

Excerpts From the North Vietnamese Chief of Staff's

Special to The New York Times

HONG KONG, April 28— Following are additional excerpts, in unofficial translation, from the account of North Vietnam's Chief of Staff, Gen. Van Tien Dung, of the spring offensive of 1975 that led to the Communist victory in South Vietnam. Earlier excerpts were published in Monday's New York Times.

Puppet Col. Pham Duy Tat, commander of the ranger force on the Second Military Region, made the following declaration to us about the puppet units withdrawing from the Central Highlands:

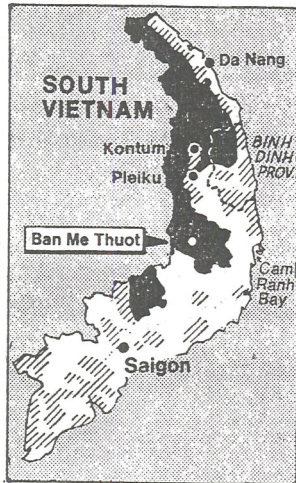
"On the afternoon of March 14, while I was going to various units to re-examine the defense situation in Pleiku, I received a call from the military region headquarters telling me to attend a meeting at the office of Pham Van Phu, commander of the Second Corps. Phu said he had just come back from a meeting in Cam Ranh with Nguyen Van Thieu, Tran Thien Khiem, Cao Van Vien and Dang Van Quang. Here is Phu's account of the meeting.

"Thieu asked Vien: 'Do we still have reserve forces to reinforce the Second Corps?' Vien replied: 'No.'

"Thieu then turned to Phu, asking: 'If there are no reinforcement troops, how long will you be able to defend the area?' Phu answered: 'I can defend for a month on the condition that I will get maximum air support, sufficient airborne matériel, weapons, ammunition and reinforcement troops so as to make up for our recent heavy losses. I will stay in Pleiku to fight and I will die there.'

"Thieu said: 'These conditions cannot be met, and the P.L.A.F. [People's Liberation Army Forces] is conducting violent attacks; therefore we must withdraw from Kontum and Pleiku so as to preserve our forces and use our troops to defend the Delta and the coastal area.'

"Then it will be more convenient for us regarding supplies."



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Black areas on map mark parts of South Vietnam held by Communist forces in March, 1975, when Ban Me Thuot fell. Saigon's units, which held white areas, then quit central region. Diagonal shading marks disputed areas.

Withdrawal Routes Weighed

"Thieu then asked: 'Could Route 19 be used for our withdrawal?' Vien answered: 'In the history of the Indochina war, no forces have been able to withdraw along Route 19 without being badly mauled by the revolutionary forces.'

"Thieu again asked: 'How about Route 14?' Vien answered: 'Withdrawal is all

the more impossible along Route 14.'

"All those attending the meeting then realized that the only choice left was Route 7, which had not been used for a long time and was in bad condition, but it could provide an element of surprise.

"Brig. Gen. Tran Van Cam asked: 'How about the province chiefs, the regional forces and the local people? Shall we also organize their withdrawal?'

"Phu replied: 'According to Mr. Thieu's order, the regional forces should be left behind, and no information of the withdrawal should be

Account of the Spring

Offensive in 1975

given to the province chiefs. Let them continue to defend. Let us complete our withdrawal and let them find out about that later on. The regional forces here consist only of highlanders. Let them return to the highlands."

"After completing his explanation, Phu ordered Cam and Ly, chief of staff of the Second Corps, to work out a withdrawal plan."

Following the enemy's serious defeat in the Central Highlands, the Political Bureau and the Central Military Party Committee promptly assumed leadership over the Tri-Thien front and directed the Second Army Corps to rapidly change the direction of its offensive. On March 17, the Tri-Thien military zone was ordered to send its forces at once from the moun-

post from Ban Me Thuot City to report on the situation. Comrade Phan Ham saluted, shook hands with me and then embraced me.

He was choked with emotion, his eyes filled with tears. He could say just one sentence: "Our victory is extremely great, brother."

I lit a cigarette. I had quit smoking long ago, but each time we succeeded in solving a new opportunity, won a victory or achieved particular success, I smoked a cigarette with particular satisfaction. When the comrades around me, including the guards, saw me smoke a cigarette, they knew that I was enthusiastic.

After our great victories in the Central Highlands, the regional party committee and the Fifth Military Zone Party Committee, anticipating a new opportunity, cast aside plans to develop the offensive toward the south and shifted the direction of our offensive to the north with the aim of creating conditions for our attacks on Da Nang.

On March 24 and 25, the Second Division of the military zone, in cooperation with the regional forces, annihilated and disintegrated the Fourth and Fifth Regiments of the second puppet division and liberated Tam Ky and Tuan Duong. The Quang Ngai regional forces, in cooperation with the masses, attacked, rose up and liberated the northern part of the prov-

tain areas to the coast to motivate the masses in intensifying the people's war, to press closely on communications lines and the outskirts of Hue, to intensify military proselytizing activities and so forth. At the same time, the Second Army Corps was ordered to intensify its attacks from the [Chuong] area and to strategically sever Hue from Da Nang.

On being told that Hue had been liberated, I could not control my emotions. My eyes were filled with tears. I remembered that on the day of liberation of Ban Me Thuot, Comrade Phan Ham returned to the command

ince. We annihilated the enemy and liberated the Chu Lai base.

Attack on Da Nang Ordered

On March 26 I cabled Brother Hoang Van Thai, deputy chief of the general staff, requesting him to order the Second Army Corps to bring its long-range artillery immediately to within striking distance of the airfield and port of Da Nang, urgently mount a siege on this city and boldly advance into this city to destroy all the enemy forces massing there. If this plan was achieved, we would be able to facilitate future operations on the Nam Bo battlefield. I asked the Central Military Party Committee to send Brother Le Trong Tan, deputy chief of the general staff, to supervise the Second Army Corps' attack on Da Nang to insure victory.

The Second Army Corps operating on the Tri-thien front was composed of the 304th, 324th and 325th Divisions and a number of technical units.

On March 27 the Central Military Party Committee decided to set up the Quang Dai Front Command with Comrade Chu Huy Man as political commissar and Comrade Le Trong Tan as commander. Comrade Tan boarded a helicopter in Hanoi to fly to Gio Linh.

To attack Da Nang, it was necessary to set up the command headquarters west of Da Nang. Upon his arrival in Quang Tri, Comrade Tan

took a road east of the Truong Son Range to go to A Luoi, where he proceeded to an area west of Da Nang. While en route, he stopped at a general telephone switchboard station to contact the various units. Thus, the command and the party committee of the Quang Dai front had not yet met each other.

Beginning on March 26 Da Nang City was in a chaotic situation. Our forces quickly advanced to close in on the city. The enemy was forced to abandon his plan to hold up in Da Nang and began using Boeing-727's and helicopters to evacuate some American advisers and part of the puppet forces. The puppet troops fought among one another for places on the plane, causing noisy, brawling scenes at the airfield. Some of them were run over by taxiing aircraft on the

runway.

Our big artillery guns began bombarding Da Nang airfield, Hoa Tinh base, the headquarters of the third puppet division command, Son Tra port and the command headquarters of the marine division in Non Nuoc, thus driving enemy troops in the city into a more panicky state.

On March 29 ground troops and tanks of the Second Army Corps, together with the armed forces of the Fifth Military Region, advancing in four directions — north, northwest, southwest and south, rapidly and directly attacked the city.

The city was not subject to destruction. The airfield, military barracks and government buildings remained intact; public utilities were still in service and ferryboats were still in operation. We seized 26 aircraft, 20 tanks and 40 artillery pieces. Within 32 hours we had destroyed or disbanded more than 100,000 enemy troops, captured a strong military base complex and liberated Da Nang, the second largest city in the South.

Southern Corps Destroyed

With the liberation of Da Nang, we had completed the destruction and disintegration of the First Corps and totally liquidated the puppets' Military Region One, creating conditions for speeding up the total collapse of the puppet army.

I also received news about the situation on the Nam Bo battlefield through a letter sent by Comrade Tran Van Tra, commander of the Nam Bo armed forces and the Sixth Region.

Comrade Tra regretted that he had not had sufficient forces to proceed immediately with capturing Biao and Da Lat after liberating Lam Dong.

At the Central Highlands Front Command headquarters, on March 18—when the enemy was retreating from the Central Highlands—we discussed the trends for developing the operations of the Central Highlands forces. We came to the following assessment of the situation facing the enemy and ourselves:

Our victories in the Central Highlands had had a very strong impact on the enemy's strategic deployment of forces and his morale. By going on the offensive and quickly

developing battle gains, we could speed up the enemy's disintegration.

Our victory in the Central Highlands was extremely great as it had been realized beyond our expectations. Our forces had sustained only marginal losses in combat; the fighting spirit of our troops had increased manifold.

We were still strong logistically—only part of the ammunition earmarked for the plan had been used and a fairly large quantity of ammunition had been seized from the enemy. Our strategic communications lines

now allowed smoother and quicker passage for trucks.

There still remained a month and a half of the dry season for us to continue our operations. All our battlefields throughout the South had developed their operations with good coordinations. In the short term, the question was to determine the correct direction for developing the operations of the Central Highlands forces in the most continuous, rapid and effective manner in order to make fullest use of their might and spend the least time possible.

After intense discussions,

we agreed that the direction for strategic development of the operations of the Central Highlands forces was to advance eastward. Specifically, our forces swept toward the coast and joined the armed forces of the Fifth Military Region in liberating Binh-Dinh and Phuyen Provinces and part of Khanh Hoa Province, destroying a good part of the enemy's vital forces and liberating more than one million people.

By this time, filled with excitement, our troops wanted to advance rapidly toward the lowlands in the flush of victory.