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17 FEB 1968

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Impending Viet Cong Attacks

1. We have received from our Station in Saigon their response to our request for an evaluation of yesterday's reports of an impending second attack on Saigon and possibly other urban areas. A summary of that evaluation, which is being disseminated electrically, follows:

(a) The information reported yesterday concerning an impending attack on Saigon was from different sources -- one report was based on prisoner interrogations, and the other from a source who has previously provided good information.

(b) Documents, prisoners, and agent reports have referred to second phase attacks, with the latter giving conflicting dates.

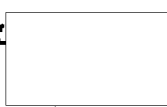
(c) Enemy tactical and political considerations weigh heavily toward the initiation of attacks on Khe Sanh, Quang Tri, Hue, Danang, Dak To, Saigon, and delta towns. As noted in the 9 February document captured in Danang, the enemy's Military Region V has called for "intensified guerrilla attacks, small and medium attacks and preparations for a series of big actions." The longer the enemy waits, the more tenuous becomes his position as the allies continue to mount operations and employ air and artillery against his massed forces. Thus coordinated attacks on selected key targets appear in order, but the improved allied alert posture should contain and make them extremely costly to the enemy.

2. We have subsequently received the following additional reports on the subject:

(a) A CAS report from [redacted] attributed to a [redacted] that Hanoi has directed

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the Liberation Front "to launch a second general attack on Saigon and all provincial capitals at 0200 Hanoi time (1400 EST) on 18 February." While CAS Saigon is dubious of the authenticity of this report, it notes that it coincides with recent information which places the renewal of offensive action between 17 and 20 February, and this is the only report giving a precise date and hour for the offensive.



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(c) A report from CAS Saigon, as of 0900 EST  states that: "Indications have been received in past two hours that the Viet Cong second phase attack will be launched on 18 February. Various hours from midnight to 0430 local have been mentioned in the reports. The Chief of Saigon Municipal Police expects an attack on Saigon to begin at midnight. The likely area of attack to be in the sixth or seventh precincts."

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3. We generally agree with CAS Saigon's assessment, as outlined in paragraph I. The enemy poses significant threats in the areas cited, and attacks in at least some of those areas may occur in the immediate future. While the enemy may attempt coordinated actions in a number of areas simultaneously, the form, scale, and intensity of his attacks may vary widely in view of his losses and the disruptions resulting from recent allied operations. The success of the enemy's efforts will also be limited because of the improved alert posture of friendly forces.



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