

November 29, 1968

Upsurge--page 1

(This is the first of a two-part series on military developments in South Vietnam as the new peace talks are ~~immediately~~ scheduled to begin in Paris).

BIEN HOA, SOUTH VIETNAM--Communist forces in the eleven provinces ringing Saigon are frenetically preparing for another wave of their general offensive and/or general uprising, military sources here report.

American military sources at this field command headquarters 18 miles north of the capital believe the expected Communist offensive-uprising might reach the magnitude of the Communists' country-wide ~~sweep~~ <sup>B.L.T. 2</sup> sweep into the South Vietnamese cities during Tet in January of this year.

The American military command ~~seem~~ expressed confidence that Allied troops could successfully counter, smash or pre-empt the Communist offensive, if and when it is ~~unleashed~~ unleashed.

Some ~~ms~~ informed members of the diplomatic corps here are also predicting a new round of Communist military--and perhaps political activity--in South Vietnam. Communist radio broadcasts daily explain their traditional winter-spring campaign has already begun and is to be climaxed again with another general offensive and uprising.

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However, another school of thought in official American circles is that the Communists will continue to de-escalate their ~~high-intensity~~ spectacular big-unit war, keeping portions of their large main-force units ~~away~~ outside the borders of South Vietnam, because this move would be more likely to precipitate bilateral Washington-Hanoi agreements on mutual military disengagement and withdrawal of both American and North Vietnamese troops.

Among those publicly holding <sup>HERE</sup> that another Communist military offensive <sup>PERHAPS A</sup> and political uprising are in the works are South Vietnamese Prime Minister Tran Van Huong and President Nguyen Van Thieu. ~~Recentl~~ Recently, in a closed-door session, President Thieu reportedly ordered 1,200 Vietnamese political warfare cadre to visit government outposts and units throughout the countryside. These cadre were to explain to South Vietnamese troops to be alert for the expected--and perhaps decisive--Communist-led political disorders and military ~~subv~~ activities, especially in the cities including Saigon and that they should be prepared to smash these activities "at all costs."

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~~Western sources~~

Informed Western ~~2~~ sources believe that the South Vietnamese battlefield--swinging towards ~~4~~ either heavier fighting or a more pronounced main-force lull--is ~~also~~ taking on a critical new political dimension as the new Paris peace talks open and as the new American administration is about to be inaugurated in Washington. However, Communist radio broadcasts explain that this period is one of the most favorable ~~periods~~ their general offensive and uprising because of ~~for them~~ the erosion of American political will and economic resources to continue fighting the war in Vietnam, discontent within South Vietnam, ~~stabilizing within~~ growing frictions within the American government and between the American government and its other ~~4~~ Allies, including the South Vietnamese.



In ~~so~~ short, ~~unless~~ unless there is a dramatic, initial breakthrough towards military disengagement at the conference table in Paris, the military developments in South Vietnam are moving towards the edge of a critical, perhaps even decisive political point; more than ever before the Communists can be expected to whipsaw their military machine-- not simply for military victories, but to create high-impact political and psychological shockwaves either ~~int~~ internationally or internally.

Military officials here cite two reasons for their assessment that the Communists are preparing to launch another general offensive and uprising of the Tet magnitude. ~~Has~~ The first reason is basketsfuls of documentary evidence and prisoner interrogations; the second is the disposition of and increase in numbers of Communist main-force units in the 11 provinces surrounding Saigon, some of which are currently--and perhaps only temporarily--hibernating ~~i~~ across the borders in Cambodia.

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One piece of evidence considered highly significant by these sources was a captured directive from the Viet Cong high command (called COSVN or Central Office in South Vietnam) in which Hanoi predicted an American bombing halt in November, ~~as~~ and as of <sup>25</sup>late October, spoke of a general offensive and general uprising--without specifying in detail which. The directive also ordered political cadre to intensify troop indoctrination with a target date of ~~complete~~ completion by December 31 of this year. Extensive political indoctrination generally precedes a new, major Communist military thrust.

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"With the bombing halt, the document says the Communists should increase military pressure with the ultimate goal of setting up a coalition government," one informed source explained. "In constance with Communist main force units, the Communists ~~will~~ <sup>E. H. R.</sup> said in the document they would launch either a large-scale offensive so the Americans would go along with a ~~ceasefire~~ ceasefire and coalition government--or else you can interpret the document that, depending on political developments in Paris, these main-force actions will or will not take place. But, it specifies that the Paris peace talks will dictate moves of the main-force units as well as the sub-regional commands," *five of which surround Saigon.*

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Masses of other captured documents and prisoner interrogations, however, give in great detail not simply general ~~the~~ directions, but also specific unit instructions for implementing another Communist blitz-styled war. Informed sources report "the temperature chart" of ~~planned~~ Communist plans to intensify the war has risen so sharply simply in the volume of captured documents "moving across the desks of American commanders" that few consider <sup>captured</sup> the material as planted hoaxes. <sup>①</sup>

The second reason cited by these sources is that the disposition of Communist main-force units are fanned out--as they have been since September--north and northwest of Saigon in a wide arc astride the jungled Cambodian border area, where they are in a favorable posture for resupply, refitting, regrouping and receiving replacements. ~~Three~~ The three traditional Communist divisions perched in this area--the 5th, 7th and 9th--are now assessed to ~~have~~ had their military troop strength and equipment requires requirements <sup>elevated to</sup> ~~brought up to~~ sufficient capability for beginning an offensive.

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Intelligence sources have also confirmed that these three divisions have been joined by a new regiment--the 95C Regiment of the 1st North Vietnamese Army Division. This regiment, which suffered a severe defeat in the battle of Duc Lap in II Corps in September, was confirmed to have moved into ~~the~~<sup>the</sup> border provinces outside of Saigon recently when it was again severely mauled after attacking a South Vietnamese Ranger battalion. Allied officials credit the South Vietnamese Rangers, plus American firepower, with killing 278 Communists--based on battlefield bodycount--and hence, American sources believe the regiment is currently combat ineffective.

Since mid-September, Communist main force strength has jumped from 77 to 84 battalions in the 11 provinces around Saigon--but the ~~Balance of Forces~~ any effectiveness from this increase has been greatly reduced by the introduction of the U. S. Army 1st Air Cavalry Division into the border area.

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Local force guerrilla ~~unit~~ companies and other units <sup>around Saigon</sup> have to date been largely inactive in the provinces surrounding Saigon, and many of these units are known to have broken down into ~~smaller~~ <sup>or smaller</sup> squad-size units or ~~smaller~~ in order to step up ~~terrorism~~ a campaign of terrorism, kidnappings, taxation, proselytizing, harrassing attacks on cities and towns and ~~also~~ also ~~for~~ diversionary attacks designed to open up corridors of infiltration for movement of men and supplies towards Saigon.

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Upsurge—page 4/10

COMMUNIST RADIO BROADCASTS Regularly  
call for ANOTHER OFFENSIVE - UPRISING  
CAMPAGNE  
One recent radio broadcast from Liberation Radio on Radio, <sup>REPEATED</sup> announced

on Radio Hanoi 9 on November 25, ~~called information~~ related:

"Now, the general offensive and general uprising is underway...  
Never is the situation so favorable <sup>for</sup> our people as today. The American  
imperialists have suffered bitter defeats. They are ~~being~~ bogged down  
in an extremely difficult situation; their will of ~~aggressive~~ aggression <sup>HAS BEEN</sup> is  
shaken violently. Continuing to be sucked into this war in Vietnam,  
which is consuming more men and money and <sup>GETTING</sup> gets them bigger and bigger  
defeats, the American people as well as people throughout the world are  
protesting against ~~the~~ this war. The American allies are taking advantage  
of the Americans, <sup>who are bogged down in this war</sup> in order to get out of  
the American system of control. On the other hand, if the Americans <sup>want</sup>  
~~want~~ to end this aggressive war, they will lose the ~~press~~ prestige before  
the world. The American <sup>officials</sup> ~~people~~ back home are insulting each other.  
The American boss and the Vietnam ~~boss~~ betrayers, Thieu-Ky-Huong, are  
quarreling like people in the <sup>fish</sup> ~~new~~ market... The people in the <sup>city</sup> ~~city~~ have been  
revolution-ized. They are waiting for the coordination in order to stand  
up and liberate themselves. The intermediary class (i. e. middle class)  
has turned towards the revolutionary side. <sup>IT</sup> This is very clear that the  
opportune time is very favorable to us. This opportune time is more solid  
than ever.... and the enemy has put down on the table all his trump cards....

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"We know very clearly that the American imperialists and their ~~and~~ quislings are very stubborn people and we have no illusion about them. They will never accept to be defeated until they are defeated. They are torpedoing the four-way conference in Paris even though the conference has not been held yet. Only when our armed forces will be victorious on the battlefield, then all the people will uprise to be the master of the villages, hamlets, inter-blocks and sub-precincts to liberate the countryside, to defeat the American pirates, <sup>AND</sup> to knock out the puppets. At that time, the enemy will admit his defeat regarding the violent revolution of the people who are uprising everywhere in Vietnam. That is the decisive factors of the situation...

"Our military and the people ~~shoud~~ should take advantage of this most favorable, opportune time to carry out the general offensive and general uprising, to chase away the American aggressor, to overthrow the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique, to take over the government in order to move forward to achieve our basic objective of the revolution in the South...."

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~~SECRET~~