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command 1 (normass/deepe)

SAIGON, APRIL ²⁴~~23~~—The supreme Viet ~~Comm~~ Cong ~~and~~ command has directly taken charge of the political activities and military operations in the capital of Saigon and surrounding provinces.

The move to give direct control ~~the~~ to the supreme headquarters, called Central Office, South Vietnam (COSVN) was made in November of last year as a prelude to the Communist Tet offensive, and is ~~still~~ ^{still} considered to ~~will~~ ^{currently} be operative ~~in the current period~~. A recent intelligence report, based on prisoner and defector interrogations and documents captured during the Tet offensive, has for the first time detailed the change of the political-military command in the ~~capital~~ capital and peripheral provinces.

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command 2 (normass/deepe)

In a command sense, the ~~continuation~~ reported continuation of ~~the~~ direction by COSVN ~~would indicate~~ ⁵⁴ to reliable observers that the Communists are prepared for bigger battles ^{OR NEAR} in the urban ~~and~~ sections of Saigon.

"This is just like General (William ~~Westmoreland~~ C.) Westmoreland sending General (Creighton) Abrams up north to set up a forward command and to control all American military operations along the demilitarized zone," one source explained. "The Viet Cong have set up a COSVN-forward near Saigon to give them better control and coordination."

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command 3 (normass/deepe)

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COSVN, however, does not control all of the multi-faceted war in South Vietnam. In June, 1966, the North Vietnamese High Command reportedly assumed direct charge of the military-political war in the Tri-Thien-Hue Region and Region 5. The former consists of the two northernmost provinces of Quang Tri and Thuan Thien, where U. S. Marines and soldiers are meeting continuing resistance, and the city of Hue. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ This region, with a regional Communist Party committee established to give over-all political guidance, is also believed to control the central part of the Laotian panhandle. Military Region 5 controls the coastal portions of the provinces of Quang Ngai, Quang Tin, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa. It also provides political supervision and direction of guerrilla activities—but not main force operations—in the highland provinces directly west of to the Laos-Cambodian borders.

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command 4 (normass/deepe)

The details of the recent intelligence report indicates that in ~~November~~ November last year, "all military and political forces around Saigon were ordered to be integrated into one big zone under the direct command of COSVN."

Codenamed T-700, the new region integrates the former zone including greater-urban Saigon with the Communist base areas to the north and northwest of the capital. Before ~~the~~ November, Saigon, its ~~twine~~ Chinese twin-city of Cholon and suburban sections of Gia Dinh province were considered a special zone, later called Military Region 4. A special zone, the control of both military and political affairs is directly by directed by the military organizations, ~~while~~ while in a standard military region, separate structures are established for political and military activities. The provinces, ~~forme~~ forming Military Region 1, fanning in a wide arc north of Saigon from Cambodia to the South China Sea, has now been integrated with ~~Siagon~~ ^{Greater} urban Saigon to form T-700.

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command 5 (normass/deepe)

The main purposes of the change are considered to be:

1. The direct COSVN command gives the Viet Cong more flexibility and speed in shifting units from their base areas in the provinces into the Saigon perimeter, since intermediate command echelons have been amalgamated or erased.
2. ^{PROVIDES} Better coordination between troop units, both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese, and political activities.
3. Gives COSVN direct ~~control~~ control of the political-military underground operating in the Saigon area and ~~other~~ nearby areas now considered to be under ~~their~~ jurisdiction of the ~~Vietnamese~~ anti-Communist Vietnamese government.
4. ^{GIVES} More authority for COSVN representatives to solve ~~their~~ local problems directly on the spot, thus cutting ~~the~~ bureaucratic red tape and saving time.

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command 6 (normass/deepe)

In a documentary analysis released by the American mission in March, the writer notes: "The total reorganization (around Saigon) in late 1967 is revealing of the Viet Cong's capability to change to meet the current situation, for here we have not a simple series of mergers, but a completely new design that abrogates all ~~historical~~ historical precedent."

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command 7 (normass/deepe)

COMMANDS ^{East} DIRECTED BY

The T-700 region is divided into six sub-regions ~~with the command~~
~~of each subregion delegated to~~ at least one representative from COSVN.
Sub-command One, stretching twenty five miles north of Saigon,
includes two districts once in ~~the~~ considered under the War Zone C
command in the provinces of Binh Duong, a portion of ~~the~~ Cu Chi
district where the U. S. Army 25th Division is based, and the districts
of Go Vap and Hoc Mon, in Gia Dinh provinces' ~~surround~~ which surrounds
Saigon. These latter ~~w~~ two districts were the scene of heavy fighting
during the Communist Tet offensive, ~~used~~ used by the Communists in attacking
Tan Son Nhut airbase. ~~Government~~ Government intelligence sources have confirmed ^{Here}
the presence of four autonomous, mobile battalions of the Viet Cong
Regiment 165A, which are thought to be reinforced by a number of
unidentified heavy weapons units and North Vietnamese army elements.
A number of Viet Cong regional and guerrilla forces as well as sapper
platoons and political agents are ⁴⁵⁰ ~~so~~ operating in this area, sources said.

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command 8 (normass/deepe)

Sub-Command Two, ~~xixix~~ situated south and west of Saigon, encompasses
Biny ~~Binh~~ Chanh and Tan Binh Districts of Gia Dinh provinces' and two
districts of Hau Nghia province--Duc Hoa and Duc Hue districts. Some
of these districts are considered important routes of infiltration of weapons
and supplies directly from Cambodia into the multi-fingered canal system
on the outskirts of Saigon. This Sub-Command contains six main-force
battalions--one battalion of heavy weapons, another battalion of 165A
Regiment, three battalions of the Viet Cong 9th Division and one battalion
~~of~~ up-graded from regional force ranks, which is mainly responsible
for guiding and spearheading units unfamiliar with the the area.

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command 9 (normass/deepe)

~~Sub-C~~

Sub-Command 3, stretching south-southeast of Saigon, includes Nhe Be district of Gia Dinh province and three districts of Long An province. ^{two} Four main-force battalions have been confirmed operating in this area; of these were former Long An battalions, the 506th and 508th, and two are primarily North Vietnamese Army battalions which have assumed names of two famous Viet Cong units--the Phu Loi battalion and the Dong Ngai battalion. ~~Autonm~~ Autonomous Autonomous companies and sapper units for sabotage ~~for~~ purposes also serve in the area.

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command 10 (normass/deepe)

Sub-Command 4 comprises Thu Duc district of Gia Dinh province, Phuoc Tuy province and the southern half of Long Khanh province. The largest geographical ^{two} subdivision, the area stretches fifty some miles east-southeast of Saigon. ^{two} Four main-force battalions have been confirmed in this area, ^{two} including one battalion of the 165A Regiment, one battalion of the 274th Regiment of the Viet Cong 5th Division. Two companies of the North Vietnamese Army have also been confirmed, sources said. Two heavy-weapons companies are considered likely in the area, but not yet confirmed. In addition, several district regional force companies are known to be reinforced ^{two} by six companies of engineers, specialists in river and road sabotage.

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command ~~10~~¹¹ (normass/deepe)

Sub-Command 5 includes the northern part of Bien Hoa province, the northern part of Binh Duong province, and the city of Bien Hoa, which serves as headquarters for the Third Vietnamese ^{GOVERNMENT} Military Corps and a jet-length airbase. The city, and airbase of Bien Hoa, ~~plus~~ plus the huge American Long Binh complex, ~~serve~~ are included in a special sub-division of ~~the sub-command~~ ^{DESIGNED to} called U-1--of the sub-command ~~because~~ of the high density of Allied troops there. The Viet Cong Dong Ngai Regiment and the Viet Cong Phu Loi 1 Battalion operate in this area, sources said.

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command ~~11~~¹² (normass/deepe)

called the Saigon Capital Capital Command,
 Sub-Command Six includes urban Saigon, which is divided into three special sections: the Chinese section of Saigon, called Cholon; Saigon proper and the urbanized sections of Gia Dinh province. Each of these three sub-divisions has one company of armed propaganda experts, the sources said. In all three sub-divi divisions, the F-100 battalion, now called battalion number 10--which attacked the American Embassy and Vietnamese Presidential Palace during Tet--per operates on special ~~sb~~ sabotage and ~~has~~ harrasing missions. ~~Abundant~~ The battalion is divided into squads and platoons, each operating independently, ~~and~~ in the nine precincts of Saigon-Cholon and the nearby urbanized area of Gia Dinh province. ^{SOURCES SAID.}

--end reuter