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ON THE SUBJECT OF LOCAL WARS

The theory of local wars attracted a particular attention of Western military theoreticians in the postwar period; during this period this theory was developed and perfected. Outstanding in this respect were U.S. military theoreticians.

And this was a starting point of a feverish development of a new theory that could justify the existence of local limited wars as a tool of foreign policy aimed at preserving the colonial system and fighting against socialism.

With the emergence of nuclear weapons on the world arena the problem of equality of the war means and the goals desired to be achieved became particularly sharp. If previously a breach of this principle led to an unjustified increase in military expenses, it would now inevitably result in a retaliatory nuclear blow against the aggressor. Thus from the strategic point of view a local limited war is nothing but an attempt to find a cautious alternative to a total nuclear war, an attempt to solve the same political and economic tasks through a less dangerous policy of a gradual penetration into strategically important areas of the world.

The strategy of "flexible response" intended for putting down the people's national liberation movement was officially approved in 1961 and since then continues to be an integral part of the U.S. military doctrine.

In the West, local wars are understood to be armed conflicts limited by either political and military aims, or by the territory, or by the armed forces and military means used irrespective of the fact between which countries those conflicts occurred - big or small.

Who is the defending side and who is the attacking side in a local war? Under the modern conditions a local war is, on the one side, a limited aggressive war, and on the other side, a war of national liberation against colonial oppression, defence of independence and sovereignty of states and peoples. Consequently in any local war the attacking side, i.e. the side committing an aggression is always an imperialist power which commits an aggression either openly, as is the case with the U.S. aggressive war in Vietnam going on for seven years, or through its satellites - a vivid example is the aggression by Israel against the Arab countries.

The example of the criminal war waged by the United States in South-East Asia shows that the aggressor stops at nothing in its attempts to break the heroic resistance of the peoples fighting for their independence, the aggressor resorts to any means at his



disposal. The United States sent a 500 thousand man army to Vietnam having converted the country into its test ground, where the newest means of destruction are being tested. The employment by the aggressor of napalm, phosphor bombs, chemical poisons which destroy the vegetation and have harmful effect upon people became an everyday occurrence. Moreover, now six types of poisonous substances (as the British "New Statesman" magazine reports) are now officially permitted to be used by the US Armed Forces in South Vietnam. They include nauseous gas, which may have the lethal effect, tear gas, etc. There are five more poisonous substances developed for the military actions in this country. Among them a cyanide compound, i.e. one of the "Cyclon-B" varieties used in Cventzim. It seems to be the dead end there. Even such a bitter and far from being 'limited' military conflict, as the Second World War had no knowledge of such means.

Coming to the discussion of the second type of limited wars - the wars where only conventional types of armaments are employed, it is possible to state that if the main feature of the local war is the restriction of the military action area, the second type does not know such a limit. A conventional war in comparison with a local war may be a war of much wider scope, such as may be waged by major states. Therefore, the second type of a limited war differs from the local war only in territorial scope. The local war is a war restricted by a certain territory but not necessarily a small territory. It will be wrong to classify such war as small. This war is small for the aggressor, a big power, but even for that power, as Vietnam experience shows, it becomes not so small. But for a victim of aggression this war by all means is really the big war carried with the utmost effort and having the most decisive goal to defend in the hard struggle its right for independent existence. And a small state with the assistance of its friends wages this struggle successfully and the struggle becomes the cause of the whole-people. The heroic struggle of the Vietnam people is an example of this.

A local war becomes even more dangerous because it is connected with the "escalation" directed to the gradual acceptance by mankind of the permanently intensifying acts of aggression.

Hermann Kan has invented <sup>a</sup> "stair" of 44 steps. The principle of it is as follows: you take a step and look around to see whether everything is quiet (Kan considers the other side to be sane enough to retreat). Then you take steps one by one until you reach your aim.

To those who accept such theories we say that they had chosen a slippery path, and are close to a colossal mistake. Yes, the other side is sane but this does not mean that it will retreat. No need to frighten others with your own mortal fears.

But we must state with deep regret that these theories are winning ground in the United States. For example, Bzezinsky, a member of the planning council of the State Department, has published in the "Bulletin of the State Department" of July 3rd this year, the text of his speech where he declares that the United States has become the super, overwhelming world power, that 'our might is - as Brezinsky says - the applied force equipped by a system of long-range arms



means to assert itself on the basis of global reach . . . ". And further on: "The present globali might of the U.S.A. provides an opportunity and obligations to be leaders". But the most surprising is the following statement of Bzezinsky: "The U.S.A. is the only global power". We are not going to imitate Bzezinsky and are not eager to compete with him in **bellicose** statements. But it is useful to recall that Nazi Germany considered itself the supreme power, the Thousand Year Reich. And where is it now?

Finally let us draw the balance. Soviet military science proceeds from the premise that local wars may break out provoked by the aggressors in a specific region limited to their territories, and to some extent also by the military resources available to them. These wars aim against the nations that are fighting for their freedom and independence, are wars that we consider as aggressive, unjust wars that must be condemned. Soviet military science holds that any local conflict more or less limited is fraught with the danger of spreading into global nuclear war, although under specific conditions this danger may not materialize.