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GEORGE W. ASHWORTH, C.S. MONITOR: 10/15/69

SAIGON -- THE VIETNAM WAR WILL CONTINUE AT A LOW, LEVEL IN MILITARY TERMS THROUGH THE END OF THE YEAR, ACCORDING TO SOLID INDICATIONS HERE.

IN LATE SUMMER, MILITARY ANALYSTS PREDICTED PRIVATELY THAT THE "LULL" WOULD CONTINUE WITH PERIODIC SO-CALLED "HIGH-POINTS," THROUGH LATE OCTOBER OR INTO NOVEMBER.

NOW THEY HAVE PUSHED THAT PROJECTION FORWARD TO THE END OF 1969.

IT IS STILL TOO EARLY NOW TO FORECAST WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY PERIOD, BUT PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE FOE IS DOING NO MORE THAN PREPARING FOR THE OPTION OF A STEPPED-UP MILITARY CAMPAIGN.

(REUTERS REPORTED THAT UNITED STATES MILITARY OFFICIALS SHOWED NEWSMEN COMMUNIST WEAPONS CACHES WHICH, THEY BELIEVE, BACK UP THEORIES THAT THE COMMUNISTS ARE USING THE CURRENT LULL TO PREPARE FOR A BIG NEW OFFENSIVE)

MORE ACTION IS EXPECTED AROUND THE TET HOLIDAY PERIOD EARLY NEXT YEAR, BUT ENEMY MILITARY CAPABILITIES AS WELL AS MILITARY TACTICS HAVE CHANGED CONSIDERABLY SINCE THE SPECTACULAR TET ATTACKS IN 1968.

IT IS CONSIDERED UNLIKELY THAT THE VIETNAM WAR WILL SEE ANYTHING SO FIERCE AND WIDE-SPREAD AGAIN.

MILITARY ACTIVITIES ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE IN BORDER AREAS, PARTICULARLY IN THE II CORPS AREA NORTH AND NORTHWEST OF THE CAPITAL AND IN THE I CORPS AREA, WHERE ADVANTAGE WILL BE TAKEN, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, OF THE DEPARTURE OF THE MARINES.

AT THE SAME TIME, AS "VIETNAMIZATION" CONTINUES, COMMUNIST FORCES WILL TRY TO EXPLOIT ANY EXPOSED SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY VULNERABILITIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE SITUATIONS IN WHICH HELP FROM THE AMERICANS IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE.

HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM