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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600
3 October 1966

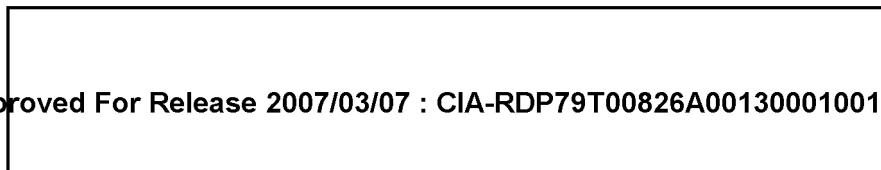
State Department review completed

NSA review completed

ARMY review(s) completed.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Light sporadic contact with the VC continues in coastal Binh Dinh Province and in the area just south of the DMZ. Moscow signs new aid agreement with Hanoi, promising free and additional credits. No details have been given.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:

American troops continue to hunt down the remnants of the 300-man Communist force trapped in Binh Dinh Province (Para. 1). Light, sporadic contact with Communist forces is reported as Operation PRAIRIE continues to search the area south of the DMZ for elements of the 324B North Vietnamese Army Division (Para. 2). A Viet Cong prison camp was located on 2 October in Phu Yen Province (Para 3). A Viet Cong motor pool was discovered and destroyed in an area about 30 miles north of Saigon early on 3 October (Para. 4). The Viet Cong reportedly are planning to use tunnels and sewers for demolition attacks against allied military installations (Para. 6). Because of allied defoliation operations, Viet Cong troops in Kontum Province are forcing local villages to help supply food (Para. 7).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:

President Park of South Korea plans to visit South Vietnam for one or two days prior to the Manila Conference (Para. 1). Sa Dec Province has been re-established in the delta area south of Saigon, probably as a government concession to the Hoa Hao religious sect (Para. 2). In the first eight months of 1966, there was a net gain of only 252 hamlets to government control (Para. 3). The second class of revolutionary development cadre groups graduated from the national training center on 19 September (Para. 4).

III. North Vietnamese Military Developments:

There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:

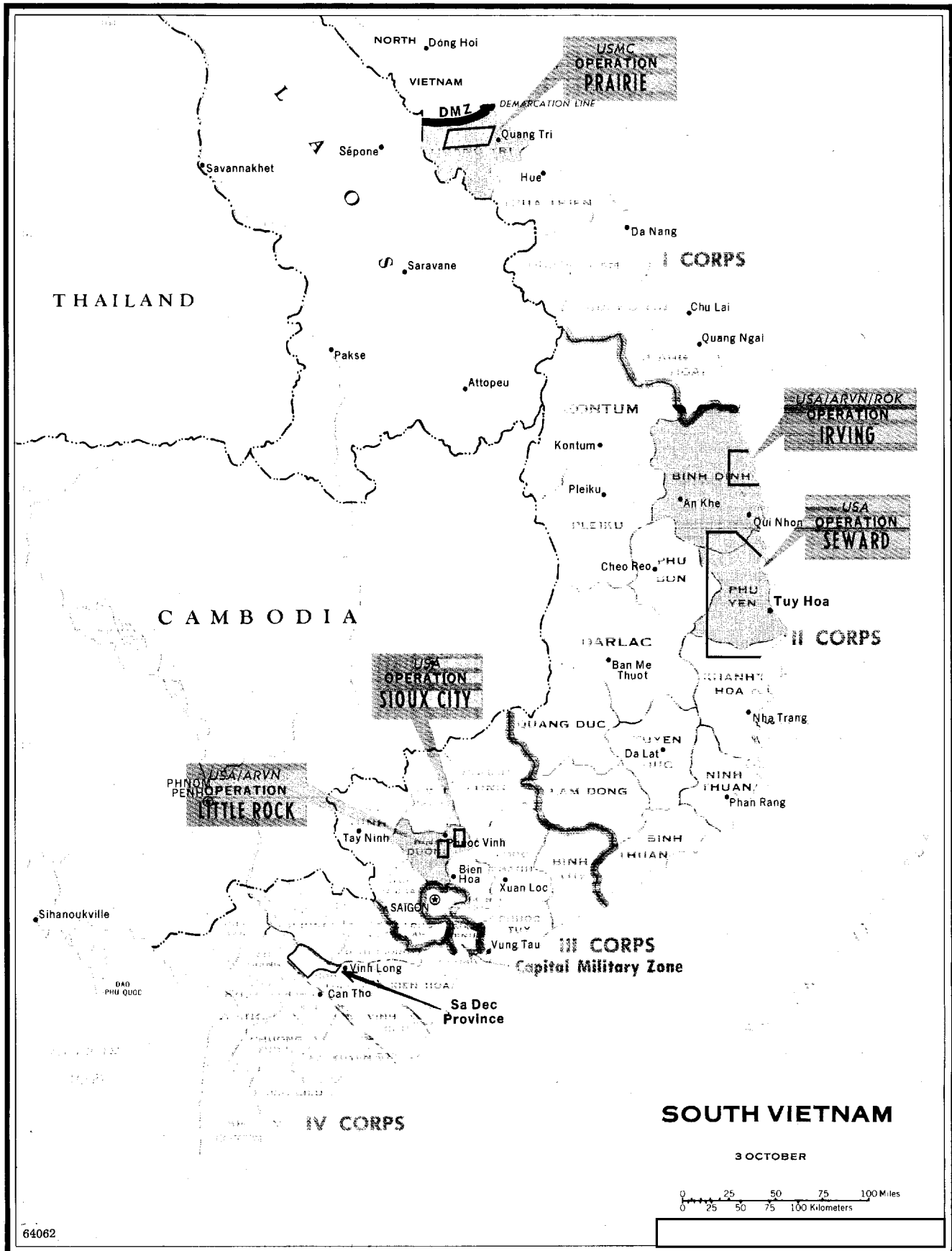
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments:

Soviets sign new aid agreement with DRV (Para. 1).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Helicopter-borne US infantrymen of the 1st Air Cavalry Division continued on 3 October to hunt down remnants of a battered Communist force trapped in a coastal valley in the central province of Binh Dinh. The enemy force has reportedly been broken down into small groups of two or three men each. Cumulative casualties since this operation began on 1 October include six Americans killed and 28 wounded. A total of 228 Communist troops have been killed, 65 captured, and 229 suspects detained.

2. Light, sporadic contact has been reported as elements of four US Marine battalions participating in Operation PRAIRIE continue to seek out North Vietnamese soldiers in the area immediately south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Early on the morning of 3 October a US Marine command post was shelled with approximately 40 rounds of 82-mm. mortar fire. The attacking Communist force withdrew when US artillery and air strikes were called upon to assist the Marines. One American was killed and 17 wounded, with enemy losses unknown. Elsewhere, US Marines encountered a force of undetermined size, killing eleven enemy soldiers.

3. A US reconnaissance platoon, participating in Operation SEWARD, located a Viet Cong prison camp on 2 October in Phu Yen Province, about 17 miles southwest of Tuy Hoa. The Americans had been led to the camp in the thickly jungled mountains by one of the 11 persons they freed from a similar Viet Cong prison camp about a mile away last week. A total of 23 South Vietnamese prisoners were found in the camp. There was no evidence of Americans being held there.

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4. US soldiers participating in Operation SIOUX CITY uncovered a Viet Cong motor maintenance garage hidden in the jungle about 30 miles north-east of Saigon early on 3 October. Extensive minefields and booby traps protected the garage, but the Americans met no guerrilla resistance. The depot was equipped with numerous tools, tires, batteries and 50-gallon drums of fuel and lubricants. The site was on the edge of the Viet Cong "War Zone D" where the guerrillas are known to use captured trucks and private cars to haul supplies along camouflaged jungle trails.

5. Two battalions of the US 1st Infantry Division and two battalions of South Vietnamese Army troops began search-and-destroy Operation LITTLE ROCK on 2 October in an area of Binh Duong Province about 22 miles north of Saigon. Only light contact with enemy forces has been reported.

Viet Cong Terrorists Plan to Use Tunnels and Sewers

6. Communist tunneling specialists are reported planning to construct tunnel systems leading to several allied military installations including Tan Son Nhut Air Base, the 7th Air Force Headquarters, and the South Vietnamese Joint General Staff. It has been previously noted that Viet Cong terrorist organizations in Saigon have planned to use either tunnels and/or sewer systems for demolition attacks. Underground explosions, comments MACV, would cause more damage to some types of buildings than ones above ground, and also injure fewer civilians.

Viet Cong Food Shortages

7. Damage to crops by allied defoliation chemicals was responsible for a 40-percent decrease in subsistence for Viet Cong troops over that of 1965, it was disclosed at a Viet Cong meeting in Kontum Province on 25 September. To make up this shortage and meet battlefield needs, the Viet Cong plan to force the people living in Viet Cong - controlled areas to support Viet Cong troops directly, with each village required to feed approximately 50 men for a three-month period beginning on 1 November.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. According to the US Embassy in Seoul, President Pak of South Korea plans to visit South Vietnam for one or two days just prior to the seven nation conference in Manila.

New Province Formed in the Delta

2. Sa Dec Province was re-established in the delta area effective 24 September, according to a government decree recently published in the Vietnamese press. The new province consists of four predominantly Hoa Hao districts which were formerly a part of western Vinh Long Province. The province chief and other local officials have not yet been named, but will most likely be Hoa Hao. The US Embassy has commented that the re-establishment of Sa Dec Province, which had existed with a slightly different territorial base prior to 1957, is another gesture by the Ky government to the Hoa Hao, who have been pushing for this and other territorial changes in the western delta area.

Pacification Developments

3. One of the most realistic yardsticks of revolutionary development progress is how many of the country's 13,000 to 16,000 rural hamlets are controlled by the GVN. At the end of August, the cumulative total secured by the government was 4,155. Only 262 of those hamlets were added during the first eight months of 1966, despite the emphasis on the over-all pacification effort since February. However, 55 percent of the approximately 16 million total population and 11.5 percent of the land are considered to be government controlled. The net gain or loss of GVN controlled hamlets by month for 1966 follows:

January	25	May	156
February	30	June	42
March	-9	July	34
April	-93	August	67

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4. The second class of cadres trained since February specifically for revolutionary development graduated from the Vung Tau national training center on 19 September. About half of the 5,128 graduates were organized into 44 complete 59-man groups. The rest were given specialized training in civil affairs, new life hamlet development, and census-grievance work for incorporation as 19-man units with existing 40-man Peoples Action Teams (PATs). There are now nearly 32,000 actually deployed in the provinces as the pacification cadre.

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III. NORTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Moscow press sources report that DRV politburo member Le Thanh Nghi signed a new economic agreement with the Soviet Union on 3 October. The agreement provides "fresh, gratuitous assistance" to North Vietnam as well as additional credits, according to a TASS announcement. At the signing ceremonies, Deputy Premier Novikov pledged support for Vietnam's position on the settlement of the war and said that the continuing Soviet assistance will take into account the needs of the war in Vietnam.

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