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IN THIS PREPARATORY EFFORT THE ENEMY HAS FOCUSED HIS ATTENTION ON PENETRATING FROM THE EAST THE 12-KILOMETER DEFENSIVE PERIMETER AROUND SITE 85 WHICH HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED BY IRREGULAR FORCES UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL VANG PAO, COMMANDER OF THE SECOND MILITARY REGION. IN PENETRATING THE DEFENSIVE PERIMETER AROUND PHOU PHA THI THE ENEMY HAS CONCENTRATED ON ESTABLISHING POSITIONS WHICH COULD SERVE AS A FIRE BASE FROM WHICH HE COULD BRING THE SUMMIT OF PHOU PHA THI WITHIN RANGE OF HIS ARTILLERY AND MORTARS. DURING THE PAST 30 DAYS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE SECURITY OF PHOU PHA THI ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE ENEMY EXTENDED ROUTE 602 WESTWARD IN THE DIRECTION OF PHOU DEN DIN (UH 7660) TO ENABLE HIM TO MOVE SUPPLIES AND TROOPS FROM SAM NEUA TO THE OUTER PERIMETER OF THE IRREGULARS' DEFENSIVE PERIMETER AROUND PHOU PHA THI. ENEMY SOLDEIRS AND COOLIES SUCCEEDED IN EXTENDING ROUTE 602 BY ABOUT TEN KILOMETERS IN LESS THAN ONE MONTH. BY 21 FEBRUARY 400 COOLIES WERE WORKING ON THE ROAD AS FAR WEST AS UH 80159. ON 21 FEBRUARY AIRCRAFT STRUCK AND CUT THE

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NEW ROAD EXTENSION. THIS CUT WILL ONLY INHIBIT TRUCK TRAFFIC FOR A FEW DAYS IF THAT LONG. [ ] CONTAINED INITIAL REPORTING ON THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION OF THIS ROUTE 602 EXTENSION AND [ ] FURNISHED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ROAD-BUILDING IN THE AREA AROUND PHOU PHA THI. [ ] CONTAINED INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE ROAD AS OF 21 FEBRUARY.

B. ON 20 FEBRUARY THE ENEMY OVERRAN MUONG YUT (UH 704563), ABOUT SEVEN KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF THE CREST OF PHOU PHA THI, AND THEN SPREAD APPROXIMATELY ONE BATTALION ALONG THE RIDGE LINE NORTHEAST BACK TO PHOU HOUAY HQO (UH 735585). ALTHOUGH THE DEFENDING AUTO-DEFENSE DE CHOC (ADC) TROOPS LOCATED IN THE MUONG YUT AREA REPEATEDLY ATTEMPTED TO STOP THIS ENEMY PUSH, THE ENEMY DROVE THEM BACK EACH TIME AND INFLICTED RELATIVELY HIGH CASUALTIES. SEE [ ]

[ ] FOR DETAILS ON THE ENEMY BREAKTHROUGH OF THE 12-KILOMETER PERIMETER AROUND PHOU PHA THI. OTHER REPORTS ON ENEMY MOVES TO CONSOLIDATE HIS POSITION AROUND PHOU PHA THI WERE [ ]

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AND ADC TROOPS ARE CONTINUING TO EXERT EFFORTS TO RETURN TO THE AREA, AND BY 24 FEBRUARY A SPECIAL GUERRILLA COMPANY HAD REACHED MUONG YUI AND WAS READY TO ATTEMPT TO REOCCUPY IT.

C. ON 21 FEBRUARY FOUR NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY BATTALIONS ARRIVED AT PHOU DEN DIN, AND SOME UNITS FROM THIS FORCE TOOK UP POSITIONS AT UH 7764, ABOUT FOUR KILOMETERS NORTH OF PHOU DEN DIN. CONTAINED A REPORT ON THIS MOVE. SUBSEQUENT INFORMATION INDICATES THAT THESE NORTH VIETNAMESE BATTALIONS MAY HAVE ORIGINATED AT MUONG LIET (UH 1163). REFERRED TO ANOTHER NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY BATTALION TO THE EAST IN POSITION BETWEEN UH 905647 AND UH 915642.

D. ON 17 FEBRUARY ADC TROOPS TOOK A MAP OUTLINING THE ENEMY'S PLAN FOR HIS ATTACK ON PHOU PHA THI FROM THE BODY OF A NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIER KILLED IN AN AMBUSH, ABOUT EIGHT KILOMETERS EAST OF PHOU PHA THI. ACCORDING TO WHICH WAS BASED ON AN INITIAL EVALUATION OF THESE CAPTURED DOCUMENTS (WHICH WERE WRITTEN

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IN VIETNAMESE), THE ENEMY PLANNED TO USE AT LEAST FOUR BATTALIONS IN HIS ATTACK ON SITE 85, WITH ONE BATTALION EACH ATTACKING HOUEI HOK (UH 6561), HOUEI MA (UH 6253), HOUEI MOUN (UH 5664), AND HOUEI KHA MOUN (UH 6868). ONE COMPANY WAS TO ATTACK EACH OF FOUR MAJOR TRAILS LEADING TO THE TOP OF PHOU PHA THI. IN ADDITION THE ENEMY CALLED A SERIES OF PROPAGANDA MEETINGS FOR OFFICIALS AT VILLAGE AND C-NTON LEVEL TO ANNOUNCE HIS INTENTION OF ATTACKING PHOU PHA THI IN THE NEAR FUTURE. NEO LAO HAK SAT OFFICIALS IN HOUA PHAN PROVINCE TOLD THOSE ATTENDING THE MEE... 3S THAT THEIR FORCES ASSISTED BY NORTH VIETNAMESE WOULD ATTACK IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH AND USE 120MM MORTARS AND FROM TEN TO TWENTY AIRCRAFT.

CONTAINED REFERENCES TO ENEMY PLANS FOR THE ATTACK ON PHOU PHA THI. (b) (3), RESPECTIVELY)

2. SINCE THE ADC DEFENDERS OF PHOU PHA THI WERE THROWN BACK WITH SUCH HEAVY CASUALTIES WHEN THEY TRIED TO ELIMINATE ENEMY UNITS THAT HAD PENETRATED THE PERIMETER FROM PHOU HOUEI HAO (UH 735585) TO MUONG YUT, ADC COMMANDERS RESORTED

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TO SENDING OUT SMALL PATROLS TO SELECT TARGETS FOR AIR STRIKES AND ARTILLERY FIRE. THIS EFFORT HAS IDENTIFIED HARD TARGETS WHICH HAVE BEEN STRUCK EFFECTIVELY BY AIR AND ARTILLERY FIRE. THIS HARASSMENT BY FIRE IS RETARDING ENEMY ACTIVITIES BUT IT IS NOT ELIMINATING THE ENEMY PRESENCE IN THE 12-KILOMETER DEFENSIVE PERIMETER AROUND PHOU PHA THI.

3. SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE TEAMS MADE UP OF IRREGULARS FROM GENERAL VANG PAO'S FORCES HAVE ALSO BEEN ACTIVE IN THE AREA EAST OF SAM NEUA IN AN ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY THE ENEMY'S LOGISTICAL BASE WHICH SUPPORTS THE EXPANSIONIST EFFORT IN AND AROUND PHOU PHA THI. THIS RECONNAISSANCE EFFORT HAS BEEN PRODUCTIVE AND TARGETS IDENTIFIED BY THESE TEAMS HAVE BEEN EXAMINED ON PHOTOGRAPHY, WITH THE RESULT BEING THAT 61 TARGETS EAST OF SAM NEUA CITY HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR DESTRUCTION BY AIR STRIKES.

4. IN THE PERIOD 23 TO 25 FEBRUARY GENERAL VANG PAO HAS

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TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS TO ENHANCE THE SECURITY OF PHOU PHA THI:

- A. TWO 4.2-INCH MORTARS HAVE BEEN SENT TO PHOU PHA THI.
- B. ONE ADDITIONAL 105MM HOWITZER HAS BEEN SENT TO PHOU PHA THI.
- C. THE GARRISON AT THE TOP OF PHOU PHA THI HAS BEEN INCREASED BY 50 MEN.

5. AS A RESULT OF THE ENEMY'S PENETRATING THE 12-KILOMETER RADIUS AROUND PHOU PHA THI IN FORCE AND OCCUPYING KEY POSITIONS WITHIN THE LOWER RIGHT-HAND <sup>(SIC)</sup> QUADRANT OF THIS PERIMETER AS WELL AS POSITIONS JUST OUTSIDE THE PERIMETER AT PHOU DEM DIN, HE REPRESENTS AN IMMINENT THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF THE TACAN SITE AND OTHER INSTALLATIONS AT PHOU PHA THI. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ENEMY WILL CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO CONSOLIDATE HIS GAINS IN THE PHOU PHA THI AREA DURING THE NEXT TWO WEEKS WHILE MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS FINAL ASSAULT BY THREE OR FOUR BATTALIONS. IF, HOWEVER, ADC UNITS CONTINUE TO HARASS SUCCESSFULLY THE ENEMY ON THE GROUND AND IF AIRCRAFT CONTINUE TO STRIKE ENEMY CONCENTRATIONS IN AND AROUND PHOU PHA THI AND IN THE AREA EAST

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OF SAM NEUA THE TACAN AND OTHER SITES AT PHOU PHA THI WILL CONTINUE TO BE VIABLE FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PREDICT, HOWEVER, THE STATE OF SECURITY AT PHOU PHA THI BEYOND 18 MARCH BECAUSE OF THE ENEMY'S WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE TO ESCALATE HIS COMMITMENT IN THIS AREA.

6. THE AMBASSADOR HAS READ THIS REPORT AND HAS OFFERED NO OBJECTIONS.

7. FIELD DISSEM: STATE ARMY AIR USMACV 7TH AIR FORCE CINC PAC PACFLT PACAF ARPAC

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