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CITE TDCS314/02051-63 (ADVANCE)

COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM

DOI: 27 JANUARY 1968 - 4 FEBRUARY 1968

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ONE VIET CONG AND TWO NORTH VIETNAMESE
 ARMY PRISONERS CONCERNING THE PLANS AND OBJECTIVES
 OF THE TET OFFENSIVE AND POPULAR SUPPORT FROM THE
 SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE DURING THE OFFENSIVE.

ACQ: (5 FEBRUARY 1968)
 SOURCE:

1. A BRIEF INTERROGATION OF THREE PRISONERS IN THE BIEN HOA AREA REVEALS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (A) THEY WERE GIVEN ORDERS FOR THE TET CAMPAIGN SHORTLY BEFORE THE TIME OF ATTACK AND WERE TOLD THAT THE EFFORT WOULD BE A FINAL THRUST TO LIBERATE SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN). THE PRISONERS SAID THEY WERE TO ATTACK CITIES AND TO CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS AGAINST HEADQUARTERS INSTALLATIONS, PARTICULARLY U.S. FACILITIES, (B) LOW LEVEL CADRES APPARENTLY WERE NOT PROVIDED WITH WITHDRAWAL PLANS SINCE THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF VICTORY. THEY WERE TOLD THAT THE TET HOLIDAY WOULD BE CELEBRATED IN "LIBERATED" AREAS FOLLOWING THE TRIUMPH. THE PRISONERS SAID THEIR ORDERS WERE TO CONTINUE FIGHTING UNTIL VICTORY, (C) THERE WAS AN INITIAL BELIEF THAT THE POPULATION WOULD ASSIST IN AN UPRISING AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) AND U.S. FORCES, (D) IN THE OPINION OF THE PRISONERS THE ANTICIPATED SUPPORT FROM THE SVN POPULATION WAS NOT FORTHCOMING, (E) NO MENTION WAS MADE TO THE PRISONERS OF A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF SVN TO FOLLOW-UP OR COINCIDE WITH THE TET CAMPAIGN, (F) THE PRISONERS HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY EFFORTS TO REORGANIZE THE "ALLIANCE FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY" AS A COALITION MOVEMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM (NFLSV), (G) THE PRISONERS WERE NOT AWARE OF ANY FOLLOW-UP PLANS FOR THE CURRENT OFFENSIVE, (H) THE PRISONERS WERE UNABLE TO COMPREHEND A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MILITARY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORY BECAUSE THEY WERE ORIENTATED SOLELY TOWARD A MILITARY TRIUMPH. THE PRISONERS WOULD NOT COMMENT ON THE REACTIONS OF HANOI OR THE NFLSV TO THE FAILURE TO ACHIEVE THE MILITARY OBJECTIVES OF THE TET OFFENSIVE.

2. DISSEM: STATE, MACV, 7TH AF, CINCPAC, PACFLT, ARPAC, PACAF, POLAD/CINDPAC.

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