

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY Intelligence Information Cable

• IMMEDIATE

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SECRET

CITE

DIST 25 JANUARY 1968

COUNTRY

LAOS

DOI

LATE JANUARY 1968

SUBJECT

APPRAISAL OF THE SECURITY OF THE GUERRILLA BASE AT PHOU PHA THI AND PROVISIONS FOR ITS DEFENSE AS OF LATE JANUARY 1968

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LAOS, VIENTIANE

FIELD NO.

SOURCE

1. SINCE LATE DECEMBER 1967, WHEN [] WAS PREPARED TO APPRAISE THE SECURITY SITUATION AT PHOU PHA THI (UH 6662), THE ENEMY HAS MADE THE FOLLOWING MOVES THAT THREATEN THE APPROACHES TO PHOU PHA THI:

A. ON 12 JANUARY 1968, TWO NORTH VIETNAMESE AN-2 COLTS ATTEMPTED TO ATTACK PHOU PHA THI FROM THE AIR. DEFENDING FORCES SHOT DOWN BOTH AIRCRAFT BEFORE THEY INFLICTED MAJOR DAMAGE TO THE GUERRILLA BASE AT PHOU PHA THI. IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE ENEMY WILL AGAIN ATTEMPT TO ATTACK PHOU PHA THI FROM THE AIR.

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E. ON 15 JANUARY ENEMY FORCES ATTACKED AND CAPTURED MUONG SON (UH 7661), 40 KILOMETERS WEST OF PHOU PHA THI. MUONG SON HAS A STRIP FOR CARIBOU AIRCRAFT AND WAS IMPORTANT AS AN ALTERNATE SUPPLY POINT FOR GUERRILLA FORCES IN HOUA PHAN PROVINCE.

C. ON 22 JANUARY ENEMY FORCES ATTACKED AND CAPTURED POSITIONS AT NHOI PHAI (UH 6743) AND PHOU DEN DI N (UH 7761), NINE KILOMETERS EAST OF PHOU PHA THI. THESE POSITIONS WERE PART OF THE OUTER DEFENSIVE PERIMETER FOR PHOU PHA THI AND THE ENEMY HAD KEPT BOTH POSITIONS UNDER CONSTANT AND STEADILY INCREASING PRESSURE SINCE EARLY DECEMBER 1967.

D. ON 23 JANUARY THE ENEMY ATTACKED AND CAPTURED SOME OUTPOSTS IN THE VICINITY OF MUONG HIEM (UH 3122), WHICH IS 15 KILOMETERS NORTHWEST OF PHOU PHA THI. THIS ACTION WAS MERELY A SMALL PATHET LAD RAID AND WAS PROBABLY NOT PART OF THE ENEMY'S EFFORT AGAINST PHOU PHA THI.

2. IT NOW APPEARS THAT THE ENEMY IS MOVING IN TO TRY TO PUT

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HIMSELF WITHIN MORTAR AND/OR 105MM HOWITZER RANGE OF PHOU PHA THI SO THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BRING PHOU PHA THI UNDER FIRE AND IN SO DOING MAKE THE BASE CAMP INOPERATIVE. ON THE OTHER HAND HIS MOVES MAY BE A PRELUDE TO A COMBINED OPERATION USING A GROUND ASSAULT SUPPORTED BY ARTILLERY MORTAR FIRE WHICH WOULD BE FOLLOWED UP BY AIR ATTACKS BY AN-2 COLTS OR OTHER AIRCRAFT.

3. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ENEMY IS PLANNING TO ATTACK PHOU PHA THI, BUT IF HE DOES STRIKE AT IT IN A CONCENTRATED GROUND AND MORTAR ASSAULT THERE SHOULD BE EIGHT HOURS' PRIOR NOTICE ALERTING THE DEFENDERS TO THE FACT THAT A MAJOR ATTACK IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE. THIS ADVANCE NOTICE SHOULD ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF THE GUERRILLAS TO HOLD PHOU PHA THI AGAINST AN ENEMY ATTACK. CURRENTLY GENERAL VANG PAC, COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE LAO ARMED FORCES SECOND MILITARY REGION, IS TAKING ACTION TO THROW THE ENEMY OFF BALANCE IN THE AREA AROUND PHOU PHA THI BY INTENSIFYING HIS PATROL ACTIVITY TO BRING IN EFFECTIVE AIR STRIKES ON ENEMY CONCENTRATIONS IN AN ATTEMPT TO HARASS THE POSITIONS THE ENEMY TOOK ON 22 JANUARY AT NHOT PHAT AND PHOU DEN DIN. GENERAL VANG PAC IS ALSO FORMULATING PLANS

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(classification) (dissem controls)

TO RETAKE NHOT PHAT AND PHOU DEN DIN. SUCH ACTION, IF SUCCESSFUL, WILL THROW THE ENEMY OUT OF PHASE AND MAY DELAY THE ENEMY'S NEXT MOVE AGAINST PHOU PHA THI.

4. THE CHARGE HAS READ THIS REPORT AND HAS OFFERED NO OBJECTIONS.

5. FIELD DISSEM: STATE ARMY AIR USMACV 7TH AIR FORCE CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC

PACAF

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