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CITE

1.3(5)(4)

COUNTRY NORTH VIETNAM

DIST 1 SEPTEMBER 1967

DOI 11 - 23 AUGUST 1967

SUBJECT: BOMBING OF THE CAU LONG BIEN BRIDGE IN HANOI ON 11 AUGUST AND THE
EFFECT OF THE CLOSING OF THE BRIDGE ON TRANSPORTATION IN HANOI

ACQ

FIELD NO.

SOURCE

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(classification) (dissem controls)

1. ON 11 AUGUST THE CAU LONG BIEN BRIDGE CONNECTING HANOI AND THE GIA LAM AREA ACROSS THE RED RIVER WAS BOMBED. THE BRIDGE CROSSES AN ISLAND IN THE RED RIVER AND ABOUT FORTY METERS OF THE BRIDGE SURFACE BETWEEN THE ISLAND AND GIA LAM WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED WHILE ANOTHER THIRTY METERS OF THE SURFACE WAS SEVERELY TWISTED. THERE ARE 13 SETS OF BRIDGE PIERS BETWEEN THE ISLAND AND THE GIA LAM SIDE OF THE RIVER AND THE PIERS ARE ALTERNATIVELY SINGLE, THEN DOUBLE, THEN SINGLE, ETC. COUNTING FROM THE ISLAND SIDE TOWARDS GIA LAM THE TWO PIERS IN THE FOURTH LINE (C THE SECOND DOUBLE SET OF PIERS) WERE DESTROYED BY THE BOMBING. ONE OF THE TWO PIERS WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED AND THE OTHER IS VISIBLE ABOVE THE SURFACE OF THE WATER BUT DOES NOT REACH THE BRIDGE. AS OF 22 AUGUST THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT THE VIETNAMESE HAD MADE ANY EFFORT TO REPAIR THE BRIDGE ITSELF ALTHOUGH WORKMEN HAD REPLACED THE POWER AND ELECTRIC LINES CROSSING THE BRIDGE WHICH HAD BEEN DESTROYED WHEN THE BRIDGE WAS BOMBED.

2. SINCE 11 AUGUST TRAFFIC CROSSING THE RED RIVER AT THE BRIDGE HAS BEEN HANDLED BY TWO OLD FERRY BOATS, EACH TOWING A BARGE-LIKE BOAT. THESE FERRIES CARRY PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS AS WELL AS VEHICLES UP TO AND INCLUDING MEDIUM SIZED TRUCKS. BACKLOGS OF TRUCK TRAFFIC OF AS MANY AS 40 VEHICLES WERE OBSERVED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER DURING THE PERIOD 11 - 22 AUGUST, BUT THE BACKLOGS NEVER APPEARED TO HAVE REACHED A REALLY SEVERE STAGE AND USUALLY DISAPPEARED DURING THE DAY. THE FERRIES WERE HAVING SOME TROUBLE MANEUVERING BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY OF TOWING BARGES AGAINST THE RIVER CURRENT; THEY FREQUENTLY WENT UPSTREAM AND LET THE CURRENT OF THE RIVER AID

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THEM IN CROSSING. TWO OTHER OLD FERRY BOATS WERE TIED UP ALONG THE RIVER BANK BUT DID NOT APPEAR TO BE IN USE. SMALL CRAFT TRAFFIC ACROSS THE RIVER DID NOT NOTICEABLY INCREASE AFTER THE BRIDGE WAS CUT.

3. SOURCE COMMENT: ULTIMATE SOURCE WAS FRANKLY SURPRISED THAT NO APPARENT EFFORT WAS MADE TO USE SMALL BOATS OR SAMPAN TYPE CRAFT TO TRANSPORT PEOPLE ACROSS THE RIVER. HE WAS ALSO SURPRISED THAT THERE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY MAJOR BLOCKAGE OF TRUCK TRAFFIC. HE VISITED THE HANOI WATERFRONT ALMOST DAILY BETWEEN 11 AND 22 AUGUST AND DID NOT DETECT ANY SIGNS OF EFFORTS TO BUILD ALTERNATE MEANS OF CROSSING THE RIVER, SUCH AS PONTOON BRIDGES. SEVERAL VIETNAMESE NOTED THAT THE RIVER IS QUITE HIGH AT THIS TIME OF YEAR AND THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN A PONTOON BRIDGE.

4. FIELD DISSEM: NONE

REPORT CLASS

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5. [REDACTED] COMMENT. ADVANCE COPIES SENT ELECTRICALLY TO EXO, STATE, DIA, 1.3(a)(4)

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