

DIRECTORATE OF
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Central Intelligence Bulletin

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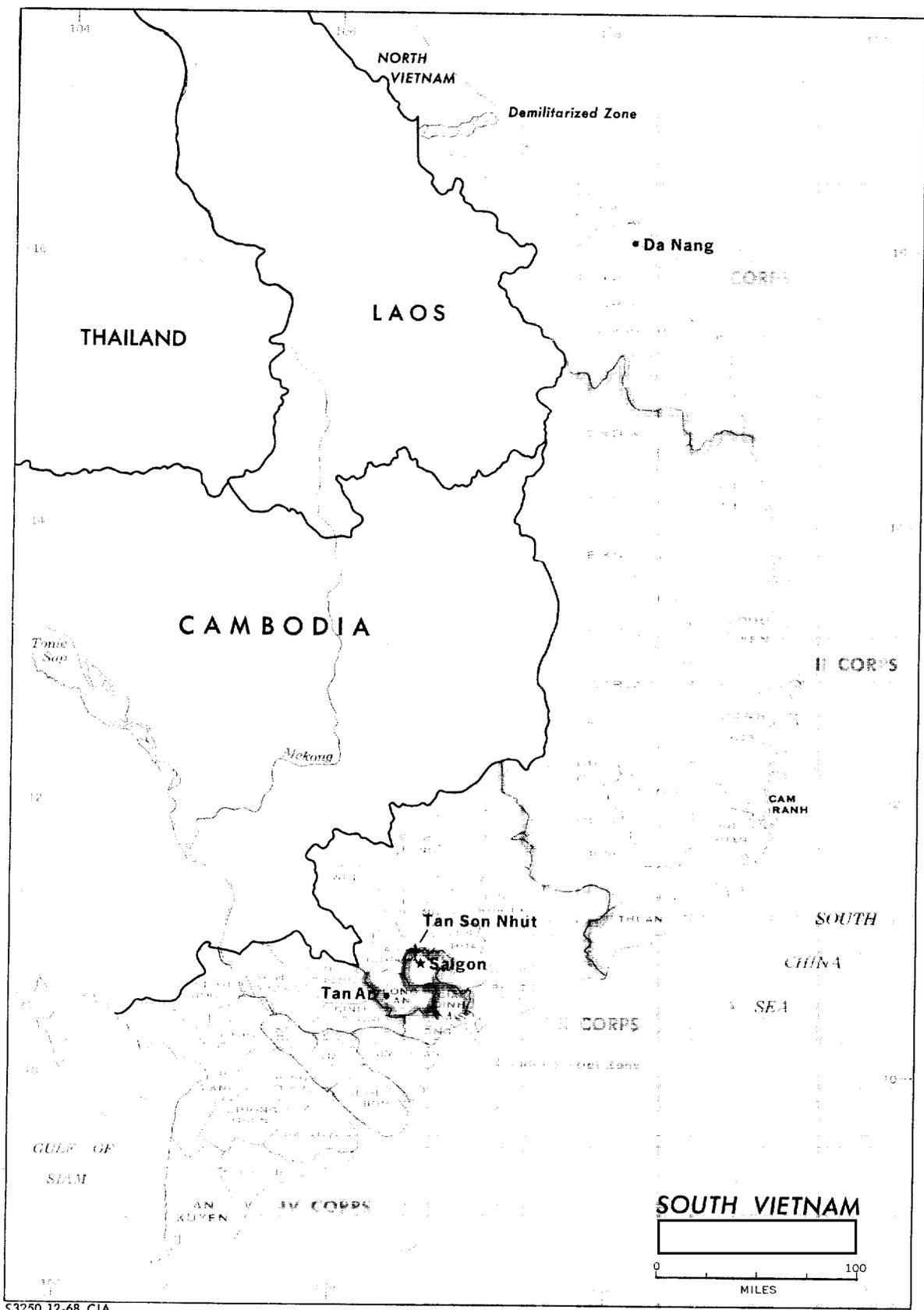
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Vietnam: There are indications that the Communists hope to intensify significantly their military operations--possibly countrywide--in the days just prior to their announced Christmas truce.

Perhaps as a prelude to such operations, the enemy on 17-18 December staged a number of small-scale rocket and mortar attacks against major allied bases stretching from Da Nang to the Saigon area.

Most of the indicators still point to the Saigon area as the focal point of any upcoming Communist military action. There are strong indications that the Viet Cong 9th Division, which has played a key role in major Communist offensive actions during the year, is now moving from its Cambodian border base camp toward Saigon.

Three enemy personnel, captured on 17 December in Gia Dinh Province adjacent to Saigon, claimed that their parent unit, a battalion of the 9th Division's 271st Regiment, is already located southwest of Saigon near the Long An provincial capital of Tan An. They further asserted that the 9th Division will attack Tan Son Nhut airbase within the next ten days.

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The Viet Cong announced yesterday the release of three US prisoners on Christmas Day in the Tay Ninh area near the Cambodian border. A Liberation Radio broadcast went on to call for a suspension of US operations in the area during the time of the transfer of the US prisoners.

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New SAM Sites Revealed in Remote Cuban Area

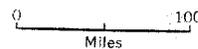
HAVANA



Cuba: SAM Sites

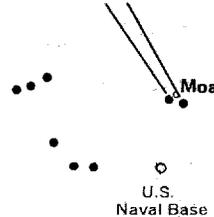
- Operational SA-2 site
- SAM site under construction

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2 SAM sites under construction



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Cuba: Two new surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites have appeared in recent aerial photography of the remote Moa area of eastern Cuba.

Each site is still in the early to middle stage of construction and consists of six revetted drive-through launch positions, a revetted guidance area, and three missile-hold positions. No missiles or missile-associated equipment can be seen.

The reason for the construction of two SAM sites in this region is not clear. There are no known military installations of importance there, and the only facility of economic significance is the Moa nickel mine and processing plant. The last time a SAM site was observed in the Moa area was in 1967 when a field site was set up temporarily during a training exercise.

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Nigeria: Both sides in the civil war have reaffirmed their basically hard-line positions on a negotiated settlement as the military stalemate continues.

In a recent meeting in Biafra with a British MP, Biafran leader Ojukwu said he would not negotiate on any basis that would undermine Biafra's "sovereignty." He was probably reflecting the Biafran belief that a prolongation of the military stalemate can only work in the secessionists' favor. Meanwhile, Nigerian military leaders also appear as determined as ever to carry on with the war.

In the war itself, the Biafrans are continuing to counterattack in several areas as well as mounting sustained operations against two federal-held towns. Despite repeated attempts, the Nigerian Air Force has failed to knock out the airstrip through which Biafrans receive their supplies. [redacted]

[redacted]

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India: The Communist-dominated government of Kerala is faced with serious problems, but shows no inclination to abdicate power. Although New Delhi appears especially concerned about the recent deterioration of law and order in the state, it is hesitant to intervene.

Kerala's Left Communist chief minister, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, despite a host of political, economic, and social problems, appears anxious to hold on to power in Kerala and to avoid intervention from New Delhi. The Left Communists would like to extend their infiltration of the state bureaucracy and to stamp their influence more firmly on state policies. Many party members are thoroughly enjoying the spoils of power and are reluctant to revert to the less comfortable opposition status.

Communist extremists in Kerala--a small, disorganized, but growing group that has broken with the Left Communists--have inspired several violent incidents in recent weeks. Non-Communist opposition groups, suffering under the progovernment bias of the state security forces, are displaying a vigilante mentality that could lead to bloody clashes in the streets.

New Delhi appears increasingly concerned about this situation, but is reluctant to oust the Kerala regime and to impose direct rule. The non-Communist parties of Kerala, some of which are in the governing coalition, are deeply split, as is the local Congress Party unit. Under these circumstances, the new elections that would have to follow intervention by the central government could result in an even stronger Communist grip on the Kerala state government.

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Laos: No significant new fighting has been reported in the Thateng area or elsewhere in southern Laos. At last report, North Vietnamese troops were still dug in around Thateng, and a fresh assault could come at any time. [REDACTED]

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Arab Terrorists: The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is negotiating with the Polish Government for the purchase of 1,000 Soviet-made Kalashnikov submachine guns. The arms are to be delivered to the Iraqi forces in Jordan for further distribution to PLO terrorist units. The PLO had earlier purchased a shipment of the same type of weapon from the Bulgarians. The purchases are a departure from the PLO's usual policy of leaving all aspects of arms acquisition to the Egyptian and Iraqi governments. [REDACTED]

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Sierra Leone: Prime Minister Stevens, at a closed parliamentary caucus, has urged immediate passage of a bill that will transform Sierra Leone into a republic. He stated that his northern dominated government intends to push for approval of the draft republican constitution that was passed initially by the previous parliament in 1967 when southerners were in power. Passage for a second time would put into effect the new constitution, which is designed to strengthen significantly the powers of the prime minister. This would bolster Stevens' shaky regime and could be used as a lever to impose a more radical one-party system of government. Stevens' proposal has aroused considerable opposition within his own party, however, and he may be forced to move cautiously. [REDACTED]

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Dominican Republic: Differences between Juan Bosch and more moderate leaders of the opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party appear to have been papered over. Bosch has dropped his threat to quit the party and has agreed that under some circumstances it can participate in elections. In a subsequent speech, however, he gave no indication that he intends to abandon his efforts to radicalize the party, and additional efforts by party radicals to push for more militant opposition tactics seem likely.

[REDACTED]

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