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DIST 3 FEBRUARY 1968

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COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

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SUBJECT PRELIMINARY INTERROGATIONS OF VIET CONG CAPTURED IN SAIGON

ACQ VIETNAM, SAIGON (3 FEBRUARY 1968)

SOURCE AN OFFICIAL VIETNAMESE SECURITY SERVICE WHICH PROVIDED A COPY OF THE PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION REPORT.

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(SUMMARY: PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION OF FOUR VIET CONG (VC) CAPTURED IN SAIGON DURING THE RECENT FIGHTING REVEALED THAT ALL WERE MEMBERS OF COMPANY 3 OF VC BATTALION (BN) 6. ACCORDING TO ONE OF THE CAPTIVES, THE COMPANY 3 POLITICAL OFFICER, THE BN'S TARGET WAS THE CHI HOA PRISON WHICH IT WAS TO SEIZE, FREE THE INMATES AND THEN HOLD INDEFINITELY. RETREAT WAS NOT TO BE CONSIDERED AND WOUNDED WERE TO BE LEFT BEHIND. THIS WAS CONFIRMED BY THE COMPANY COMMANDER WHO WAS CAPTURED BUT SOON DIED OF HIS WOUNDS. THE POLITICAL OFFICER HAD STUDIED A SAND TABLE OF THE PRISON AND HAD KNOWN FOR ABOUT A MONTH OF THE ATTACK

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ON SAIGON, ALTHOUGH NOT THE DATE AND PRECISE OBJECTIVES. ALL FOUR CAPTIVES REPORTED THAT THE COMPANY HAD UNDERGONE 20 DAYS OF TRAINING JUST PRIOR TO THE ATTACK. THE POLITICAL OFFICER SAID THAT 21 BNS WERE INVOLVED IN THE ATTACK, WHILE THE COMPANY COMMANDER STATED BEFORE HE DIED THAT 30 BNS WERE SCHEDULED TO PARTICIPATE. ONE OF THE PRISONERS IDENTIFIED A FIFTH PRISONER AS THE BN COMMANDER BUT THE OTHER THREE INSISTED HE WAS NOT. THE PERSON INVOLVED IS WOUNDED AND UNCONSCIOUS AND HAS NOT YET BEEN QUESTIONED. END SUMMARY.)

1. FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY TRANSLATION OF VIETNAMESE POLICE INTERROGATIONS OF FOUR VIET CONG (VC) CAPTURED IN SAIGON BETWEEN 31 JANUARY AND 1 FEBRUARY. ALL FOUR POWS WERE MEMBERS OF THE VC 6TH BATTALION (BN). (A) LE VAN BEN, ALIAS MINH KIET, ALIAS BAY KIET, 27 YEARS OLD, POLITICAL OFFICER OF COMPANY 3, BN 6, REGIMENT 165A. HE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

"COMPANY 3 WAS RECENTLY REENFORCED AND GIVEN 20 DAYS' TRAINING IN THE BA THU FOREST AREA, HAU NGHIA PROVINCE, WHICH ENDED ON 26 JANUARY. THE COMPANY THEN WENT TO THE CAU SANG AREA, WHICH IT REACHED ABOUT 1000 HOURS ON 29 JANUARY. UPON RECEIVING ORDERS TO PREPARE FOR AN URGENT MILITARY OPERATION, THE COMPANY BEGAN TO ASSEMBLE AT TAN NHUT VILLAGE, WHERE IT RECEIVED ORDERS TO ATTACK SAIGON DURING THE LATE NIGHT HOURS OF 30

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JANUARY.

"AFTER RECEIVING A FULL ISSUE OF AMMUNITION FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF GUNS, BN 6 SET OUT FOR SAIGON AT ABOUT 2000 HOURS. THE TROOPS DID NOT KNOW THE BN'S PRECISE SCHEDULE, ONLY THAT IT WAS TO ENTER SAIGON AT THE PHO THO HOA CROSSROADS ALONG THE CEMETERY AND THEN ENTER THE PHU THO RACE-TRACK. BN WEAPONS INCLUDED: (1) K57 ANTI-AIRCRAFT MACHINEGUN, WITH 2 *(PORTION GARBLED)*, WITH SEVEN ROUNDS FOR EACH (EACH SOLDIER HAD TO CARRY EITHER ONE B40 OR B41 ROUND); (2) B41'S, WITH FIVE ROUNDS FOR EACH WEAPON; (3) RBD-TYPE AUTOMATIC RIFLES, WITH 1,500 ROUNDS FOR EACH; AND (4) CZECH AK50'S, WITH 500 ROUNDS FOR EACH. IN ADDITION, THE BN HAD GRENADES AND CLAYMORE AND HAND-THROWN MINES, AND COMPANY-LEVEL CADRES AND HIGHER CARRIED K54 REVOLVERS.

"WHEN THE AMMUNITION WAS ISSUED, SOLDIERS WERE ORDERED TO CONSERVE IT: SINCE THEY WOULD NOT BE RESUPPLIED UNTIL THE FOLLOWING NIGHT. (SINCE BEN WAS CAPTURED, HE NEVER LEARNED THE LOCATION OF THE AMMO RESUPPLY POINT.) THE BN SOLDIERS DID NOT CARRY ANY FOOD WITH THEM; THEY WERE ORDERED TO FIND WAYS TO BUY FOOD OR TO REQUEST IT OF THE POPULATION WHEREVER THEY WENT. CASUALTIES WERE TO BE LEFT BEHIND. AFTER SAIGON HAD BEEN OCCUPIED, THERE WOULD BE A SPECIAL DETACHMENT TO TAKE CARE OF CASUALTIES.

"THE BN'S TARGET WAS THE CHI HOA REEDUCATION CENTER WHICH WAS TO

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BE HELD INDEFINITELY AFTER INMATES HAD BEEN RELEASED. IF THE BN WAS BLOCKED BY THE ENEMY ENROUTE TO ITS OBJECTIVE, IT WAS TO CONCENTRATE ITS FIRE POWER AND CONTINUE TO ADVANCE OR, AT LEAST, TO HOLD ITS GROUND UNTIL SUPPORTING FORCES ARRIVED. THE BN WAS NOT TO RETREAT. BEFORE LEAVING TAN NHUT, BEN STUDIED A SANDTABLE MODEL FOR THE ATTACK ON CHI HOA FROM THE WEST. THE BN COMMANDER TOLD HIM AT THAT TIME THAT AFTER THE BN OCCUPIED THE OBJECTIVE IT WAS TO HOLD IT INDEFINITELY. HE ALSO SAID THAT OTHER UNITS WOULD BRING IN SUPPLIES LATER AND THAT 21 BNS WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE ATTACK ON SAIGON.

"BEN STUDIED THE "RESOLUTION" CONCERNING THE SAIGON ATTACK A MONTH BEFORE THE ATTACK, BUT HE WAS NOT TOLD LOCATIONS AND DATES. HE LEARNED OF THE BN'S SPECIFIC TARGET ONLY WHEN HE STUDIED THE SANDTABLE AT TAN NHUT. THE "RESOLUTION" STATED THAT SAIGON MUST BE CAPTURED IN ORDER TO CREATE CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS TO BRING ABOUT A NEUTRALIST REGIME IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

"SINCE BEN DOES NOT KNOW THE ROADS LEADING INTO SAIGON, HE COULD NOT DESCRIBE THE ROUTE TAKEN BY HIS UNIT. WHEN THE LATTER REACHED THE PHU THO RACETRACK, IT ENCOUNTERED A POLICE FORCE WHICH IT WAS IN THE

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PROCESS OF ROUTING WHEN IT RAN INTO A U.S. FORCE. THIS WAS TOO STRONG AND BEN'S UNIT, BEING UNABLE TO ADVANCE, TRIED TO HOLD ITS GROUND. BY THE NEXT MORNING, IT WAS SURROUNDED BY ARVN TROOPS. AT ABOUT 1400 HOURS, BEN WAS WOUNDED AND LEFT BEHIND. HE THEREFORE DID NOT KNOW WHERE HIS UNIT WAS DRIVEN TO OR IF IT WAS ORDERED TO RETREAT.

"AFTER BEING WOUNDED, BEN ESCAPED TO A CIVILIAN HOME WHERE HE STAYED UNTIL DARK, THEN HIRED A PEDICAB TO TAKE HIM TO THE BUS STATION. BEING UNABLE TO GET A BUS BACK TO BEN LUC, HE SLEPT IN THE STATION UNTIL HE WAS ARRESTED AT 0700 HOURS THE NEXT MORNING (1 FEBRUARY).

"ACCORDING TO BEN, BN 6 NUMBERED ABOUT 360 PERSONS. THE BN COMMAND CONSISTED OF BN COMMANDER, NGUYEN CHI XUAN, ALIAS NAM XUAN, ALIAS DO VAM GOM, ABOUT 27 YEARS OLD; DEPUTY COMMANDER AND CHIEF OF UPAFF, HAI KHEN POLITICAL OFFICER, TU VU; AND ADJUTANT, HUNG, ALIAS LONG. THE BN WAS DIVIDED INTO FOUR COMPANIES:

COMPANY 1: COMMANDER, BE; FIRST DEPUTY COMMANDER, CUONG; SECOND DEPUTY COMMANDER, UT NGU; POLITICAL OFFICER, HA.

COMPANY 2: COMMANDER, KHU; ACTING DEPUTY COMMANDER, TAI; FIRST POLITICAL OFFICER, CON; SECOND POLITICAL OFFICER, NHO.

COMPANY 3: COMMANDER, TY (WOUNDED AND DIED UNDER ARREST ON 1 FEBRUARY); FIRST DEPUTY COMMANDER, DEN; SECOND DEPUTY COMMANDER,

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DER, EM; POLITICAL OFFICER, BEN (SOURCE).

COMPANY 4: COMMANDER AND POLITICAL OFFICER, BINH; DEPUTY COMMANDER, MOT; DEPUTY POLITICAL OFFICER, THIEN."

(B) LE VAN DUC, ALIAS HOANG, 18 YEARS OLD, MEMBER OF COMPANY 3, BN 6, WHICH HE JOINED ABOUT A MONTH AGO, HAVING PREVIOUSLY BEEN A TAN NHUT VILLAGE GUERRILLA. BEFORE HIS TRANSFER TO COMPANY 3, DUC WAS SENT TO BA THU FOREST FOR 20 DAYS OF TRAINING, WHICH HE COMPLETED ON 26 JANUARY. ON 27 JANUARY, HE WAS ORDERED TO TAN NHUT, WHERE HE ARRIVED ON 31 JANUARY AND WAS IMMEDIATELY ORDERED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE "GENERAL UPRISING." DUC SAID HIS COMPANY WAS ORDERED TO LEAVE TAN NHUT AT 2000 HOURS ON 31 JANUARY VIA TAN KIEN, AN LAC AND PHU THO HOA VILLAGES. ITS MISSION WAS TO ATTACK VARIOUS POSITIONS IN SAIGON, ALTHOUGH DUC DID NOT KNOW THE SPECIFIC POINTS OF ATTACK. THE TROOPS WERE ORDERED TO FIGHT UNTIL SAIGON WAS TAKEN; THERE WOULD BE NO ORDERS TO RETREAT. DUC DID NOT KNOW WHICH UNITS WERE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT OR WHICH OTHER VC BNS WERE INVOLVED IN THE ATTACK. DUC'S TASK WAS TO CARRY TWO BOXES OF MACHINE GUN AMMUNITION. AFTER ARRIVING IN SAIGON, HE PASSED OUT AND WAS TAKEN INTO A CIVILIAN HOME. WHEN HE REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, HIS UNIT WAS GONE. HE WAS THEN CAPTURED.

(C) TRINH VAN AN, 31 YEARS OLD, MEDIC OF 2ND PLATOON, COMPANY 3, BN 6. LIKE BEN AND DUC, AN MENTIONED COMPANY 3'S 20 DAYS OF TRAINING AT BA THU.

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HE STATED THAT ON 27 JANUARY, THE COMPANY BEGAN TO MOVE FROM BA THU TO THE TAN NHUT AREA, ARRIVING THERE ABOUT 2000 HOURS ON 31 JANUARY. THE ORDERS TO ATTACK SAIGON WERE RECEIVED AT THAT TIME. AS FAR AS AN KNEW, BN 6 HAD THE MISSION TO TAKE THE CHI HOA REEDUCATION CENTER. ALL BN SOLDIERS WORE FOR IDENTIFICATION A RED BANDANA AROUND THEIR NECKS PLUS A RED BRASSARD. AN'S DUTY WAS TO CARRY BANDAGES. AFTER TREATMENT, THE WOUNDED WERE TO BE LEFT IN NEARBY CIVILIAN HOMES. AN ALSO HAD TO CARRY A B40 ROUND AND 100 ROUNDS OF AK50 AMMUNITION.

(D) HO VAN CUOC, ALIAS TU QUOC, 18 YEARS OLD, COMMO-LIAISON CADRE FOR COMPANY 3, BN 6, WHICH JOB HE HAD HELD FOR ONLY ABOUT A MONTH. CUOC SAID HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE BN'S OBJECTIVES IN THE ATTACK. HE KNEW ONLY THE BN WAS TO ATTACK WHENEVER IT MET RESISTANCE, WAS TO HOLD FIRM, AND WAS NOT TO BE ALLOWED TO RETREAT. HE SAID THAT ON 30 JANUARY, HIS COMPANY, THEN STATIONED IN THE VUON THOM AREA, RECEIVED ORDERS TO LEAVE AT 1800 HOURS. THE UNIT ARRIVED IN SAIGON (CUOC DID NOT KNOW JUST WHERE IN THE CITY) AT ABOUT 0200 HOURS ON 31 JANUARY. SHORTLY AFTER THE

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ATTACK BEGAN, HE AND COMPANY 3 COMMANDER TU TY WERE WOUNDED. TY WAS LEFT BEHIND IN A CIVILIAN HOME. ACCORDING TO CUOC, WHEN HIS UNIT REACHED PHU THO, IT ENCOUNTERED A POLICE FORCE AND LOST TEN MEN, INCLUDING TU TY. LATER, WHEN COMPANY POLITICAL OFFICER LE VAN BEN WAS WOUNDED, CUOC WAS ORDERED TO REMAIN WITH BEN. THE LATTER TOLD HIM TO GET A VEHICLE TO TAKE THEM ON THE ROAD.

2. A FIFTH POW WAS IDENTIFIED BY LE VAN DUC, ALIAS HOANG, AS BN 6 COMMANDER NGUYEN CHI XUAN, ALIAS NAM XUAN, ALIAS DO VAN GOM. HOWEVER, THE OTHER THREE POWS DESCRIBED ABOVE CLAIMED THAT THE CAPTURED XUAN WAS NOT THE BN COMMANDER. THE PRISONER IS WOUNDED AND UNCONSCIOUS AND HAS NOT YET BEEN QUESTIONED.

3. NGUYEN VAN TY, ALIAS TU TY, ALIAS K. DONG KHANH, TRUE NAME CA VAN TY, COMMANDER OF COMPANY 3, BN 6, WAS WOUNDED IN A BATTLE WITH THE COMBAT POLICE AT THE PHU THO RACETRACK AND CAPTURED BY POLICE OF DISTRICT 6 ON 31 JANUARY. HE DIED OF HIS WOUNDS ON 1 FEBRUARY. BEFORE HE DIED, HE REVEALED THAT THE VC USED ABOUT 30 BNS IN THE ATTACK ON SAIGON, WITH THE MAJOR OBJECTIVES BEING THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, THE RADIO STATION AND TAN SON NHUT AIRBASE. HIS OWN BN 6 WAS TO TAKE THE CHI HOA REEDUCATION CENTER, FREE THE INMATES, AND TO HOLD THE CENTER AT ALL COSTS, WITH NO THOUGHT OF RETREAT. TY SAID HE DID NOT KNOW THE DESIGNATIONS OF THE OTHER UNITS WHICH

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PARTICIPATED IN THE ATTACK.

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5. *HEADQUARTERS COMMENT: MISSING PORTION WILL BE DISSEMINATED ONLY IF IT MATERIALLY AFFECTS THE SENSE OF THIS REPORT.

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