

W
FILE SUBJ.
DATE SUB-CAT.
1/75

On Jan 2, 1975 the Chairman of ARVN Joint Chiefs of Staff, CAO VAN V I E N TOLD HIS STAFF THAT THE SITUATION IN SONG BE, THE CAPITAL OF PHUOC LONG PROVINCE AND THE SOLE REMAINING GOVERNMENT POSITION IN THE PROVINCE MUST BE VIEWED AS CRITICAL. ACCORDING TO VIEN THERE WERE THREE BATTALIONS WITH A TOTAL STRENGTH OF LESS THAN 1,000 MEN DEFENDING THE CITY: THE FIRST BATTALION (BN), SEVENTH REGIMENT, FIFTH ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (ARVN) DIVISION WITH 300-320 MEN STATIONED AT THE BRIDGE AT THE INTERSECTION ON ROUTE 1A TO THE NORTH OF THE CITY; THE 340TH REGIONAL FORCE (RF) BN WITH ABOUT 200 MEN WHICH HAD PULLED BACK FROM VA RA MOUNTAIN INTO THE CITY; AND THE 362 RF BN WITH ABOUT 220 MEN HOLDING THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE CITY. THE COMMUNIST ATTACKS WERE FALLING INTO A PATTERN--TO ATTACK ON THE GROUND IN THE MORNING AND TO HARRASS IN THE EVENING.

2. VIEN SAID THAT HE WAS IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN T H I E U ON THE SITUATION IN SONG BE. HE TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT WHILE IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE COMMUNISTS TO TAKE SONG BE BECAUSE OF THE GOOD DEFENSIVE POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT FORCES, THE NATURAL DEFENSE OFFERED BY THE RIVER, AND THE INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF ENEMY FORCES IN THE AREA, THE PROSPECTS OF THE DEFENDERS WERE NOT GOOD. VIEN TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT MILITARY REGION (MR)-3 COMMANDER LIEUTENANT GENERAL DU QUOC D O N G HAD (

REQUESTED PERMISSION TO INSERT AN ELITE AIRBORNE LONG-RANGE RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY INTO SONG BE. SIMULTANEOUSLY, THE AIR FORCE WOULD SEED THE ENEMY POSITIONS WITH GASOLINE DRUMS AND THEN FOLLOW WITH A BOMBING RAID TO IGNITE THE GASOLINE. VIEN TOLD THE PRESIDENT HE HAD GIVEN DONG PERMISSION TO GO AHEAD WITH THIS PLANS AS IT WOULD PROVIDE A MUCH NEEDED BOOST TO THE DEFENDERS' MORALE.

3. VIEN SAID HE HAD PROMISED THE PRESIDENT THAT HE WOULD DO HIS UTMOST TO PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT TO DONG. DONG WAS CRITICALLY SHORT OF HELICOPTERS AND VIEN WAS PLANNING TO SHIFT HELICOPTERS FROM MR-2 AND MR-4 TO MR-3 TO ASSIST DONG. VIEN SAID THAT HE WAS GOING TO MEET WITH DONG TO PLAN A "SECOND PHASE" WHICH WOULD BE A LONG-RANGE PLAN TO IMPROVE THE GOVERNMENT POSITION IN PHUOC LONG PROVINCE.

4. ALSO ON 2 JANUARY, ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS LIEUTENANT GENERAL DANG VAN Q U A N G PREPARED WITH HIS STAFF DOCUMENTATION FOR THE DIPLOMATIC AND PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS THE GOVERNMENT WAS GOING TO TAKE IN REGARD TO THE CURRENT COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE. QUANG SAID THE PRESIDENT HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT THE PEOPLE FULLY UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE THREAT IN PHUOC LONG.

5. QUANG TOLD HIS STAFF THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD RECALLED MINISTER 2

OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS VUONG VAN B A C BACK FROM HIS AFRICAN TRIP TO
DRAW UP A DIPLOMATIC NOTE OF PROTEST TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
UNITED NATIONS AND TO THE NATIONS WHO SIGNED THE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT.

6. LT. GENERAL QUANG, WORKING IN HIS CAPACITY AS COORDINATOR
OF CEASEFIRE RELATED DEVELOPMENTS, ALSO MET WITH OFFICIALS OF THE
INFORMATION MINISTRY AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON 2 JANUARY TO CONSIDER
SPECIFIC STEPS TO MOBILIZE PUBLIC OPINION AT HOME AND ABROAD IN
SUPPORT OF THE GVN. ONE POSSIBILITY UNDER CONSIDERATION INVOLVED
THE STAGING OF A MASS DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF THE HEADQUARTERS
OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CONTROL AND SUPERVISION (ICCS).
ANOTHER SPECIFIC MEASURE, ALREADY AUTHORIZED BY PRESIDENT THIEU, IS
THE IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION OF LIAISON FLIGHTS BETWEEN THE PRG AND NORTH
VIETNAMESE DELEGATIONS AT TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT NEAR SAIGON AND THE PRG
TERRITORY AT LOC NINH.

3