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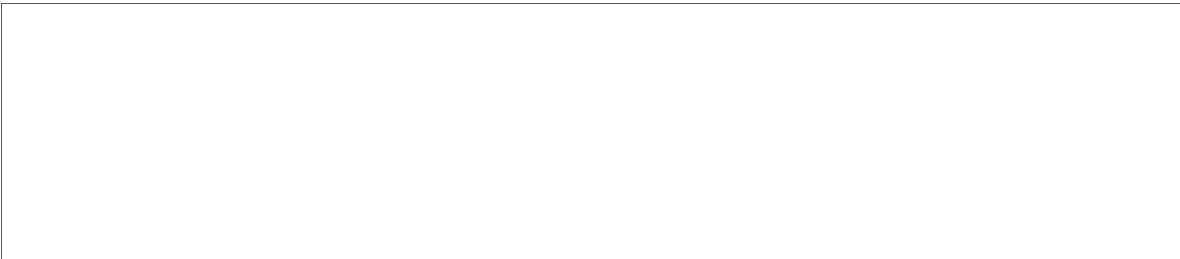
DIST 16 MARCH 1968

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM/CAMBODIA
DOI JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1968, AND AS STATED
SUBJECT VIET CONG USE OF CAMBODIA

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SOURCE



SUMMARY. PRISONERS AND DOCUMENTS CAPTURED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE TET OFFENSIVE ON 29 JANUARY 1968 HAVE PROVIDED FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE USE OF CAMBODIA BY THE VIET CONG. SOME TOLD OF VC RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES AMONG ETHNIC VIETNAMESE IN CAMBODIA. ALLEGEDLY THERE IS A TRAINING SITE WHICH CAN ACCOMMODATE FIFTY RECRUITS AT A TIME IN THE BA THU AREA. ABOUT 15 JANUARY 1968 THE AN GIANG PROVINCE COMMITTEE SECURITY SECTION ESTABLISHED A CAMP NEAR AP VINH AN WHERE PRISONERS TAKEN DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE WERE TO BE SENT. A BORDER CADRE CLAIMED IT WAS HIS DUTY TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR VC MEN AND MATERIEL TO CROSS THE BORDER. HE ESTIMATED 2,000 TONS OF CARGO PER MONTH TRANSITED THE BORDER INTO SOUTH VIETNAM. ANOTHER PRISONER CLAIMED THAT CAMBODIAN OFFICIALS COOPERATED IN AGREEMENTS ALLOWING THE VC TO CROSS THE BORDER

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FREELY AND FREE OF CHARGE TO CONDUCT VC BUSINESS ON CAMBODIAN SOIL. END OF SUMMARY.

1. VIET CONG USE OF CAMBODIA AS A SAFEHAVEN FOR INSTALLATIONS, AS A SOURCE AND TRANSIT ROUTE FOR FOOD AND SUPPLIES, AND TO SOME EXTENT AS A SOURCE OF MANPOWER WAS SUSPECTED AND TO A LIMITED DEGREE CONFIRMED PRIOR TO THE TET OFFENSIVE. SINCE THE TET OFFENSIVE OUR KNOWLEDGE HAS BEEN AUGMENTED THROUGH INTERROGATIONS OF SEVERAL KNOWLEDGE-ABLE PRISONERS, SOME VERY LOW LEVEL, WHO KNEW NOTHING MORE THAN THAT THEY HAD BEEN TRAINED IN CAMBODIA OR HAD INFILTRATED INTO SOUTH VIETNAM FROM CAMBODIA, AND SOME WHO HELD RESPONSIBLE POSITIONS WHICH GAVE THEM ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT VIET CONG (VC) USE OF CAMBODIA.

2. THE VC APPARENTLY WERE RECRUITING ETHNIC VIETNAMESE IN CAMBODIA FOR SOME TIME PRIOR TO THE TET OFFENSIVE. RECRUITMENT UNDOUBTEDLY OCCURRED AT SEVERAL LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT CAMBODIA BUT WAS CENTERED IN PHNOM PENH AND THE CAMBODIAN PROVINCES CLOSE TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE BORDER. A CAPTURED VC DOCUMENT DATED 6 JANUARY FROM GROUP 80C TO COMPANY 4/GROUP 129 SAID THAT NHA BE (POSSIBLY NHA BE SUBREGION MR 4) HAD RECEIVED 79 TYPE "C" RECRUITS (VIETNAMESE PREVIOUSLY LIVING IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES). GROUP 129 WAS REQUESTED TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS ON THE RECEPTION OF AN UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF THIS TYPE OF RECRUIT FROM THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM.

IN NOVEMBER 1967 CONTINGENTS OF SEVEN OR EIGHT ETHNIC VIETNAMESE WHO HAD BEEN RECRUITED

5 BY THE VC WERE LEAVING ON THE AVERAGE OF ONCE A WEEK FROM PHNOM PENH. A 34-YEAR- 5
 4 OLD VC CADRE CAPTURED IN SAIGON DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE SAID THAT HE AND OTHERS 4
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25 DECEMBER 1967 HIS UNIT WAS IN A FOREST ON CAMBODIAN TERRITORY WHERE THE STORAGE DEPOTS OF GROUP 85B (9TH VC DIVISION) WERE LOCATED. IN MID-JANUARY HIS UNIT MOVED BACK TO SOUTH VIETNAM FROM CAMBODIA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TET OFFENSIVE. ANOTHER DIARY KEPT BY SOMEONE WHO HAD INFILTRATED FROM NORTH VIETNAM TO SOUTH VIETNAM NOTED THAT ON 18 JANUARY THE WRITER HAD PERFORMED GUARD DUTY "AS A CAMBODIAN SOLDIER" JUST PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM CAMBODIA TO SERVE IN THE TET OFFENSIVE.

6. FOR SOME TIME GOODS HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN SHIPPED FROM CAMBODIA TO SOUTH VIETNAM FOR USE BY THE VC. ONE OF THE PRISONERS CAPTURED DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE GIVES A MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TRANSACTIONS. ACCORDING TO A BORDER CADRE OF THE VC AN GIANG PROVINCE COMMITTEE WHOSE DUTIES INCLUDED CONTACTING LOCAL CAMBODIAN OFFICIALS TO ARRANGE FOR VC MEN AND MATERIEL TO TRAVEL ACROSS THE BORDER, GOODS WERE TRANSPORTED FROM PHNOM PENH AND SIHANOUKVILLE FOR USE BY THE VC. THE ESTIMATED 2,000 TONS OF CARGO PER MONTH WERE BROUGHT BY BOAT, SAMPAN, OR TRUCK INTO SOUTH VIETNAM FOR THE VC. THE PRISONER SAID, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE MID-1967 ONLY ABOUT SIXTY PERCENT OF THE USUAL AMOUNT OF GOODS HAS FLOWED ACROSS THE BORDER BECAUSE BORDER CONTROLS BEGAN TO BE MORE EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED BY SIHANOUK. PRISONERS CAPTURED IN III CORPS REPORTED THAT THEIR UNITS OBTAINED RICE FROM CAMBODIA. ONE SAID THAT HE WAS SENT TO CAMBODIA THREE OR FOUR TIMES A MONTH TO HELP TRANSPORT RICE FOR HIS UNIT.

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7. THE COMPLICITY OF CAMBODIAN MILITARY OFFICIALS, BORDER GUARDS AND CUSTOMS PERSONNEL IN VC ACTIVITIES IN CAMBODIA HAS BEEN FREQUENTLY REPORTED BEFORE. ONE OF THE RECENT PRISONERS [Redacted]

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WALKED FROM CAMBODIA FOR SEVEN NIGHTS BEFORE THE SAIGON BATTLE. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN PRESSED INTO SERVICE BY THE VC. ACCORDING TO ANOTHER CAPTURED VC, THE BATTALION WHICH ATTACKED MOC HOA WAS MADE UP OF ETHNIC VIETNAMESE RECRUITS FROM CAMBODIA.

3. THE VC HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTING TRAINING SITES AND OTHER INSTALLATIONS IN CAMBODIA AT LEAST SINCE 1960. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL PRISONERS CAPTURED DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE, THE BA THU AREA OF CAMBODIA SERVED AS A TRAINING SITE FOR THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, COMPANY 3, VC 6TH BATTALION COMPOSED OF FORTY SOLDIERS, WAS THERE FROM EARLY JANUARY 1968 UNTIL 28 JANUARY; THE RECRUITS, HOWEVER, ARRIVED AT VARIOUS TIMES DURING THE LATTER PART OF 1967. THE TRAINING CENTER COULD TRAIN ABOUT FIFTY RECRUITS AT A TIME. ALLEGEDLY TRAINING INCLUDED COURSES IN THE MAINTENANCE AND FIRING OF AK AND CKC RIFLES, AND IN INDIVIDUAL COMBAT TECHNIQUES. IN ADDITION, THE RECRUITS STUDIED MILITARY THEORY DAILY. ACCORDING TO ONE PRISONER, COMPANY 3 WAS THE ONLY UNIT TO LEAVE THE BA THU AREA FOR SAIGON AT THE END OF JANUARY. NONE OF THE OTHER UNITS AT BA THU WAS IDENTIFIED.

4. ACCORDING TO ONE PRISONER, POLITICAL PRISONERS TAKEN DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE WERE TO BE SENT TO A NEW CAMP WHICH THE AN GIANG PROVINCE COMMITTEE SECURITY SECTION HAD ESTABLISHED NEAR AP VINH AN ABOUT 15 JANUARY. THIS PRISONER ALSO SAID THAT SINCE 1960, VARIOUS PROVINCE AND DISTRICT COMMITTEES HAVE BEEN USING THREE OTHER CAMPS LOCATED ON CAMBODIAN SOIL FOR MEETINGS, TRAINING SITES, BIVOUAC AREAS, AND COMMO-LIAISON STATIONS. ALL OF THE CAMPS USED SOME SORT OF CAMOUFLAGING TECHNIQUES AND AT LEAST ONE OF THEM HAD

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4 NO PERMANENT BUILDINGS AND MOVED EVERY THREE DAYS WITHIN A ONE KILOMETER RADIUS. 4

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2 5. IN A CAPTURED NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY (NVA) DIARY, THE WRITER STATED THAT ON 2
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GIANG PROVINCE COMMITTEE HAD RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL COOPERATION FROM CAMBODIAN OFFICIALS SINCE 1960. AGREEMENTS WERE MADE TO ALLOW THE VC TO CROSS THE BORDER FREELY AND FREE OF CHARGE, TO SET UP CAMPS ON CAMBODIAN SOIL, AND TO COLLECT TAXES FROM VIETNAMESE MERCHANTS CROSSING THE BORDER. COOPERATION WITH CAMBODIAN OFFICIALS WAS SUCH THAT THE VC WERE PERMITTED SAFE PASSAGE IF THEY WERE TRAVELING ALONG A PREARRANGED COMMO-LIAISON ROUTE AT A SPECIFIED TIME, OR IF THEY WERE PROPERLY DOCUMENTED. DURING THE LATTER PART OF 1967 THE ABOVE MENTIONED PRISONER CROSSED FROM CO TO MOUNTAIN IN CHAU DOC PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM, TO A MEETING AT CAMP B2 ON CAMBODIAN TERRITORY. HE AND HIS TRAVELING COMPANION CARRIED A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMANDER OF BATTALION 510, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BORDER RELATIONS, IDENTIFYING THE BEARER AS A MEMBER OF BATTALION 510 AND GRANTING PERMISSION FOR HIM TO TRAVEL THROUGH A PARTICULAR AREA AND REQUESTED THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN THE AREA TO GRANT HIM FREE PASSAGE.



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