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| 7. SOURCE: <b>CAPTURED ENEMY DOCUMENT</b>                                      | 14. APPROVING AUTHORITY: GEORGE S. LAPINSKES, LTC, USA<br>DIRECTOR, US ELM, CDEC |

15. SUMMARY:

(C) This report contains information obtained from an enemy document and concerns Directive 040/CT, dated 5 October 1970, which was originated by Headquarters, Sub-Region 5, ((COSVN)), and addressed to subordinate units and agencies, and command committees of district units. The directive, divided into five parts, pertains to the following subjects: I. Significance and importance of developing ((VC)) sapper forces; II. General missions and requirements; III. Specific plan; IV. Command and leadership; and V. Leadership requirements.

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## FULL TRANSLATION

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Headquarters, Sub-Region 5

No. 04/CT

((Marginal note)) Đoàn Thăng Lối ((possibly aka K3, aka 3rd Battalion, former Đông Nai Main Force Regiment)). ((End of marginal note))

D I R E C T I V E

To: Subordinate Units and Agencies, Command Committees of District Units

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In compliance with the directive concerning the mission and development of ((VC)) sapper forces by R ((COSVN)), the Headquarters, Sub-Region ((5)) provides the following guidelines for units:

## I. SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING ((VC)) SAPPER FORCES:

Sapper forces are of great importance to our people's war. They wear down enemy strength, kill many enemy soldiers, and destroy much of the enemy's war facilities. They conduct attacks on key enemy agencies, storage facilities, rear bases, airfields, ports, cities, district seats, and province capitals. The key feature of sapper forces is the broad and flexible use of the three types of forces ((main force, local force, and guerrilla force)). Sapper attacks can be conducted by secret guerrillas if they are well trained. Major units launch large-scale operations during campaigns or activity phases, while sapper units conducted small but constant attacks against the enemy in the three areas ((mountains, lowlands, and towns)). Generally speaking, sapper attacks allow small and compactly equipped forces to successfully attack large enemy units.

Sapper units are essential for the protracted war. In the future, they will become more important than ever. Therefore, sapper units are to be developed in size and quality, their combat effectiveness is to be increased and combat requirements are to met promptly.

The enemy has attempted to enlarge his control over the population in the three areas and has dispersed his troops to participate in combat in both theaters of operations ((possibly Cambodia and South Vietnam)). Therefore, he is vulnerable at small posts deep in rural areas and in strategic hamlets where our ((VC)) main force has not operated. Thus, it is more favorable now than ever before for sapper units to develop their effectiveness in attacking the enemy.

II. GENERAL MISSION AND REQUIREMENTS:

a. Instruct units and local areas to speed up the development of sapper units in order to have a sufficient and elite sapper force in the three areas and in the three forces. These forces will apply sapper tactics and increase their effectiveness by conducting continuous attacks against weak areas. Provide training in sapper tactics for all forces to improve

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infantry, engineer, and artillery units so they can conduct close surprise attacks on any objective in any area with a small force against a larger force.

b. Launch sapper attacks against the enemy's defense system in the three areas, especially his defense system in rural areas and strategic hamlets in order to harass him constantly and to frustrate his pacification plan.

c. Sapper units must be capable of conducting attacks in the areas where our ((VC)) main forces cannot operate or local guerrilla forces are weak. They must be capable of launching separate sapper attacks or participating in coordinated operations to annihilate the enemy in preparation for larger scale activities.

Specific missions and requirements:

a. Make every effort to activate sapper units at various levels. Improve and develop them and insure that they can execute deep thrusts against important objectives in the enemy's rear area.

During development and training, improve the degree of technical and tactical skills of soldiers, and provide training in organizational activities, leadership, and coordination. Pay special attention to newly formed detachments.

(Be sure they have technical and tactical skills, effective command, and can conduct attacks successfully.)

b. Sapper forces of the sub-region must attack key positions and bases in sub-sectors, and destroy enemy C-level posts ((possibly posts defended by one company)). District sapper forces must conduct attacks against district seats and destroy B-level posts ((possibly posts defended by one platoon)).

Guerrilla sapper forces of villages are to use mines and improvised mines (including automatic ones) to attack and destroy enemy military bases, and posts in hamlets and villages.

III. SPECIFIC PLAN:

1. Organization:

District:

There should be a specialized cell in charge of study, organization, and development of sapper forces.

Command Committees of district units are each to assign one comrade in charge of ((this cell)).

Strength: Local force units in Châu Thanh and Tân Uyên ((Districts, Sub-Region 5, COSVN)) are to train 25 to 30 sappers each, and establish one platoon command committee.

Phu Giao: One sapper squad of 10 to 12 men.

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II. GENERAL MISSION AND REQUIREMENTS:

a. Instruct units and local areas to speed up the development of sapper units **in order to** have a sufficient and elite sapper force in the three areas and in the three forces. These forces will apply sapper tactics and increase their effectiveness by conducting continuous attacks against weak areas. Provide training in sapper tactics for all forces to improve

Thu Đức: One sapper squad of seven men.

Lai Thiêu; Di An: Five to seven men.

Province Capital: Four to five men.

Thu Đức District Seat: Train special action squad in sapper tactics.

Tân Uyên District Seat: Train special action units in sapper tactics.

Phước Vinh key Area: Train special action units in sapper tactics.

Village is to activate one three-man sapper cell.

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Time required to complete the development ((of sapper forces)):  
District units are to complete the development of sapper forces by 10 Oct 70.  
District seats, province capitals, key areas, fringe areas, and village guerrilla units are to complete the development of sapper forces by 30 Oct 70.

Upon completion, reports will be forwarded to the sub-region.

Recruiting measures:

Châu Thành and Tân Uyên Districts and fringe-areas are to choose personnel from battalions assigned to districts and district local force units for sapper training. Phu Giao ((District)) is to choose personnel from the district unit for sapper training.

Command committees of district units, coordination and operations committees, Party committees, and command committees of K2, K3 and K4 ((possibly 2nd, 3rd and 4th Battalions of Former Dong Nai Main Force Regiment)) are to carefully study these measures and select cadre to implement them.

## 2. Training and development:

Because of the significance of sapper units, from now until the end of 1970, greater efforts must be made to develop sapper forces than other forces.

Specialized sapper units are to be activated in all areas from the three forces. They are to be continually improved and developed. Train district forces and guerrilla units in sapper tactics, because these forces engage the enemy daily and know enemy weaknesses. If they are aware of sapper tactics, they can cause as many enemy casualties as specialized sapper units.

Stress political indoctrination and ideological guidance, and make cadre and soldiers display a good combat spirit and endure hardships. Sapper tactics require sappers to make every effort to cross defense lines and obstacles to infiltrate enemy posts. Cadre and soldiers must improve their tactical and technical skills.

Emphasize increasing the number and size of sapper units. However, a small ((sapper)) force of good quality is also capable of defeating the enemy

and destroying his war facilities. Only when sapper forces are developed in size and quality is their combat effectiveness increased. The Military Staff ((possibly of Sub-Region 5)) will assign Comrades Trung and Côi, sapper cadre of the sub-region, to train forces of Tân Uyên District in sapper tactics during Oct 70. During Nov 70, the sub-region will assign cadre to conduct a refresher sapper training course for sappers of other districts.

3. Combat:

a. Combat guidelines:

Sapper units are either to concentrate or disperse widely during attacks. Sometimes they stay close to hamlet or village guerrilla forces to help frustrate the enemy's pacification plan, and at other times they coordinate with infantry or artillery units.

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Sapper units of key areas are immobile. They are to combine with other ((VC)) forces to lay permanent siege to a number of enemy bases.

Units that can launch continuous military operations in various forms are to conduct small attacks. Specialized sapper units are to conduct medium-sized attacks, or large-scale attacks if conditions permit.

Sapper units should take advantage of opportunities to participate in separate attacks or in a sapper campaign initiated by sapper forces between the two phases of campaigns, and at the same time to combine closely with the three forces, armed services, and service branches.

Sapper units are to be mobile in order to attack the enemy successfully. Sapper units will conduct attacks as required, but they are also to launch continuous attacks and advance from destruction attacks to annihilating attacks.

Erase the erroneous belief that sapper units are capable of destroying materiel only, but not of annihilating the enemy, collecting his weapons, or capturing PW's. To conduct annihilating attacks successfully, the decisive factors are determination, careful organization, and a plan for close coordination between infantry and sapper units. (First sapper units conduct penetration attacks and then infantry units assault, occupy, and finish the attack.) If sapper units participate in an attack alone, a reserve element is formed to clear the battlefield.

In addition to sapper tactics, sapper units are also to know other combat tactics and techniques such as counter-sweep operations, raids, and ambushes.

b. Combat leadership:

The area of operations of sapper units, in general, is in all three areas, but mainly in deep areas. They provide support for disrupting the pacification plan throughout rural areas. They are also to coordinate operations with other armed services and service branches.

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c. Objectives:

Highest priority is to be given to attacks against special pacification agents, important storage facilities, cities, district seats, and province capitals in order to wear down the enemy force and destroy his war facilities. Main objectives to be attacked are enemy posts, watchtowers, pacification tyrants, local ((RVN)) administrative personnel, spies, and those who have direct oppressive control over the population. Sapper units will also provide support to frustrating the enemy pacification plan and increasing the people's power in hamlets and villages.

IV. COMMAND AND LEADERSHIP:

Command agencies are to control and direct compliance with directives concerning sapper tactics issued by higher echelons or by themselves, and to provide guidance for lower echelons to discover weaknesses in the use of sapper tactics. They also review past activities of sapper units to gain experience, assist unit commanders, and exercise leadership over local areas.

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Rebuild or reorganize sapper schools and regularly assign military training cells to help organizations at lower levels conduct training on sapper tactics and techniques.

Emphasize refresher training for cadre (including cadre in organizations, command cadre, and those in charge of combat tactics and techniques) in order that cadre can be versed in command leadership as well as in combat tactics and techniques. By doing this, combat policy and tactical concept of sapper units will be developed more satisfactorily.

Provide guidance for lower echelons to prepare weekly, monthly, and quarterly combat plans and report activities to higher echelons. (Reports are to be made by immediate commanders of sapper units.)

V. LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS:

Make Party Committees, Party members, cadre, and soldiers understand their situation and mission and acknowledge the significance and importance of building and developing sapper forces.

Speed up the development of sapper forces in villages and districts and formulate specific plans.

Overcome difficulties in personnel strength.

Recruit personnel to form sapper units.

Comply with this directive at all costs.

Upon receipt of this directive, various echelons are required to implement the build-up and development of sapper forces. Reports will be submitted to the sub-region as soon as a sapper unit is activated.

5 Oct 70

For Headquarters, Sub-Region 5,  
Acting Commanding Officer.

/S/ BUI KHANH NGUON.

----- END OF TRANSLATION -----