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DE WTE #1559 0801411  
O 211338Z MAR 75  
FM THE SITUATION ROOM //TOHAK 157//

TO BORG/ADAMS/RODMAN FOR THE SECRETARY

S E C R E T CONTAINS CODEWORD



WH50526

25X1

TOHAK 157

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY  
FROM: THE SITUATION ROOM  
SUBJECT: REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

ARMY review completed.

THE SITUATION NORTH OF HUE REMAINS SERIOUS; HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT DEFENSE LINES ARE BEGINNING TO STABILIZE AS THE MILITARY REGION (MR) 1 COMMANDER, MAJ GEN TRUONG, MOVES HIS FORCES INTO DEFENSIVE POSITIONS NORTH, WEST, AND SOUTH OF THE CITY. THE COMMUNIST ATTACK AND CAPTURE OF VIRTUALLY DESERTED QUANG TRI CITY ON 19 MARCH AND SUBSEQUENT REPORTS OF NVA TANKS AND INFANTRY HEADING SOUTH TOWARD HUE APPEAR TO HAVE INITIALLY SHAKEN ARVN CONFIDENCE IN ITS ABILITY TO DEFEND HUE. HOWEVER, THE HEAVY ASSAULTS AGAINST THE CITY ENVISIONED BY LOCAL SOUTH VIETNAMESE COMMANDERS HAVE NOT YET OCCURRED AND PLANS FOR DEFENDING THE CITY ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED. THE MY CHANH RIVER, WHICH FORMS THE QUANG TRI-THUA THIEN PROVINCIAL BORDER IN THE ROUTE 1 AREA, WILL BE THE NORTHERNMOST DEFENSIVE POSITION. IT IS DEFENDED BY FOUR ARVN RANGER AND 10 REGIONAL FORCE BATTALIONS BACKED BY ARMOR UNITS. THE LINE EXTENDING SOUTHWESTWARD IS DEFENDED BY A MARINE BRIGADE. THE ARVN 1ST DIVISION IS OPERATING IN THE HIGH GROUND WEST AND SOUTHWEST OF HUE AND TWO BATTALIONS OF ANOTHER MARINE BRIGADE ARE DEPLOYED NEAR PHU LOC, BETWEEN HUE AND THE HAI VAN PASS. THE VITAL PASS IS DEFENDED BY THREE REGIONAL FORCE BATTALIONS.

NSA review(s) completed

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

SOUTH OF DA NANG, TWO BATTALIONS FROM THE ARVN 30 DIVISION HAVE REINFORCED QUANG TIN PROVINCE, BUT AS IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE, COMMUNIST FORCES ARE CONTINUING TO PRESSURE GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. AT LAST REPORT, ROUTE 1 WAS OPEN BETWEEN

\*\*\*\*\* WHSR COMMENT \*\*\*\*\*

MCFARLANE, RODMAN, SEC FLE

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QUANG NGAI AND DA NANG.

LEAD ELEMENTS OF THE EVACUATION COLUMN FROM THE HIGHLANDS ARRIVED AT TUY HOA PROVINCE LAST NIGHT. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATE THAT WITHDRAWING TROOPS WERE ORDERLY AND UNDER CONTROL. THE EXTENT OF NVA HARASSMENT OF THE COLUMN IS NOT KNOWN, BUT A 20 MARCH COMMUNIST MESSAGE STATED THAT CHEO RED HAD BEEN OCCUPIED AND, THOUGH PROBABLY EXAGGERATED, "TWENTY-EIGHT 155-MM HOWITZERS, 48 TANKS, AND MANY ARMORED VEHICLES" HAD BEEN CAPTURED.

ELEMENTS OF THE ARVN 3D AIRBORNE BRIGADE, WHICH ARRIVED AT CAM RANH BAY ON 19 MARCH, ARE EN ROUTE TO WESTERN KHANH HOA PROVINCE. WITH THE DEFEAT OF THE 23D ARVN DIVISION IN DARLAC PROVINCE, THE AIRBORNE WILL HAVE THE IMPORTANT JOB OF DEFENDING THE HIGH GROUND ALONG ROUTE 21 AND THE WESTERN APPROACHES TO KHANH HOA PROVINCE.

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DIVISION. AN NVA PRISONER CAPTURED IN THE BAN ME THUOT FIGHTING CLAIMED TO BE FROM THE 316TH, BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN FIRMLY ESTABLISHED THAT THE DIVISION IS IN DARLAC PROVINCE.

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IN ADDITION TO HEAVY FIGHTING IN THE TAY NINH AREA, BINH TUY AND LONG KHANH PROVINCES HAVE EXPERIENCED INCREASED ENEMY ACTIVITY. ON 19 MARCH, AFTER DAYS OF HEAVY FIGHTING, GOVERNMENT FORCES WERE ROUTED IN THE DINH QUAN AREA, EFFECTIVELY BLOCKING ROAD ACCESS TO THE HIGHLANDS ALONG ROUTE 120. ON THE 20TH, HOAI DUC DISTRICT TOWN, IN BINH TUY WAS OVERRUN, AND ATTACKS AGAINST XUAN LOC ON ROUTE 1 CAN BE EXPECTED SOON.

IN BINH LONG PROVINCE, THE BREAKOUT FROM THE GOVERNMENT ENCLAVES AT AN LOC AND CHAN THANH IS REPORTED TO BE MEETING LITTLE COMMUNIST OPPOSITION.

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IN MR 4, COMMUNIST FORCES CONTINUE TO THREATEN CAN THO AND THE  
ROUTE 4 AREA NEAR THE DINH THUONG-KIEN PHONG PROVINCIAL  
BORDER, BUT NO SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS OR CONTACTS WITH  
GOVERNMENT FORCES HAVE BEEN REPORTED.  
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