



# Tet Offensive Presidential Committee

## Lesson Plan & Documents

Tina Ubersax  
Summer 2012

The following lesson plan was developed under the supervision of the LBJ Presidential Library Education staff. Permission was granted to publish this lesson plan. If you have any questions, please contact the [LBJ Library Education Staff](http://www.lbjlibrary.org).

**Name of Lesson Plan/Activity:** Tet Offensive Presidential Committee

**Created By:** Tina M. Uebersax

**Grade/Level:** 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> / Honors or AP

**Subject(s):** US History

**Lesson Duration:** One 90 minute block or Two 45 minute classes

**Goals:** The purpose of this lesson is three fold. First, students will gain knowledge about the Vietnam War pertaining to United States History, specifically the Tet Offensive a major turning point in the war as well as American public opinion of the war. Second, students will strengthen their analysis and evaluation skills through the use of primary source documents. Finally students will practice their historical writing skills using evidence gathered from the primary source documents.

**Objectives:**

- Analyze primary source documents.
- Summarize information from the primary source documents.
- Explain the Tet Offensive and American Public Opinion toward the war in Vietnam.
- Analyze American Public Opinion of the war in Vietnam, US involvement and President Johnson.
- Evaluate and assess the information presented to formulate a cohesive statement.
- Generate a historically written document about the Tet offensive and public opinion.

**Primary Document(s) Used:** Lyndon Baines Johnson Library Collection

**March 31, 1968 Speech Box 47**

*Volume 2:* Doc 6, Doc 7, Doc 10, Doc 13, Doc 16, Doc 19, Doc 23a, Doc 26a, Doc 38, Doc 39, Doc 41, Doc 52a, Doc 53b,

**March 31, 1968 Speech Box 48**

*Volume 4:* Doc 16a, Doc 21b, Doc 22b, Doc 44a,

*Volume 5:* Doc 4, Doc 11, Doc 15, Doc 19, Doc 25, Doc 31, Doc 36, Doc 38, Doc 85a

**Office Files of Mildred Stegall Box 64B**

*Protesting United States Intervention in Vietnam and Student Agitation Report*  
Docs 64a, 65a, 70a, 70b, 71, 71a

**Additional Sources:**

Teachers are encouraged to use the LBJ Library website in conjunction with the materials.

<http://www.lbjlibrary.org/>

**Advanced Prep Needed:**

Do to copy write laws some materials are not available with this lesson. Maps, Political Cartoons, Images/Photos from the Vietnam era will need to be obtained by the teacher before hand.

**Adaptations:**

This lesson can be used with on level United States History students as long as the teacher scales down the readings. One could take paragraphs and excerpts from the primary documents to be used by the students.

**Vocabulary/Terms:**

VC, Vietminh, Viet-Cong, NVA, ARVAN, Ho Chi Minh, Tet, Westmoreland, escalation

**Introduction:**

Tell the students that they have been chosen by President Johnson to be on a special committee to evaluate the situation in Vietnam from January 29th to February 11th 1968. Before that can happen they first must be briefed on the events in Vietnam leading up to January 29th 1968. Pass out the Vietnam time lines and/or the Vietnam background sheet for the students to read through. Next present and explain the vocabulary/terms listed (these terms are found in the documents so students must be aware of them before hand). This activity should take no more than 15 to 20 minutes. For those who are pressed for time consider assigning the vocabulary/terms the night before as prep for the next day.

*Suggestion: Have the students create a vocabulary/term sheet that includes as least one visual for each explanation. This can be gathered off the Internet or drawn by the student. There is a sample vocabulary/term sheet included.*

*Suggestion: Create a power point presentation from the times lines and background information sheet and include pictures with descriptions of the vocabulary and terms. Make it look official by adding the words 'confidential' or 'top secret' to help the students transition into their roles as presidential advisers.*

**Development/****Procedure:**

Tet Offensive and Situation in Vietnam:

Gather students into groups of 3-5 and hand them a folder containing the documents for analysis (Box 47: Docs 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19, 23, 26, 38, 39, 41, 52, 53 Box 48: Docs 4, 11, 15, 19, 25, 31, 36, 38, 85) Remind students that they have been chosen by the President to complete this very important task. They are receiving 'top secret' and 'confidential' primary source documents from various sources that they will need to analyze and summarize before presenting their findings to the President. There are 23 documents that the students need to work with which means that they must break up the work between each group member. Each group member must analyze and summarize their documents and their report their findings to the other members. As a group they will write a formal statement for the President about the situation. Students should be given 30 minutes to complete this activity and each student should analyze at least 5 documents. The Tet Offensive Presidential Committee Handout accompanies this activity. At the end of the 30 minutes have the groups share their report and discuss things that they found interesting about the documents.

Assessment/Evaluation: As the students are working the teacher should be walking around informally assessing the progress of the students. At the end of the activity/lesson the teacher can collect the Tet Offensive Presidential Committee Handout as another assessment.

*Note: Those who are breaking this up into a 2 day activity would end with the discussion and collection of the Tet Offensive Presidential Committee Handout. As an exit ticket the students could state one interesting fact they gathered from their analysis. Then pick up the next class session by having someone recap the previous class before moving into the next activity.*

**Public Opinion:**

After the students have assessed the situation in Vietnam from January 29th to February 11th 1968 ask them how they think the public would have reacted to the situation in Vietnam. Discuss possible reactions and note reactions of the public to recent military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Instruct the students that President Johnson was impressed with their analysis of the situation in Vietnam and would like their help discerning American Public Opinion. Using a power point presentation present the students with political cartoons depicting American Public Opinion at the time. Also include documents highlighting demonstrations at this time from two different protest groups. (Box 64B: Docs 64, 65, 70, 71) Have the students either take notes on their own or using the Public Opinion and Vietnam War handout. They will need this information as well as their earlier analysis to complete the President's final task. Have students take note of images used in the political cartoons as well as the captions. Try to have them describe the cartoon and give a one sentence summary. Once they have seen at least 5 cartoons show them the protest documents and pictures. What can they gather from this information? Then pose these final questions: Are any of these feelings and sentiments similar to how people react today to military action? Are there any differences? What about the protests? Similarities/Differences? What is the overall opinion toward Vietnam? Is there clearly one predominant message? This discussion can be done within their original groups or as a large group.

Assessment/Evaluation:

The final task asked of you by the President is to either create a detailed course of action for the situation in Vietnam or to write a speech for the President assessing the situation in Vietnam and reassuring the people of the United States.

**Closure/Conclusion:**

Play the u-tube video of President Johnson's March 31 1968 Speech. In the speech President Johnson addresses the situation in Vietnam, a course of action, as well as his decision not to run for re-election. As a class you can discuss similarities and differences between the students' suggestions to the President and their speeches.

**Assessment/Evaluation:**

Throughout the lesson the formal and informal assessments and evaluations should enable the teacher to fully assess the students' mastery of the objectives.

**Presidential Course of Action Vietnam  
or  
Presidential Speech on Vietnam**

**Directions:**

With your knowledge of the current situation in Vietnam as well as your background in American public opinion President Johnson has one final task for you to complete. He plans on addressing the American people in regards to Vietnam. He would like from you either a detailed course of action for Vietnam, which should include evidence from your documents that support this course **OR** a speech that he can use to address the nation assessing the Vietnam situation and reassuring the people of United States, which should include as much evidence as possible without jeopardizing national security.

## **Public Opinion and the Vietnam War**

### **Directions:**

Upon reading your statement and analysis of the situation in Vietnam President Johnson has decided to seek your help in another matter, public opinion. He is concerned with this new course of events in Vietnam and is trying to devise a plan of action. The President does not want to proceed until he understands the position of the public at this time. Your first assignment is to assess the general opinion of the public towards the war in Vietnam.

As a class we will be reviewing and analyzing primary source documents that deal with public opinion and the Vietnam War. Use the space provided to take notes on the documents as they will come in handy during your finally task set forth by President Johnson.

### **Notes:**

## Tet Offensive Presidential Committee

### Directions:

In preparation for your meeting with President Johnson you will need to take notes on the primary source documents that you analyze. Each member of your group will analyze at least 5 primary source documents. Then the group will use the information gathered to create a brief statement for the President assessing the situation in Vietnam at this time.

Please DO NOT mark on the documents. You will have 30 minutes to complete this task. It is suggested that you use 15 to 20 minutes analyzing your primary documents and 15 to 10 minutes discussing and creating your statement.

### Notes:

Document Title:

Document Author/Source:

Document Summary:

**Statement for the President:**

## Background Information Vietnam

Vietnam had been under the control of various groups over the centuries, including China, Japan, and the French. During World War II while under Japanese control U.S. forces from the Office of Strategic Services, code named Deer Mission, trained Vietnamese to combat the Japanese. One of the Vietnamese trained by the United States was a man by the name of Ho Chi Minh. In September of 1945 Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam an independent nation. After the end of World War II Chinese troops descended into Vietnam and the French, who were in control of Vietnam before the war, were allowed back into the country to help drive out the Chinese troops in 1946. Skirmishes between French and Vietnamese troops broke out and by December 1946 Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh established a base of operations in the north and declared war on the French. In 1950 Ho Chi Minh declared his Democratic Republic of Vietnam the only legal government. The 'Dirty Little War' as it was known as in France came to an end in 1954 when they were defeated by the Viet Minh at Dien Bien Phu. At the peace talks Vietnam was divided at the 17th parallel into North Vietnam controlled by The Democratic Republic of Vietnam and South Vietnam controlled by the Republic of Vietnam. As the French left Vietnam the United States began funneling aid to South Vietnam. In the same year North Vietnam began accepting aid from the Soviet Union. As the years rolled by fighting continued between the North and the South and U.S. aid increased. In 1964 the Gulf of Tonkin incident drew the United States into the war and by 1965 the first American troops landed on the beaches of Danang. American money, weapons, bombs and troops continued to flow into Vietnam over the years and by 1968 a tipping point had been reached.

*Source:*

Karnow, Stanley. *Vietnam A History*. New York: The Viking Press, 1983. Print.

# Vocabulary/Term Worksheet

**Term with Definition**

**Visual**

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <p><i>General Westmoreland</i> <i>Commander of the US forces in Vietnam</i></p>	

# Vietnam: Background History

## Original Settlement

- originally settled by various tribes of Asian peoples about 3,000 years ago
- tribes entered from the north and gradually moved south
- each tribe carved out a portion of the country for themselves to settle in
- most tribes had similar cultures and languages

## Chinese Occupation

- conquered by Chinese emperors 111 B.C. to 939 A.D.
- Chinese introduced religions—Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism
- Chinese also introduced feudal government, written language

## Independence

- defeated Chinese rulers and declared independence 939 A.D.
- defeated invading army of Kubli Khan in 1288
- remained independent vassal states for almost 900 years

## French Colonialism

- French conquered a portion of Vietnam and ruled as a colony 1858-1884
- French Indochina—French held territory of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia; ruled as protectorate from 1884 to 1940

## Japanese Occupation

- Japanese forces defeated the French in 1940
- Japanese-backed regime ruled Vietnam from 1940-1945

## Division of Vietnam

- Ho Chi Minh, a popular communist guerrilla, formed the Vietminh (Independence) League in 1944 to fight the Japanese forces in Vietnam
- Ho Chi Minh's army (with aid from Russian and Chinese communists) gains control of northern Vietnam in 1945
- French tried to re-establish colonial rule in 1945 and fought Ho Chi Minh's communists from 1945-1954
- Geneva Accord signed in 1954 divided Vietnam in two sectors:
  - Communist North Vietnam under President Ho Chi Minh above 17th Parallel
  - Republic of South Vietnam under President Ngo Dinh Diem below 17th Parallel
- fighting persisted in Vietnam from 1954 to 1963 with the Vietcong in South trying to unify the country with the aid of communists from the North

## United States Involvement

- United States sent military advisors to train and assist South Vietnamese people from 1959 to 1964
- Vietcong-backed military coup in November 1963 prompted United States President Lyndon Johnson to commit U.S. troops (as part of a United Nations action) to keep the entire country from falling to the communist forces

Source:

[www.stark.k12.oh.us](http://www.stark.k12.oh.us)

Stark County Educational Service Center; Canton, Ohio

## **Vietnam Timeline**

1959: American military advisors were killed in Vietnam – the first US casualties; the Ho Chi Minh Trail was first used

1960: the National Liberation Front (NLF) was formed in Hanoi though in the South, they were known as the Vietcong (VC)

1961: US President Kennedy pledged extra aid to South Vietnam

1962: The number of US military advisors increased from 700 to 12,000

1963: President Diem was killed in a military coup  
15,000 US military advisors were in South Vietnam

1964: the Gulf of Tonkin incident; Congress passed the 'Gulf of Tonkin Resolution'; America bombs targets in North Vietnam; NLF attacked US air bases

1965: 'Operation Rolling Thunder' started; first US combat troops were sent to Vietnam in March; by the end of the year there were 200,000 US troops there; first major conventional clash between USA and NVA at Ia Drang

1966: 400,000 US troops were in Vietnam

1967: 490,000 US troops in Vietnam; Nguyen Van Thieu became President of South Vietnam

1968: Tet Offensive; demonstrations against the war started in America; My Lai massacre; peace talks began in Paris; 540,000 US troops in Vietnam; anti-Vietnam War riots in Chicago (August)

1969: Nixon ordered the secret bombing of Cambodia; 'Vietnamization' started; Nixon announced the start of US troop withdrawals; Ho Chi Minh died; 480,000 US troops in Vietnam; My Lai massacre made public in November

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Tuesday, January 30, 1968 -- 11:45 a.m.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority DSD 10-25-78, NSC 8-14-80

By JK (cg), NARS, Date 8-29-80

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

*(see Index, p. 3-10)*

The following is a situation report from MACV, sent at 7:30 a.m. this morning. (All times are EST.)

Principle activity in the Republic of Vietnam on 29/30 January 1968 is summarized as follows:

First Corps

Enemy forces launched coordinated mortar, rocket and ground attacks in the Danang, Wheeler/Wallowa and Chu Lai areas.

At 11:20 a.m. several enemy snipers were observed in the water in the vicinity of the Danang Bridge. The enemy was engaged with small arms fire resulting in one enemy killed and one detained.

At 12:48 p.m. a Marine unit located northwest of Danang received four rounds of rocket fire and at approximately the same time, the 1st ARVN Battalion and a Regional Force unit in Hai Van Pass area reported receiving mortar and small arms fire. There was no report of enemy penetration.

Between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. the Marble Mountain air facility received approximately 20 rounds of mortar fire with numerous Army aircraft receiving damage. No casualties reported.

At 2:30 p.m. the Danang Air Base also came under rocket attack with initial reports indicating a total of 20 rounds received. Additional reports reflect five aircraft destroyed, 18 aircraft with various degrees of damage. Results were: friendly, one killed, 10 wounded, 37 non-battle casualties; enemy casualties are not known.

Between 2:30 and 4:40 p.m. the ARVN Headquarters at Danang came under enemy mortar and ground attack by an estimated reinforced enemy company or larger. A total of 40-50 mortar rounds were received in and around the ARVN compound area. The attack was repulsed. Results were: friendly, 2 killed; enemy, 64 killed, 7 detainees.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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In response to the enemy attacks to the Danang area, artillery missions were conducted and gunships launched attacks on enemy forces south of Danang. The exact extent of enemy losses is not yet known.

At 1:55 p.m. an ARVN artillery unit in the vicinity of Hoi An reported receiving mortar, small arms, and automatic weapons fire. Korean Marines were inserted by helicopter and engaged the enemy force. Latest information reflects 21 enemy killed and two detained, no friendly casualties have been reported.

American division units also report a number of incidents during the period. Between 12:50 and 5:10 p.m. a total of 90 rounds of mortar fire was reported by US units at five different landing zones throughout the Wheeler/Wallowa area of operation and the Chu Lai area. No reported ground attacks.

#### Second Corps

In Qui Nhon, the enemy controls the radio station and the maintenance area. One Korean battalion is sweeping the area, and results to date: three US killed, five US wounded, and 50 enemy killed.

In Kontum City artillery and air strikes are being employed against an estimated two enemy battalions. Results: friendly, seven killed, five wounded; enemy, 165 killed, two detained. An estimated two enemy battalions are outside the city.

In Ban Me Thuot, fighting continues within the city. An estimated two battalions are outside the city. Results: friendly, seven killed, 16 wounded; enemy: 91 killed and 28 detained.

In Ninh Hoa contact continues on a sporadic basis. Results: friendly, one wounded; enemy, 11 killed.

In Tuy Hoa heavy fighting continues. The enemy force is trying to break out. Results: friendly, seven killed, 31 wounded, six missing; enemy, 36 killed.

In Nha Trang sporadic fighting continues in the city with friendly elements attempting to cut off enemy forces leaving the city. Results: friendly, 21 killed, 66 wounded; enemy, 60 killed, 15 detained.

In Pleiku contact continues with an unknown size enemy force in the city. ARVN units are in the city. Friendly forces are attempting to cut off the enemy forces trying to escape. Results: friendly, seven killed, 22 wounded; enemy, 103 killed.

In Tan Canh contact is sporadic with elements of an ARVN regiment against an unknown size enemy force. Results: friendly, four wounded, enemy, five killed.

Third Corps

In Binh Duong province, 14 miles southwest of Ben Cat, the 4th Cavalry fought a five-hour battle, beginning at 4:25 a.m. yesterday morning. Enemy losses are reported as 66 killed compared with US losses of 8 killed and 14 wounded.

Fourth Corps

In Vinh Long province, 21 miles south of Vinh Long, helicopter gunships fired on a number of sampans traversing canals in the area. Results were 124 sampans destroyed with 80 enemy killed.

In Phong Dinh province aircraft fired on a number of sampans, sinking two. Eight enemy were killed and a number of weapons were captured.

Casualties reported:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Captured</u>
US/ARVN*	74	173	--
Enemy	749	---	54

\*Note: exact breakdowns are not available.

White House Situation Room

*William M. Coffey*  
Briefing Officer

January 31, 1968

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Rostow

Herewith Gen. Westmoreland's telephonic answers to the President's questions.

1. Casualties to date

From the beginning of the planned truce at 6 P. M., 29 January, the following casualties have been suffered by us or inflicted on the enemy:

- Friendly: 421 killed in action, including 189 U.S.
- Enemy: 4,320 killed in action  
1,811 detainees, many of whom are prisoners of war

2. Enemy capacity to sustain present campaign

We see this as a 3-phase campaign.

The first phase involved build-up, sporadic attack, and a well-orchestrated psychological warfare program against the population.

We are now in the second phase, which is an all-out military effort throughout South Viet Nam, except for the two northern provinces. The enemy has achieved some local successes, but the initiative is turning against them. However, we feel that he has the capability of continuing this phase for perhaps several more days at great risk to himself.

*(Khe Sanh)* The third phase will involve a massive attack in Quang Tri and Quang Nam provinces. The enemy is now poised for this phase which he considers his decisive campaign. Our air strikes have blunted his attack, but we still give him the capability to strike at any time with large forces supported by an abundance of artillery and rockets.

3. Relationship between North Vietnamese and North Korean actions

It would seem to us there is a relationship.

4. Is there a military impasse in South Viet Nam?

We do not think the situation in South Viet Nam is at an impasse, since the initiative is turning in favor of the government and the allies, and the enemy is suffering unprecedented casualties, indeed.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 715c 1-5-81 letter  
By inf, NARS, Date 4-20-81

~~SECRET~~

5. Is the enemy holding any towns in South Viet Nam now?

The enemy does not control any single town in South Viet Nam.

However, he has some degree of control in several towns. Specifically, he now has forces in Quang Tri, Hue, Duy Xuan, Kontum City, Chau Phu and Ben Tre, and scattered elements in Saigon.

I repeat, he does not control any single town. In those areas where the enemy has troops, they are confronted by Vietnamese troops and fighting continues.

6. What political and psychological problems do Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland foresee?

It seems to Ambassador Bunker and me that initially there will be some adverse psychological impact on the people and the government. However, if the government handles the matter carefully, they can use the opportunity to improve their position with the people.

President Thieu has the opportunity to exercise rare leadership.

The National Assembly has the opportunity to be more constructive.

President Thieu has declared martial law, but this will have to be approved by the Assembly after 12 days in accordance with the Constitution. The situation should not slow down major programs for a prolonged period.

It will harden the government's position on negotiations with the Front. It may set back civilianization of the government.

Military success should give the Army of South Viet Nam and its leadership self-confidence and should encourage the acceleration of their improvement.

*g*  
ROBERT M. GINSBURGH

VC Attacks  
JANUARY 30 AND 31, 1968

Province

City

I Corps

5 provinces, 5 province capitals hit

Quang Tri  
Thua Thien  
Quang Nam  
Quang Tin  
Quang Ngai

Quang Tri  
Hue  
Hoi An  
Tam Ky  
Quang Ngai

Danang city was also hit.

II Corps

12 provinces, 8 province capitals hit

Kontum  
Pleiku  
Binh Dinh  
Phu Yen  
Darlac  
Khanh Hoa  
Ninh Thuan  
Binh Thuan

Kontum  
Pleiku  
Qui Nhon  
Tuy Hoa  
Banmethuot  
Nha Trang  
Phan Rang  
Phan Thiet

(Phu Bon, Quang Duc, Tuyen Duc, Lam Dong province capitals not hit)  
Cam Ranh municipality hit, Dalat municipality not hit

III Corps

11 provinces, 2 province capitals hit

Bien Hoa  
Gia Dinh

Bien Hoa  
Saigon area - Gia Dinh

(Phuoc Long, Binh Long, Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, Hau Nghia, Long Khanh,  
Binh Tuy, Phuoc Tuy, Long An province capitals not hit)

Saigon municipality hit

IV Corps

16 provinces, 13 province capitals hit

Dinh Tuong  
Go Cong  
Kien Hoa  
Vinh Binh  
Vinh Long  
Sa Dec  
Kien Phong  
Chau Doc  
Kien Giang  
Ba Xuyen  
Bac Lieu  
An Xuyen  
Phong Dinh

Mytho  
Go Cong  
Ben Tre (Truc Giang)  
Tra Vinh (Phu Vinh)  
Vinh Long  
Sa Dec  
Cao Lanh  
Chau Phu (Chau Doc)  
Rach Gia  
Soc Trang  
Bac Lieu (Vinh Loi)  
Ca Mau (Quan Long)  
Cantho

(Kien Tuong, Chuong Thien, An Giang province capitals not hit)

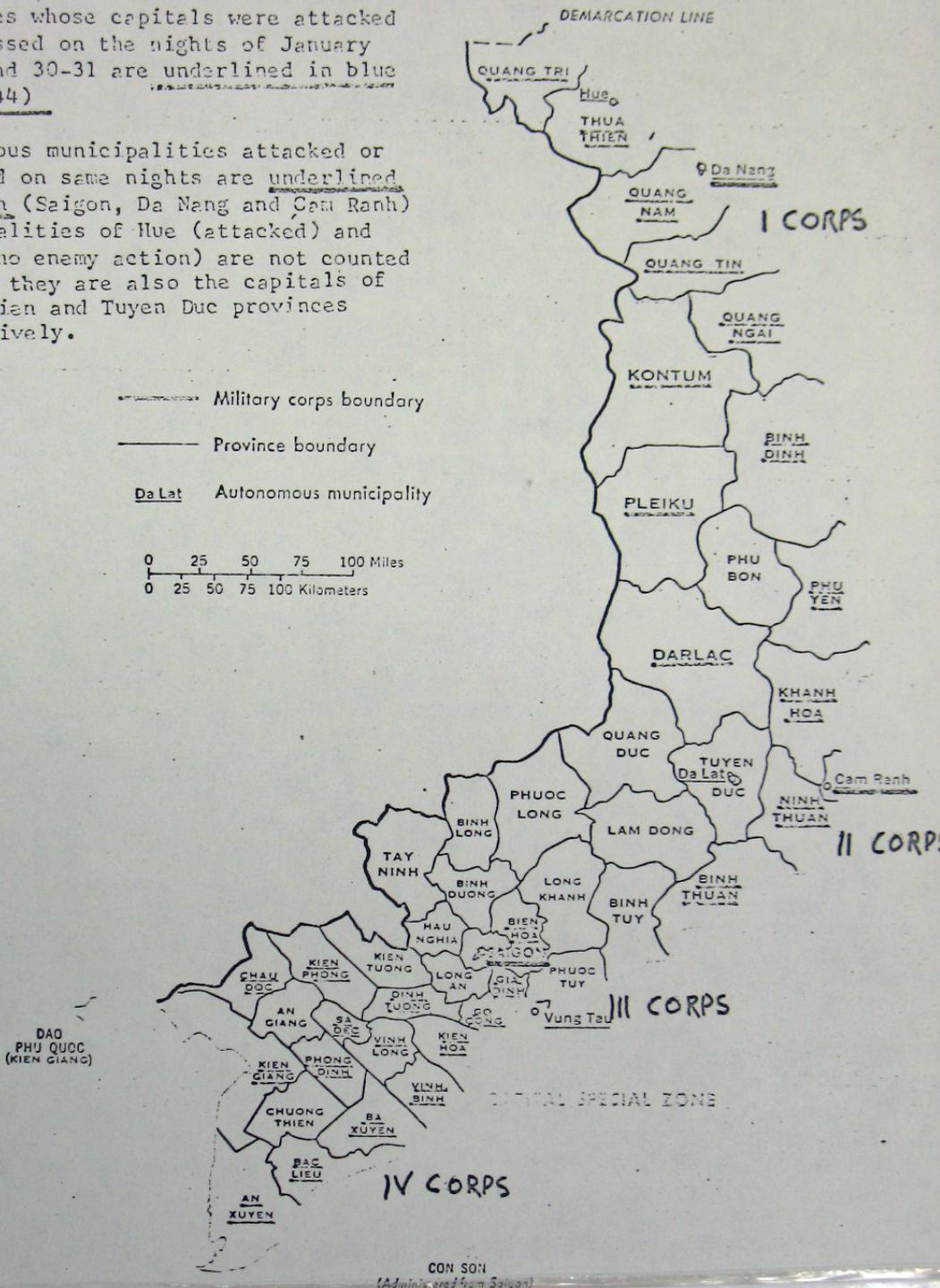
# SOUTH VIETNAM ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

Provinces whose capitals were attacked or harassed on the nights of January 29-30 and 30-31 are underlined in blue (28 of 44)

Autonomous municipalities attacked or harassed on same nights are underlined in brown (Saigon, Da Nang and Cam Ranh). Municipalities of Hue (attacked) and Dalat (no enemy action) are not counted because they are also the capitals of Thua Thien and Tuyen Duc provinces respectively.

-  Military corps boundary
-  Province boundary
- Da Lat Autonomous municipality

0 25 50 75 100 Miles  
0 25 50 75 100 Kilometers



CON SON  
(Administered from Saigon)

16  
FBIS 49

STATEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES

LIBERATION RADIO (CLANDESTINE) IN VIETNAMESE 1110 GMT 1 FEB 68 B

(STATEMENT BY HEADQUARTERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES)

(TEXT) ON 31 JANUARY 1968, THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES--THE COMMANDING ORGAN OF VARIOUS PATRIOTIC SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES, WHICH IS COMMANDING THE GENERAL OFFENSIVE AIMED AT TOPPLING THE THIEU-KY PUPPET REGIME AND RESTORING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, PEACE, SOVEREIGNTY, DEMOCRACY, AND HAPPINESS TO THE PEOPLE--ISSUED A STATEMENT ADDRESSED TO ALL VIETNAMESE PEOPLE.

THE FULL TEXT OF THE STATEMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

COMPATRIOTS, THE GENERAL OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE THIEU-KY CLIQUE YOU HAVE WAITED FOR SO LONG HAS ARRIVED. THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES, UNSWERING THE ASPIRATIONS AND THE ANGER OF ALL VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, HAVE LAUNCHED ATTACKS AGAINST OUR SWORN ENEMY. WE TELL OUR COMPATRIOTS THAT WE ARE DETERMINED TO TOPPLE THE REGIME OF THE TRAITOROUS THIEU-KY CLIQUE AND TO PUNISH AND ANNIHILATE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN MASSACRING, AND OPPRESSING OUR COMPATRIOTS. OUR GOAL OF STRUGGLE IS TO RESTORE INDEPENDENCE, PEACE, AND SOVEREIGNTY TO THE NATION, AND TO WREST BACK DEMOCRACY AND HAPPINESS FOR THE PEOPLE. WE ARE GOING TO SET UP A GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL BE ENTIRELY OURS, A GOVERNMENT SERVING THE FATHERLAND AND THE PEOPLE.

TO PERMIT THE ARMED FORCES TO FULFILL THEIR SACRED TASKS, WE ASK OUR COMPATRIOTS TO:

1--GET IN TOUCH WITH US CONCERNING THE ATTACKS AND PURSUIT OF THE U.S.-PUPPET FORCES.

2--HELP US ARREST ALL THE U.S.-PUPPET CRUEL HENCHMEN.

BEING THE SONS AND BROTHERS OF THE PEOPLE, THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES WILL TRY THEIR BEST TO WIN VICTORY AT ANY COST FOR THE FATHERLAND AND PEOPLE.

(SIGNED) 31 JANUARY 1968, THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES.

1 FEB 1321Z GKE/BK

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-10-78 letter

By ip, NARS, Date, 3-29-79

19

**EYES ONLY**

1 FEB 68 15 26z

BOOK COPY

COMMUNICATIONS

SIC			
TYPE MSG	BOOK	MULTI	SINGLE
		X	
PRECEDENCE			
ACTION			
PRIORITY			
INFO			

DTG

FROM: General Wheeler, CJCS

TO: Admiral Sharp, CINCPAC  
General Westmoreland, COMUSMACV

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

CJCS

*Work has not been made to keep outside OCSJCS*

*PLR*

~~TOP SECRET~~ - EYES ONLY - JCS 01151 Feb 68

(DELIVER DURING WAKING HOURS TO ADDRESSEES ONLY)

1. There is a considerable amount of discussion around town about the Khe Sanh situation to include the inevitable comparisons with Dien Bien Phu. One question raised recently in this connection (and I believe it received some consideration at the time of the Dien Bien Phu siege) is whether tactical nuclear weapons should be used if the situation in Khe Sanh should become that desperate. I consider such an eventuality unlikely. Nevertheless, I would appreciate your views as to whether there are targets in the area which lend themselves to nuclear strikes, whether some contingency nuclear planning would be in order, and what you would consider to be some of the more significant pros and cons of using

DATE	TIME
1	1015
MONTH	YEAR
Feb	68
PAGE NO.	NO. OF PAGES
1	2

ZFF-1

**EYES ONLY**

DRAFTER

~~TOP SECRET~~

RELEASES

SIGNATURE

*Paul M. Kearney*

TYPED (or stamped) NAME AND TITLE

PAUL M. KEARNEY, Administrative Assistant to Chairman

REGRADING INSTRUCTIONS

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

DD FORM 1 NOV 67 178

REPLACES EDITION OF 1 MAY 58 WHICH WILL BE USED.

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PRIORITY

RELEASED BY

ACTION  
INFO

EYES ONLY

tac nukes in such a contingency.

2. I do not need a reply quite so urgently as on many of my other requests to you lately -- early next week should suffice. While I know you will have to put a few of your bright planners on this, I would caution you to hold this subject very closely. Warm regards.

EYES ONLY

CONTROL NO.	TOP/100	PAGE NO. 2	NR. OF PAGES 2	MESSAGE IDENTIFICATION	INITIALS
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REGRADING INSTRUCTIONS

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

SANITIZED

2c

Authority CIA 12-21-78 letter

Feb. 2, 1968

By ip, NARS, Date 4-6-79

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

23a

Copy of intelligence report TDCS 314-01890-68 (advance)

Subject: Viet Cong Prisoner's Account of Preparations for Attack on Chau Doc City

Source: |

SANITIZED

1. | There are indications that source may be lying on some points which he made during the interrogation, especially concerning facts involving him personally. He claimed that when he was captured he was acting in the capacity of rear services support for Viet Cong troops. However, only about 200 Viet Cong actually are believed to have entered the city of Chau Doc as the multi-battalion Viet Cong attack was repulsed before they could enter the city. Also, he was captured behind a movie theater in Chau Doc City on 31 January, and it is felt that he may have been reconnoitering the city prior to the arrival of the Viet Cong battalions. |

2. | said that he first became aware of the Tet military operations of the Viet Cong about two weeks prior to the assault on Chau Doc City on the night of 30-31 January. At that time, | Chin Tanc, chief of security for Viet Cong An Giang province (Government of Vietnam Chau Doc and An Giang provinces and Ha Tien district of Kien Giang province) attended an indoctrination briefing in the Viet Cong redoubt on Nui Dai mountain. This briefing lasted for three days with 8-hour sessions each day. One of the principal indoctrinators was Bay Tha, a member of the provincial committee. Chin Tanc gave | a general account of these briefings shortly after his return. In general the briefings reviewed the entire Vietnamese situation, the world balance of forces, the balance of forces within Vietnam, and future plans of attack to create conditions which would bring the U. S. Government to negotiate in order to "proceed to peace." The briefings also touched on the point that the attacks being carried out by the Viet Cong during Tet are a departure from previous operational practice of the Viet Cong.

3. | said that the Viet Cong realized that they were committing everything and every person they had in this assault. It was obvious to all, he said, that

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the assault was a "go for broke" matter. He believes that few of the participants expected success, although most of them hoped that they would succeed.

an officer in Chau Doc province stated that if it had not been for the presence of the gunship "Spooky" and U. S. Navy PBR boats, the city would have indeed fallen.) There was no contingency plan for withdrawal or retreat because if even the possibility of defeat had been mentioned the morale of the troops would have been shattered and the operation would probably not have taken place. As it was, an unknown number of the troops fled with the first contact with defending forces.

4. | claims that he was assigned to the 512th and 510th battalions under the command of Major Nam Xuong. The objective of the operation was the liberation of Chau Doc. | learned of this objective only 24 hours before it was to begin, although he believes that the troops knew somewhat sooner. They were told that conditions were now right for a general uprising of the population, so that an aggressive and rapid assault would bring the people to the side of the Viet Cong and make untenable the positions of the Government of Viet Nam and American defenders. The uprising in fact did not take place during the attack, and | stated that it is likely that this lack of all-out popular commitment to the campaign is having a bad effect on the morale of the Viet Cong attackers. Source knew of no sandtabling of the operation nor any specific rehearsals. He said he was unfamiliar with the town of Chau Doc, and says he knew of no Viet Cong infiltrators or agents in the town before the actual attack took place.

5. | said Viet Cong main force units in Viet Cong An Giang province were designated the responsibility for "liberating" provincial capitals, whereas district forces and guerrillas were responsible for gaining control of their respective districts. The assault force which struck Chau Doc included ten party members who were to constitute the city front which was to organize a provisional government. | said he first heard the term "coalition government" about six months ago, but had never heard it brought into formal party proceedings until the briefings for the current operation.

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YEKADS  
DE YSNKQA 8 0351531  
O 041522Z ZYH ZFF-5  
FM GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH DC  
TO MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC  
MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC  
MR HELMS CIA  
Z 040959Z ZYH ZFF3  
FM GENERAL WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, SAIGON  
TO GENERAL WHEELER, CJCS, WASHDC  
INFO ADMIRAL SHARP, CINCPAC HAWAII  
AMB BUNKER SAIGON  
ZEM



DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-10-78 letter  
By ip, NARS, Date 3-29-79

~~SECRET~~ MAC 0161 EYES ONLY  
REF CJCS MSG 031606Z

AFTER NEARLY FIVE DAYS OF WIDESPREAD FIGHTING, THE TRUE DIMENSIONS OF THE SITUATION ARE BEGINNING TO EMERGE.

FROM A REALISTIC POINT OF VIEW WE MUST ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE ENEMY HAS DEALT THE GVN A SEVERE BLOW. HE HAS BROUGHT THE WAR TO THE TOWNS AND THE CITIES AND HAS INFLICTED DAMAGE AND CASUALTIES ON THE POPULATION. HOMES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED; DISTRIBUTION OF THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE HAS BEEN INTERRUPTED. DAMAGE HAS BEEN INFLICTED TO THE LOC'S AND THE ECONOMY HAS BEEN DISRUPTED. MARTIAL LAW HAS BEEN INVOKED, WITH

STRINGENT CURFEWS IN THE CITIES. THE PEOPLE HAVE FELT DIRECTLY THE IMPACT OF THE WAR.

A TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE HAS BEEN POSED TO THE GVN TO RESTORE STABILITY AND TO AID THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED.

THE ENEMY HAS PAID A HIGH PRICE FOR HIS EFFORTS. HIS LOSSES FROM 291800H TO 041200H STAND AT 15,595 KIA, 3,122 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS AND 632 CREW SERVED WEAPONS. HE HAS COMMITTED A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF HIS LOCAL FORCES, SAPPER UNITS, AND VC MAIN FORCE UNITS INTO THE BATTLE. OUR ESTIMATE INDICATES ABOUT 52,000. WE DO NOT KNOW, AT THIS TIME, HOW MUCH OF HIS GUERRILLA FORCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BUT, IN THE TOWNS AND CITIES, IT MUST BE A SIGNIFICANT PORTION. AGAIN OUR ESTIMATE WOULD BE AS HIGH AS 10,000 ALL OF THESE FORCES HAVE BEEN BADLY HURT, SOME HAVE BEEN WIPED OUT. THE ENEMY HAS REALLY FAILED TO ACHIEVE HIS OBJECTIVES. POLITICALLY, THERE HAVE BEEN NO UPRISINGS, NONE OF THE TOWNS WHICH HE PENETRATED ARE NOW HELD BY HIM, ALTHOUGH HE STILL IS HOLDING OUT IN PARTS OF A FEW SIGNIFICANT PLACES SUCH AS HUE, KONTUM CITY, DALAT, SAIGON AND IS CONTINUING TO LAUNCH NEW ATTACKS AGAINST NUMEROUS TOWNS IN IV CTZ. SPECIFICALLY, IN THE DELTA THE BATTLE SURGES IN AND OUT OF THE TOWNS, SOME BEING HIT REPETITIVELY, OTHERS TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED AND THEN FREED BY FRIENDLY REACTION FORCES. AS OF

THIS WRITING, HE HAS NO SIGNIFICANT HOLD ON ANY TOWN IN IV CTZ.

MILITARILY, THE ENEMY HAS FAILED IN HIS OBJECTIVES AND HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUSTAIN HIS ATTACKS. THUS, HE HAS DEMONSTRATED THE LACK OF A BASIC CAPABILITY TO DO SO. ALL OF OUR AIRFIELDS ARE OPERATIONAL DESPITE HIS ATTACKS. WE HAVE LOST A NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT BUT THESE HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY INFLUENCED OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE ALL FACETS OF AIR SUPPORT. HE HAS FAILED TO BREAK COMMUNICATIONS. IN FACT, THROUGHOUT THIS BATTLE, COMMUNICATIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY DEPENDABLE. HE HAS FAILED TO DESTROY ANY FRIENDLY UNITS, ALTHOUGH FRIENDLY CASUALTIES DURING THE FIVE DAY SPAN ARE THE HEAVIEST OF THE WAR. AS OF 041200H, THEY STAND AT 415 U.S. KIA, 904 ARVN KIA, 13 FW KIA AND 2,385 U.S. WIA, 2,705 ARVN WIA AND 102 FW WIA.

ALL FW AND ARVN FORCES HAVE THE STRENGTH, DISPOSITION, AND ARE IN THE PROPER FRAME OF MIND TO KEEP AT THE ENEMY AND INFLICT EVEN GREATER LOSSES IF HE PERSISTS IN THE ATTACK. AND, SINCE MANY OF HIS NVA/VC MAIN FORCES HAVE NOT BEEN COMMITTED, WE MUST ACCORD HIM THE CAPABILITY OF A SECOND CYCLE OF ATTACKS EITHER AGAINST THE POPULATED AREAS OR MOST LIKELY, IN THE DMZ AND OTHER AREAS OF NVA CONCENTRATION. THESE MAY COME IN CONCERT.

I HAVE NO DOUBT OF THE ABILITY OF THE FW FORCES TO MEET THIS RENEWAL.

ALSO, I BELIEVE THE ARVN HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT IT CAN AND WILL FIGHT VALIANTLY TO STEM THIS ENEMY SURGE. AS FOR ARVN PERFORMANCE, THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT THEY WERE CAUGHT IN A "PRE-TET" POSTURE. WE DO NOT HAVE FULL DETAILS, BUT THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT UNITS WERE REDUCED BY TET LEAVE AND WERE NOT FULLY ALERT DESPITE PRESIDENTS THIEU'S ASSURANCE TO ME THAT 50 PERCENT OF EACH UNIT WOULD BE ON THE ALERT. FROM THE OPENING OF THE FIGHTING, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE MOVED THEIR FORCES RAPIDLY AND TOWARDS THE BATTLES, AND THE TROOPS HAVE FOUGHT WELL. THEY ARE CARRYING THE BRUNT OF THE CITY FIGHTING, WITH THE U.S. FORCES WORKING ON THE OUTSKIRTS, OR IN COOPERATIVE OPERATIONS IN THE MORE CRITICAL TOWNS. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE ARVN APPRECIATES THE ENORMITY OF THE TASKS AHEAD AND, ALTHOUGH THE HIGH COMMAND IS UNDERSTANDABLY ENGROSSSED IN CLEARING THE CAPITAL, THE REST OF THE MACHINERY IS FUNCTIONING. THE FULL IMPACT OF ARVN LOGISTICAL LOSSES HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED.

THE IMMEDIATE TASK FACING US IS TO COMPLETE THE CLEAN UP OF ENEMY FORCES IN THE CITIES.

IN HUE, THE BATTLE IS STILL GOING ON. FIVE ARVN BATTALIONS AND ONE U.S. MARINE BATTALION ARE OPERATING IN THE CITY. 2 BATTALIONS OF THE 1ST CAV ARE EMPLOYED OUTSIDE THE CITY. I AM HOPEFUL THAT THE NEXT

FEW DAYS WILL SEE THE SITUATION CLEANED UP.

IN KONTUM, ORGANIZED RESISTANCE HAS STOPPED AND FRIENDLY FORCES ARE MOPPING UP. WE HAVE A U.S. INFANTRY BATTALION WITH APC'S AND TANKS, AND AN ARVN INFANTRY BATTALION IN AND AROUND THE CITY. THE ENEMY HAS SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES IN THE AREA.

SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS

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OO YEKADS  
DE YSNKQA 9 0351531  
O 041523Z ZYH ZFF-5  
FM GEN WHEELER CJCS  
TO MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC  
MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC  
MR HELMS CIA

O 041244Z ZYH ZFF3  
FM GEN WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, SAIGON  
TO GEN WHEELER, CJCS, WASHDC  
INFO ADM SHARP CINCPAC HAWAII  
AMB BUNKER (PASS TO MR. CHILLEM)  
ZEM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ MAC 01628 EYES ONLY

1. FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OBTAINED TODAY BY GENERAL ABRAMS IN VISIT TO IV CTZ MAY BE USEFUL AS BACKGROUND FOR TELECAST.

2. LTC DU, PROVINCE CHIEF, KIEN HOA PROVINCE, WAS AT HIS PLACE OF DUTY IN PROVINCE HEADQUARTERS IN BIEN TRE CITY. HIS FAMILY WAS AT FAMILY HOME IN SAIGON. AT 0230 HOURS, VC ENTERED HOME AND MURDERED HIS FAMILY. ALTHOUGH LTC DU WAS ADVISED OF THIS TRAGEDY, HE CARRIED ON DURING THE HEAVY ATTACKS ON HIS HEADQUARTERS. HE DISPLAYED REAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY IN THE FACE OF THE RUTHLESS VC TERRORISM IN BIEN TRE IN WHICH THOUSANDS OF HOME WERE DESTROYED. HE CONTINUED TO WORK AROUND THE CLOCK TO HELP HIS PEOPLE.

3. GENERAL TRI, COMMANDER 9TH ARVN DIVISION WAS AT HIS OPERATIONS CENTER AT SA DEC ON 310200, AT WHICH TIME THE VC ENTERED HIS HOME IN THE CITY NOT FAR FROM HIS OPS CENTER. HIS FAMILY WAS NOT IN HIS HOUSE. UPON LEARNING OF THE VC RAID, GENERAL TRI SENT A PLATOON TO DESTROY THE VC. IT SUCCEEDED IN DRIVING OFF THE VC AND CAPTURED ONE PRISONER. UPON INTERROGATION IT WAS LEARNED THAT THE VC MISSION WAS TO CAPTURE THE GENERAL AND HIS FAMILY AND FORCE HIM TO CALL FOR HIS CHIEF OF STAFF AND DEPUTY. WITH THESE HOSTAGES, THE VC WERE TO GIVE GENERAL TRI THE CHOICE OF TURNING OVER HIS DIVISION OR ALL WOULD BE EXECUTED.

4. GENERAL THAN, COMMANDER 7TH ARVN DIVISION, WAS AT HIS HEADQUARTERS WHEN THE VC ATTACK WAS INITIATED. DURING THE BATTLE A VC PLAN WAS CAPTURED WHICH DETAILED THE MISSION OF CAPTURING GENERAL THANH AND HIS HEADQUARTERS FOR THE SAME PURPOSE AS DESCRIBED ABOVE IN THE CASE OF GENERAL TRI.

5. THE SIGNIFICANT FEATURE IN ALL OF THE ABOVE INCIDENTS IS THAT THE PRINCIPALS WERE AT THEIR POSTS OF DUTY WHEN THE ATTACKS WERE INITIATED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS WAS DURING THE TET PERIOD. THEIR ATTENTION TO DUTY UNDOUBTEDLY SAVED THEIR LIVES AND PRIMARILY CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESSFUL DEFENSIVE ACTIONS OF GOVERNMENT FORCES IN THE DELTA.

6. GENERAL ABRAMS DISCUSSED THE DELTA SITUATION WITH MR. COTTRELL, DEPUTY FOR CORDS AND COLONEL HILL, MILITARY DEPUTY IN THE IV CTZ. THESE OFFICERS HAD JUST COMPLETED A TOUR OF ALL 16 PROVINCES IN IV CTZ AND TALKED WITH EVERY PROVINCE CHIEF AND THEIR US ADVISORS. THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE VC ATTACKS IS GREAT. THEY ESTIMATE OVER 10,000 HOMES DESTROYED AND APPROXIMATELY 125,000 PEOPLE HOMELESS. GENERAL ABRAMS

CONSIDERED IT SIGNIFICANT THAT ALL PROVINCES WITHOUT EXCEPTION,  
HAD ALREADY INITIATED REORGANIZATION OF THEIR AREAS,  
APPOINTED RELIEF COMMITTEES, AND WERE PROVIDING THE HOMELESS  
WITH FOOD, CLOTHING AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. FOOD KITCHENS  
WERE FEEDING PEOPLE WITHOUT FACILITIES. THERE APPEARED TO  
BE AN INTENSE DESIRE BY PROVINCE CHIEFS TO SHOW THEIR PEOPLE  
THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS MORE TO OFFER THAN DO THE VC.  
IT WAS ALSO INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT PEOPLE WERE HELPING  
EACH OTHER, GIVING UTENSILS AND FOOD TO THE DESTITUTE,  
INDICATING THAT IN A REAL CRISIS, VIETNAMESE PEOPLE  
DO BAND TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON WELFARE. WITHOUT  
EXCEPTION, PROVINCE CHIEFS STATE THAT THEY WOULD COPE WITH  
FOOD AND CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS WITHOUT OUTSIDE HELP. THEY WILL  
NEED MONEY AND BUILDING MATERIALS. THE DETERMINATION  
AND WILL OF THE DELTA LEADERSHIP TO CARE FOR THEIR PEOPLE  
IS AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT.

SSO NOTE DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS  
820

NNNN

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

EYES ONLY

INFORMATION

38

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Monday, February 5, 1968 -- 4:05 pm

*Pres file*

Mr. President:

This is the report I didn't send along the other day because: it was only one such straw in the wind; and CIA could not evaluate the source. Nevertheless, it is interesting.

 reports that the North Vietnamese army has informed the Viet Cong that support will be withdrawn in March 1968 and therefore the Viet Cong must make every effort to win before March."

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

W. W. Rostow

SANITIZED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6  
NLJ 96-199  
By isa, NARA Date 8-19-98

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 5, 1968

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

SUBJECT: Statistics on the Past Week's Activity in Vietnam

The following are cumulative statistics for the period from the 29th of January to midnight, February 4, by Corps areas:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Weapons Captured</u>
<u>I Corps</u>				
Enemy	6030		2009	1276
U. S.	225	1218		
South Vietnamese	335	1159		
<u>II Corps</u>				
Enemy	3562		1477	1103
U. S.	77	309		
South Vietnamese	270	933		
<u>III Corps</u>				
Enemy	7118		456	1412
U. S.	148	1109		
South Vietnamese	238	905		
<u>IV Corps</u>				
Enemy	3625		559	1043
U. S.	65	239		
South Vietnamese	226	956		
<u>TOTAL</u>				
Enemy	20,335		4,501	4,834
U. S.	515	2,875		
South Vietnamese	1,069	3,953		

It is interesting to look at this in comparison with other periods.

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>Last week</u>
Ratio enemy/friendly killed	2.8/1	3.7/1	4.1/1	12.8/1
Enemy weapons captured (weekly average)	224	357	598	4,834

It is difficult to make a relationship with prisoners, due to a change in reporting procedures. However, it is interesting to note that the prisoner of war population as of January 1 was 9,743. Assuming all those captured last week are valid POWs, this will mean we have increased this population by almost 50 percent in just one week.



Art Mc Cafferty

Tuesday, February 6, 1968

41

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

We have gone through the accumulated materials resulting from interrogation of prisoners and documents captured last week, and sought the answers to three questions:

1. Did the VC/NVA troops expect the Vietnamese populace to rise up and support them in their attacks?
2. Did the VC/NVA have any known plans for retreat or withdrawal?
3. What is the VC/NVA evaluation as to success or failure of the campaign?

In general, the answers are as follows:

1. Yes, they did expect assistance and uprising as evidenced by the following responses to interrogation.

A prisoner captured on January 31 in Chau Doc City stated that the attack was to create conditions which would bring the U. S. Government to negotiate in order to proceed with peace. The time was ripe for an uprising. He said that the VC realized that they were committing everything and every person they had in this assault. It was obvious to all that the assault was a "go for broke" matter. He believes that few of the participants expected success, although most of them hoped that they would succeed.

Prisoners captured in Nha Trang (II Corps) state that they were told they could take Nha Trang because of the VC organization in the city. The NVA officers did not believe this but went on with the attack in order to support the nation-wide effort and make success possible elsewhere.

According to one of these who was captured on the morning of February 4, "The current general insurrection campaign will extend for the duration of the Winter-Spring Campaign. Many attacks will continue because the order has been given and cannot be countermanded." He stated that "when the VC/NVA attacked Nha Trang, they expected to be defeated; however, they believed in the general insurrection campaign of South Vietnam."

The Executive Officer of the VC Zone Committee II, Gia Lai (Pleiku), who was captured on January 30, stated that the aim of the present action is to achieve the goals set forth in Resolution 13 of the Lao Dong Party, that is, guide people to strike and demonstrate and to liberate all areas. He also advised that the present offensive was scheduled to last seven days and would end on February 5, 1968.

Three prisoners captured in the Bien Hoa area stated that they had believed that the population would assist in an uprising against the GVN and U.S. forces and in their opinion the anticipated support from the population has not been forthcoming.

2. All evidence points to the conclusion that orders were received to "hold at all costs." Prisoners captured on January 30 in the attack on Pleiku revealed that they had orders to "take Pleiku City or not return." Three prisoners captured in the Bien Hoa area apparently were not provided with withdrawal plans since there was no question about achievement of victory. The prisoners said their orders were to continue fighting until victory. (Lack of a withdrawal plan and unfamiliarity with the local terrain may account in part for the large enemy losses.)

Four prisoners captured in the attack on Saigon provided the following: Casualties were to be left behind. After Saigon had been occupied, there would be a special detachment to take care of wounded. The Battalion was not to retreat. The objective was to be held indefinitely. Supplies would be brought in later. Troops were ordered to fight until Saigon was taken. A prisoner who died of wounds on February 1 revealed before his death that the major objectives in the attack on Saigon were the Presidential Palace, the radio station, and the Tan Son Nhut Airbase, with orders to hold at all costs, with no thought of retreat.

Another prisoner (believed to be a VC General and currently undergoing more intensive interrogation) revealed that the VC planned to take over Chau Doc Province at any cost. If this failed, then taking over the Province was to be completed before the end of the "Spring Phase," that is, before the end of March 1968. This all came about because of an order from COSVN to use the Tet period as a "unique opportunity to make sacrifices of their lives for the survival of the fatherland." There was no plan of retreat or withdrawal as the VC were convinced of success. This was part of a general uprising throughout South Vietnam, which would reduce the number of U. S. or GVN troops which could be sent in as reinforcements. Thus, if their first attack on Chau Doc City failed, they planned to keep attacking until they achieved success.

Approximately 100 VC prisoners captured in the attack on the city of Rach Gia, Kien Giang Province, with an average age being between 15 and 18 years, revealed during interrogation that the soldiers were given no contingency plan and were directed simply to take the town and hold it until a coalition government could be formed.

3. There is little hard evidence in the form of response to interrogation or captured documents which give feel for their assessment of success or failure. However, the following does show that plans did not progress as anticipated.

A prisoner captured in Chau Doc City indicated that his troops had been told that the conditions were now right for an uprising of the population and that an aggressive and rapid assault would bring the people to the side of the VC and make untenable the positions of the GVN and American defenders. The uprising in fact did not take place during the attack and the prisoner said that it is likely that this lack of all-out popular commitment to the campaign is having a bad effect on the morale of the VC attackers.

A prisoner captured during the attack on Nha Trang stated that there would be a second attack on the city and that the Special Forces Headquarters, the 62nd Aerial Squadron, and the airfield

would be shelled. Shelling had been intended during the first attack but the element in charge of transporting ammunition did not arrive on time.

W. W. Rostow

AmcC:jjs

Thursday, February 8, 1968

THE FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF CABLE FROM GENERAL WESTMORELAND

The following is my assessment of recent enemy activity and strategy:

The enemy's objectives in the recent phase of his Winter-Spring Campaign are now clear. They were primarily psychological and political. The enemy sought first, to destroy the Government of Vietnamese governmental apparatus, second, to intimidate the people, and third, to bring about large scale defections from ARVN. All of these would add up to a "general uprising" in which the citizens would join the Viet Cong ranks and thus permit the enemy to take over the control of major cities and areas. The military objectives of this phase appear to be secondary. Here the attacks were directed primarily against Headquarters, air installations and aircraft with the view of injuring our control and our air power so as to hamper reinforcement and air support. Of course there was a secondary military objective to disperse and divert our forces throughout South Vietnam.

Since he hoped to obtain Vietnamese support from his "general uprising," the enemy used Viet Cong troops to the largest extent possible. Obviously these were more appropriate for use in this psychological thrust than North Vietnamese Army troops. Some North Vietnamese Army troops in First and Second Corps were used where Viet Cong strength was inadequate. He withheld large formations, both North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong, apparently to reinforce local success or to recycle his offensive at some later date.

As to the timing, attacks in southern First and Second Corps (Military Region 5) commenced in the early hours of 30 January. Attacks in the Second Corps, Fourth Corps, and Tri-Thien commenced 24 hours later. This is as close to simultaneity as the enemy has ever come in launching widespread attacks, and probably is a result of a high-level (Hanoi) decision to use the Tet Holidays for cover. In the Khe Sanh/DMZ and Duc Co area of the Western Highlands, the enemy appeared ready to attack concurrent with his Tet offensive, but he probably was delayed because of friendly operations.

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 13292, Sec. 3.5  
NLJ

~~SECRET/SAVIN~~

By \_\_\_\_\_, NARA, Date \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the enemy tactical scheme for the urban areas was simple, well planned, and, up to a point, effective. Viet Cong local force and sapper troops infiltrated the urban areas under cover of Tet celebrations and mingled with the people. Units then assembled, armed themselves, and attacked their targets. At the same time, supporting units outside the city launched attacks on airfields and other installations. Numerous POW Interrogations indicate that the initial attacking forces were to seize key installations, paralyze Government of Vietnam installations, and start a general uprising--all within two to three days. Then heavier units were to reinforce to eliminate remaining resistance and exploit the situation.

There was no general uprising, and the enemy holds totally no cities, though his units remain in city environs and continue harassment he achieved his greatest success in Hue. Also, enemy forces lost heavily (22,000 - 23,000 killed and 5,000 detainees since the commencement of his Tet offensive). On the other hand, the enemy has scored a psychological blow, possibly greater in Washington than in South Vietnam, since there are tentative signs that the populace is turning against the Viet Cong as a result of these attacks. In addition, the enemy has succeeded in temporarily disrupting the South Vietnam economy.

The enemy poses serious threats in the following areas:

- A. Saigon: Remnants of the local force units are still in Saigon but the major threat consists of the 9th Viet Cong Division now located a few kilometers North of Saigon. Although the evidence is thus far inconclusive, I anticipate that this attack will be supported by rockets into the Saigon area--possibly the 240MM Rocket which a POW has stated is in the area.
- B. Khe Sanh/DMZ: The enemy deployment in the DMZ is well known and his recent attacks in the Khe Sanh area indicate he has surrounded that camp with two divisions. A major offensive is imminent.
- C. Danang: The 2d North Vietnamese Army Division, deployed west of Danang, is preparing for an attack.
- D. Dak To: The 1st North Vietnamese Army Division has again deployed its three regiments in the immediate Dak To area and an attack supported by mortars and rockets appears imminent.

E. Hue: The enemy occupies the southern portion of Hue and pockets of strong resistance exist in the Citadel Proper. The disposition of the 6th Regiment and Headquarters Tri-Thien Military Region coupled with resupply activity indicates a possible attack recycle against the city. Certainly, the enemy will remain until forced to withdraw.

We have a number of indications as to the time frame for the next phase of the enemys offensive. Two POWs in Third Corps indicate a new phase will begin on 10 and 11 February. In First and Second Corps COMINT indicates the new phase will begin on 8 and 9 February. Additionally, two North Vietnamese Army officers captured in Laos state that the date for the renewed offensive is 10 February.

I believe the enemy will continue to strain the will of the people by maintaining pressure on the populated areas with his forces already committed. He probably will attempt to coordinate major offensives indicated above and current intelligence points to a recycle of attacks in the Saigon area, probably to commence on 10 or 11 February.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 3-6-79 letter

By ip, NARS, Date 3-21-79

53b

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Thursday, February 8, 1968

TEXT OF CABLE FROM AMBASSADOR BUNKER (Saigon, 18562)

SUBJECT: COSVN Order for Tet Offensive

The following is the combined documents exploitation center translation of a document captured on February 3 in Tay Ninh Province. The document is a carbon copy of what appears to be the general order from COSVN to its military forces for the Tet offensive.

Begin text:

Headquarters, South Vietnam  
Liberation Army

Enclosure  
B

Order of the Day  
of the Headquarters,  
All South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces

To all cadre and combatants,

"Move Forward to Achieve Final Victory"

The Tet greeting of Chairman Ho is actually a combat order for our entire army and population.

And in compliance with the attack order of the Presidium, Central Committee South Vietnam Liberation Front, all cadre and combatants of all South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces should move forward to:

Carry out direct attacks on all the Headquarters of the enemy, to disrupt the US Imperialists' will for aggression and to smash the Puppet Government and Puppet Army, the lackeys of the US. Restore power to the people, completely liberate 14,000,000 people of South Vietnam fulfill our revolutionary task of establishing democracy throughout the country.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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This will be the greatest battle ever fought throughout the history of our country. It will bring forth world-wide change but will also require many sacrifices. It will decide the fate and the survival of our fatherland and will shake the world and cause the most bitter failure to the imperialist ringleaders.

Our country has a history of four thousand years of fighting and defeating foreign aggression, particularly glorious battles such as Bach Dang, Chi Lang, Dong-Da and Dien Bien Phu. We defeated the special war and are defeating the limited war of the Americans. We resolutely move forward to completely defeat the American aggressors in order to restore independence and liberty in our country.

Dear Comrades,

Our liberation armed units have had many achievements in the past. This will be a good opportunity for you to score more brilliant and heroic victories. Through this opportunity, you will be able to make maximum use of your abilities, demonstrate your devotion to the revolution and your unsubdued will to get even for what has been done to our country and brighten our beloved country.

In the name of our fatherland's independence and liberty, Headquarters of all South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces orders every cadre and combatant to:

1. Move forward aggressively to carry out decisive and repeated attacks in order to annihilate as many American, Satellite and Puppet troops as possible in conjunction with political struggles and military proselyting activities. Each cadre and combatant must be doggedly determined to accomplish their combat mission. Each local area must also accomplish its assigned mission.
2. Display to the utmost your revolutionary heroism by surmounting all hardships and difficulties and making sacrifices so as to be able to fight continually and aggressively. Be prepared to smash all enemy counter attacks and maintain your revolutionary standpoint under all circumstances. Be resolute in achieving continuous victories and secure the final victory at all costs.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 3 -

3. Correctly comply with all combat discipline and the Front policies. Strive to assist and protect the people and motivate them to comply with the Front policies.

It is evident that the American aggressors are losing.

The call for assault to achieve independence and liberty has sounded.

The Truong Son and the Mekong river are moving.

You, comrades should act as heroes of Vietnam and with the spirit and pride of combatants of the Liberation Army.

The final victory will be with us.

- Day - Month 1968

Instruction: This enclosure B will be read to every cadre and combatant prior to departure for attack.

Comment: JUSPAO is processing this document for release February 8 or 9.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM

20

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

87  
January 30, 1968  
Tuesday, 3:15 P.M.

6

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Viet Cong Attack on U.S. Embassy in Saigon

By direct telephone, NMCC has learned that in an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, several Viet Cong got into the compound.

There is one U.S. casualty, an officer in the Embassy's Political Section. The compound is under full U.S. control.

*W. A. R.* Rostow

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

MEMORANDUM

INFORMATIONTHE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Tuesday, January 30, 1968, 10:00 P.M.

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Westmoreland Reports U.S. Embassy Saigon Cleared  
of Viet Cong

At 9:00 P.M. (EST) General Westmoreland telephoned from the U.S. Embassy compound to report that the Embassy Chancery as well as the entire compound are completely cleared of Viet Cong attackers.

In the rest of Saigon, he reports that things are now quiet. There is still some fighting at the nearby U.S. base at Ton Son Hut. This fighting at the base may be Viet Cong attempting to get out of the area. He reports he has all the strength needed to take care of this fighting.

Ambassador Bunker is safe but has not yet returned to his Embassy office. All Embassy civilians are safe, one marine was killed and two were wounded in the action. Four Military Police were killed and three were wounded. Nineteen Viet Cong were killed in the fighting.

Damage to the Embassy building is minimal. There was no structural damage but part of the lobby was destroyed and the outside of the building damaged.

General Westmoreland reconstructs the operation as follows: At about 3:00 A.M. Saigon time a Viet Cong platoon of about twenty men dressed in civilian clothes and armed with automatic weapons, rockets, satchel charges and explosives, attacked the Embassy compound. They made a hole in the outer wall through which they crawled. Their purpose was apparently to destroy the building.

The MPs moved in, encountering sniper fire coming from buildings nearby. At about 5:00 A.M. U.S. troops moved into the compound, engaging the Viet Cong. At 8:00 A.M. a platoon of the 101 Airborne Division landed on the roof. The fighting ended about 9:00 A.M., all Viet Cong in the area believed killed.

*Bromley*  
Bromley Smith

*Picture of Embassy attached*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

Our latest information on the situation in Saigon indicates that Senior Embassy personnel have returned to duty in the Embassy. The situation in Saigon has stabilized somewhat, however mopping up operations continue in the area of the presidential palace and in the Cholon area of Saigon.

Sporadic sniper fire has been reported in various parts of Saigon and there has also been some scattered firing around the MACV headquarters. Scattered and sometimes heavy Viet Cong activity is taking place in the Cholon area but a considerable number of the enemy have withdrawn across the river.

The Saigon police estimated that more than 60 police have been killed in various actions around Saigon. They also report that 60 Viet Cong have been killed in actions within Saigon.

Sporadic small-arms fire continues at the Tan Son Nhut Air Base. The Viet Cong penetrated the northwest gate and also probed the main gate area and at last report over 100 enemy soldiers were within the base area. There was also sporadic mortar fire directed at the runway, however, the base is reportedly operational. The Command post has been evacuated, except for emergency personnel. The extent of damage and casualties are presently unknown.

Up-dating information on indicates that 4 US were killed and 61 were wounded in the attack against Bien Hoa air field. In addition three aircraft were destroyed and 19 aircraft were damaged. It is unknown how many enemy were killed, but 17 were captured. Light contact is still taking place on the base perimeters. The runways and taxiways are presently undamaged.

Yesterday afternoon the Marble Mountain air base, near Da Nang, came under a rocket and mortar attack, with an estimated 25-30 rounds impacting within the compound. A total of 23 helicopters received damage. Two US were wounded during the attack.

At 3:10 yesterday the air base at Chu Lai also came under a rocket and mortar attack. In this attack nine aircraft received damage. During the attack the ammunition dump was hit resulting in secondary explosions. Two US were killed and five were wounded as a result of this attack.

Also yesterday afternoon the air base at Phu Bai came under rocket attack but there was no damage to aircraft or runways. Four US were killed and 14 wounded during the attack.

Early yesterday morning the city of Can Tho and the airfield, in the Delta, came under a ground and mortar attack by an estimated two enemy battalions. This attack lasted throughout the day and as of last report South Vietnamese National Police and ARVN troops were bringing the situation under control. An enemy force of 50 personnel have been split into three groups and are held up in an old pagoda and two other buildings in the center of town. At present 55 enemy have been killed and 52 others have been wounded and captured. Friendly losses are 13 killed and 34 wounded.

An estimated six enemy companies attacked the city of Ben Tre, in Kien Hoa Province, and indications are that the enemy moved into the city. However, after heavy fighting the enemy has been driven to the outskirts of the city where fighting is still underway. Preliminary reports indicate that 80 enemy were killed. At present there are no reports of US casualties.

Late yesterday evening one North Vietnamese battalion was reported within Kontum City and an additional North Vietnamese battalion was stationed on the outskirts of the city. The MACV compound was reported as under attack but is holding out with military reinforcements on the way. At last report 150 enemy had been killed. US losses were 7 killed and five wounded.

The town of Phan Thiet, Bien Thuan Province, is reported as being under enemy control. US Public Service personnel in the town have requested to be evacuated and an aircraft is underway to take them to Nha Trang.

Nha Trang itself is just snapping back after two nights and two days of fighting in which time one enemy battalion entered the city and destroyed the sector headquarters and captured the Province headquarters and radio station prior to being driven out leaving 103 killed and 20 captured. At least 12 Americans are dead or missing. Scattered sniping on the fringes of the town continues, however.

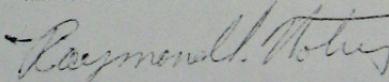
In the coastal town of Qui Nhon South Korean and South Vietnamese troops secured the radio and train station that remained in enemy hands throughout yesterday. 70 enemy were killed in the fighting at Qui Nhon with an additional 10 being captured. It now appears that Qui Nhon is under allied control.

During the period 5:00 Monday to 11:00 PM last night 2,291 enemy were killed throughout South Vietnam. Allied casualties are unknown at present, but they are reported as light.

#### North Vietnam

Scheduled strikes against major targets in North Vietnam were cancelled because of poor operation weather in the target areas. US pilots flew a total of 90 sorties over North Vietnam yesterday. The major emphasis of these strikes were against lines of communications.

White House Situation Room



Briefing Officer

Friday, February 2, 1968  
6:30 AM

15

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

The Tet offensive continued into its fourth day with pockets of Communist forces holding out within or on the outskirts of key cities in each of South Vietnam's four corps areas.

Saigon was relatively quiet during the night. In early morning action, however, the Viet Cong overran two South Vietnamese police precinct stations. Sporadic fire was reported at several other points in the city. Small arms fire continued early this morning at Tan Son Nhut airbase.

Reports out of Saigon indicate that traffic in the downtown and residential areas is at a minimum as the people respond to the government's control measures under martial law. The functioning of public services, water electricity, telephone, has returned to near normal after various outages. Government agencies are beginning to deal with the problem of the many persons who have been driven out of their homes by the fighting.

Mortuaries in the city have more bodies than they are equipped to handle (this includes Viet Cong bodies) and the corpses are being stored outdoors. Bodies will be cremated to avoid an epidemic. The director of the combined intelligence staff predicts that this will be abhorrent to the public and will cause a strong reaction against the Viet Cong.

Fighting is still going on in Hue as both US and ARVN forces maneuver to block any retreat from the citadel area. The ARVN commanding general has approved bombing of selected targets in the city, starting with small bombs and then getting bigger. The MACV headquarters and subsector headquarters are still under friendly control but troops are unable to move out of them because of heavy enemy fire.

In the Mekong delta sharp fighting continued in several cities. Two enemy battalions are still believed to be inside Ben Tre, where two US companies have arrived to reinforce ARVN forces. Heavy fighting was reported during the night at Vinh Long, and a Navy base was overrun briefly.

Yesterday afternoon the MACV compound in Kontum received mortar, rocket and automatic weapons fire. Last night the airfield was receiving sporadic fire and was only open for emergency use. There was heavy fighting within the city but all friendly installations and compounds remain in friendly hands. A US Army reinforcement battalion has completed helilift into the city.

The Khe Sanh area remains quiet with only five rounds of mortar fire being received.

Enemy dead reported since Monday now total over 10,000. US forces have lost 232 killed and some 1,000 wounded; South Vietnamese losses stand at 522 killed and nearly 1,300 wounded.

North Vietnam

All scheduled major strikes were cancelled because of poor weather in the target areas.

White House Situation Room

*Arthur M. Coffey*  
Briefing Officer

Apart from a relatively small but articulate minority the bulk of American public opinion would, in the short run, support expanded military effort in Viet-Nam in order to end the war fast. Most of the polls indicate that sentiment continues to be hawkish, but this has more relation to expanding the war into North Viet-Nam than expanded troops. There would be misgivings about more troops without more war and a certain feeling of despair. There is very little sentiment for giving up or withdrawing in Viet-Nam.

At the same time, the predominant sentiment is one of frustration and a desire to finish up in Viet-Nam. There is relatively little sentiment which understands the problem and which is prepared for the long haul which may be required. There continues to be the feeling that we ought to be making more progress than we are and a considerable feeling that the reason we have not lies in denying for political reasons military solutions to the problem. Therefore, a proposal to greatly increase US troop contributions without at the same time extending the bombing program in North Viet-Nam and mining the port of Haiphong would be met by considerable grumbling on the part of those who support an increased Viet-Nam effort.

Authority DECLASSIFIED STATE letter [2-79]

There is a danger that this frustration will grow and that increased troops, which means increased casualties, will tend to increase the feeling of frustration unless the kind of concrete progress which now seems unlikely can be shown in the near future. There is a real danger that more of the same, unaccompanied by visible progress towards an end to the war, will result in disenchantment with the policy. There are almost sure to be increased questions as time goes along as to whether or not we are properly conducting the war and whether or not the burdens which would accompany increased troops are worth it.

Beyond doubt there is an increasing criticism of the GVN and the ARVN and an increased questioning as to whether or not they are bearing their fair share. Unless an increased troop contribution is accompanied by tangible progress with respect to the South Vietnamese themselves, it is likely to bring increasing criticism upon the Administration and increasing questions as to whether or not the war is being properly conducted.

Thus sentiment which now favors increased military action could quite easily turn into sentiment extremely critical of the way in which the Administration is conducting the war.

Most of this criticism is likely to appear some months from now rather than immediately. But there will be questions asked in the Congress and in the press which will set the basis for that criticism. Undoubtedly we will be asked what it is we expect to accomplish with increased troops and what it is the GVN is doing to solve its own problems. We will also be asked whether or not more troops will be needed later and why troop increases are not being accomplished by other actions.

A majority of public opinion will continue to reject the idea of United States withdrawal or defeat in Viet-Nam but will more and more question the capacity of an Administration which is unable to achieve a victory. It is likely to move in the direction of "win or get out" with increasing willingness to wash our hands of the whole matter. What is important above all, is to give a sense that leadership knows where it is going and how to get there.

19  
Sunday, February 4, 1968  
6:30 AM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

A check by the Marines indicates everything was quiet in Khe Sanh as of 2:00 AM.

In Hue, the northwest and southwest portions of the citadel remain partially occupied with small pockets of enemy forces. Clearing of the built-up areas has slowed the operation. ARVN forces are reported in complete control of the airfield. Sporadic contact continues within the citadel and US forces continue sweep operation to the southwest and maintain blocking positions to the west and northwest.

During the night hours, Phu Bai airfield received 40-50 rounds of mixed mortar and rocket fire. There was no damage reported.

In Kontum mortaring of US and Vietnamese installations was reported during the early morning hours. At present Kontum city is under the control of friendly forces. However, sniping continues during daylight and nighttime hours. In general the local populace appears apathetic to the current situation, trying to avoid being caught in the action and being injured. To date, there have been no signs of sympathy or aid for the enemy among the local populace.

No fighting has been reported in Ban Me Thuot, but reports were being received in the town that enemy forces were advancing on the town.

In Saigon there is still scattered firing and small groups of enemy are being observed. Vietnamese troops and police are being dispatched immediately to clear these areas out. On Sunday morning, when the Vietnamese people poured out into the streets, police were strictly enforcing the ban on vehicular traffic.

At Tan Uyen, in Bien Hoa province north of Saigon, enemy forces occupied a brick factory a short distance from the ARVN headquarters, overran the dependent housing area and disabled a nearby power plant. Reinforcements were being sent to the town.

US personnel in My Tho report that, despite the terrific pounding which the city took, it has withstood the Viet Cong attacks and remains in friendly control. The Viet Cong still infiltrate the edges of the city, but action is confined to sporadic sniper fire. The special police were cited as having done an excellent job during the fighting, especially considering the superiority of enemy weaponry over that used by the police. ARVN troops fought well throughout the fighting.

In the delta area, the town of Ha Tien was attacked and reported overrun in the early morning hours. A reaction force has been dispatched.

US personnel report from the city of Vinh Long that the Viet Cong attacks there will probably be a military loss to the Viet Cong, but may become a psychological victory for them. Looting by soldiers and civilians is widespread throughout the city. All public utilities are off and air strikes, artillery, and firing from boats have leveled much of the city. ARVN troops appeared untrained and unaccustomed to city fighting.

Cumulative casualties since Monday

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Captured</u>
Enemy	14,997	--	4,156
United States	367	2,063	
South Vietnamese	738	2,059	

North Vietnam

All strikes against major targets were again cancelled because of poor weather in the target areas. 76 armed reconnaissance sorties were flown in the southern part of the country.

White House Situation Room

*Arthur M. Coffey*  
Briefing Officer



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

216

March 5, 1968

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

To: The Secretary  
From: H. C. Lodge *H.C. Lodge*  
Subject: Herewith what I tried to convey to you on Sunday.

American public opinion can stand a long drawn out military campaign with few casualties or a relatively short campaign with high casualties (such as World War II which from the American standpoint began with heavy combat operations in December 1942 and ended in April 1945, i. e., two and one-half years). But American public opinion cannot stand a long drawn out war with high casualties. As far as the overwhelming mass of public opinion is concerned, the big thing is U. S. casualties. If they go down, none of the other things matter very much. And Vietnamese civilian casualties would go down too.

It would be most imprudent to expect quick results in Viet-Nam. The central purpose, after all, is to build a nation and this involves psychological changes which usually come gradually. As realists we should assume a protracted effort -- hopefully with low casualties. If things should go quicker than we expect, so much the better.

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority STATE letter [2-79]  
By ing, NARS, Date 7-25-79

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

"Search and Destroy"

The policy of the U. S. military in Viet-Nam has consistently -- and rightly -- been to conduct what is called "offensive operations." But these are defined as "search and destroy" -- and this raises serious questions.

Such a definition clearly implies a belief that an exclusively military victory is conceivable and that if we just get out and destroy enough Viet Cong the war will come to an end. This is the so-called "war of attrition."

Such a war was sound doctrine in World War II, but it is not realistic in the Viet-Nam war. It is not possible to win the war by killing the enemy by military means on the ground in South Viet-Nam. The hard core terrorist guerrilla certainly cannot be reached that way. He will only be reached when the people give enough information about the terrorists so that they can be rooted out by police-type methods. This is what is meant by "pacification" which, in turn, is the first step in "nation-building." And the North Vietnamese soldier can be better reached by bombing North Viet-Nam and by being apprehended when he reaches his so-called "safe haven" in South Viet-Nam.

The following questions, therefore, arise:

a) has there not been unnecessary killing of people on our side because of the policy of "search and destroy," in particular

by the devastating effect of our artillery and airpower on Vietnamese civilians and buildings?

b) has not this tactic failed to do the job?

c) has it not also created an undue number of refugees?

d) has it not made heavy demands on precious intellectual and physical energies which might otherwise have been aimed at nation-building, which is the most promising way to achieve a durable result?

Might we not, therefore, do much better if we defined the phrase "offensive operations" as meaning "split up the enemy and keep him off balance"? In accordance with this definition the U. S. military would be playing its own utterly indispensable part: acting as a shield behind which the Vietnamese nation-building and pacification operations can take place.

Someone who enjoys the President's confidence and has a good grounding in military and political matters, but who is not in the regular military hierarchy, should see whether a policy of "split up and keep off balance" would not result in fewer U. S. casualties, fewer refugees and at the same time actually expedite the pacification program, by releasing energies now inevitably absorbed by the great demands of the present policy of "seek out and destroy."

The question of how we use our armed forces is a matter of the greatest political importance, even though its execution is

military. It should be viewed from the viewpoint of the highest possible overall civilian strategy.

More Troops?

More troops, therefore, should, in accordance with this reasoning, be sent in numbers sufficient only to enable us to keep faith with our troops in exposed positions, as in the northern end of South Viet-Nam -- and not to continue the past emphasis on "search and destroy."

The new emphasis should be on the creation of durable local political institutions under which police-type programs -- for "territorial security" -- can operate. Such an emphasis would be on protection of heavily populated areas, which would, of course, require operations outside of these areas. It would deny safe haven to the infiltrators from the North. It should organize South Vietnamese society as efficiently as North Vietnamese society is organized. There should thus be intensive and repeated scourings -- i. e., "comb-outs" -- precinct by precinct, block by block, house by house, and farm by farm. It should be as hard to move from one precinct to another or from one village to another in South Viet-Nam as it is today in North Viet-Nam. All this should mean fewer U. S. casualties and fewer Vietnamese refugees. And it should hasten the end of the war.

Our present practice of having virtually everything available to the press is also a loser. The enemy would never do such a thing. We should institute censorship just as we did in World War II and on the very simple grounds that we are risking American lives if we don't.

### A New Turn

Thus it would be clear that we are not going to abandon Viet-Nam; but that we are going to run the war with a somewhat different emphasis in the light of our experience at the time of the Tet raids, which has created a new situation.

There were those who, in the late forties and early fifties, believed that the so-called "cold war" with the Soviet Union must come to a head. Some were making plans accordingly -- to "end the cold war by winning it." Then General Eisenhower explained to the American people that we must learn to live with the cold war. Everyone now sees that this was good advice.

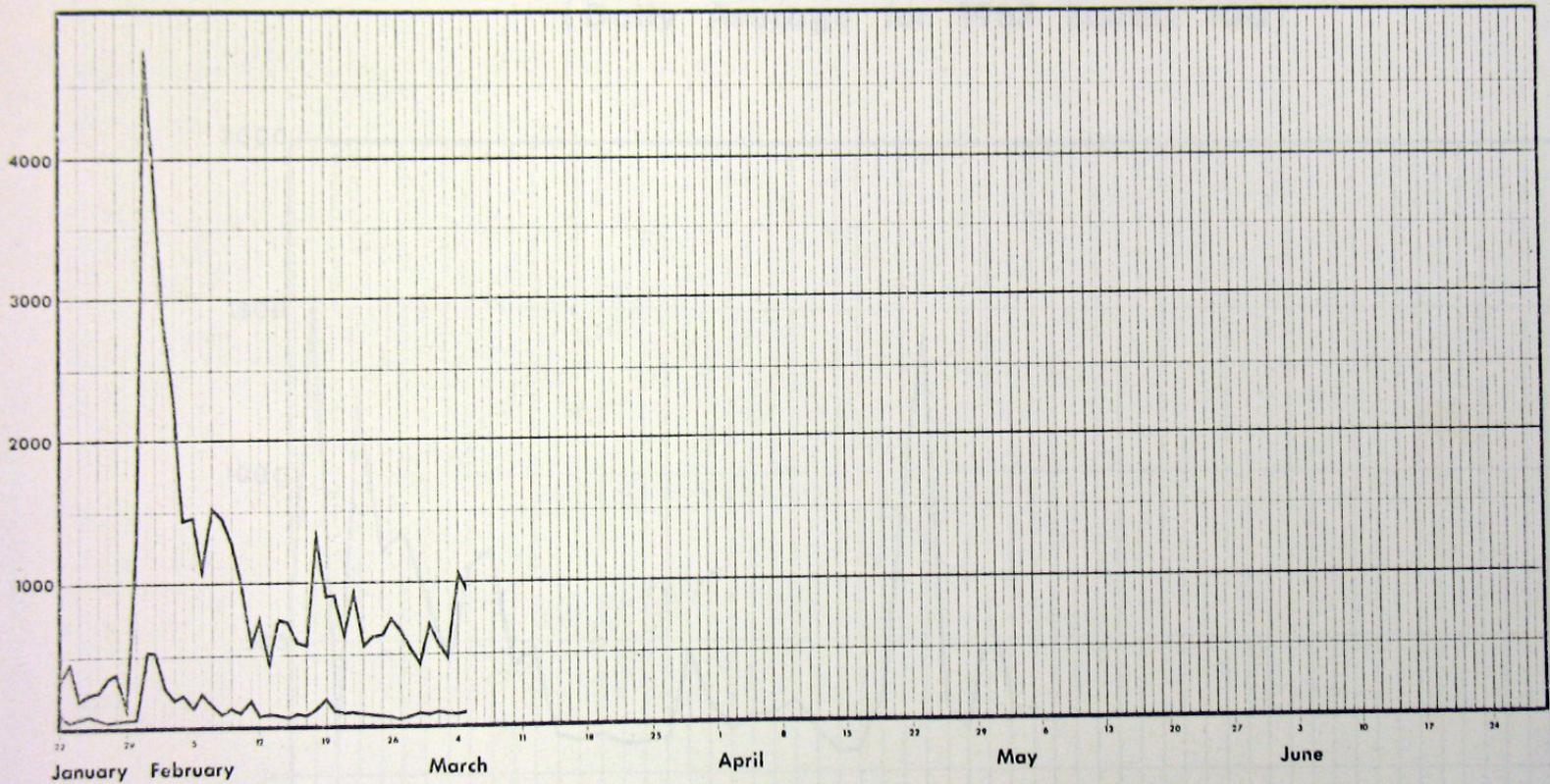
We can learn to live with this Vietnamese situation and, if we do not watch the clock, we will find that time will be working for us. We have had soldiers in Germany and in Korea since 1945. Similarly, we can have soldiers in Viet-Nam providing protection

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

# South Vietnam: Daily Casualties

226

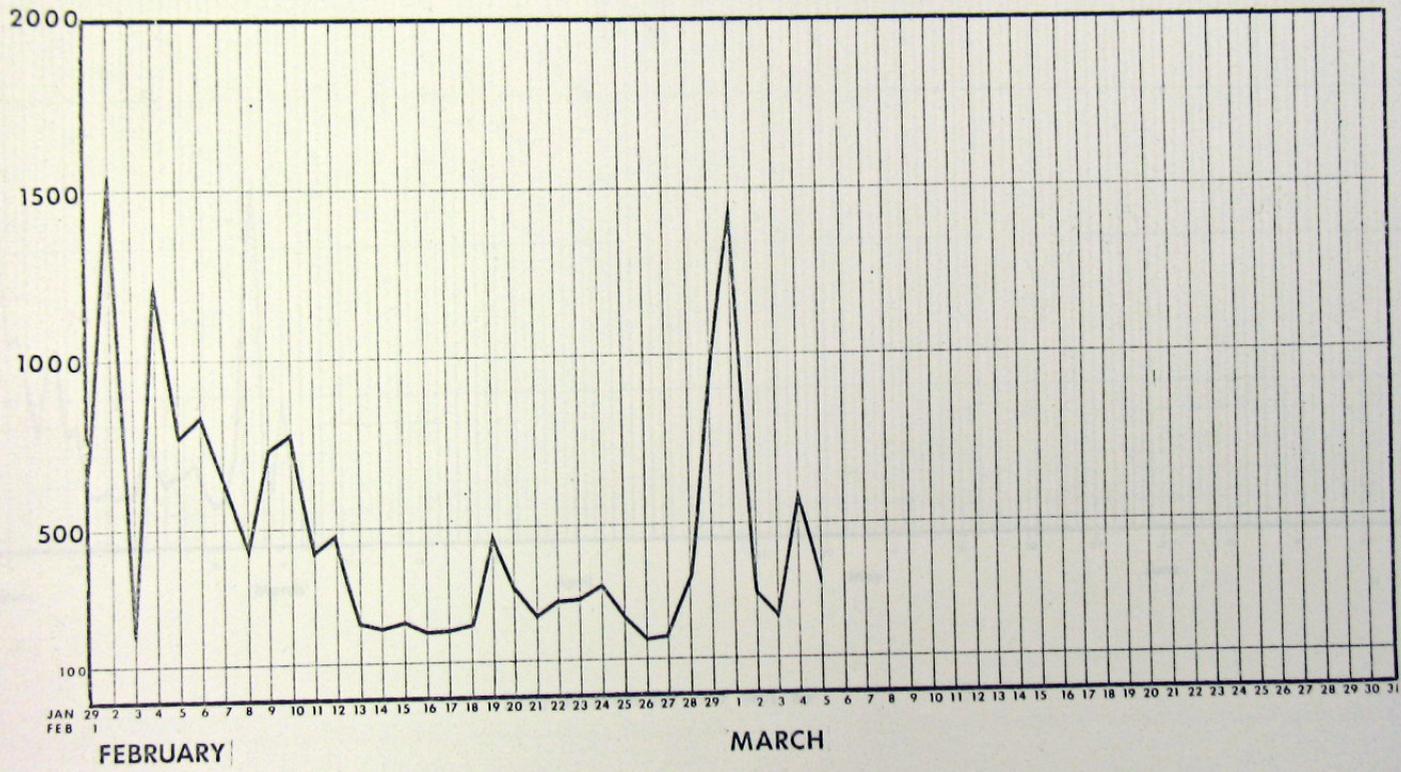
US  
GVN  
Enemy



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# South Vietnam : Index of Enemy Weapons Losses Since Tet

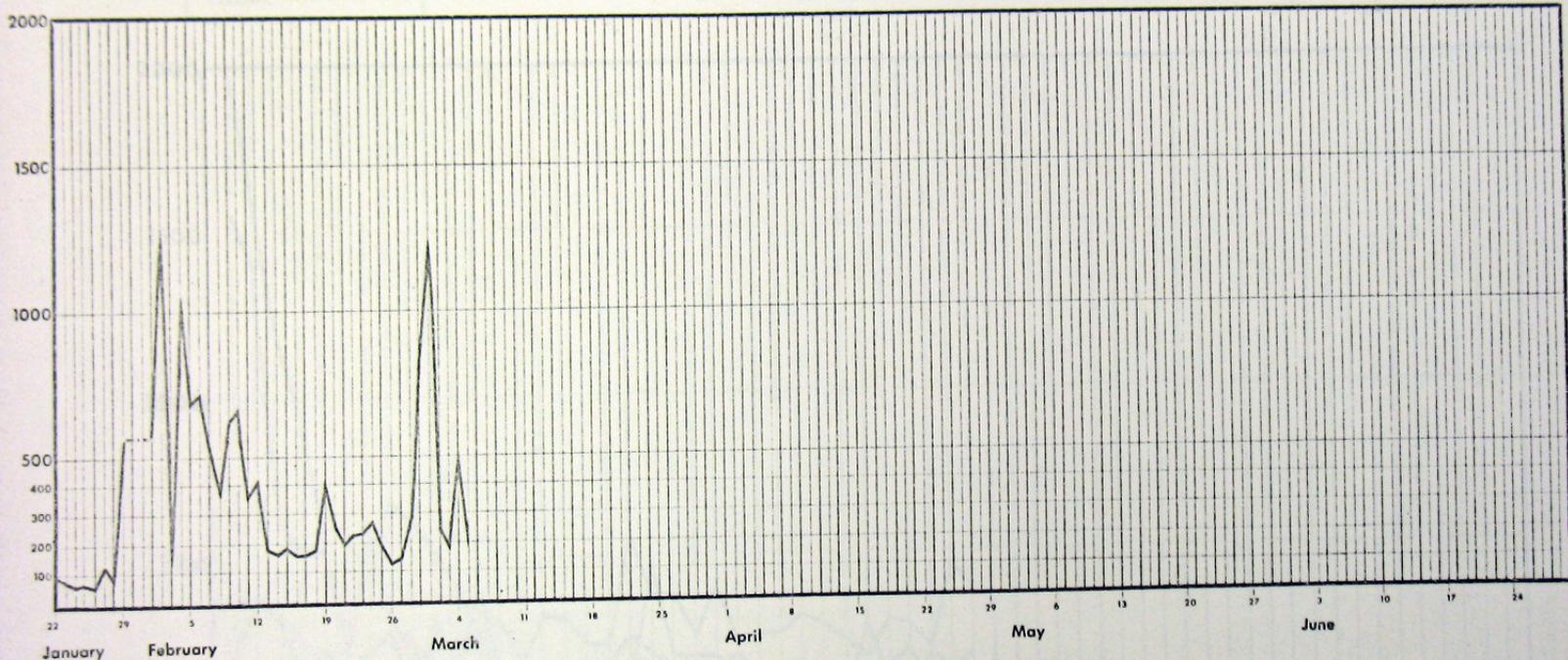
(Daily Average for 1967 Equals 100)



COPY LBJ LIBRARY

# South Vietnam: Enemy Weapons Losses

NOTE: INDIVIDUAL DAILY TOTALS ARE NOT  
AVAILABLE FOR THE PERIOD FEBRUARY  
JANUARY 29 THROUGH FEBRUARY 1. THE  
TOTAL FOR THIS PERIOD IS 2,379, AN AVERAGE  
OF 81 PER DAY.

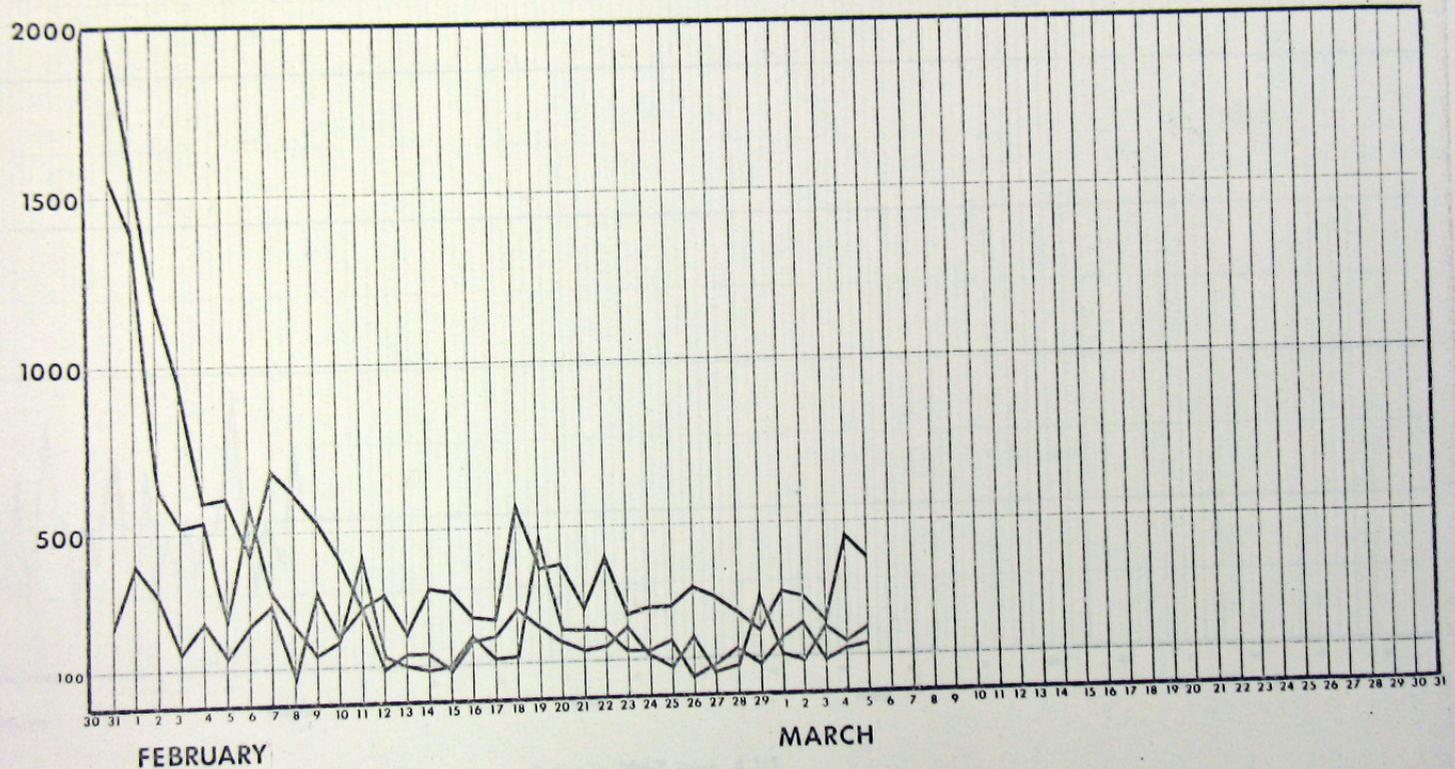
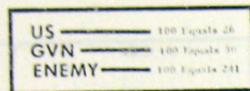


Daily Average for 1967 was 85

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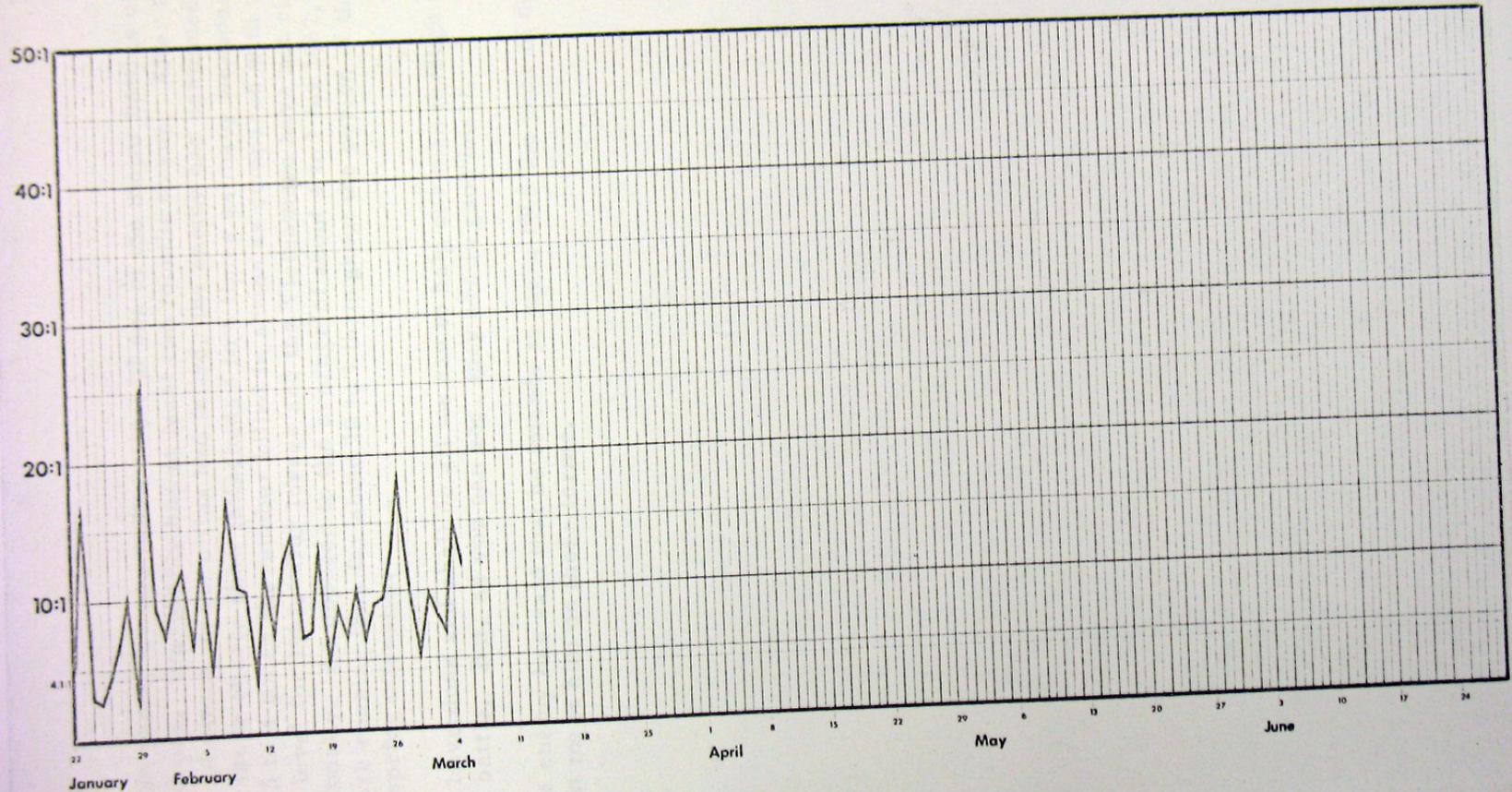
# South Vietnam : Index of Casualties since Tet

(Daily Average for 1967 Equals 100)



COPY LBJ LIBRARY

# South Vietnam: Ratio of Enemy Killed to Friendly Killed



Ratio in 1967 was 4.1:1

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9. In short, we are in the midst of one of the major battles of modern times. It probably has at least two months to run. After the big wave of attack on the cities had failed, the enemy has continued to lose, as these charts show (attached), 3 to 4 times as many weapons each day and 3 to 4 times the number killed in action as compared with the average level for 1967. Our losses and the Vietnamese have not risen proportionally. As opposed to the average of about 4 to 1 for 1967, enemy losses are running thus far about 10 to 1 throughout the period of the winter-spring offensive.

We have done and shall do all we can to help our men through this critical battle. But, as you can see, they are in good heart.

The enemy has said that he intends to make 1968 the year of decision. We must meet him on those terms.

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55  
Tuesday, February 6, 1968  
6:30 AM

25

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

The Cholon area of Saigon continues to be the prime area of Viet Cong activity. In an effort to stabilize these areas, South Vietnamese Rangers have taken up positions in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th precincts.

Yesterday evening an enemy force attacked and blew-up a power station in the Cholon area and at about the same time set fire to a US warehouse in the same general area.

Additionally, a Viet Cong force is presently involved in a fire-fight with the national police in the 5th precinct and as of last report 25 enemy had been killed. Thus far only one policeman has been killed and 44 were wounded.

With the exception of Cholon, the remainder of Saigon has experienced only sporadic sniper fire.

In the First Corps area Hoi An City was attacked by an estimated three companies of Viet Cong. This action continued for several hours and it is believed that the enemy sustained heavy casualties.

A South Korean artillery position located on the outskirts of Hoi An came under a mortar attack late yesterday evening. Simultaneously a South Korean infantry company in the same vicinity was assaulted by an enemy ground force, supported by mortar fire. The enemy penetrated the South Korean defensive position for a short period before they were repulsed. Enemy losses are unknown at present. South Korean losses were one killed and 12 wounded. Two US advisors were also killed.

No major ground engagements developed in the Khe Sanh area during the night. However, the combat base at Khe Sanh received 172 rounds of mortar and rocket fire yesterday. There were no casualties reported.

In Hue, an estimated three enemy companies still retain positions in the southeast and southwest sectors of the Citadel and as of yesterday evening US Marines and ARVN units were still involved in heavy contact and progressing slowly in house-to-housefighting.

A US Marine unit on a sweep operation was ambushed by the enemy in an area 24 miles southeast of Hue yesterday. The Marines called in artillery and the enemy broke contact leaving behind 54 killed. Marine losses were 2 killed and three wounded.

In two sharp contact about 10 miles north of Dong Ha, US Marines killed 135 enemy soldiers. Nine Marines were killed and 32 were wounded.

National Police in Da Nang reportedly killed over 100 Viet Cong in actions throughout the city. Friendly losses were reported as very light.

Also yesterday, the US Army's helicopter landing pad 8 miles northwest of Da Nang came under a mortar attack resulting in one US killed and two wounded. Two helicopters were destroyed and 9 others damaged.

At present all major population centers in the II Corps are under friendly control.

However, during the night Ban Me Thout received approximately 60 rounds of enemy mortar fire with the primary target being the Army's helicopter facility. There has been no enemy contact within the city, however.

During the night the helicopter field at Pleiku was hit by mortar fire with one ammunition dump destroyed. A friendly infantry unit was in contact with an enemy unit 15 miles southwest of the city and at least 57 enemy have been killed.

In the Third Corps American observers in the area report no new outbreaks of Viet Cong activity and allied forces continue to mop up small enemy pockets in the provinces.

Two US Army companies engaged an enemy force 12 miles northwest of Saigon yesterday and with the aid of air support and artillery killed 36 enemy. Five US were killed and nine were wounded.

In the Fourth Corps, 135 sampans were seen moving south of Camau City. Air strikes were called in resulting in 95 sampans destroyed. Additionally many secondary explosions were noted with smoke and debris visible at times as high as 2,000 feet.

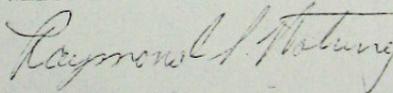
#### North Vietnam

US aircraft flew a total of 88 sorties over North Vietnam yesterday. All major strikes were cancelled because of bad weather in the target areas.

#### LATE ITEM

The press is carrying a story out of Hue reporting that US Marines smashed into a Communist stronghold, ripped down the Red North Vietnamese flag and hoisted up the Stars and Stripes over the heart of Hue today. We have NMCC checking to see if we defeated the enemy holed up in the Citadel.

White House Situation Room



Briefing Officer

#### Cumulative casualties as of noon Sunday

Enemy killed	21,330	
United States killed	546	3,084 wounded
ARVN killed	1,183	4,101 wounded

Thursday, February 8, 1968  
6:30 AM

31

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

The base at Khe Sanh and its peripheral defensive positions were struck again this morning with a heavy barrage of enemy artillery, rocket and mortar fire. The three hour bombardment, accompanied by a small ground probe of a nearby hill, resulted in little damage and light US casualties.

No major new attacks have occurred elsewhere. Pockets of enemy resistance, however, remain in several urban areas.

In Hue, enemy elements still occupy positions in the extreme southwest corner of the Citadel. On the south side of the river, US Marines are continuing clearing operations against diminishing enemy opposition. ARVN forces continue to be engaged in heavy fighting inside the Citadel.

In Dalat, enemy forces mortared several areas in the city during the night. No major areas of the city are now controlled by the enemy, but there is concern that they may have mixed with the refugees in the city. Local officials report there is sufficient food, water and power, and do not anticipate any major problems for at least a week.

Kontum reports that Viet Cong units continue to be entrenched in bunkers northeast of the city and are currently being hit with mortars artillery and airstrikes. The situation in the city itself is quiet.

Yesterday afternoon a Marine force attacked a North Vietnamese unit to the northeast of Con Thien. In the ensuing battle 30 of the enemy were reported killed; US casualties were 4 killed and 17 wounded.

In Saigon, three police stations came under fire in the Cholon section. Numerous reports are being received of sightings of enemy groups throughout the four precincts that make up this area -- 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Two US Marine battalions continued to pursue an enemy force 6 miles south of the Danang Air Base throughout the daylight hours yesterday. They have reported 153 enemy killed and 144 weapons captured; 6 Marines were killed and 14 wounded.

North Vietnam

A total of 120 sorties were flown yesterday. All strikes against major targets were cancelled because of weather.

Late Item

The latest information we have on Lang Vei is the attached press item which was written on the basis of the 5:00 MACV press briefing.

Cumulative casualties as of noon February 7

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Captured</u>
Enemy	24,662		4,996
United States	703	3,729	
South Vietnamese	1,303	4,493	

White House Situation Room

*Arthur M. Coffey*

Briefing Officer

**COPY LBJ LIBRARY**

36  
Saturday, February 10, 1968  
6:30 AM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

Khe Sanh remained relatively quiet with one enemy probing attack being reported during the past 24 hours. The enemy attacked a small US Marine outpost with 30-40 men. The Marines pulled back to the company defensive position followed by the enemy, who threw seven satchel charges into the perimeter defensive wire and then withdrew. US Marine casualties were two killed and three wounded. Enemy losses are unknown.

A US Marine KC-130 aircraft, was hit by ground fire and caught fire, two miles southwest of the runway. The burning aircraft landed at Khe Sanh and was destroyed. Of the eight men aboard the aircraft, two were killed and four were injured. The remaining two men are missing. The runway has been cleared and the airfield is open.

A US Marine company, 4 miles south of Da Nang, was fired on by an unknown number of the enemy. The Marines called in artillery fire and strikes by tactical aircraft. The enemy withdrew leaving 20 dead. There were no US Marine casualties.

Early yesterday morning elements of the US Army 25th Division engaged the enemy about ten miles north-northwest of Saigon. The fighting continued for six hours with action ending when the enemy withdrew. The enemy lost 176 killed while the US Army units lost three killed and 30 wounded.

Two rifle companies of the 25th Division engaged the enemy eight miles northwest of Saigon. In a four hour fight the enemy lost 102 killed. US Army casualties were placed at three killed and four wounded.

Saigon passed its quietest night since the beginning of the TET offensive. There were only two incidents reported as being of importance. In the fifth precinct friendly forces made contact with an estimated 40 Viet Cong at the southern edge of the race track which has been the scene of continued Viet Cong presence. The other attack was in the sixth precinct. It was attacked by an unknown size force. There were no casualties figures reported.

ARVN forces are still engaged in heavy fighting in the southwest corner of the Citadel. US Marines are reported to be having a easier time in clearing the area across the Perfume River.

North Vietnam

Yesterday US pilots struck the Cat Bi Airfield with one US Navy A-6A and the Air Force struck the Phuc Yeu Airfield with 16 F-4D aircraft. No damage assessment could be made because of darkness and weather. All the aircraft returned safely.

Poor weather conditions in the Hanoi area forced the cancellation of strikes against the Hanoi Rail/Highway Bridge.

Late Report:

A Viet Cong Battalion Command Group south of the racetrack area was knocked out. Six Viet Cong were killed including the battalion commander.

Cumulative casualties as of 11:00PM, February 9

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Captured</u>
Enemy	28,321		
United States	929	4,488	
South Vietnamese	1,739	6,720	

White House Situation Room

*James L. Brown*  
Briefing Officer

**COPY LBJ LIBRARY**

Sunday, February 11, 1968  
6:30 A.M.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

South Vietnam

A US Army brigade headquarters located at Tan An City, approximately 25 miles south of Saigon, received about 250 rounds of mortar fire followed by a ground attack against outposts defending the city. The contact lasted for three hours and 123 enemy were killed and 17 were detained. US Army losses were placed at four killed and 11 wounded while the South Vietnamese lost 37 killed and 211 wounded.

The Bien Hoa Airfield, about 25 miles north of Saigon, was hit by approximately 20 rounds of rocket fire resulting in one US killed, 36 wounded and 24 injured. Seven aircraft were destroyed and 16 were damaged. There have been no reports of enemy casualties. The airfield itself is reported as fully operational.

Bac Lieu City, about 140 miles south of Saigon, was hit by enemy mortar fire followed by a ground attack. One enemy platoon occupied a school house in the city and approximately 100 enemy remained on the outskirts of the city. South Vietnamese forces counter-attacked and recaptured the school building. The enemy force withdrew leaving nine dead behind. South Vietnamese casualties were five killed and 28 wounded. A large part of the city was reported to have been burned during the fighting.

In Saigon, there has been no significant activity reported. The South Vietnamese Police are conducting search operations in areas of suspected enemy presence.

US Marine units engaged in clearing the enemy from portions of Hue, reported greater ease of movement through the city yesterday with only light contact with enemy units. South Vietnamese Army units engaged enemy units in the Citadel. The enemy stills holds strong points along the wall in the southwest sector.

In the Cholon sector of Saigon, a warehouse containing food, clothing and assorted supplies was attacked by an enemy force. The enemy set fire to the warehouse and no report of the outcome of this action has been received.

A US force sweeping the area around Hoi An, approximately 15 miles south of Da Nang, engaged a large enemy force and reported killing 173 of the enemy. US losses were 12 killed and 43 wounded.

North Vietnam

US tactical aircraft flew 109 sorties against targets in North Vietnam yesterday. The weather conditions forced cancellation of all Rolling Thunder strikes scheduled for last night.

White House Situation Room  
*Charles E. DeLoach*  
Briefing Officer

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~~SECRET~~

Authority STATE letter [2-79]

MEMORANDUM

By isp, NARS, Date 7-25-79.

SUBJECT: Decision in Vietnam

1. The Critical Variable: US Public Opinion. The outcome of the war could well be determined by the evolution of opinion in this country during the balance of 1968. Present trends in domestic opinion, if continued over the next nine months, could make it very difficult for whoever holds office in 1969 to continue the war.

The course of domestic opinion, in turn is likely to hinge on what happens in Vietnam. Only a more evident prospect of success there is likely to reverse present trends in the US.

The analogy to the summer of 1864 is familiar: Then sinking Northern hopes of victory combined with rising peace sentiment to make it seem likely that Lincoln's opponent would win the election on terms which, in Lincoln's words, "would make it impossible for him to save it (the Union) afterwards". But the fall of Atlanta in September enhanced Northern confidence in victory and overnight the war ceased to be an election issue, as McClellan repudiated the peace platform on which he had been nominated.

2. Our Short Term Objective. There are many differences between now and 1864, but a key one is this: No military success is likely to take place soon in Vietnam which would be even remotely comparable to the fall of Atlanta in its effect on US public opinion. The only event that could have a similar effect in the US would be the opening of peace negotiations.

But the mere initiation of negotiations would not be enough. Unless negotiations were preceded and accompanied by military and political progress in South Vietnam, Hanoi would not likely undertake serious bargaining and Saigon would be demoralized by the mere fact of negotiations.

It should be our objective to get such favorable trends in Vietnam underway by late summer, and then to move to negotiations.

~~SECRET~~

The most important favorable trend would be improvement in the ARVN and GVN. CIA and INR believe that such improvement would weigh more heavily with Hanoi than any other single factor. It is to hastening this improvement that main emphasis should go in the period ahead. The actions needed to this end are for experts to fix, but some possible steps are cited below.

### 3. Improving ARVN

(a) Priority. The US Government, like any large organization, can only give a few subjects top priority. Improvement of ARVN (and of Regional and Popular Forces) should be given that priority - even if this means lower priority for some other aspects of our war effort.

(b) Arms. One tangible result might be sending more of the latest US arms and equipment to South Vietnamese forces. Recent reports suggest that many units on the other side are now better armed than SVN forces. If US production is limited, it may be more important to send the latest arms to Vietnamese forces than to provide them to US forces elsewhere (as President Roosevelt over-rode needs of the US armed services, in 1939-41, in order to give priority to allied needs).

(c) Appointment. The best way to assure that a subject gets high priority in the US Government is sometimes to create a bureaucratic vested interest in assuring that priority. Nothing would be more popular with the US public than appointing a high-level official whose main job was to coordinate Washington efforts in support of steps to improve South Vietnamese armed forces and to ensure that these steps got top priority in the US Government.

(d) Speech. Paradoxically, American Presidents sometimes communicate more effectively with the vast civil and military bureaucracy over which they preside by public speeches than otherwise. A Presidential speech on Vietnam, announcing the appointment suggested above and signalling our intent to place increasing emphasis on improving South Vietnamese forces in the present phase of the war, would be a clear signal to all concerned in the US Government

as to how they should spend their time. And it would be greeted with enthusiasm by the public - doves and hawks alike.

4. Improving GVN.

(a) Saigon. Current efforts to mobilize a wider range of non-Communist opinion in South Vietnam are an important part of the strategy posited in this paper.

(b) Appeal to VC. When the military situation in South Vietnam improves, a high level appeal by Saigon to elements in the VC to cut their ties to the north and try to work out a southern settlement might have an unsettling effect on the VC - particularly if it were coupled with a clear willingness to allow responding local VC leaders and cadres to remain in place and in local positions of authority, i.e., to "defect in place".

(c) Shift to Accommodation in Countryside. Along with this might go increased emphasis, as proposed by Professor Huntington, on strengthening ethnic, religious, and other organized groups in the countryside. This could mean delegating more responsibility, and providing more arms and resources, to such groups - instead of trying to run everything from Saigon.

5. Negotiations. After these courses of action had achieved some success, hopefully by late summer, would be the time to try to move to negotiations.

To persuade Hanoi to observe the San Antonio formula, it might be made clear to Hanoi that the alternative could be unpalatable forms of US escalation. Military planning or preparations to this end might then be undertaken, in ways that would be evident to Hanoi.

Once negotiations had begun, it would be desirable to reduce the scale of US casualties to a more politically tolerable level. This would make it easier for the US to wait out the Communists in what might well prove a prolonged period of simultaneous fighting and talking. This could mean curtailing some of the more distant US search and destroy operations, and withdrawing from some of the

more exposed US military positions. The fact of negotiations would provide an evident occasion for this shift of strategy - assuming that it makes sense on military grounds.

At the same time we might be prepared from time to time to intimate to the other side that the threat of escalation remained close at hand, if the negotiations seemed to spin out indefinitely.

6. US Troops. What the strategy outlined above means for specific US troop levels in Vietnam is a matter for expert judgment, but it clearly suggests these criteria:

(a) Enough additional US troops should be sent to Vietnam to meet current needs, while the ARVN and GVN improvements suggested above can be sought, and can take effect.

(b) Not so much additional US force should be sent as to (i) detract from placing the main priority on ARVN improvement; (ii) compel the US to adopt now escalation which we would want to hold in reserve as a threat, (iii) create such US public impatience and pressure to end the fighting and bring the boys home as would make it impossible for us to match Communist obduracy in possibly prolonged negotiations.

7. Conclusion. It may well be that, even if more favorable trends can be brought about in South Vietnam, Hanoi will use negotiations only as a tactic, without so changing its terms as to permit a settlement.

Even so, the strategy outlined above has merit.

For we will be better able to restore US support for the war if negotiations are begun, and better able to continue the war on whatever scale is needed if they have been tried and failed.

But the pre-condition to negotiations, as to any hope of success, is improvement in the ARVN and GVN. And it is to this end that we should now direct our main efforts - setting for ourselves the goal of producing a sufficient improvement to make negotiations feasible and useful later this year.

Query: Would initiation of negotiations during the election make it difficult to conduct negotiations sensibly, in view of the conflicting domestic pressures which an election might intensify?

Answer: Given negotiations' likely slow pace, it is improbable that, if they start in late summer, they will come to the crunch so soon in the succeeding months as to pose this problem.

**COPY LBJ LIBRARY**

Monday, January 29, 1968  
6:30 AM

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SANITIZED

South VietnamAuthority DSD 11-15-78 + NSA 1-29-79By [Signature], NARS, Date 3-20-79

The tempo of enemy military activity has not been reduced significantly since the beginning of the Viet Cong - announced cease-fire period three days ago. Numerous attacks, including both shellings and ground assaults were staged by the Communists over the weekend. Sporadic barrages of mortar, rocket, and artillery fire were directed at US positions throughout the northern provinces including the posts at Khe Sanh, Dong Ha, Gio Linh, and Chu Lai.

The US/South Vietnamese 36-hour cease-fire began at 5:00 AM EST this morning. Some 45 minutes before it began, Saigon announced that it would not observe the cease-fire in the First Corps area due to the heavy enemy buildup in that area.

Yesterday morning while sweeping the north bank of the Cua Viet River, 15 miles north of Quang Tri, Marine elements engaged a large enemy force which was supported by rocket and artillery. Attacking under the supporting fire of air, artillery and naval gunfire, the Marines pursued the enemy northward until dark. Night blocking positions have been consolidated in the area, with plans to continue the attack at first light. Initial casualties are reported as 52 enemy killed, while Marine losses were 7 killed and 27 wounded.

US army units participating in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa, 40 miles southeast of Danang, killed 21 enemy in an engagement late Saturday night. After four hours of fighting the enemy broke contact. US losses were reported as one killed and 6 wounded.

In the Khe Sanh area the enemy continued his harrassment with mortar and rocket attacks on Marine positions. Marine patrols and aerial observers continued to search actively for the enemy, directing heavy volumes of air and artillery fire against located and suspected enemy locations.

Elsewhere in the First Corps enemy contact was limited to small-unit engagements. Allied forces reported a total of 114 enemy killed and 52 weapons captured in these engagements.

Battle preparations are being completed by North Vietnamese main force units in the western highlands of Pleiku and Kontum provinces and there are indications that the beginning of a well-coordinated series of large-scale attacks may be imminent.

North Vietnam

US aircraft flew 224 sorties over North Vietnam yesterday. 42 of the sorties struck the Thanh Hoa railroad/highway bridge. Several direct hits were reported on the east span. Also, several railroad cars were reported damaged or destroyed.

The Vinh airfield was also struck with pilots reporting the runway cratered in at least three places.

Casualties reported during the past 24 hours -- to 5:30 AM

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>
Enemy	187	--
United States	8	33

White House Situation Room

*Arthur M. Coffey*  
Briefing Officer

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h. Your general preliminary comments on meaning and import current countrywide spate of VC activity.

i. How is VC surge likely to affect GVN standing and stability?

3. At 31/0710Z, [REDACTED] replied. The text of his reply is given below. I am passing it to the recipients of this memorandum in the belief that you may find it useful. You will understand, of course, that these are [REDACTED] initial reactions in a very fluid situation, the full dimensions and details of which were not known to him at that time.

\*\*\*\*\*

FOR [REDACTED] FROM [REDACTED]

1. Appreciate your need for rapid coverage of events and assure you we are doing everything possible to comply. It has been extremely difficult during the morning hours to obtain any hard information on the events of the night since police are fully occupied in mopping up operations in various sectors of the city. For example, the VC continued to be holed up in a house across from the Palace and apparently in houses in the area of Tan Son Nhut. Contrary to earlier reports, Embassy employees have been instructed not to report to work this afternoon.

2. You will shortly receive dissem concerning [REDACTED] enemy plans for this evening.

3. [REDACTED] telecon just received. As you can see from above, announcement premature that situation was calm enough to permit return of personnel to work. At this moment, it is impossible to estimate how long it will take to mop up VC who are holed up around town. If intelligence referred to above is accurate, we may have a busy night again this evening.

4. Will be filing report shortly on countrywide situation [REDACTED] Regional officers are preparing sitreps for direct transmission. [REDACTED]

President Thieu was in My Tho yesterday and requested MACV assistance in returning to Saigon this morning. Although American facilities received their share of attention, other targets were Koreas and Philippine Embassies, Palace and Saigon radio station. During the last few days, Station has diligently pursued all available sources for intelligence that might have given us warning of these attacks. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

reports but nothing which appeared to be very hard. [REDACTED] not prepared for this attack on the opening day of Tet, when large numbers of [REDACTED] At this point, we anticipate that country-wide attacks will continue tonight. However, we lacking intelligence from the regions which would give us an accurate read-out. Your telecon questions, para 2g, h, and i will be dealt with separately.

5. COS and EXO will spend night in Station, with a backup commo command post in another area of the city. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Every possible precaution being taken to assure security of personnel and classified facilities.

6. Re your telecon questions g, h and i:

a. You will appreciate the difficulty we have in even beginning an answer to these questions which will be of great importance when the security situation settles down.

b. We are not today in contact with many elements in the Vietnamese population to discern their attitudes and moods. A circling airplane with loudspeakers told the people to stay off the streets and in their homes. VC have reportedly made specific threats to persons living in certain areas to vacate homes at risk of death. Most Saigonese have indeed stayed at home and we assume that they will follow VC orders as well. The mood is very tense.

c. The meaning and import of current activity can be extracted from VC stated intentions regarding the winter-spring campaign, their calls for general uprising, and their obvious drive toward a major victory for propaganda and morale purposes. While we may be undergoing a major multiple harassment without lasting military significance, the ultimate import will depend on their degree of success on the ground and the impact on American and South Vietnamese willingness to rebound. The boost to VC/NVA morale is in any case certain to be substantial.

d. Regardless of what happens tonight or during the next few days, the degree of success already achieved in Saigon and around the country will adversely affect the image of the GVN (and its powerful American allies as well) in the eyes of the people. All Vietnamese, both those who are sympathetic and those who are

[REDACTED]

critical, hope and expect for protection from their government and the relative lack of VC activity in Saigon during recent months created a presumption of GVN and police strength in this area at any rate. Those who believe that security situation (not the political) is paramount will deduce that only a tough, efficient, no-nonsense government run by the military can meet the sheer physical thrust of the Viet Cong. Those who cannot stomach such a government will be moved further toward the temptation of negotiations and coalition government.

e. We would hope to be permitted to delay additional analysis and prediction until we have provided for the necessary security of our installations and personnel and can begin to move about the city to communicate with sources able to provide authoritative reactions and ideas. In meantime, hope above will be helpful.

[REDACTED]

Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

cc: Secretary Rusk  
Secretary McNamara  
General Wheeler



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

64a  
Bennett

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

February 7, 1968

DEMONSTRATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.  
FEBRUARY 5-6, 1968

On February 5-6, 1968, a demonstration was held in Washington, D. C., sponsored by the Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, an organization in opposition to United States policy in Vietnam.

Approximately 1,350 persons attended the opening session of the demonstration held at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, 1313 New York Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D. C., on February 5, 1968.

Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr., Chaplain, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, one of the five persons recently indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for counseling draft evasion, was moderator of this session. Coffin, in his opening remarks, stated that it was possible that the administration is losing some of its leaders such as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Gardner, Secretary of Defense McNamara and Ambassador Goldberg because they do not agree with the moral position of the administration in the war in Vietnam. He stated that if this was their reason for leaving, they should speak out. Coffin stated that if the President really wants to end the war he has only to declare a cease-fire to be effective in 24 hours and then hope that the other side will follow suit.

Reverend John C. Bennett, President, Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York, and a Cochairman of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, spoke concerning a new book published by the Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam in January, 1968, entitled "In The Name of America." Bennett remarked that it was difficult for a nation to admit that it was wrong, but that compassion and repentance are a fruit of common faith and both churches and synagogues should cry out against the war.

DEMONSTRATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.  
FEBRUARY 5-6, 1968

Father Robert Drinan, Dean, Boston College Law School, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, stated that the violence of the war has silenced the conscience of those who engage in it and those who are witnesses. He said that if the war could not be won without violating the rules of warfare, the American people have the right to know this and to repudiate the pattern of lawlessness in the Vietnam struggle.

Dr. Seymour Melman, Professor of Industrial Engineering, Columbia University, New York, New York, and the Director of Research for the book "In The Name of America," stated that the root principle at stake is whether American officials must obey the law or whether they are above the law. He said that in a free society some may be guilty, but all are responsible. Melman claimed that the recent Viet Cong infiltration into Saigon proved that the people of South Vietnam do not support their Government.

The opening session ended at approximately 12:30 p.m. and participants were urged to attend "state-by-state" strategy sessions at various local churches from 1 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. During the afternoon of February 5, 1968, participants were encouraged to visit their Congressmen for the purpose of presenting their views on Vietnam.

During the opening session, a group of approximately 100 counterdemonstrators representing the American Council of Christian Churches, a conservative fundamentalist organization, conducted a picket line in front of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. These individuals carried placards reading, "No Substitute for Victory," "Let's Have Victory in Vietnam," "Clergymen, Stop Helping the Reds," "God and the Devil Do Not Coexist," "Will the Sacrifice of Our Boys Be in Vain," and "We Detest War Too, But Tyranny More."

Reverend Donald A. Waite, who acted as a spokesman for the American Council of Christian Churches, stated that his group was in Washington, D. C., to demonstrate in favor of United States policy in Vietnam and in opposition to the activities of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. He said his group would peacefully picket all the activity of this latter group.

DEMONSTRATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.  
FEBRUARY 5-6, 1968

At 7 p.m. on February 5, 1968, an "Ecumenical Worship" was held at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. The program included a "report from Vietnam" and the showing of a film entitled "Inside North Vietnam."

Speakers included Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Director, Commission on Interfaith Activities, Union of American-Hebrew Congregations; Dr. Harvey Cox, Professor, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts; the Reverend George M. Docherty, Minister, New York Avenue Presbyterian Church; Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel, Professor of Jewish Ethics and Mysticism, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, New York; and the Reverend Andrew J. Young, Executive Vice President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Following these speeches, a film entitled "Inside North Vietnam" by Felix Greene, an English journalist, was shown. The program ended at 11 p.m.

On the morning of February 6, 1968, the demonstrators reconvened at two locations. One group of approximately 350 to 400 people attended a plenary session on "the religious community and politics, 1968" at the Lincoln Memorial Congregational Temple, 1701 11th Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C. The second group of approximately 1,200 individuals met at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church for a plenary session on "the religious community and the draft."

At the Lincoln Memorial Congregational Temple, Sanford Gottleib, Executive Director of the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, a group which opposes United States policy in Vietnam, urged support for the candidacy of Senator Eugene McCarthy.

Duff Reid, Assistant to Senator Thruston Morton, said the war in Vietnam must be de-escalated because the United States cannot determine the course of events in Vietnam. He called for the election of a Republican president.

At the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, one of the speakers was the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr., who spoke on the draft laws and stated "legality is not

DEMONSTRATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.  
FEBRUARY 5-6, 1968.

morality." He said a minister can counsel individuals to obey their conscience, but cannot counsel them to disobey the laws.

The Reverend Mr. Coffin was interrupted by the Reverend Carl McIntyre, an official of the International Council of Christian Churches, who asked to speak. He stated he had been defrocked as a Presbyterian minister because he wanted to be ruled by God and not by human beings. He told those present they must follow their conscience and follow the word of God.

Following the meetings at the two churches, the demonstrators participated in a silent prayer service at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Following this service, a closing assembly was held at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church where the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke regarding the administration's policy concerning the war in Vietnam and the war on poverty. King said that those working in the civil rights movement should also be working for peace and justice. King stated, "I will give you my commitment, I intend to keep on marching." Speakers at this assembly also included Ossie Davis, who has been identified as a member of the Communist Party during the latter part of 1963, and Coffin.

Following this closing exercise, Reverend Thomas Hayes and four other individuals proceeded to the Department of Justice Building, Washington, D. C., where they presented representatives of the Department of Justice with a large scroll signed by members of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam in support of antidraft and antiwar activity.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

February 5, 1968

BY LIAISON

Mrs. Mildred Stegall  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Stegall:

A peace demonstration was held at Pauley Pavilion, University of California, Los Angeles, California, on January 31, 1968. The principal speaker was Dr. Benjamin McLane Spock who has recently been indicted along with four others in Boston, Massachusetts, concerning a violation of the Selective Service laws.

Prior to Dr. Spock's speech at approximately noon on January 31, 1968, a gray Plymouth Belvedere Sedan with "United States Government" printed on its front doors and license number G1133798 was observed parked near the vicinity of Pauley Pavilion.

The trunk of the vehicle was open and a large number of balloons and an inflating device were observed in the trunk. The balloons were blue in color with white doves and bore the printed words "Stop the Draft." Persons of college age were observed removing these balloons from the trunk of the car and inflating them. The balloons were carried by individuals who marched from Pauley Pavilion to an office building in Los Angeles that houses five local draft boards where a demonstration took place.

Some of the demonstrators wrote obscenities on the outside walls of the draft board building and others forced the front door open and entered the building; however, no damage occurred to draft board files. The demonstrators appeared to be highly excitable, shouting slogans and singing songs.

It was ascertained that the United States Government vehicle was assigned to General Services Administration motor pool, Los Angeles International Airport. The vehicle was

Mrs. Mildred Stegall

charged out on January 26, 1968, to Harvey Lee Barnett, Office of Economic Opportunity, 100 McAllister Street, San Francisco, California, and was to be returned on February 9, 1968. According to the San Francisco office of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Barnett is temporarily employed by that agency as a recruiter for Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA).

The Department of Justice, Office of Economic Opportunity, General Services Administration and Civil Service Commission are being furnished information regarding this matter.

Sincerely yours,

*J. Edgar Hoover*

# A CALL to CLERGYMEN and LAYMEN

## In Whose Name?

70a

Death, destruction, and despair have been heaped upon the Vietnamese people in the name of freedom and democracy—in the name of America!

By what kind of moral calculus can any human being condone the following...

- 2,000,000 South Vietnamese, or almost one eighth of the population, have become official refugees. Hundreds of thousands more have been displaced.
- 110,960 tons of napalm have been dropped over South Vietnam since the end of 1963.
- 150,000 acres of crop-producing land as well as 500,000 acres of jungle and brush have been defoliated by 5 million gallons of herbicide in 1967 alone.
- None of the 43 provincial hospitals is "considered up to minimum standards for a developing country in Southeast Asia," according to Sen. Edward Kennedy.
- Since 1961 more than 300,000 Vietnamese and American military personnel have been killed while a conservative estimate would place civilian death at approximately four times that figure.

(Above figures are taken from the U.S. Department of Defense and/or Senatorial hearings.)

The blood we shed in Vietnam makes a mockery of all our proclamations, dedications, celebrations. Has our conscience become a fossil? Is all mercy gone?

Join us in Washington, D.C. on February 5 & 6, 1968 to visit with congressmen in this "political" year, to meet by states to talk tactically about increased opposition to the Vietnamese war, and to make clear our concern for young men of draft age who in conscience cannot fight in Vietnam. Remember, the blood of the innocent cries forever. Should that blood stop to cry, humanity will cease to be.

(Institutions for identification only)

Dr. John C. Bennett  
President, Union Theological  
Seminary

Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J.  
Cornell University

Dr. Robert McAfee Brown  
Professor, Stanford University

Bishop Harvey D. Butterfield  
Burlington, Vermont

Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr.  
Chaplain, Yale University

Dr. Harvey G. Cox  
Associate Professor  
Harvard Divinity School

Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath  
President, Union of American  
Hebrew Congregations

Rabbi Abraham Heschel  
Professor, Jewish Theological  
Seminary of America

Dr. Martin Luther King  
President, Southern Christian  
Leadership Conference

Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld  
President, American Jewish  
Congress

Bishop John Wesley Lord  
Washington, D.C.

Bishop J. Brooke Mosley  
Wilmington, Delaware

Father John Sheerin  
Editor, *Catholic World*

Bishop R. Marvin Stuart  
Denver, Colorado

Clip out the application below and send it to us at once. We will be in touch with you immediately with more information about the Mobilization.

### COUNT ME IN!

Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, New York 10027 212-870-2283—870-2020  
Room 547—Attention: Rev. Richard Fernandez

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. Home \_\_\_\_\_ Office \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I cannot come—here is a contribution to defray cost.

JOIN  
US IN  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
FEBRUARY 5 & 6,  
1968.

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MOBILIZATION OF CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN  
 WASHINGTON, D. C.  
 February 5 & 6, 1968  
 Sponsored By  
 Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam

706

Sunday-February 5

8:30 a. m. -10:30

Registration (Cost \$7.00)

10:30-12:00

State by State Strategy Sessions

1:00 p. m. -2:15

Procession of Agony

2:15-5:15

Congressional Visits

(4:30-6:00

Film Previews)

7:30-10:00

Ecumenical Worship

Tuesday-February 6

9:00 a. m. -10:30

Two Plenary Sessions:

A.) The draft and the response of  
the religious community.

B.) Politics 1968 and the response  
of the religious community.

10:30-12:00

State by State Strategy Sessions

1:00 p. m. - 3:00

Closing Plenary

The War in Vietnam-A Challenge to  
the Religious Community.

Specific places for meetings will be available January 7, 1968. Registration cost \$7.00.

Leadership for the Mobilization to date includes (tentative):

Dr. John C. Bennett  
 Father Daniel Berrigan  
 Rabbi Balfour Brickner  
 Rev. William S. Coffin  
 Dr. Harvey G. Cox

Rev. Dana McLean Greeley  
 Rabbi Abraham Heschel  
 Dr. Martin Luther King  
 Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld  
Senator Eugene McCarthy

Father John Sheerin

(All of the above, of course, subject to minor revision)

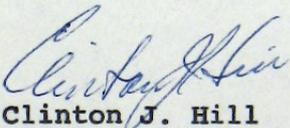
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January 19, 1968  
4:00 P.M. - Friday

MEMORANDUM FOR

MARVIN WATSON

At 1:04 PM, Friday, January 19, 1968, twenty-five (25) members of the Womens Strike for Peace Organization demonstrated in front of the White House. Dick Gregory of Chicago was among the group. The group left at 1:51 P.M.

Attached are photographs of this demonstration.

  
Clinton J. Hill  
SAIC - PPD  
U. S. Secret Service

Attachment