

# New Cong offensive decisive

The North Vietnamese general offensive promises to be the third decisive encounter of the Vietnam war.

The previous two had momentous impact on the course of the conflict.

The first was the Viet Cong winter-spring offensive of late 1964 and early 1965. That one crumbled the Saigon army and brought American ground troops into the war.

The second was the Tet offensive of 1968. That one saw Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces unexpectedly rise from the jungles and swamps and attack military camps and population centers throughout the country. The dramatic upsurge of fighting called into question the official allied assessments of progress. Ultimately, the American withdrawal of combat forces began and Vietnamization became American policy.

The targets of this third general offensive seemed to surprise some observers, although the offensive itself was expected. But viewed in the context of the decade-long war, the crash of Hanoi's armored columns across the demilitarized zone and the powerful infantry thrusts against the weakest of Saigon's divisions was as predictable as the monsoon rains that annually wash across the paddyfields and mountains.

Since the victory over the French at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, the North has had the capacity to sweep across the DMZ. It was this Korea-like threat that persuaded American military advisers to build a con-

ventional South Vietnamese army.

But until 10 days ago this threat never materialized. Why did Hanoi move that way now, changing at least for now the very character of the war?

The earlier patterns of the conflict are clearer now. The North Vietnamese leadership initially hoped to take over the South in the general elections provided for under the Geneva conventions that ended the war against the French.

When President Ngo Dinh Diem said no to the elections, Hanoi encouraged partisans in the South to organize an insurgency along the lines that Ho Chi Minh instituted in his successful campaign to oust the French from Indochina. By 1964, the Viet Cong guerrillas were ready to move.

Late that year, mobile guerrilla battalions were destroying at least one Saigon battalion a week, and by early 1965 the military situation was so serious that only American troop intervention could prevent a defeat.

When the Americans came in, so did the North Vietnamese. But Hanoi's forces only sparred with the Americans, choosing the battle sites, usually in remote mountain regions where the terrain favored them, and quickly backing off when casualties rose in bloody battles.

It was not until late in 1967 that Hanoi's military leader, Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap, had figured out allied weaknesses. He had drawn American forces into the mountains and jungles, leaving South Vietnamese forces in the rear.

Giap sent his troops around

the Americans and through the lines of the South Vietnamese, greatly assisted by whole village populations on the outskirts of Saigon and other cities. They had been won over to the Communist cause by Viet Cong cadres.

Hanoi has always played its military cards close to its chest. But short of a serious miscalculation, which seems unlikely when reading through the history of the war, Gen. Giap and his advisers must be convinced that the current mighty effort will bring satisfactory results.

What is the maximum they must be hoping for? Probably the total collapse of the Saigon armies and the capitulation of the capital of Saigon to Communist troops. But the North Vietnamese would settle for much less than that.

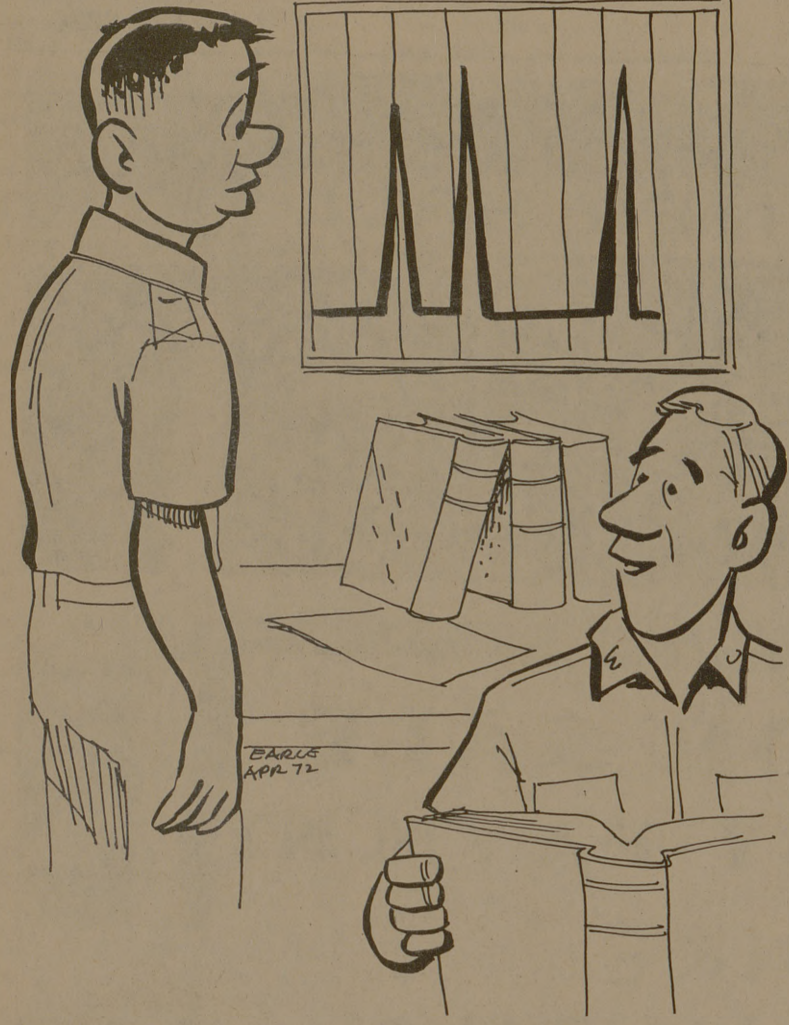
The North Vietnamese still enjoy the military luxury of choosing the site and time of the battle. They can go back up through the DMZ. They can fade again into the jungles of War Zone C and the central highlands. Yet they can always return, as they have always done.

## Bulletin Board

**Tonight**  
The A&M Wheelmen will meet in Room 3-D of the MSC at 7:30 p.m. Nominations of officers for the summer session will be taken.

The Ag Economics Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Plant Sciences building, Rooms 112-113.

SAM will meet at the Red Lion at 7:30 p.m. to elect new officers.



"Those are the high points of my year so far—Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter."

## Silence

The confusion that has stemmed from the protest in the race for student body government recorder comes not from its being an intricate and involved issue but from the lack of thinking—and statements—by the principals involved.

It would seem now that Eichorn and Michelson are among the two least involved people in the whole affair. Michelson wants justice and Eichorn didn't know what was happening.

But the OPA and Pat Self have been on the other end of the stick. They evidently know how the mess all got started, but damned if they are going to say anything.

This leads us to several conclusions. 1) They don't know anything—that we won't argue. 2) They know everything but somehow can't tell anyone—right. 3) They are probably guilty of starting the whole mess—a likely possibility.

They will probably say something. As late as possible. And we will be damned surprised if anyone believes them.

Let it be that way then. They have brought it on themselves.

## Power to the BAC

The lines were long Monday night at Sbsa Dining Hall and the reason was soul food—something that most rural Aggies, whether white or black, had been eating all their lives.

But in this case the responsibility falls to the Black Awareness Committee, not anybody's mother.

The BAC had gotten together with Food Services to prepare a menu of barbecued spare ribs, chitterlings, ham hocks, collard greens, pintobbeans, black-eyed peas and such soulful desserts as sweet potato pie and watermelon.

Carrying things even farther, perhaps too far, was the red soda pop also provided.

The thing is, it was great. Not only did it serve to publicize Black Week to the entire campus, but it also brought some good eating, with the exception of those damn chitterlings, to the campus.

Rather than a fare of dubious spaghetti, mystery meat and other questionable items brought to us by food services, Aggies finally had the opportunity to sink their teeth into something that was familiar, identifiable, and good.

For this, all power to the BAC.

Along with this bright spot, food wise, the BAC is doing quite a few other things this week that should be brought to the students' attention.

Tonight at 8 in the Basement, Mance Lipscomb, a local blues and folk musician of fame, will perform.

Thursday, Sudan Arts will present poetry, folk music, African dance and drama. Saturday a dance will be held in the Memorial Student Center Ballroom at 8:30. During the dance the first black sweetheart of TAMU will be crowned.

All during the week a display of black history and films about blacks will be on display in the MSC lobby.

We urge students to attend these happenings. The BAC has gone far out of their way to put this on and it is well worth all the effort.

Unfortunately, James Foreman, minister of foreign affairs of the Black Panther party, who was scheduled to speak Thursday, had to cancel his appearance.

Now, since Texas is about 13 per cent black, maybe we can talk Sbsa into serving soul food 13 percent of the time. That's at least once every ten days.

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<p><b>Knit Shirts</b> ½ Price</p>	<p><b>Shoes</b> ¼ - ½ Off</p>	<p><b>Famous Brand Sport Shirts</b> ½ Off</p>

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# The Battalion

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## PEANUTS

**PEANUTS**  
SO YOU FINALLY DID IT. YOU GOT INTO A FIGHT WITH THE CAT NEXT DOOR..

I WENT TO THE MAT WITH HIM. BY GOLLY!

COME INTO THE HOUSE. WE MAY HAVE TO CALL THE VET...

THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I EVER FOUGHT A HUNDRED-POUND CAT!

WHAT'S THAT ALL OVER YOUR TONGUE?

MY TONGUE?

CAT HAIR! I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK!

HOW'S OUR HERO?

I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM TO THE VET'S..

THAT'S GOOD...HE'LL PROBABLY NEED A TETANUS SHOT...

ACTUALLY, FOUR OR FIVE GOOD TETANUS SHOTS

TETANUS SHOTS ARE FOR HORSES

WELL, HE LOOKS LIKE HE WAS STEPPED ON BY A HORSE!

BLEAH!!

## By Charles M. Schulz