

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*Memorandum*



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 0600  
11 FEBRUARY 1965

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
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Office of Current Intelligence  
11 February 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam as of 0600

The 11 February Air Strikes

1. Forty-six US carrier-based aircraft conducted a retaliatory air strike against the Chanh Hoa army barracks north of Dong Hoi at approximately 0100 EST today. This installation is adjacent to Dong Hoi airfield and has an estimated capacity of 2000 troops. It is believed to house elements of the PAVN 325th Infantry Division, one of several North Vietnamese units with a long history of military operations in Laos.

2. Results of post-strike photography are not yet available, but judging from pilot reports, the target area was severely damaged. At least three barracks areas were observed to be burning heavily. Four of the US strike aircraft were lost, but at least three of the pilots were recovered.

3. Another air strike by the South Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) was launched at approximately 0245 EST against targets located just north of the DMZ. The primary target was the Vu Con barracks and storage area, a newly constructed installation believed to be a staging area for infiltration units. Preliminary information, however, indicates that the VNAF may have concentrated on the secondary target of the strike, the Chap Le army barracks. This complex, believed to contain the headquarters of the DRV 270th Independent Infantry Regiment, was also hit in the 8 February VNAF attack. An estimated 60% of the target was destroyed on the 8th.

4. All of the VNAF aircraft have returned safely to base, but no information is yet available on the success of the strike.



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Communist Military Reaction

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7. No significant Chinese Communist or Soviet military reaction has been noted during the past twenty-four hours.

Developments in South Vietnam

8. Aggressive Viet Cong military activity continues in widespread areas of South Vietnam. The singling out of Americans as targets of violence, probably in retaliation for the airstrikes against the North, is indicated by the mutilation of three American advisers whose bodies were found yesterday when government troops recaptured a district town north of Saigon which had been overrun by the Viet Cong on 9 February. Confirmed US casualty figures in yesterday's terrorist bombing of the enlisted men's billet in Qui Nhon now stand at 1 dead, 14 wounded. Twenty five are still sought in the debris.

9. The Viet Cong attempted an amphibious assault today on Qui Nhon, not far from the site of yesterday's terrorist bombing. The Communists employed 50 armed junks, but were driven off by armed ARVN vessels. This action represents the first attempted Viet Cong amphibious attack on a major population center.



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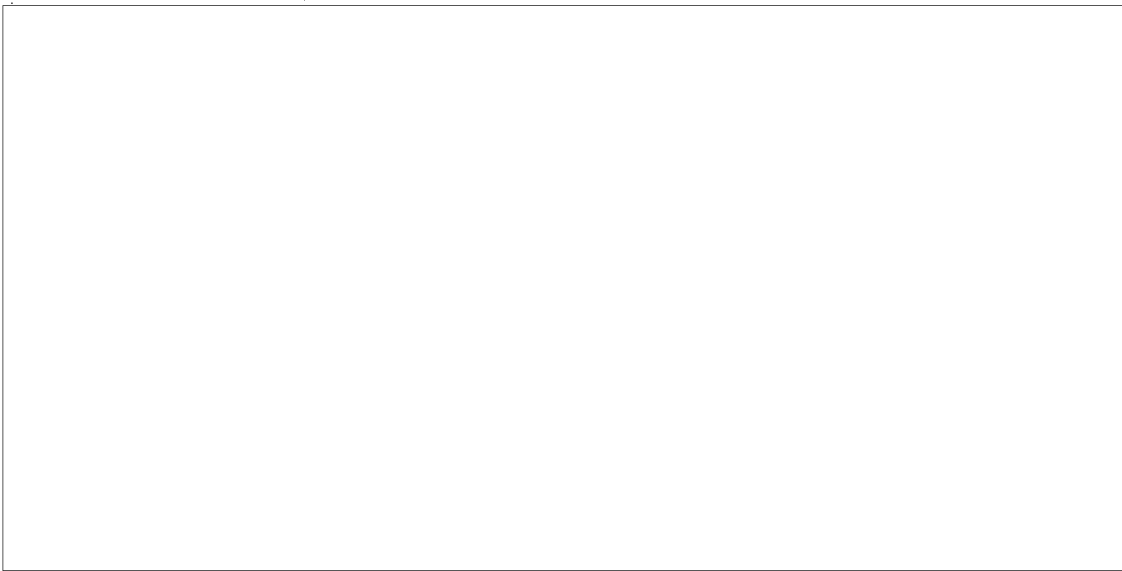
10. MACV reports that in the first ten days of February, there have been 213 US casualties, including 14 KIA and one MIA. 141 of these casualties resulted from last Sunday's attack on Pleiku. These figures apparently do not include losses sustained in the Qui Nhon terrorist bombing.

11. The military developments of the past few days have overshadowed the political maneuvering in Saigon, and have lent some urgency to the formation of a new government. Agreement seems to have been reached on the designation of Interior Minister Nguyen Luu Vien as premier, and an announcement is expected shortly. However, continuing conflicts among the principal power elements are reflected in the difficulty being experienced in selecting individual cabinet ministers.

DRV Internal Situation

12. The first post-strike report on conditions in North Vietnam has been received from the Canadian ICC representative in Hanoi. According to the report, there was no evidence of public concern evident in Hanoi as of 8 February, nor any outward signs of a renewed civil defense alert or special defense precautions

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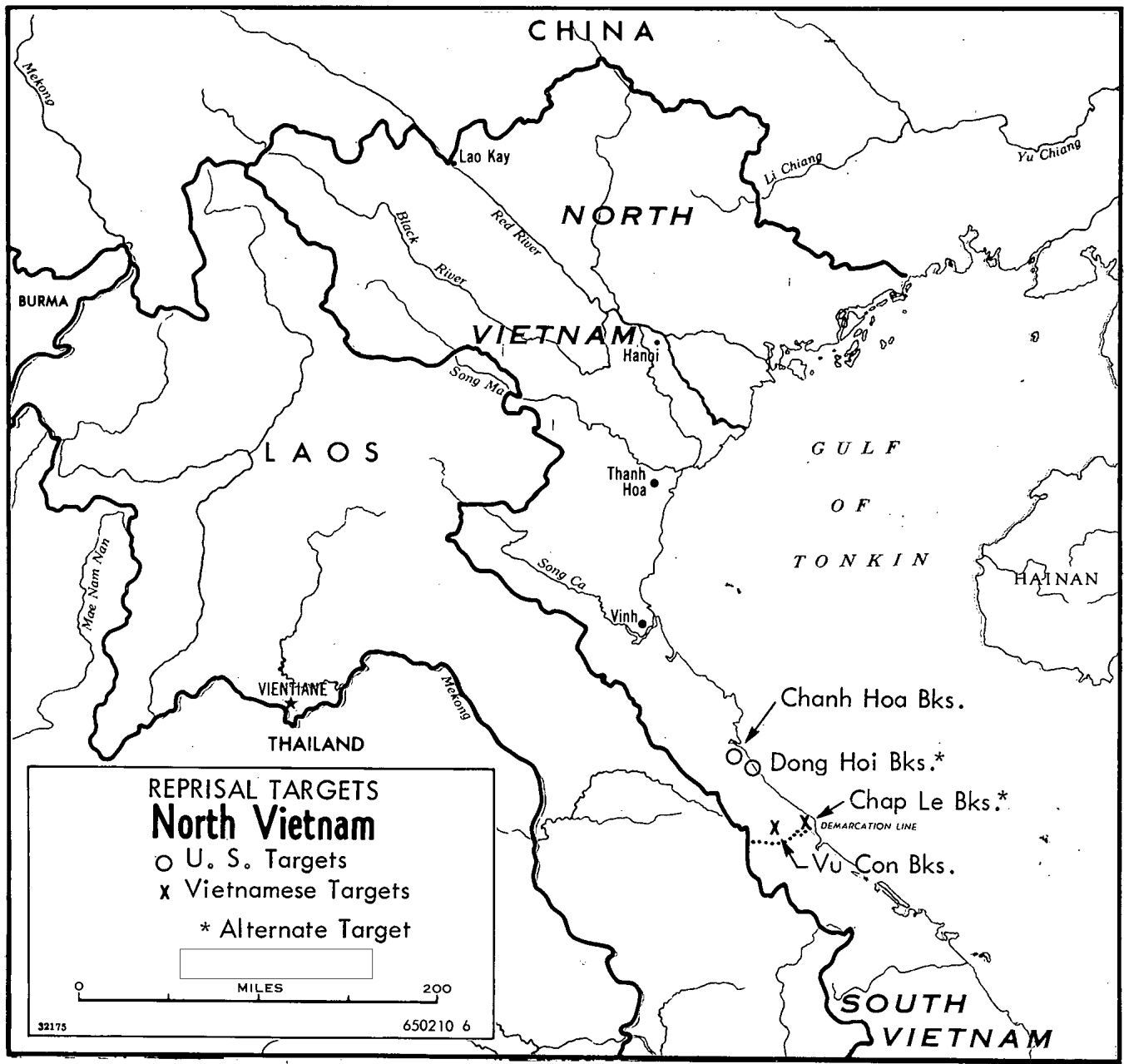
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Communist Political Developments

15. A joint Soviet-DRV statement was issued on 10 February following Kosygin's departure from Hanoi. It proved to be relatively bland and non-committal. The USSR reaffirmed its pledge to render "necessary assistance and support" to the DRV, but strongly implied in the statement that it intends to carry out the commitment step by step, carefully weighing the extent of its involvement against future US actions in Indochina. The statement asserted that "regular consultations" would be held on "measures which should be taken to strengthen" North Vietnamese defensive capabilities.

16. There was no indication in the statement that Kosygin had extracted a pledge of support from Hanoi on issues in contention in the Sino-Soviet dispute. No mention was made, for example, of the proposed meeting of the Communist "editorial commission" in Moscow on 1 March, thus casting doubt on whether the Soviets were able to win Hanoi's agreement to participate. The statement also failed to refer specifically to future Soviet economic assistance to North Vietnam. In a farewell speech in Hanoi, Kosygin mentioned only that an "exchange of views" on the subject had taken place.

17. The Soviet Premier is now in North Korea, after a short stop in Peiping for further talks with Chinese leaders including Mao and Liu Shao-chi. No information is available on these discussions. There are some indications that Kosygin's decision to include Pyongyang on his itinerary was hurriedly made. His trip adds to the thesis that the Soviet Union has begun a concerted effort to increase its overall influence with the Asian Communist parties. Since the new Kremlin leaders came to power, North Korea has dampened down its pro-Chinese polemics.



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