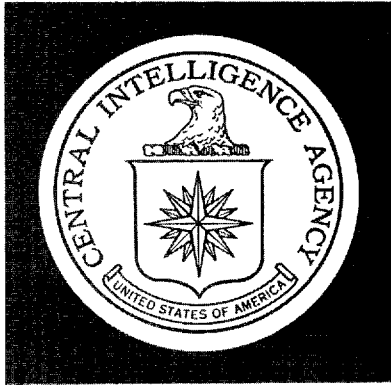


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

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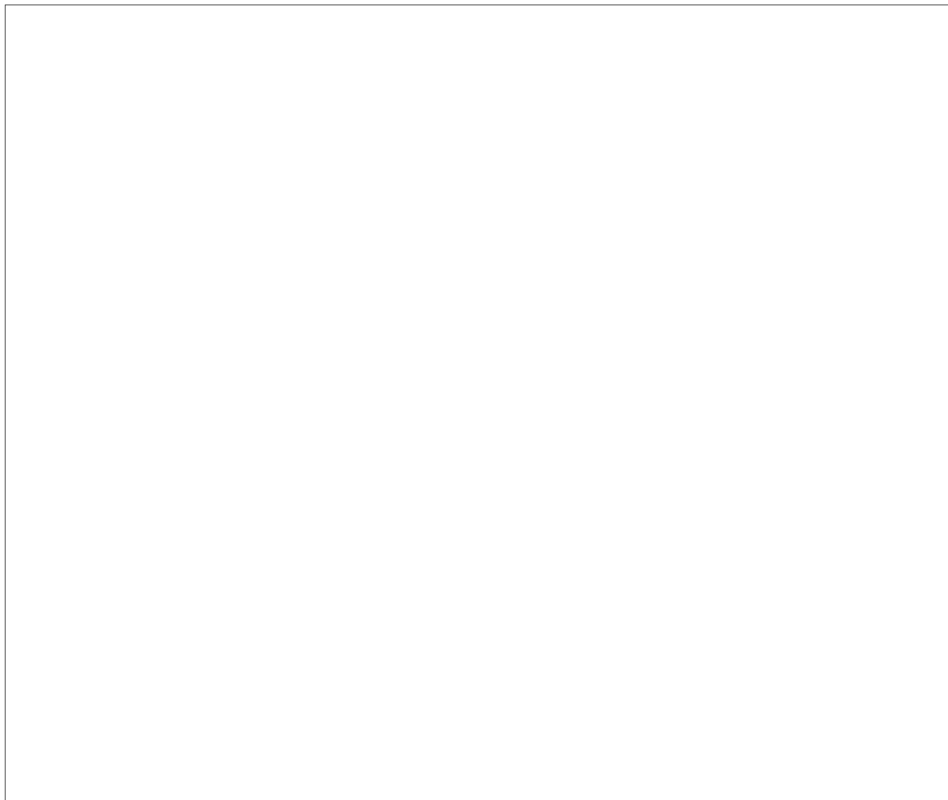
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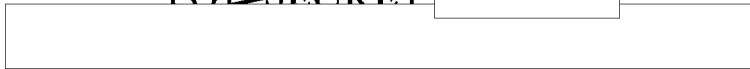
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Information as of 1600
21 November 1967

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HIGHLIGHTS

The important North Vietnamese 10th month rice crop may be below average for the fourth straight year. The fighting was heavy again in the Dak To area.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Fighting in the Dak To area picked up again early on 21 November after a brief lull on the 20th (Paras. 1-4). The Viet Cong employed 105-mm. artillery in the Mekong Delta for the first time on 19 November (Para. 5).



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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam: There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

VI. Other Major Aspects: Hanoi's important 10th month rice crop may be below average for the fourth straight year (Paras. 1-3).

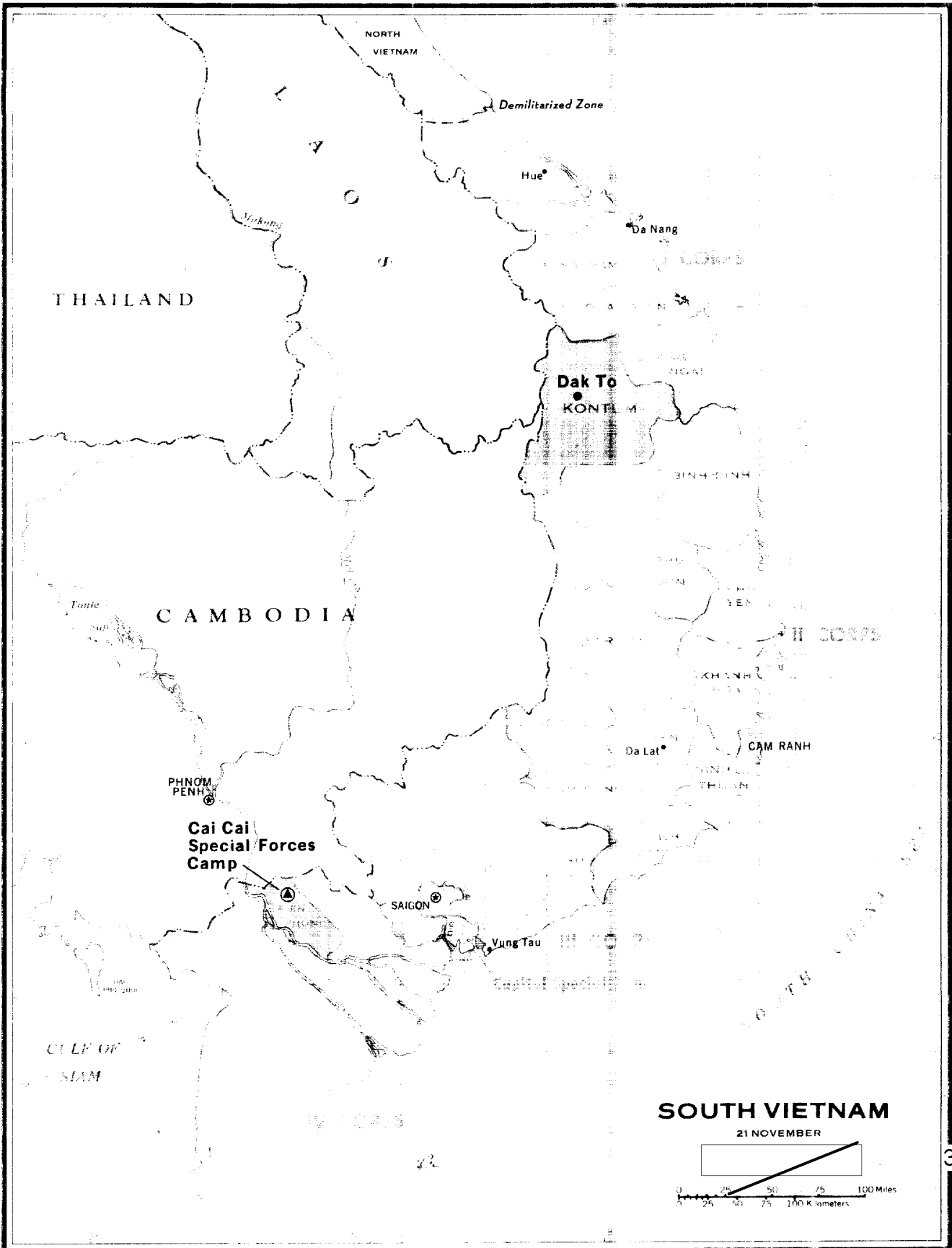


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I. MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Fighting in the central highlands picked up on the morning of 21 November when troops of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade came under heavy enemy mortar fire near Hill 875, some 19 miles southwest of Dak To. Five US paratroopers were killed and 47 were wounded in the barrage. The 173rd lost 72 killed, 85 wounded, and 17 missing in action on Hill 875 on 19 November.

2. Enemy losses are believed to have been much higher than the 17 bodies counted by US forces. Massive artillery barrages and scores of air strikes were directed by the 173rd at the North Vietnamese positions. The enemy still controls the summit of Hill 875.

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3. The battalion of the 173rd which made the initial contact in this area on the 19th has now been reinforced by a second battalion. Heavy enemy groundfire damaged several helicopters attempting to evacuate US wounded, but most of the seriously wounded have been brought out.

4. Nearly 280 US soldiers and over 1,100 enemy troops have been killed in the Dak To area since 1 November. Over 414 enemy weapons have been captured. The intensity of the fighting equals that of November 1965, when some 250 Americans and an estimated 1,200 North Vietnamese were killed in the Ia Drang Valley, some 70 miles south of the current action.

Viet Cong Artillery and Rocket Attacks in the Mekong Delta

5. In Kien Phong Province on 19 November, the US Special Forces camp at Cai Cai was hit with three rounds of 105-mm. howitzer fire. This caliber weapon has

21 November 1967

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been used previously by the Communists only in the area of the Demilitarized Zone. The Cai Cai camp was also hit two days earlier by enemy fire which US ordnance experts estimated to be 122-mm. rounds. That attack marked the first time that the enemy had employed large-caliber rockets in the delta, although they have been used in the I, II, and III Corps areas. If these recent artillery and rocket attacks do not turn out to be isolated incidents, the threat against allied installations along the Cambodian border has been appreciably increased.

21 November 1967

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21 November 1967

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

21 November 1967

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VI. OTHER MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

1. An editorial in the 15 November issue of the Hanoi party daily, Nhan Dan, offers another indication that the regime's important 10th month rice crop, currently being harvested, will be below average. The editorial reported that harvesting "is later than last year" and called for an all-out effort to get in the crop before losses are incurred from "natural calamities, insects, and the bombing."

2. Lack of water in the early stages of the crop delayed transplanting and forced some cutback in acreage. It is estimated that the 10th month crop may be 200,000 tons below the average of 3 million tons. If so, this would be the fourth successive below average rice harvest since the spring of 1966.

3. Faced with such a shortfall in its major crop, Hanoi will doubtless require a continuing high level of food imports. The poor crops earlier have led to a sharp increase in imports already. For the first 10 months of this year, food imports have totaled more than 370,000 tons, an annual rate about five times that of 1966.

21 November 1967

VI-1

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