

# WAR NO. 6 MAY 10, 1972 BULLETIN

## HAIPHONG MINED, BLOCKADED Nixon Seeks International Showdown



One of several buildings of the Thanh Hoa Provincial Hospital compound which were destroyed by U.S. bombing Dec. 26, 1971. Nine people were killed and 11 wounded in the Dec. raids. The Thanh Hoa Hospital was attacked again April 26. 12 people were killed, according to initial reports.

### New Civilian Targets Nixon Expands Air War

As U.S. air raids over North Vietnam continued last week, U.S. fighter-bombers attacked the Hanoi and Haiphong areas again on Monday, May 8. Radio Hanoi reported that irrigation dikes southeast of Hanoi, in the Red River Delta, were hit by the bombers, and on May 9, Hanoi reported that residential areas of Haiphong city were hit. Also, on May 9, Radio Peking reported that American planes attacked two Chinese merchant ships anchored at an island port off the coast of the southern panhandle of North Vietnam on May 6, 7, and 8. These incidents, coupled with President Nixon's announcement that military targets as well as rail and communications lines will be considered objects for new raids, indicates a return to the continuous bombing of the North characteristic of the 1965-68 period. In recent days U.S. planes have been flying an average of 125 strikes against the north each day.

#### Civilian Targets

Despite the U.S. claims to be attacking only military targets, reports from the scene show that civilian targets other than the dikes were deliberately attacked in the raids on North Vietnam. Joel Henri of Agence France Presse filed the following report from Hanoi on May 8:

"At the end of our journey (from Hanoi) was the Thanh Hoa provincial hospital, 75 miles south of Hanoi. The destruction stunned our party.

continued on page 4

### Kontum, Hue Await Attacks

Nixon's desperate decision to escalate the war against North Vietnam is a direct result of the critical defeats suffered by the Saigon troops in the past two weeks in South Vietnam.

Since his April 26 speech, in which he emphasized the success of Vietnamization, an entire province has fallen to the Peoples Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF). And the morale of the Saigon army, as well as its very existence as an organized fighting force, have deteriorated to such a point that their recovery is unlikely.

The fall of Quang Tri province on May 1 was a particularly serious defeat for the U.S. and the Saigon regime. It was the first provincial capital to be abandoned by the Saigon troops and the first province to be wholly liberated by the PLAF in the history of the war.

#### U.S. Defeat at Quang Tri

The loss of Quang Tri was a major blow to the Saigon government which had publicly vowed that the provincial capital would be held at any cost. Instead the entire Saigon 3rd Division (the 10,000 man unit assigned to Quang Tri), disintegrated in the five days of battle. Many of the commanders escaped the battle area by helicopter, leaving their men to flee in complete disorder. "With horns blaring and headlights glowing in the midday sun they raced down the center of the road, pushing other vehicles out of the way," reported an American newsmen on the scene. From the accounts of fleeing soldiers, it is evident that the Saigon troops retreated without ever actually engaging in ground combat with the PLAF.

The disintegration of the 3rd Division is a major defeat in itself, because it means

On May 8, Nixon told the American people that the U.S. will institute continued high level bombing and a total naval blockade of North Vietnam by mining the entrances to its ports and patrolling its territorial waters.

This is an extremely provocative step, which even former President Johnson never dared to take, because of fear that it would lead to an international confrontation with other nuclear powers. In singling out the Soviet Union as the major supplier of military equipment to the North Vietnamese, Nixon was very direct in his challenge, which sounded like an invitation to a showdown:

"Ships presently in Vietnam will have three daylight periods to leave in safety. After that time, the mines will become active and any ships attempting to leave or enter these ports will do so at their own risk."

Nixon tried to appear as if he were seizing the initiative, dealing decisively with the challenge of the offensive currently being mounted by the Peoples Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF) in South Vietnam. But, in reality, his action is one of desperation. And it is indicative of just how little initiative Nixon really has to stem the course of events in the South.

In South Vietnam the initiative continues to lie, as it has for some time, with the Peoples Liberation Armed Forces. Even the Pentagon has admitted that mining of the ports of Haiphong and the blockade would not affect the fighting in the South for several months, since supplies have already been stockpiled there by the liberation forces.

#### International Implications

In the larger international arena, too, the initiative is in the hands of the North Vietnamese and the other socialist countries. Nixon does not really have the power to "seal off" North Vietnam, or to determine the precise nature of a confrontation with the Soviet Union or China.

It is not the case that the Soviet Union and China are simply being forced either to capitulate by ceasing to send supplies to North Vietnam, or to accept Nixon's invitation to a "high noon" shootout with the Seventh Fleet. In fact, they have at their disposal, a number of options that would allow them to continue sending supplies to North Vietnam.

They could send supplies on the overland rail lines and roads from China. The Pentagon Papers estimates that this would be quite feasible, even if all the North Vietnamese ports were sealed off by a blockade. They could, in addition, if North Vietnam so requested, send volunteers to help keep these roads and rail lines in repair in the face of U.S. bombing. China in fact did this during the 1965-68 air war over the North.

They could, also, send more anti aircraft guns and SAM missiles to protect these roads and rail lines. These missiles could be manned by Soviet or Chinese troops. Finally, they could, at their choice of time and place—not Nixon's—decide to confront American blockading ships, or carry out mine-sweeping operations. (At this time two Soviet minesweepers are enroute to Haiphong from Vladivostok.)

In his speech, Nixon made an appeal to the Soviet Union to stop giving aid to North Vietnam, urging that the Soviets "not permit Hanoi's intransigence to blot out the prospects we together have so patiently prepared." This was a crude attempt to divide the countries of the socialist camp, particularly to pit the large socialist powers against North Vietnam.

But, by casting the offensive in South Vietnam into an international context and

continued on page 3



the loss not only of thousands of men but of the basic organizational structure of the Saigon army in the northern area. It also opened the way for the PLAF to advance toward Hue, 32 miles to the south.

In an attempt to recover the situation, on May 3 Thieu ordered a shake-up in the military command. The commander of the routed 3rd Division was replaced by Maj. Gen. Ngo Quang Truong. Truong is considered a top commander by the Saigon government and is credited with preventing a NLF victory in Hue during the 1968 Tet offensive.

continued on page 3

# PRG 7 Point Peace Proposal

Responding to the Vietnamese people's aspirations for peace and national independence, considering the American and the world peoples' desire for peace, showing its goodwill to make the Paris Conference on Viet Nam progress, basing itself on the 10-point over-all solution, and following up the September 17, 1970 right-point and the December 10, 1970 three-point statements, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam declares the following:

## 1 — REGARDING THE TERMINAL DATE FOR THE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES.

The U.S. Government must end its war of aggression in Viet Nam, stop the policy of "Vietnamization" of the war, withdraw from South Viet Nam all troops, military personnel, weapons, and war materials of the United States and of the foreign countries in the U.S. camp, and dismantle all U.S. bases in South Viet Nam, without posing any conditions whatsoever.

The U.S. Government must set a terminal date for the withdrawal from South Viet Nam of the totality of U.S. forces and those of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp.

If the U.S. Government sets a terminal date for the withdrawal from South Viet Nam in 1971 of the totality of U.S. forces and those of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp, the parties will at the same time agree on the modalities of:

a) the withdrawal in safety from South Viet Nam of the totality of U.S. forces and those of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp;  
b) the release of the totality of militarymen of all parties and of the civilians captured during the war (including American pilots captured in North Viet Nam), so that they may all rapidly return to their homes.

These two operations will begin on the same date and will end on the same date.

A cease-fire will be observed between the South Viet Nam People's Liberation Armed Forces and the armed forces of the United States and of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp as soon as the parties reach agreement on the withdrawal from South Viet Nam of the totality of U.S. forces and those of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp.

## 2 — REGARDING THE QUESTION OF POWER IN SOUTH VIET NAM.

The U.S. Government must really respect the South Viet Nam people's

right to self-determination, put an end to its interference in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam, cease to support the bellicose group headed by Nguyen Van Thieu now in office in Saigon, and stop all manoeuvres, including tricks on elections, aimed at maintaining the puppet Nguyen Van Thieu.

By various means, the political, social, and religious forces in South Viet Nam aspiring to peace and national concord will form in Saigon a new administration favoring peace, independence, neutrality and democracy. The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam will immediately enter into talks with that administration in order to settle the following questions:

a) to form a broad three-segment government of national concord that will assume its functions during the period between the restoration of peace and the holding of general elections and that will organize general elections in South Viet Nam.

A cease-fire will be observed between the South Viet Nam People's Liberation Armed Forces and the armed forces of the Saigon administration as soon as a government of national concord is formed.

b) to take concrete measures with the necessary guarantees to prohibit all acts of terror, reprisal and discrimination against persons having collaborated with one or the other party; to ensure every democratic liberty to the South Viet Nam people; to release all persons jailed for political reasons; to dissolve all concentration camps and to liquidate all forms of constraint and coercion so as to permit the people to return to their native places in complete freedom and to freely engage in their occupations.

c) to see that the people's conditions of living are stabilized and gradually improved, to create conditions allowing everyone to contribute his talents and efforts to heal the war wounds and rebuild the country.

d) to agree on measures to be taken to ensure the holding of genuinely free, democratic, and fair general elections in South Viet Nam.

## 3 — REGARDING THE QUESTION OF VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES IN SOUTH VIET NAM.

The Vietnamese parties will together settle the question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Viet Nam in a spirit of national concord, equality, and mutual respect, without foreign interference, in accordance with the post-war situation and with a view to lightening the people's contributions.

## 4 — REGARDING THE PEACEFUL RE UNIFICATION OF VIET NAM AND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH ZONES.

a) The re-unification of Viet Nam will be achieved step by step, by

The 7 point peace proposal was first presented in Paris on July 1, 1971. The two basic points of this proposal, which are fundamental to any genuine settlement of the war, are:

1. Regarding the military situation: The U.S. must set a date for the total withdrawal of all U.S. troops, military personnel, weapons and war materials and those of its allies.
2. Regarding the political situation in South Vietnam: The U.S. must end its intervention in the internal affairs of South Vietnam and stop backing the regime of Nguyen Van Thieu.

peaceful means, on the basis of discussions and agreements between the two zones, without constraint and annexation from either party, and without foreign interference.

Pending the re-unification of the country, the North and the South zones will re-establish normal relations, guarantee free movement, free correspondence, free choice of residence, and establish economic and cultural relations on the principle of mutual interests and mutual assistance.

All questions concerning the two zones will be settled by qualified representatives of the Vietnamese people in the two zones on the basis of negotiations, without foreign interference.

b) In keeping with the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam, during the present temporary partition of the country into two zones the North and the South zones of Viet Nam will refrain from joining any military alliance with any foreign countries, from allowing any foreign country to maintain military bases, troops, and military personnel on their soil, and from recognizing the protection of any country or of any military alliance or bloc.

## 5 — REGARDING THE FOREIGN POLICY OF PEACE AND NEUTRALITY OF SOUTH VIET NAM.

South Viet Nam will pursue a foreign policy of peace and neutrality, establish relations with all countries regardless of their political and social system, in accordance with the five principles of peaceful coexistence, maintain economic and cultural relations with all countries, accept the cooperation of foreign countries in the development of the resources of South Viet Nam, accept the economic and technical aid of any country without any political conditions attached, and participate in regional plans for economic cooperation.

On the basis of these principles, after the end of the war South Viet Nam and the United States will establish relations in the political, economic, and cultural fields.

## 6 — REGARDING THE DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE UNITED STATES TO THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE IN THE TWO ZONES.

The U.S. Government must bear full responsibility for the losses and the destruction it has caused to the Vietnamese people in the two zones.

## 7 — REGARDING THE RESPECT AND THE INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEE OF THE ACCORDS TO BE CONCLUDED.

The parties will reach agreement on the forms of respect and international guarantee of the accords that will be concluded.

# What It Means to Bomb the Dikes

On May 8 U.S. planes carried out bombing missions against dikes in the Red River Delta area of North Vietnam. The following is a consideration of some of the implications of these bombings:

In late 1944, the German High Commissioner for Holland, Seyss-Inquart, ordered the Dutch dikes to be opened. This resulted in thousands of civilians being killed and made homeless, and created the most serious food shortage of any country in Western Europe. For this act, Seyss-Inquart was labelled "one of the worst war criminals" at the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal. Out of 186 defendants, he was one of 24 Germans sentenced to death.

Like Holland, North Vietnam relies on a system of dikes to hold back sea water on the plain of the Red River Delta. In addition, North Vietnam has a system of several thousand kilometers of dikes used for controlling floods on the Red River and its tributaries, and for the irrigation and drainage of cultivated land.

Testimony at the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal in 1968 indicated some of the probable effects of the destruction of these dikes:

—If river dikes were breached at a time when the river was near flooding, it would inundate large areas of land, cause many deaths, carry away houses, and destroy crops.

—If tidewater control dikes on the seashore were bombed, the crops would die, and the sea water would render the land uncultivable. In addition, many houses and buildings would be destroyed by the inrush of sea water.

—If irrigation facilities were destroyed, it would damage the rice crop in the October dry season.

—If drainage facilities were destroyed, it would make rice cropping impossible during the May rainy season.

The U.S. carried out bombardment of the dikes many times between 1966-1968. Thanks to the efficient air defenses in the North, and the mobilization of people to repair the damage, the U.S. never succeeded in creating a major breach, although there were several instances such as the bombing of tide control dikes in Quang Binh province, which destroyed 1500 hectares of rice paddy fields.



Workers of an engineering factory in Nam Ha in the Red River Delta building dams against floods.

Another typical example was the bombing of the dike in the Thuong River, which was attacked with 100 bombs. In this instance, as in many others, the U.S. Air Force came back to attack the repair crews with anti-personnel pellet bombs.

The barbarity of these actions is even more evident in view of the fact that the dikes were laboriously built up by the peasants of North Vietnam, largely through manual labor. Between 1954-1968, the people of North Vietnam moved 1.2 billion cubic meters of earth in their construction. As a result, they were able to provide irrigation for 90 percent of the arable land, and dramatically increase rice production—in a country which before liberation had the lowest rice productivity in Southeast Asia.

Robert Jackson, the U.S. prosecutor at Nuremberg, stated that the principles defined there applied not only to Germany and Japan, but should in the future be

equally applicable to any country, including the United States. By carrying out these new bombings against the dikes, Nixon is committing new war crimes—by the very standards which the U.S. was instrumental in defining 26 years ago.

"They have been the most lucrative bomb strikes made at any time during the war. Every single bomb crater is surrounded with bodies, wrecked equipment, and dazed and bleeding people... We sent in helicopter gunships which quickly put them out of their misery."

U.S. official after B-52 raid near Kontum, May 5

## We Need Your Help!

We would like to continue to publish the War Bulletin during the current crisis in Indochina. In order to do this, we desperately need money. We would appreciate comments people have on content and format of the bulletin. Checks should be made payable to the War Bulletin, P.O. Box 4400, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Groups can order the War Bulletin in bulk at \$11 per thousand (our cost).

# TO MAKE THINGS PERFECTLY CLEAR... no. 2

As was the case with his April 26 speech, Nixon's latest speech of May 8 contains many arguments based on distortions, outright lies, or confused definitions or analyses. The following is an examination in some detail of several themes running through Nixon's latest speech, which are based on misleading or faulty assumptions.

**"Hanoi must be denied the weapons and supplies it needs to continue its aggression."**

The implications of Nixon's statement is that the announced measures, including the mining of the ports and air strikes against rail and communications lines will actually affect the current offensive in South Vietnam. Historically, there is no evidence for this.

In the short run, indications are that the offensive will continue, using supplies already stockpiled over several years. For example, two years ago before tanks were even being used by the PLAF, American troops found caches of tank ammunition in Cambodia about 50 miles from Saigon.

In the longer run, North Vietnam can continue to receive supplies even if its ports are blockaded. A 1967 memorandum by the Secretary of Defense, contained in the Pentagon Papers study, concluded that by use of road and rail lines from China, and emergency unloading techniques, the supplies would continue to flow unabated. The history of the 1965-68 air war over the North also demonstrates the inability of the U.S. Air Force to cut off rail and road transport lines inside North Vietnam.

"The Communist offensive has now reached the point that it gravely threatens the lives of 60,000 American troops who are still in Vietnam."

The current offensive has not been aimed at U.S. forces, the vast majority of whom are support troops. Last week, for example, U.S. official statistics listed only 2 U.S. deaths in Vietnam. And the PRG has reiterated its policy that U.S. units who do not initiate attacks will not themselves be attacked.

If Nixon were really concerned about the safety of the remaining U.S. troops, he

would simply withdraw them. He could do so immediately by negotiating a settlement on the basis of the 7 point peace plan. In fact, however, the remaining troops are hostages, used to justify whatever escalation Nixon might consider necessary to prevent a U.S. defeat in South Vietnam.

**"To other nations, especially those allied with North Vietnam: The actions I have announced tonight are not directed against you."**

Past administrations always realized that a naval blockade of North Vietnam would be seen as an extremely provocative action directed against countries doing trade with North Vietnam—especially the Soviet Union and China. They therefore refrained from exercising this option.

For example, Defense Secretary McNamara, in May, 1967, made these estimates of the probable reactions to a naval blockade of North Vietnam:

"Moscow in this case, should be expected to send volunteers, including pilots, to North Vietnam, to provide some new and better weapons... and to consider some action in Korea, Turkey, Iran, the Middle East, or most likely, Berlin.

China might decide to intervene in the war with combat troops and air power, to which we would eventually have to respond by bombing Chinese airfields and perhaps other targets as well.

Hanoi would tighten belts, refuse to talk, and persevere, as it could without too much difficulty."

Walt Rostow, another noted hawk of the Johnson administration, estimated that if North Vietnam's major harbors were mined, or a blockade set up, "the Chinese Communists would probably introduce many more engineering and anti aircraft forces along the roads and rail lines between Hanoi and China to keep supplies moving."

**"Now, as throughout the past four years, the North Vietnamese arrogantly refuse to negotiate anything but an imposition by the United States of a Communist regime on 17,000,000 people in South Vietnam."**

Neither the North Vietnamese, nor the PRG have ever demanded that the U.S.

impose a communist regime in South Vietnam. In fact, the PRG has consistently stated that the nature of the future government of South Vietnam is not to be determined by the U.S. at all. It is, they have always said, a question to be decided by the South Vietnamese people themselves after the U.S. has gone. What they do demand is that the U.S. stop backing Nguyen Van Thieu and respect the right to self determination of the South Vietnamese people.

This position is clearly stated in the PRG 7 point peace proposal, which outlines the following process for the development of a new, representative government in South Vietnam:

First "the political, social, and religious forces in South Vietnam aspiring to peace and national concord will form in Saigon a new administration favoring peace, independence, neutrality and national democracy." The PRG would then enter into negotiations with that administration to "form a broad three-segment government of national concord" which might include members of the present Saigon government, but not Thieu itself. Other elements might include the PRG and independent peace forces. This new coalition government would then organize general elections in South Vietnam.

**"They [the North Vietnamese] have flatly and arrogantly refused to negotiate an end to the war and bring peace."**

It is the U.S., not the North Vietnamese, who has unilaterally cut off the peace talks on two occasions in the last two months—first on March 23 and then on May 4. Even after the U.S. had bombed Hanoi and Haiphong, the North Vietnamese continued to request a resumption of the peace talks.

It is the U.S., not the North Vietnamese, who has refused to offer a solution to the two main causes of the war: U.S. military aggression, and U.S. political interference in the internal affairs of South Vietnam. The U.S. has refused to set a date for the total withdrawal of its troops and materiel and those of allies. And the U.S. has refused to give up its support of the Nguyen Van Thieu regime in South Vietnam.

The PRG has said that if these issues were settled, the war would end, the U.S. troops could withdraw in safety, and the POWs would be returned. It is Nixon who has prolonged the war by refusing to negotiate on these two essential points.

**"Throughout the war in Vietnam, the United States has exercised a degree of restraint unprecedented in the annals of war."**

The unlimited war crimes of the United States have been massively cataloged by observers from many countries. In Indochina the U.S. has violated nearly every international agreement on the conduct of warfare, from the St. Petersburg Agreements of 1868 banning poisonous gases to the Nuremberg Principles, detailing crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide (the destruction of entire peoples). The following are some of the war crimes committed by the U.S. in South Vietnam:

\*\* 60% of the cropland in South Vietnam has been sprayed with toxic chemicals at least once since the beginning of the war.

\*\* W. Colby, the U.S. officer in charge of "pacification" in South Vietnam, estimated as of April, 1971, that the war has produced over 5,800,000 civilian casualties and displaced persons. This is more than 1/3 of the total population of the country. Most of this is a result of U.S. bombing and "forced urbanization" programs.

\*\* Nixon has used over 7 million tons of explosives in South Vietnam in three years, even more than Johnson did in four.

\*\* A British doctor, Dr. Phillip Harvey, has reported that the April 16 bombings of Hanoi included a new anti-personnel weapon which showers cube-shaped plastic pellets in all directions at a speed of 1300 feet per second. These pellets vaporize human flesh and melt inside the body of the victim, thus becoming undetectable by X-rays and irremovable by surgery. This weapon is the latest in the line of U.S. technological advances from napalm to white phosphorous to a wide variety of pellet bombs for use against civilian targets.

## Nixon speech, continued from page 1

by posing so clearly the question of whether socialist countries will choose to support North Vietnam in its fight against U.S. aggression, Nixon may actually be strengthening the unity of the socialist camp.

### Nixon Cornered

In fact, it is Nixon who is backing himself into a corner. In his April 26 speech, Nixon tied the U.S. presence in Vietnam to the maintenance of the Thieu regime, whose stability grows more precarious with each day of the offensive. In that speech he also characterized a settlement along the lines of the PRG Seven Point Peace Plan as a major defeat for the U.S., which would result in the imposition of a communist dictatorship in South Vietnam. This, he vowed, "we will never allow to happen."

In his May 8 speech, Nixon said that the blockade would be called off only if North Vietnam accepts three demands: the release of American POWs while the war is still going on; a ceasefire throughout all of Indochina; only after these points are implemented, the withdrawal of American troops in four months. These demands are so outrageous that it is difficult to believe anyone would seriously expect the North Vietnamese to accept them.

By these words and actions, Nixon is closing off all the options which could lead to a negotiated settlement and an end to the war, and instead is solidifying a course of action that leads to continuing escalation and the danger of an

international confrontation. Meanwhile, the offensive in South Vietnam is bound to continue, since the actions Nixon has taken cannot affect the fighting there in the near future. Having closed off his options for peace, what will Nixon do in a month, or in two months, when the political and military position of the Saigon regime has deteriorated even further?

Nixon's actions in the coming period will continue to carry great dangers, because his underlying strategy is so desperate. He has stated that when he is concerned, his "tendency is to strike back."

There are indications that he is willing to give up a great deal in order to be able to "strike back." The first casualty would appear to be his trip to Moscow scheduled for later in the month—which now seems unlikely to come off.

He may even be willing to lose the election in November. Secretary of the Treasury Conally indicated recently to a group of journalists that the President has decided it would be better to lose the election than to hand the next President of the United States an "unviable" foreign policy.

Certainly his latest action confirms this view. Six months before the election he has decided on a course of action that raises the spectre of nuclear war—a nightmare that has been slowly subsiding from the consciousness of the American people for ten years, until this week.

## PLAF offensive, continued from page 1

### PLAF Offensive at Hue

Truong is now trying to regroup the scattered 3rd Division to form a defense line north of Hue. He is relying on terror to restore order in the ranks, announcing that any deserters who do not report for duty will be executed.

Meanwhile, inside Hue itself, the local administration has lost the ability to provide basic governmental services. Like the collapse of the 3rd Division, this too, is a defeat for the Thieu regime. Throughout the current offensive the Saigon government has tried to gain support by promising that it can "protect" the South Vietnamese people and provide for their basic needs.

Yet with the fall of Quang Tri, provincial and city offices in Hue emptied as the staff joined those fleeing south. In the central hospital for example, 90% of the staff had fled last week. Soldiers in flight from Quang Tri entered Hue, burning down the central marketplace, which is crucial to the city's food supply. Less heavily armed than the deserters, the local police were unable to protect the population from looting and physical assault.

Unwilling to trust their fate to the provincial government and the northern defense line of the Saigon troops, 80% of the residents of Hue have now fled the city.

As confidence in the Saigon government deteriorated, the liberation forces on May 4 issued an appeal to the people of Hue and the surrounding rural

areas.

"Quickly seize the opportunity," the appeal read, "unite millions as one, vigorously rise up and closely apply the slogan 'regain power for the people,'... Struggle to demand the return of your sons and brothers from the puppet army and resolutely oppose the scheme of using the people as a screen to protect the enemy from our blows. Quickly get out of areas where enemy troops are stationed and protect our youths from forced conscription. Actively help our refugees from Quang Tri and persuade them to return to their former villages to resume production."

The appeal called on the people of Hue to "join the offensive and uprising movements," and to "struggle for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the country and the overthrow of the Thieu clique, and to regain control of the city."

The appeal also urged "all officers, troops, police, militiamen, and civil servants," to "mutiny, drop your weapons, quit ranks, and return to the people. You will be warmly welcomed."

### Kontum Waits

While the PLAF continues its military and political offensive near Hue, Saigon soldiers in the Central Highlands sit and wait for the expected attack on the city of Kontum. There, another Saigon Division, the 22nd, is described by U.S. advisors as

continued on page 4

# STOP THE BLOCKADE STOP THE BOMBING SUPPORT THE 7 POINTS

Once again, as past Presidents have done, Richard Nixon has overestimated the support the American people will give him for such an adventurous act as the blockading of North Vietnam.

While it is clear that the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated by this blockade or by other escalations, we can demonstrate to Richard Nixon that we will not accept any acts which escalate rather than end the war.

## THURSDAY MAY 11—BLOCKADE BEGINS

RALLY — REPUBLICAN HEADQUARTERS  
[3rd & Mkt] — 12 NOON

## FRIDAY MAY 12— ROCKEFELLER, REAGAN, DOLE, GOLDWATER HERE FOR NIXON CAMPAIGN

PICKET LINE — ST. FRANCIS HOTEL —  
UNION SQUARE — 11 A.M. RALLY — 12 NOON

Demonstrations Sponsored By

### Bay Area APRIL 22 Coalition

- For an end to U.S. aggression in Indochina and support for the PRG 7-Point plan for peace in Indochina.
- For an end to U.S. interference in the internal affairs of any country.
- For an end to Nixon's policies of economic, political, racial and sexist repression.

San Francisco

398-5060

San Jose

295-2375

East Bay

848-3068

Peninsula

328-4941

#### FUTURE ACTIONS

- MAY 20- Mass Demonstration to support the 7 Points and to demand freedom for all political prisoners  
San Jose, William St. Park, 12:00 Noon.
- JUNE 8- Demonstration at Alameda Naval Air Station to protest the sailing of the Aircraft Carrier  
Oriskany for Vietnam

#### liberation offensive, continued

"finished." No replacements have been brought in to back them up. The Saigon airborne division, which tried unsuccessfully last week to open a road to the encircled city, have been flown back to Saigon. U.S. officials are indicating that Kontum has been written off.

Perhaps, U.S. officials are now saying, the PLAF will not even bother with Kontum, but will go directly to Pleiku, site of a large U.S. base. In either case, the Saigon soldiers left in the area will evidently be sacrificed. If they try to retreat to the American compound at Pleiku, they will further endanger U.S. troops. In the words of one American there, "I'm afraid we would have to make a horrible decision and shoot them down."

Where will the next move come—Hue? Kontum? Pleiku? Or even the Mekong Delta? The uncertainty is typical of the current offensive. From the start the PLAF has held the initiative, and the U.S. and Saigon troops have waited passively to see where the next front would open. They shift troops back and forth across the country hoping to be at the right place at the right time.

Nothing which Nixon or the Saigon regime has done has managed to change this basic fact of the war. The mining of Haiphong harbor will be no different, since  
The War Bulletin — page 4

the PLAF has clearly stockpiled adequate supplies in the south for the current offensive. The complete inability of the U.S. and the Saigon troops to regain the initiative is an indication of the depth of their defeat in South Vietnam. ■

#### Air War, continued from page 1

"It was hard to believe that this could have been the result of a mistake. The buildings are surrounded by rice fields. And the hospital has already been attacked before, last December, when the damage was shown worldwide on television.

"The latest raid—on April 26—brought a shower of 36 bombs onto the hospital: 12 were giant 2000-pounders, and the rest were anti-tank bombs which penetrated the concrete roofs of the hospital as well as the air raid shelters, the hospital's chief told us.

"In the enormous 45-foot craters and the rubble, the wreckage of operating tables and X-ray equipment could be seen. The death toll was twelve—and now the 600-bed hospital has been evacuated to the mountains.

"Our next stop was six miles south, in the village of Dong Yen, where five aircraft dived out of the sky to hit the primary school during the morning classes. Five bombs fell, leaving 20 dead and 25

wounded. The village is still shocked and silent. In the ruins of the school scattered books, burned and torn, lie among shattered desks...

"We looked for the military targets which might have justified the raid—for artillery, radar aerials, or machine guns. There was nothing. Just mud and straw huts."

While U.S. officials in Washington talk of renewed heavy raids over the north, U.S. military men in Saigon admit that the heaviest B-52 raids of the war in the South do little but buy time for the Saigon army in such areas as Kontum. Tactical air strikes, also at their highest level of the war in the South, average over 600 missions per day. Liberation Radio in the South reports that many of these strikes are aimed at newly liberated provincial capitals and townships, such as Tan Canh, Dak To, and Hoai An in the central region of the country.

#### A New Escalation

On May 5, another 70 fighter-bombers arrived in Thailand, bringing the total U.S. air fleet to over 1000 planes. Takli Air Force Base in Thailand has been reactivated to accommodate the new squadrons. In addition, a fifth aircraft carrier, the Midway, has arrived in the Gulf of Tonkin, and a sixth, the Saratoga, dispatched from Florida in the early days

of the offensive, is expected to arrive in a few days.

In the Gulf of Tonkin, the fifty-five ships of the Seventh Fleet are continuously shelling targets north and south of the DMZ. The total number of U.S. servicemen in the Gulf has tripled since March 30.

#### Combat Marines Ready to Land

Among the 45,000 men now in the Gulf are 5000 combat-ready Marines of the Third Division, aboard helicopter carriers and amphibious assault transports. Pentagon and State Department spokesmen have said that the possibility exists that they may be landed in the Hue-Danang area "to protect the remaining American troops." Such a landing would be accompanied by the withdrawal of non-combatant support troops, and thus the Pentagon could claim that there had been no increase in troop levels.

In his May 8 speech, Nixon did not rule out the reintroduction of ground troops as he has before. The deteriorating military situation in South Vietnam suggests that the blockade and resumption of full scale bombing against the North are not the last major U.S. escalation the world will see in coming weeks. ■