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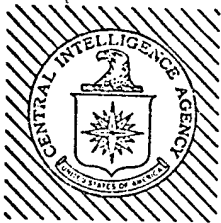
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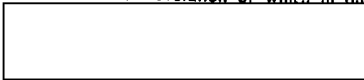
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APPROVED FOR RELEASE DIST 9 DECEMBER 1968

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COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM

DOI: 4 - 6 DECEMBER 1968

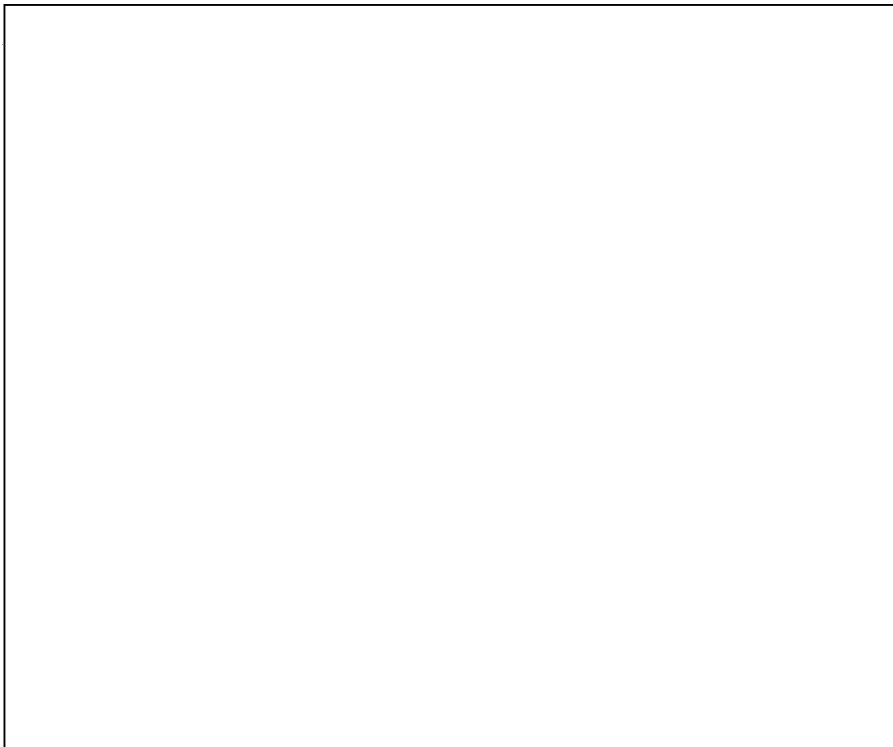
SUBJECT: VIET CONG PLANS FOR THE DECEMBER PHASE OF
THE WINTER-SPRING CAMPAIGN IN TAY NINH PROVINCE

ACQ: VIETNAM, BIEN HOA (9 DECEMBER 1968)

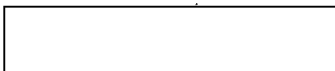


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SUMMARY: THE VIET CONG (VC) WINTER-SPRING CAMPAIGN IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN SOUTH VIETNAM BETWEEN 10 AND 15 DECEMBER. PRESENT PLANS CALL FOR A THREE-PHASE CAMPAIGN WITH ONE PHASE EACH IN DECEMBER, JANUARY, AND FEBRUARY. THREE PRIMARY TARGET AREAS HAVE BEEN SELECTED, SAIGON-GIA DINH, TAY NINH-BINH LONG PROVINCES, AND QUANG TRI-THUA THIEN PROVINCES. THE DECEMBER PLAN CALLS FOR ATTACKS IN TAY NINH PROVINCE WHICH WILL DRAW ALLIED DEFENSIVE FORCES AWAY FROM SAIGON-GIA DINH. THE PLAN STATES THAT AT LEAST ONE ALLIED DIVISION MUST BE DRAWN TO TAY NINH FROM SAIGON AND BE DESTROYED. AFTER THAT AND AFTER ROUTES 1 AND 22 HAVE BEEN CLEARED, AND TAY NINH PROVINCE IS LIBERATED, SAIGON CAN BE ATTACKED. THREE PROVINCIAL BATTALIONS, A COSVN SECURITY FORCE BATTALION AND THE 9TH AND 5TH VC DIVISIONS WILL ATTACK TAY NINH. THE 7TH NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY (NVA) DIVISION WILL CONDUCT MILITARY OPERATIONS IN BINH LONG PROVINCE. THREE OTHER DIVISIONS NOW IN CAMBODIA WILL BE USED IN TAY NINH FOR THE

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FINAL LIBERATION OF THE PROVINCE. THE PRINCIPAL TARGETS IN TAY NINH WILL BE DISTRICT TOWNS, THE PROVINCE CAPITAL, LINES OF COMMUNICATION, AND U.S. MILITARY BASES. WHILE BATTALION AND REGIMENT SIZED LOCAL UNITS, CONTROLLED BY COSVN, ARE ATTACKING SAIGON FROM THE OUTSIDE, GUERRILLAS INSIDE THE CITY WILL CONDUCT A CAMPAIGN OF SABOTAGE AND ASSASSINATION. SHOULD THE DECEMBER PHASE FAIL TO LIBERATE TAY NINH PROVINCE THE EFFORT WILL BE MADE AGAIN IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY. END SUMMARY.

1. AT A 4 TO 6 DECEMBER VIET CONG (VC) STUDY SESSION HELD FOR DISTRICT CADRES IN TAY NINH PROVINCE INFORMANT WAS TOLD THAT THE WINTER-SPRING CAMPAIGN WILL BEGIN THROUGHOUT SOUTH VIETNAM AFTER STUDY OF THE 8TH CENTRAL OFFICE FOR SOUTH VIETNAM (COSVN) RESOLUTION, ISSUED IN OCTOBER, IS COMPLETED. THE WINTER-SPRING CAMPAIGN IS DIVIDED INTO THREE PHASES AND WILL BE CONDUCTED IN DECEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY ONLY. THE FIRST PHASE PLAN FOR DECEMBER HAS BEEN COMPLETED. FINAL PLANS FOR SECOND PHASE, JANUARY, WILL BE MADE AFTER THE FIRST PHASE OF THE OFFENSIVE IS COMPLETED. THE THIRD PHASE PLAN, FEBRUARY, WILL BE BASED ON THE RESULTS

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OF THE FIRST AND SECOND PHASES.

2. THE FIRST PHASE OF THE WINTER-SPRING CAMPAIGN WILL BEGIN BETWEEN 10 AND 15 DECEMBER AND WILL REACH A "CLIMAX" ON 25 DECEMBER. THE CLIMAX WILL BE IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL FROM HO CHI MINH TO COMMEMORATE THE 8TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM (NFLSV) ON 22 DECEMBER 1960. THERE ARE THREE PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CAMPAIGN: (1) SAIGON-GIA DINH, (2) TRI-THIEN (THE AREA OF QUANG TRI AND THUA THIEN PROVINCES), AND (3) TAY NINH-BINH LONG PROVINCES. ALL PROVINCES AND FRONTS IN THOSE AREAS MUST CONDUCT ATTACKS BY FIRE AND GROUND ATTACKS ON STRATEGIC HAMLETS, ACCELERATED PACIFICATION AREAS, AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION.

3. LOCAL FORCES OF BATTALION AND REGIMENTAL SIZE, CONTROLLED BY COSVN, WILL ATTACK SAIGON FROM THE OUTSIDE. SIMULTANEOUSLY, GUERRILLAS IN SAIGON WILL ATTACK FROM WITHIN THE CITY, CONDUCTING SABOTAGE, ASSASSINATIONS, AND MORTAR ATTACKS.

4. THE TAY NINH-BINH LONG FRONT WILL SHARE IN THE ATTACK ON SAIGON, BY DRAWING U.S./GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN)

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FORCES OUT OF THEIR DEFENSIVE POSITIONS AROUND SAIGON. THIS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE TAY NINH-BINH LONG FORCES CONDUCTING ATTACKS BY FIRE ON ALLIED FORCES IN TAY NINH AND BINH LONG PROVINCES. NO ATTEMPTS ARE TO BE MADE TO PENETRATE THESE BASES, HOWEVER. [Redacted] COMMENT: BASES HERE MAY REFER TO FIRE SUPPORT BASES) AT LEAST ONE ALLIED DIVISION MUST BE DRAWN TO THE TAY NINH FRONT AND DESTROYED TO REDUCE THE SAIGON DEFENSE. EVEN IF THE ALLIES SHOULD SEND FIVE DIVISIONS TO TAY NINH THE "LIBERATION" ARMY IS STILL CAPABLE OF LIBERATING TAY NINH.

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5. THE TAY NINH AREA CONTROLS THE APPROACH ROUTES TO SAIGON AND ITS LIBERATION AND OCCUPATION ARE ESSENTIAL. SAIGON CANNOT BE ATTACKED UNTIL THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION SUCH AS ROUTES 22 AND 1 ARE CLEARED. [Redacted] COMMENT: THE IMPLICATION IS THAT SAIGON CANNOT BE ATTACKED UNTIL THE ATTACKS SUCCEED IN THE TAY NINH AREA.) AMMUNITION COULD BE MOVED FROM THE CACHE AREAS ALONG JUNGLE TRAILS, BUT IT WOULD BE A DIFFICULT AND TIME-CONSUMING TASK, AND THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH LABORERS TO MOVE THE NEEDED AMMUNITION THAT WAY; THEREFORE THE ROADS MUST BE CLEARED.

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6. DURING THE DECEMBER PHASE THE 9TH AND 5TH VC DIVISIONS, SUPPORTED BY THE THREE TAY NINH PROVINCIAL BATTALIONS, D.14, D.1, AND D.3, WILL ATTACK TAY NINH PROVINCE. THESE FORCES WILL ALSO BE SUPPORTED BY A COSVN SECURITY BATTALION. THESE UNITS WILL CONTINUE TO ATTACK UNTIL THE ALLIED FORCES HAVE EXHAUSTED THEIR RESERVES. AT THAT TIME COSVN WILL COMMIT THREE MORE DIVISIONS WHICH ARE CURRENTLY DEPLOYED ALONG THE CAMBODIAN-TAY NINH-BINH LONG BORDER. THESE THREE DIVISIONS HAVE BEEN REINFORCED WITH UNITS FROM THE NORTH AND ARE EQUIPPED WITH TANKS, CANNONS, AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS. AT LEAST ONE BATTALION IN EACH OF THE DIVISIONS IS EQUIPPED WITH GAS MASKS. THE 7TH NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY (NVA) DIVISION WILL CONDUCT OPERATIONS IN BINH LONG PROVINCE DURING THE DECEMBER PHASE.

7. AS OF 6 DECEMBER THE 9TH DIVISION, WHICH WILL ATTACK TAY NINH CITY FROM THE DIRECTION OF THANH DIEN, HAD ALREADY DEPLOYED ITS FORCES IN THE BEN CAU (HIEU THIEN) CHAU THANH PHUOC NINH) AND GO DAU (KHIEM HANH) AREAS OF TAY NINH FOR THE DECEMBER PHASE. THE 5TH DIVISION HAD NOT ARRIVED AS OF 6 DECEMBER, BUT IT WAS TO REACH THE DUONG MINH CHAU (EASTERN

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PHU KHUONG DISTRICT) AREA ALONG ROUTE 4 AND DEPLOY SOUTHWARD TO THE TOA THANH AREA (THE AREA EAST AND SOUTH OF TAY NINH CITY) BY 7 OR 8 DECEMBER. DURING THE DECEMBER PHASE OF THE CAMPAIGN DISTRICT TOWNS, THE PROVINCE CAPITAL AND U.S. BASE AREAS WILL BE SUBJECT TO CONTINUOUS ATTACKS. THE CLIMAX OF THE DECEMBER PHASE IN TAY NINH WILL BE MARKED BY VIOLENT ATTACKS ON U.S. BASES, HIEU THIEN DISTRICT TOWN (XT 3925) AND HIGHWAY 22.

8. THE THREE TAY NINH PROVINCE BATTALIONS HAVE BEEN REINFORCED WITH FORCES FROM THE NORTH. THESE THREE BATTALIONS WILL REMAIN UNDER PROVINCIAL COMMAND. THE COSVN SECURITY BATTALION WHICH IS BEING ATTACHED TO THE TAY NINH FRONT WILL BE RETURNED TO COSVN AFTER EACH OF THE THREE PHASES IS COMPLETED.

9. COSVN REALIZES THAT IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO LIBERATE TAY NINH DURING THE DECEMBER PHASE BECAUSE THE ALLIED FORCES IN THAT AREA ARE STILL STRONG. IN THE EVENT THAT THE LIBERATION IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED IN DECEMBER IT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED IN JANUARY OR FEBRUARY.

10. [] DISSEM: STATE USMACV USAID CORDS

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