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FM THE SITUATION ROOM TOHAK 40  
TO WINSTON LORD FOR HENRY KISSINGER  
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CODEWORD WH30168

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State Dept. and NSA reviews completed

JANUARY 23, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: THE SITUATION ROOM

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

SUBJECT: NOON NOTES

ENEMY OFFENSIVE ACTIVITIES: LVL SOURCE INTELLIGENCE INDICATES THAT ON OR ABOUT JANUARY 23 -- TODAY -- ENEMY FORCES WILL INCREASE OFFENSIVE ACTIVITIES IN MOST AREAS OF SOUTH VIETNAM, WHICH WILL BE SIMILAR TO THE ACTIONS THAT OCCURRED IN LATE OCTOBER 1972. THE PURPOSE WILL BE TO GAIN CONTROL OF AS MUCH TERRITORY AND AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE IN ANTICIPATION OF A CEASE-FIRE. THE ACTIVITY WILL MOST LIKELY OCCUR IN EASTERN THUA THIEN PROVINCE, THE QUANG NAM-QUANG TIN PROVINCE LOWLANDS, SOUTHEASTERN QUANG NGAI, NORTHEASTERN BINH DINH, SOUTHERN KONHUM, WESTERN PLEIKU, SOUTHERN BINH THUAN, BINH LONG, TAY NINH, BINH DUONG, LONG AN, DINH TUONG, AND CHUONG THIEN PROVINCES. THE ACTIVITY IS EXPECTED TO LAST FIVE TO SEVEN DAYS AND TO FEATURE ATTACKS-BY-FIRE AGAINST POPULATED AREAS AS WELL AS TERRORIST ACTS.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE JCS BRIEFING ON CEASE-FIRE TIMETABLE:

THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE JOINT GENERAL STAFF (JCS) SAID DURING A BRIEFING OF JCS OFFICERS ON JANUARY 20 THAT THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT WOULD BE INITIALED ON JANUARY 23 BY LE DUC THO FOR NORTH VIETNAM AND BY YOU FOR THE U.S. IT IS TO BE SIGNED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS ON JANUARY 27 AND TO BECOME EFFECTIVE THE NEXT DAY. THE OFFICERS WERE INFORMED THAT ENEMY FORCES WOULD INITIATE ATTACKS ON JANUARY 25 AND THAT THESE WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE CEASE-FIRE. BEGINNING JANUARY 24, ALL VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT MILITARY UNITS ARE TO BE ON "RED" ALERT AND NO LEAVES OR PASSES ARE TO BE ISSUED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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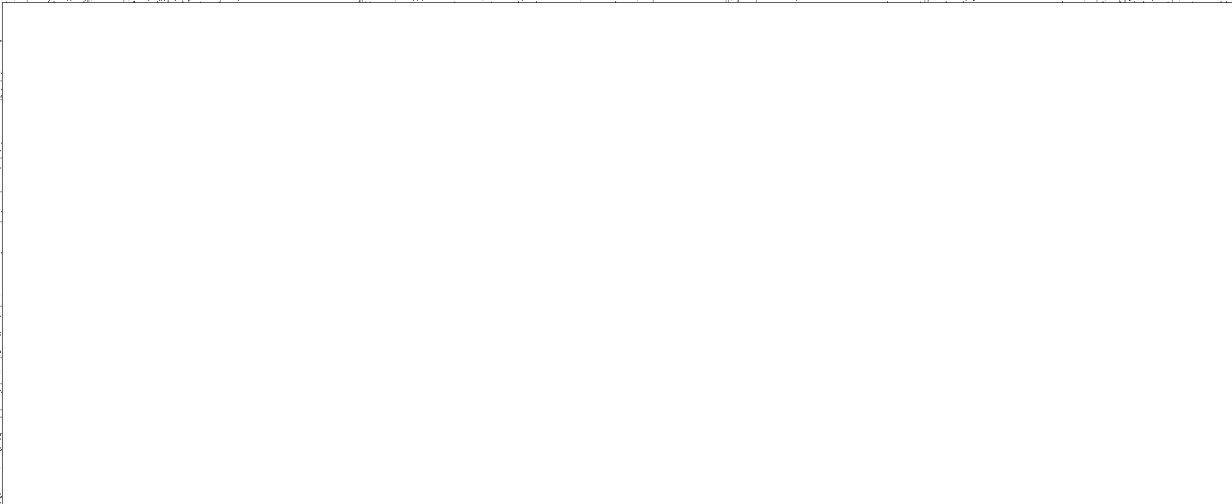
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PRG STATE-OF-THE-MOVEMENT REPORT: AT A PRG MEETING EARLIER THIS MONTH, PRG PRESIDENT HUYNH THANH PHAT GAVE A STATE-OF-THE-MOVEMENT REPORT WHICH EMPHASIZED CONCILIATION, PEACE, AND A POLITICAL EFFORT BASED ON A UNITED FRONT. BUT AT SOME POINTS IN HIS SPEECH, HIS COMMENTS HAD A FAR MORE MILITANT TONE THAN IS CURRENTLY COMING FROM THE HANOI LEADERSHIP 2 A TONE WHICH GIVES THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PRG IS, AT THE LEAST, PLANNING TO KEEP UP ITS GUARD AND STRENGTHEN ITS ARMED FORCES AFTER A CEASE-FIRE. PHAT DELIVERED A EUPHORIC ACCOUNT OF ALLEGED COMMUNIST MILITARY "VICTORIES" IN THE LAST YEAR AND THEN ASSERTED THAT THE MILITARY BALANCE WAS SHIFTING MORE AND MORE IN THE COMMUNISTS' FAVOR. HE ADDRESSED THE QUESTION OF AID FROM THE NORTH IN A WAY THAT SUGGESTS THAT THE PRG MAY HAVE SOME WORRIES ON THIS SCOREUX HE ALSO TOOK A DEFENSIVE STANCE ON THE QUESTION OF COMMUNIST POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND AS MUCH AS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PRG HAD FALLEN SHORT IN THIS REGARD; BUT HE ATTRIBUTED ANY SHORTCOMINGS TO THE "INSIDIOUS TRICKS" OF THE COMMUNISTS' ENEMIES.

LAO INTERNAL TALKS: THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE LAO TALKS TODAY GAVE NO INDICATION THAT EITHER THE GOVERNMENT OR THE COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS WERE YET PREPARED TO FOCUS ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. BOTH MARKED TIME WHILE AWAITING THE RETURN

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**PATHET LAO LEADERS FROM CONSULTATIONS IN SAM NEUA AND HANOI -- AND PERHAPS OFFICIAL WORD OF PROGRESS FROM PARIS. THE COMMUNISTS' PREPARED STATEMENT ATTACKED THE ALLEGED RAMIFICATION**

**OF THE NIXON DOCTRINE FOR LAOS; HOWEVER, CRITICISM OF SOUVANNA PHOUMA WAS MINIMAL FOR THE SECOND WEEK. THE GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT STRESSED ITS LEGITIMACY AND SOVEREIGNTY, ACCUSED THE NORTH VIETNAMESE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR**

**AND DEFENDED U.S. ASSISTANCE TO LAOS.**

**ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN NORTHWESTERN LAOS: [REDACTED] CHINESE CONSTRUCTION CREWS IN NORTHWESTERN LAOS ARE CONTINUING WORK ON A ROAD EXTENDING SOUTHWEST FROM NAM THA, A PATHET LAO ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER NEAR THE CHINA BORDER. PHOTOGRAPHY OF JANUARY 18 REVEALED THAT VEGETATION HAD BEEN CLEARED ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF OLD ROUTE 3 TO WITHIN LESS THAN A MILE OF THE FORMER GOVERNMENT REFUGEE CENTER AT VIENG POU KHA; THE ROAD IS MOTORABLE FOR 24 MILES SOUTHWEST OF NAM THA. TWO GOVERNMENT BATTALIONS OPERATING SEVERAL MILES NORTH AND SOUTH OF VIENG POU KHA HAVE BEEN TRYING TO RETAKE THE SETTLEMENT FROM THE PATHET LAO SINCE EARLY DECEMBER. INTERCEPTED MESSAGES INDICATE THAT CHIPASE INFANTRY UNITS IN THE NAM THA AREA ARE CLOSELY MONITORING PATHET LAO EFFORTS TO DRIVE GOVERNMENT TROOPS FROM THE VIENG POU KHA AREA.**

**MEIR VISIT TO THE VATICAN TURNS SOUR: EMBASSY ROME REPORTS THAT BOTH ISRAEL AND THE VATICAN MAY BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WISDOM OF HAVING ARRANGED LAST WEEK'S VISIT BETWEEN THE POPE AND PRIME MINISTER MEIR. ALTHOUGH THE ISRAELIS INITIATED THE DIFFICULTIES BY PUBLICLY ANNOUNCING THE AUDIENCE ON JANUARY 14, BOTH SIDES HAVE SINCE EXACERBATED THE SITUATION WITH PARTICULARLY OFFENSIVE AND SELF-SERVING ACCOUNTS OF WHAT TOOK PLACE.**

**SOVIETS PLAY ON EGYPTIAN SUSPICIONS: EMBASSY MOSCOW POINTS OUT THAT, DESPITE SOVIET COMMENTS TO US ABOUT "OPEN-MINDEDNESS" ON ALL INITIATIVES WHICH SEEK TO EASE THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, THE USSR HAS CONSISTENTLY URGED THE EGYPTIANS TO TAKE A CAUTIOUS ATTITUDE TOWARD "PARTIAL ARRANGEMENTS." THE SOVIETS ARE APPARENTLY DOING THEIR BEST TO BLOCK U.S. MOVES BY PLAYING ON EGYPT'S ALREADY DEEP SUSPICIONS ABOUT A PARTIAL SETTLEMENT THROUGH PROXIMATE TALKS**

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TOP SECRET No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/12/20 : LOC-HAK-547-6-28-8  
CONTAINING

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MBFR DEBATE INTRODUCES UNCERTAINTY INTO CSCE; REPORTING ON  
THE RESUMED MULTILATERAL PREPARATORY TALKS ON THE CSCE, EMBASSY  
HELSINKI CONCLUDES THAT THE WARSAW PACT POSITION ON MBFR MIGHT  
UPSET THE DELICATE CSCE/MBFR BALANCE. MOST DELEGATES IN HELSINKI  
BELIEVE THAT CONTINUED NATO INSISTENCE ON A LIMITED FORMULA FOR  
PARTICIPATION WILL HEIGHTEN PRESSURES AT HELSINKI FOR A JOINT  
DECLARATION ON MBFR IN THE CSCE CONTEXT.  
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