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# INTERROGATION REPORT

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SUBJECT	: VC Activities during the TET Offensive in CHAU DOC Province.	NIC CASE NO	: FET
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S U M M A R Y

CHAU DOC Province Committee VC units assembled and briefed for offensive 29 January 1968 at CO TO Mountain; marched to THAI SON Village, TRI TON District, CHAU DOC Province night of 29-30 January 1968; attacked CHAU PHU, CHAU DOC Province SVN on the night of 30 January. Battalion 1 targeted against GAC Barracks, Sub-Sector Headquarters and CHAU DOC Township Administrative Offices. Battalion 2 targeted against Military Police Barracks, CHAU DOC Township Police Posts and Militia Training School. Civilian cadre and CHAU DOC Township Special Action Forces were to occupy CHAU DOC Township Administrative Offices and Police Post, capture Township Administrative Services Chiefs, and establish security of occupied facilities. Pre-offensive indoctrination led VC to believe time was right for coordinated offensive. Objective was to occupy towns and Provincial capitals to force GVN and U.S. governments to accept elected coalition government. All military and civilian cadre were committed to offensive with no reserves at Province level. No promises of reinforcements or instructions for withdrawal. Offensive elements supported by seven-man medical team and 30-man civilian labor force.

## MAP REFERENCE:

AMS Series L7014, Sheet 6029 IV, Scale 1/50,000, Edition 1.

AMS Series L7014, Sheet 5929 I, Scale 1/50,000, Edition 1.

AMS Series L7014, Sheet 6030 III, Scale 1/50,000, Edition 1.

1. The AN GIANG (CHAU DOC and AN GIANG)(VC) Province Committee cadre and military units were apprised approximately one month in advance that there would be an offensive launched during the general period of the TET holiday. No other information had been available until 29 January 1968, at which time the civilian and military units were assembled at the VC Province Committee headquarters located on CO TO Mountain (approximately WS 010450). The assembled units were briefed by VU HONG DUC, Chief of the Province Committee Current Affairs Section, who had just returned from a meeting at Military Region II Headquarters some where in KIEN PHONG Province. VU HONG DUC told them that the situation was favorable for a coordinated VC attack against towns and provinces throughout SVN, and that the overall objective of the attacks would be to occupy those towns and province capitals to impress the GVN and U.S. governments and to force the election of a coalition government.
2. VO HONG DUC gave a briefing on the general situation as follows: U.S. troops were introduced into SVN with five stated purposes, all of which he reported to have failed.
  - A. To eliminate VC main forces. DUC told them that to the contrary, the U.S. forces had failed and were being defeated by the VC.
  - B. To strengthen the GVN government and military forces. DUC reported that in spite of the U.S. intervention, the GVN government and military were declining.
  - C. To pacify rural areas. The assembled units were told that this effort had failed and that the VC now occupy four-fifths of the land in SVN.
  - D. To destroy the HO CHI MINH Trail. DUC told them that there were more weapons and ammunition being introduced into SVN from NVN than ever before.
  - E. To step up the war on NVN. This effort has also failed, he told them, and reported that so far, the U.S. has lost 2700 aircraft over NVN.

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- B. The following units were under the command of the Province Committee. All available military units and civilian cadre were committed to the offensive.
- A. Battalion 1: (formerly the 512th Battalion) This battalion was reported to consist of approximately 500 men assigned to five companies. It was supplied with DK 75mm. and DK 57mm. recoilless rifles, 62mm. and 82mm. mortar, 12.7 heavy machineguns, submachineguns, and explosive charges. In addition, it was especially supplied with B41 rockets and AK machineguns and CKC rifles and ammunition. Previously, there had not been enough ammunition for training purposes. The only other special equipment used were gas masks which the men had made for themselves.
  - B. Battalion 2: (formerly the 510th Battalion) This battalion was reportedly newly organized within the preceding six months and consisted of approximately 250 men assigned to three companies. This battalion was armed with essentially the same equipment as Battalion 1.
  - C. Battalion 3: This battalion has just been organized within the past two months and contained approximately 200 recruits which had previously not received any military training. Since this battalion was not combat ready, it's members were used to augment the forces of Battalion 1 and 2.
  - D. Civilian cadre and CHAU PHU Special Action Forces: A 22-man civilian cadre which was augmented by the 30-man CHAU PHU Township Special Action Forces unit. Source stated that the civilian cadre were equipped with AK submachineguns, CKC rifles, and B-40 rockets. The unit did not have any food or medical supplies issued prior to the attack. The Chief of the Security Section was given SVN\$ 17,000 by the Rear Services Section to buy rice for the unit after it reached CHAU PHU, CHAU DOC Province. No rice could be purchased after the attack began, however, because all the stores closed and the unit could not find any sources for food purchases of any kind.
  - E. Medical Team: There was a medical team of approximately seven members which followed the military units into the battle area of CHAU PHU, CHAU DOC Province. The medical unit had insufficient medical supplies and equipment because two members of the cadre had been seriously wounded but couldn't get medical attention. The two wounded men in his unit were eventually carried off by members of the civilian labor force.
  - F. Civilian Labor Force: A civilian labor force of approximately 30 men under the guidance of the Rear Services Section of the Province Committee were employed to carry ammunition into the battle area and to evacuate wounded. The civilian labor force may have included members who were impressed into service.
4. A large percentage of the military units employed in the offensive consisted of freshly recruited youths between 15 and 17 years of age. The units of VC AN GIANG Province had difficulty recruiting older and more experienced soldiers and was thus forced to use the young men. There was no time in advance of the offensive to properly train the new recruits, but they were committed to battle out of necessity. None of the young men were forcefully recruited, but joined because of VC propaganda.

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5. The military and civilian cadre of VC AN GIANG Province were committed to the following targets:
- a. Battalion 1: (1) GAC Barracks; water facilities, weapons and ammunition storage.
    - (2) Sub-Sector Headquarters.
    - (3) CHAU DOC Township Administrative Offices.
  - b. Battalion 2: (1) Military Police Barracks.
    - (2) CHAU DOC Township Police Posts.
    - (3) Militia Training School.
  - c. Civilian cadre and CHAU DOC Township Special Action Forces:
    - (1) Occupy CHAU DOC Township Administrative Offices and Police Post.
    - (2) Capture Township Services Chiefs.
    - (3) Be responsible for security of occupied Township facilities.
6. During the night of 29 January 1968, the units marched from their CO TO Mountain encampment to the vicinity of THAI SON Village, TRI TON District, CHAU DOC Province (approximately WS 635045) where they rested until the night of 30 January 1968 when they launched their attack against CHAU-PHU (CHAU DOC). During the morning of 31 January 1968, they were able to occupy the CHAU DOC Township Police Post, seizing one automatic rifle and an undetermined number of submachineguns. The civilian cadre along with the CHAU DOC Township Special Action Forces were responsible for securing that facility, and defending it against ARVN Battalion 3 which arrived and engaged them during the night of 31 January.
7. All military and civilian cadres of the Province Committee had been committed to the offensive on 31 January 1968 to include non-combatants such as typists because the VC considered the offensive to be of such significance. During the pre-offensive indoctrination they were told that this was the last chance for an ultimate victory. The committed units were not given any instructions for withdrawal, however the forces would have retreated to either the CO TO-GIAI Mountain complex used as the SVN headquarters of the Province Committee. Some of the units may have retreated into CAMBODIA. The units were not promised any reinforcements, but were told that Regional Military units would be committed to targets at the Regional level.
8. SOURCE COMMENTS: Source became aware during the offensive that the pre-attack indoctrination which he had received was false. He reasoned that if the GVN and U.S. forces had been as weak as he had been told, they would have been easily defeated. Instead, the ARVN forces drove the VC units out of the attacked cities and caused heavy damage to the VC.

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It is the Source's belief that the TET Offensive will be recorded as an historic failure for the VC for three reasons: (1) the VC didn't keep their word about honoring the TET holiday truce, thus making the people of SVN and abroad realize that the VC don't keep their promises; (2) the VC will lose popular support for having conducted the offensive during the solemn period of TET when families traditionally get together for ancestor worship, and caused the separation of many families; (3) the VC civilian cadres and soldiers will lose faith in the VC leadership for having so badly misled them about the true situation. Source was also discouraged by the fact that he had not received any help from villagers in his efforts to escape the counter-attack. He reasoned that if the people truly wished to be "liberated" and supported the VC cause, he would have had no trouble finding shelter and assistance in getting out of the city. Source concluded that continue to step up their harrassment activities in order to preserve their image as a cohesive offensive fighting unit while recruiting replacements and resupplying their forces.

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