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Feb. 2, 1968

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Copy of intelligence report [redacted] (advance)

3.3(h)(2)

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

Source: [redacted]

3.3(h)(2)

[redacted]

3.3(h)(2)

1. [redacted] 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. [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)

[redacted]

2. [redacted] said that he first became aware of the Tet military operation the Viet Cong about two weeks prior to the assault on Chau Doc City on the night of 30-31 January. At that time, [redacted] Chin Tanc, chief 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 [redacted] 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. 3.3(h)(2)

3. [redacted] 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 [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)

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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. [redacted] a 3.3(h)(2)

[redacted] 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. [redacted] 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. [redacted] 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 [redacted] stated that it is likely that this 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. 3.3(h)(2)

5. [redacted] 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. [redacted] 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. 3.3(h)(2)

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