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attack 1 (normass/deepe)

SAIGON, MAY 6--The predicted ~~"bloody"~~ "bloody days of May" have begun here. The war in South Vietnam has ~~just~~ entered its most decisive stage to date.

The low-key Communist military thrusts into Saigon and other cities, expected to worsen considerably in the coming days, have inaugurated the beginning of a crucial, and perhaps final, ~~campaign~~ coordinated campaign to topple the American-backed constitutional government of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

*Reliable Vietnamese Sources Said.*

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attack 2 (normass/deepe)

*These*  
 Informed Vietnamese sources ~~report~~ believe that the current Communist politico-military offensive, ~~is~~ is orchestrated with, and running parallel to, the upcoming Washington-Hanoi peace talks scheduled to begin in Paris on May 10 or shortly thereafter.

The Communist's terrorist~~ic~~ and ~~small~~ small-unit fighting within Saigon, which began with Friday's unsuccessful attempt to blow up the Vietnamese and American television studios in the heart of the city, ~~currently marked by~~ is of much ~~smaller~~ *surprise* less concentration of troop strength and of strength and military ~~magnitude~~ *surprise* than the ~~1st~~ surprise Tet offensive which began in late January.

In fact, reliable Vietnamese sources indicate that the current thrusts *activities* is much more characteristic of armed propaganda ~~forays~~ in the city rather than military battles in the streets. But, like the Tet offensive, the current Communist activity is coordinated countrywide and the main thrust at this time is ~~not~~ considered to be magnitized in the urban cities and towns.

Vietnamese sources consider this to be the Communists "third wave of activity." The first wave was the Tet offensive which ~~began~~ began in late January with dramatic military ~~battles~~ battles in the cities and towns; the second wave began ~~later~~ several weeks later with pinpoint artillery, mortar and rocket attacks on key ~~installations~~ *current* and urban centers. ~~Now~~ Now, the third wave is ~~considered~~ considered to be earmarked by ~~small~~ ~~small-on~~ ~~small~~ small-unit ground attacks and some mortar, artillery and rocket fire in the urban centers. But, the ground troop activities are expected to continue, if not to worsen, before the ~~Paris~~ Paris peace talk



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attack 3 (normass/deepe)

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Vietnamese official ~~sources~~ sources characterize the units in Saigon, which ~~are~~ are maintaining pockets of sustained fighting, as ~~belonging~~ belonging to autonomous battalions of Gia Dinh provinces and the special sapper and reconnaissance units ~~assigned~~ assigned to Saigon city. But, outside the city, on the outskirts, the 272 Regiment ~~is~~ <sup>2</sup> ~~has~~ fought <sup>THROUGHOUT Monday</sup> in the Phu Tho racetrack area ~~of the Tan Son Nhut~~ <sup>near</sup> Tan Son Nhut airbase—the scene of vicious fighting during the Tet offensive. And, also like Tet, Vietnamese ~~aircraft~~ <sup>aircraft</sup> nosedived to bomb the Communist forces ~~who fought~~ who fought there, ~~Two battalions of the Dong Ngai Regiment,~~ Two battalions of the Dong Ngai Regiment, and an old unit of Southern ~~cadre~~ cadre, ~~and~~ officers and men, have held out against government troops in the Thi ~~Nghe~~ Nghe section of Saigon along the bridges leading towards Bien Hoa. One of the larger ~~bridges~~ bridges was partially blown up by Communist terrorists, but traffic is still passable.

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attack 4 (normass/deepe)

Intelligence sources report other Communist units are thought to be moving towards the city from the Cambodian border areas ~~only~~ 50 miles away.

While the military impact of this Communist thrust has been decidedly less sensational thus far compared to the Tet offensive, the political impact has effected <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ demoralize the Saigonese, shake ~~their~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~their~~ confidence ~~in~~ <sup>to</sup> in the military and ~~political~~ <sup>to</sup> effectiveness of the ~~Thieu~~ Thieu government, and to build up the prestige of the ~~pro-Communist~~ alleged ~~pro-Communist~~ pro-Communist Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces. Vietnamese sources view as ~~significant~~ <sup>significant</sup> that the armed Communists in the city ~~identify~~ <sup>identify</sup> themselves as ~~"Revolutionary Troops"~~ "Revolutionary Troops" rather than "Liberation Forces," commonly called the Viet Cong. These sources say that the current Communist ~~thrust~~ military thrust is aimed at promoting the pro-Communist Alliance, rather than the National Liberation Front itself. Reliable sources here believe that if the Thieu government is toppled in the future, the Alliance, or those closely ~~as~~ identified with it, will seize power and then form a coalition government with the National Liberation Front. If the Communists actually succeed in this political plan, Washington would have very little of substance to negotiate with Hanoi in any ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> peace ~~talks~~ <sup>talks</sup>, these sources say.

*REGARDING SOUTH VIETNAM*

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attack 5 (normass/deepe)

Recently

Captured Communist documents, discussing the necessity for another crack at "the general offensive and uprising", ~~call~~ call this an "epoch-making stage," and state: ~~state~~ "this is to notify you that an ~~offensive~~ offensive and uprising will take place in the very near ~~future~~ future and we will ~~mount~~ mount stronger ~~attacks~~ attacks on towns and cities, in coordination with the widespread uprising movement in the rural areas. The enemy will be thrown into utmost confusion. No matter how violently the enemy may react, he can not avoid collapse. This is not only a golden opportunity to liberate hamlets ~~and~~ and villages but also an opportunity to liberate district ~~seats~~ seats, province ~~capitals~~ capitals and South Vietnam as a whole....We must act and act fast."

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attack 6 (normass/deepe)

First-hand Vietnamese sources report that pro-Communist teenagers, ~~well-armed~~ well-armed, ~~to~~ have begun to call ~~at~~ at the ~~the~~ homes of ~~middle-echelon~~ middle-echelon government officials, urging them to join the pro-Communist Alliance. Some Vietnamese officials have moved ~~of~~ their families out of their homes, seeking refuge with ~~friends~~ friends; some officials have as many as ~~twenty~~ twenty different houses of friends ~~up~~ up where they can ~~sleep~~ sleep in a different house each night during most of the month.

In the Thi N Nghe section of Saigon proper, near the bridges and highway leading to Bien Hoa, one Vietnamese evacuee explained: "The Communists came out with loudspeakers and urged people who sympathized with them to stay in the ~~area~~ area; those that didn't sympathize with them should leave. They helped the children tie up their bundles of belongings as they left the area. They used loudspeakers, especially calling on the Vietnamese Marines in the area to come over to their side. The Vietnamese Marines answered back with bullets. ~~Or~~ Or they ~~threw~~ threw grenades ~~over~~ over the roof of my house--and the Viet Cong answered back with a B-40 rocket ~~round~~ round through the front of the house, ~~above~~ above me. I decided to ~~leave~~ leave."

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agttack 7 (normass/deepe)

"Each of the Communists ~~seem~~ seemed to have about five different sets of clothes--sometimes they wore black pajamas, sometimes civilian trousers and shirts, sometimes green fatigues like the government troops, sometimes shorts. I guess they wanted the people to think there were alot ~~of~~ more of them than there actually ~~are~~ were."

Beneath the political-psychological reaction which the Communists <sup>COMMUNISTS</sup> have already effected from the Saigonese, they seem to be attempting to continue their policy of economic strangulation--to cut Saigon off from the countryside. But, instead of cutting roads and blowing up bridges in the countryside, <sup>✓</sup> their past policy, <sup>✓</sup> they have made deliberate attempts, not too successful, to blow up bridges on the very fringes of ~~Saigon~~ <sup>city</sup> Saigon. They only partially succeeded in rendering ~~the~~ one of the bridges between Saigon and Bien Hoa, useless. Another bridge on the ~~outer~~ outskirts was left standing, as Vietnamese government soldiers mowed down nearly 20 Communists before they could plant their mines and demolitions under the bridge. But, inside the ~~city~~ city, some shops failed to open; shopkeepers are ~~known~~ known to fear keeping ~~in~~ large stocks of goods for ~~their~~ fear ~~the~~ <sup>their</sup> ~~shops~~ <sup>STORES</sup> ~~will~~ <sup>HAVE</sup> be damaged; costs of necessities, such as milk and ~~veget~~ vegetables, ~~has~~ <sup>HAVE</sup> doubled or tripled in the past two days. And, Vietnamese government checkpoints on the fringes of the city are stopping <sup>all</sup> ~~all~~ persons and produce from entering.

"Like at Tet, Saigon in a more slow-motion manner is again becoming an island-battleground," <sup>7</sup> one Vietnamese source explained. <sup>BE ADVISED TO</sup>

(Hank: I suggest John Hughes watch the ~~actual~~ situation and plan on coming coming in, if it worsens as we think it will. Regards Bev).