat is to conserve military strength and prepare for the counter-offensive." He identifies the two stages of revolutionary warfare as the strategic offensive and the strategic defensive, and within the defensive, is contained the two stages of the strategic retreat and the strategic counter-offensive.

"To prepare for a counter-offensive," he continued, "we must select or create conditions favorable to ourselves but unfavorable to the enemy, so as to bring about a change in the balance of forces, before we go on to the next stage of the counter-offensive....During the stage of retreat we should in general secure at least two of the following conditions before we can consider the situation as being favorable to us and unfavorable to the enemy and before we can go over to the counter-offensive. These conditions are: 1. the population actively supports the Red Army (the most important condition, he says) 2. The terrain is favorable for operations (the current rainy season in the South might be considered an unfavorable condition until October) 3. All the main forces of the Red Army are concentrated 4. The enemy's weak spots have been discovered 5. The enemy has been reduced to a tired and demoralized state and 6. The enemy has been induced to make mistakes."

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strategy 6 (normass/deepe)

Mao's elucidation of the great military ebbs and flows of revolutionary warfare provides an historical skeleton for the steady progression of the war in South Vietnam. In 1960, the Viet Cong's homegrown guerrillas began fighting after four years of unarmed political subversion and agitation by Communist cadre. The guerrillas began in 1960 and continued on the strategic defensive until late 1963, when a military ~~cou~~- coup d'etat by nationalist generals overthrew President Ngo Dinh Diem and thus provided the conditions for the Communists to shift into the strategic offensive. Through 1963 and 1964, as the Vietnamese nationalist governmental and military situation continued to ~~deteri~~ deteriorate with successive coups and counter-coups, the guerrillas, escalating into regular formations, ~~and~~ smashed the government's strategic hamlet program through most parts of the countryside. By late 1964, the guerrilla movement had escalated into ~~Phase III~~ their final Phase III with positional warfare battles against elite government troops.

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strategy 7 (normass/deepe)

Then came the buildup of American combat troops in 195 1965. The relative balance of forces against shifted against the Communist guerrillas and regulars; the Communists again became the "inferior force" in relative terms of manpower and material. They again shifted to the strategic defensive, specifically to strategic retreat. This posture of strategic retreat was the period of preparing for the counter-offensive, which was effected with a world-wide sensational impact during late January of this year. As the veteran journalist had lamented, Truong Chinh had articulated the counter-offensive two twenty years before with such precision that the Communist Tet thrust this year appeared to be simply copied from his manual. He wrote:

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strategy 8 (normass/deepe)

"Our troops concentrate rapidly and lightning attacks on the cities and the annihilate them. In brief, we throw country into the battle to crush the whole of our territory...."

~~The~~ Tet ~~a~~ counter-offensive did not succeed in the totality or ~~substantially~~ power by the use of military force; in fact, military commanders here believe the Communists suffered a military defeat of great magnitude, although they effectively gained some political and psychological ~~if~~ advantages as by-products of their military defeat. Thus, the Communists have again ~~referred~~ reverted to the strategic retreat—and if Mao is appropriate accurate, in this circumstance, they are again preparing for another counter-offensive. Some ~~curpho~~ euphoric military sources believe that the Communist military defeat at Tet was decisive and final—that they must de-escalate their total strategy to one of a lower-level of activity. But, ~~these~~ more pertinent, ~~would be~~ the historical fact that the ~~Communists~~ North Vietnamese Communists launched three ~~c~~ general counter-offensives against the French—and completely failed in each—until they were victorious with their ~~ge~~ fourth counter-offensive at the most sensitive political moment of peace negotiations.

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strategy 9 (normass/deepe)

Truong Chinh specifically forecasts the possibility of holding negotiations while fighting, saying, "In that case, our long resistance will be interrupted by new talks, and that is precisely one of its characteristics. ~~However~~ However as long as the French colonialists live in our country, and we have not yet completed the third stage (of the general counter-offensive), we cannot obtain genuine independence and unification." If applicable currently, his words would continue to imply that since the American ^{TROOPS} ~~neo-colonialists~~ are still in Vietnam and since the Communists have not successfully completed the general counter-offensive, they will continue fighting for their political objectives.

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strategy 10 (normass/deepe)

(In a ~~point~~ of nuances of definition, both Mao and Truong Chinh speak more of a strategic counter-offensive by the Communists than of a strategic offensive. Mao wrote: "Whether in a counter-offensive or in an offensive, the principles with regard to these problems do not differ in their basic character. In this sense we may say that a counter-offensive is an offensive. Still, a counter-offensive is not exactly an offensive. The principles of the counter-offensive are applied when the enemy is on the offensive (as that Allied troops were before the Communist thrust at Tet). ~~Shangain~~ which would make their Tet action more of a counter-offensive than an offensive). The principles of the offensive are applied when the enemy is on the defensive (as is now the case with the Allied strategic posture). In this sense, there are certain differences between a counter-offensive and a n offensive."

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strategy 11 (normass/deepe)

At this most peculiar moment in the Vietnam war, the Communist big unit formations have retreated, some of them across the borders of South Vietnam, the Allied Allies are on the strategic defensive until the American elections--waiting for the Communist counter-offensive. But, under this Communist big-unit layer of the war in their split-level war, the Viet Cong remain on the strategic offensive, which is explained by Mao in terms directly reflective of what is happening in Vietnam now:

When the "enemy" is on the strategic defensive and "we are on the strategic offensive, at such times our operational policy is not to attack enemy forces which are entrenched in defensive positions and which we are not sure of defeating, but systematically to destroy or drive out the small enemy units and puppet forces in certain areas, which are our guerrilla units are strong enough to deal with, and to expand our areas, arouse the masses for struggle...replenish and train our troops and organize new guerrilla units." ~~Is this~~

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military 12 (normass/deepe)

This lower level of the split-level war, ^{developed} ~~conducted~~ with a mixture of continuous, ~~irregular~~ irregular warfare ^{to gain control} fought by local guerrillas and militia, is directly related to the Communist big-unit war; it serves as the essential springboard, providing a para-military, political, economic and ~~geographic~~ geographic foundation for the Communist big-unit formations to cease their strategic retreat, about-face, and hurl themselves forward into a sensational strategic offensive.

This lower echelons/ of low-level guerrilla warfare also provides the many-faceted base for the Communist "general uprising"---the line between ^{in the cities} low-level guerrilla activity and armed political activity ^{uprising} becoming relatively obscure. The "general uprising" is now interpreted here as meaning the seizure of power from the Vietnamese government and its affiliates into the hands of the people, who are protected in this process ~~off~~ by bands of armed insurrectionists or guerrillas. Students seize power from the school principals and university administrations. The citizens seize control of outposts, government offices, police stations, military institutions---and then the Presidential Palace and the elected ~~legislat~~ legislature. ^{in the cities} Hence, the Vietnamese government and its appendages is destroyed ^{OR OUTPLANKS} by a popular ~~insurrection~~ armed insurrection in the cities, which negates at least partially conventional military power.

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military 13 (normass/deepe)

Currently, the Communists are not only consolidating power in villages under their control, but continue to fan out with precision into the contested and government-controlled areas, including the urban centers, to terrorize and neutralize selective pro-government officials, newspaper offices, businessmen, to weaken the will of pro government-controlled towns by raining in raining in harrassing fire by mortars and rockets, to over-run or reach an accommodation with government outpost militiamen, to ~~eva-to~~ proselytize politically Vietnamese organized units and ~~senio~~ in the countryside and senior Army officers in the cities and to fragment Vietnamese government reservoirs of political strength and economic buoyancy.

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military 14 (normass/deepe)

There is overwhelmingly one overwhelmingly significant and conspicuous political similarity between August of 1968 and the August Truong Chinh Chinh's August Revolution of 1945. This revolves around the formation people's liberation councils and people's liberation committees in the villages and hamlets either subject to their current control or penetration. Currently these ~~committees~~ are to serve "as a fighting machine and not a purely administrative machine as in peacetime." The formation of these committees, set up through a rather highly regulated form of election ^{process} were to be ~~set-up~~ ^{established} in accordance with a high-level directive issued March 5; the Communists now boast 26 of these people's liberation committees on the outskirts of Saigon. *tsclg.*

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military 15 (normass/deepe)

These committees are duplicates ~~of the administrative machine~~ in form, mission, purpose, character—and name—to what Truong Chinh established before the general insurrection in August of 1945. He writes that "these committees were used first as "transitory organization forms" to gain on enemy power and paralyze its administrative machine. These organizations were effective. They gave the people the occasion to realize universal suffrage and become ~~acquainted~~ acquainted with administrative affairs, led them to direct henceforth their own destiny...." In effect, after the August General Insurrection, these different Liberation Committees became real administrative organizations. To use People's Committees and Liberation Committees as springboards for the direct transition to the democratic republican regime was an extremely interesting characteristic of the Communist tactics in the ~~re~~pre-insurrectionary ~~period~~ period."

These ~~transitory~~ "transitory organizations" with their "pre-governmental character" gave way to the provisional government and finally became the Communist government ~~when their enemy had been destroyed.~~ *once they ~~more reuter~~ HAD SEIZED POWER.*

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military 15 (normass/deepe)

However,
There is ~~overly~~ *one* overwhelmingly significant and conspicuous political difference between August of 1968 and Truong Chinh's August Revolution of 1945. The 1945 insurrection was waged against the ~~Japanese~~, Japanese, who had been internationally defeated, but still held weapons and power in Vietnam. The purpose of the general insurrection was ~~simply~~ simply to seize their weapons and their power—to preclude a return of the French colonialists. Currently, the Allies are in the strongest defensive ~~position~~ *military* position to date in the war and a ~~single~~ *single* general uprising would only mean wanton massacre.

Hence, the dual nature of the current Communist appeal for either a "general offensive and general uprising" or else the total merger of these two into *one* by ~~converting~~ *merging* of their main-force and local force units into armed ~~insurrections~~ *insurrectionists* in the city cities, as a means of out-flanking the Allied military power machine while enacting, as Truong Chinh did in 1945, "the general form of struggle of the armed demonstration."

The Allied war machine here is fully alerted to the predicted Communist general offensive, but they find approaching as well what ~~Truong~~ *Truong* Chinh described as the "zero hour of insurrection."

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(Hank: This is all I'm definitely planning to file this week. However, I've requested to see the foreign minister and that might come through this week. I'm also attempting to wrapup a political situationer on the Huong government, but I doubt that if finished by weekend. Regards Bev).

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