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Mandatory Review
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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in South Vietnam No. 3
(As of 4:30 P.M. EST)

1. Attacks in Saigon: Before dawn on 31 January, the enemy offensive spread to the Saigon area where a series of mortar and ground assaults were launched. The US Embassy was subjected to mortar or rocket fire, with small arms fire occurring outside the compound. Late reports indicate that this fire has abated. A report that the Viet Cong had penetrated the Embassy and taken "control" is apparently false. However, terrorists reportedly did enter the building and blew up the main reception desk. No casualties have been reported, aside from the wounding of one Marine guard. Military police have been sent to reinforce the compound.

2. According to various reports, shelling and small fire has been occurring elsewhere in and around the capital. Both Tan Son Nhut airfield serving Saigon and nearby Bien Hoa air base have been under mortar fire. There has been no report of damage or casualties. Press reports also state that Saigon radio is off the air, and that Viet Cong in ARVN uniforms were attacking around the presidential palace. These reports remain unconfirmed.

3. Da Nang: Allied mopping-up operations are reportedly continuing in the Da Nang urban area following the series of attacks there on allied installations and strategic points on 30 January. Sporadic exchanges of fire with groups of Viet Cong are said to be continuing in a hamlet within the city limits about a mile from the ARVN Corps headquarters. Civilian casualties are reported to be heavy due to the fighting and the strafing of sections of the city by government planes.

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5. Hoi An: In the 30 January attack on this city, the provincial capital of Quang Nam, it now appears that an estimated 200-300 enemy troops seized a number of allied installations including the provincial hospital and ARVN engineer battalion compound. The Communist forces apparently still control the area. A Republic of Korea (ROK) Marine Brigade was reported to have retaken the Hoi An airfield and, at last report, was advancing toward the city. Elements of the North Vietnamese 2nd Division appear to have been involved in the Hoi An action, along with other local Viet Cong forces.

6. Attacks in the Western Highlands: Confirmation has been received that troops of the US 4th Infantry Division have pushed the Communists out of Kontua city where they had apparently occupied several government installations early on 30 January. The enemy force, estimated at two battalion strength, has been driven to positions on the northern outskirts of the city, where allied artillery and tactical air bombardment can be brought to bear. The attacking force was apparently composed both of Viet Cong guerrillas and North Vietnamese soldiers--the latter probably from the NVA 24th Regiment.

7. The DMZ Area: There have been no official reports of significant action today in any sector of the Demilitarized Zone. Press reports that Khe Sanh air strip was closed due to enemy bombardment have not yet been confirmed or clarified through official channels.

8. Other Related Actions: The Communists have continued their broadcasts, begun on 30 January, which condemn the allies for violating the Tet truce. The broadcasts have announced that Communist forces have launched many simultaneous attacks in northern and central South Vietnam. One broadcast said the attacks were aimed at developing the "winter-spring" campaign and "punishing" the US for violating

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the Communist "order" for a cessation of military attacks. Hanoi has also issued a Foreign Ministry statement claiming that the US has "completely cancelled the 1968 Tet truce" and condemning the Americans for continuing the air attacks during Tet.

D. There has so far been no other significant foreign commentary; either from bloc or non-bloc sources, on the current military action in South Vietnam.

