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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*



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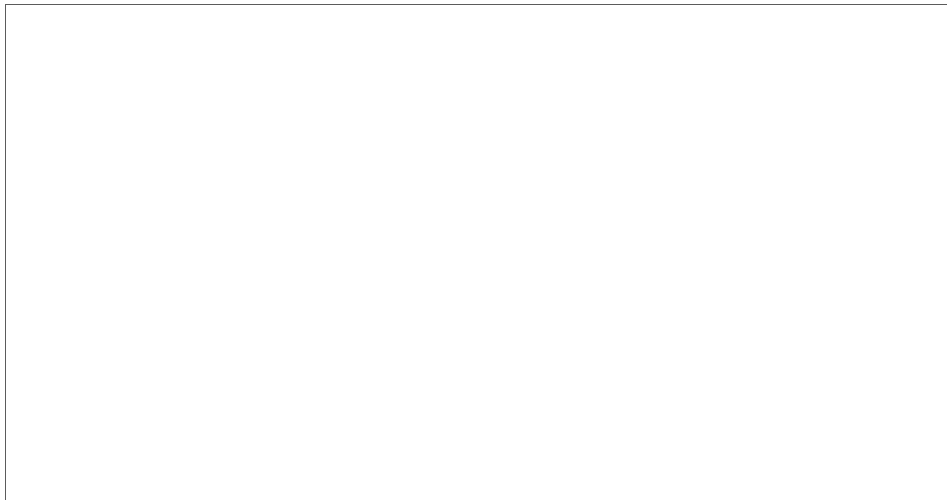
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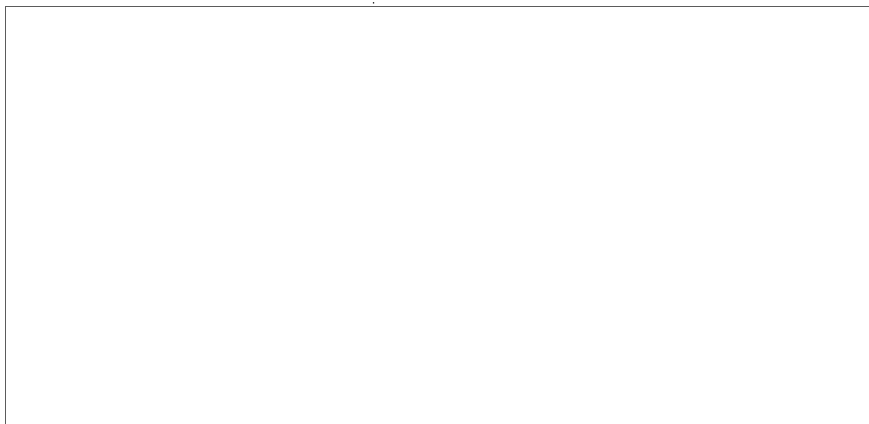
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\*Vietnam:

South Vietnam: Allied forces have resumed military operations against the Vietnamese Communists following the traditional Christmas cease-fire.

During the holiday respite major ground fighting was at a virtual standstill, but some 118 truce violations were charged against the Communists during the 24-hour pause declared by the Allies. Forty of these violations were considered "major" in that they collectively resulted in Allied casualties of seven killed (2 US), and 45 wounded (24 US). Enemy losses during the standdown included 33 killed and six captured.

The majority of truce violations, as in previous cease-fire periods, consisted either of small-scale guerrilla probes against Allied positions or enemy reactions to intensified Allied ground and air reconnaissance activities.

The absence of any large-scale enemy initiatives suggests that Communist main force units were generally content to abide by the standdown while at the same time apparently repositioning or reinforcing major combat elements, particularly in northern South Vietnam.

Indications of a major Communist build-up in the Quang Nam - Quang Tin province area of southern I Corps continued to be reflected in communications over the holiday weekend. The concentration of enemy units appears to be spearheaded by the 2nd North Vietnamese Division, but also includes main and provincial force Viet Cong units subordinate to Military Region 5, and a new communications group very tenuously associated with the 320th North Vietnamese Division. Elements of the 320th have been detected since early November moving south.

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[ President Thieu's government appears to be under mounting criticism from political leaders in Saigon. ]

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[ Their major complaint is that Thieu has failed to provide the leadership needed to break the inertia which has gripped the government since it was installed two months ago. ] [redacted]

[ Thieu has been delinquent in not establishing a close working relationship with Prime Minister Loc, whose political inexperience and retiring personality have proved to be major liabilities. ]

[ Thieu's inability to exert strong leadership has also adversely affected the performance of ministries in the executive branch. The foreign and economy ministries, still bogged-down in bureaucratic indecision, have been cited by observers as departments almost certain to face critical problems. ]

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[ Vice President Ky apparently is taking pains to steer clear of the government and its problems, claiming that Thieu and Loc deserve the opportunity to run the country's affairs without interference. Ky's withdrawal from active participation in the government, however, has caused speculation that he is only biding his time until he can play a more prominent role. ]

[ Thieu, for his part, ] [redacted] [redacted] appreciated the need for more dynamic leadership, he also believed that popular dissatisfaction stemmed, at least in part, from the unrealistic expectations of the Vietnamese people. He stated that the people must learn not to expect too much from the government. ]

North Vietnam: There are strong indications in intercepted enemy communications that the North Vietnamese intended to use the period 21-25 December to resupply and reinforce Communist forces in southern North Vietnam, the Demilitarized Zone area, and in South Vietnam's two northernmost provinces. Photography of 24 December reveals bumper to bumper truck traffic moving south from Thanh Hoa to Vinh.

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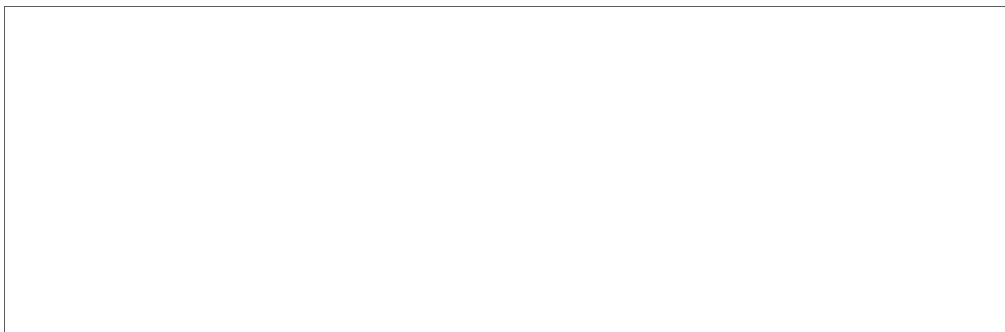
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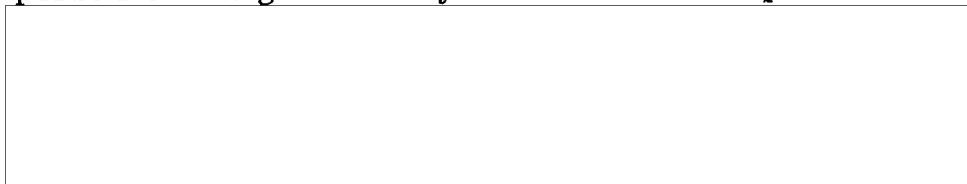


Czechoslovakia: The Czechoslovak party central committee will reconvene on 3 January [redacted]

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[redacted] The meeting is expected to deal mainly with changes in the party leadership that were left unresolved at the three-day plenum which ended on 21 December. The text of the resolution issued following the earlier meeting contained no reference to organization or personnel changes and may not have been complete.

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