

## ЦЕНТРАЛЬНЫЙ КОМИТЕТ КНСС

ОТДЕЛ ЦК КНСС ПО СВЯЗЯМ С КОММУНИСТИЧЕСКИМИ  
И РАБОЧИМИ ПАРТИЯМИ СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКИХ СТРАН

Фонд № 5

Опись № 64

Дело № 478

Информации Генштаба Вооруженных Сил СССР о положении в ДРВ, о плане "Ба Бе", проводимом ДРВ в Южном Вьетнаме.

Переводы докладов и выступления секретаря ЦК ПТВ перед работниками пропаганды и руководящим составом центральных учреждений, заместителя начальника Генштаба Вьетнамской Народной Армии на заседаниях Политбюро ЦК ПТВ "Об итогах наступательных действий ВНА" в Южном Вьетнаме и задачах дальнейшей вооруженной борьбы", доклада на заседании Правительственного Совета о государственном плане развития народного хозяйства ДРВ на 1972 год.

Top Secret

Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for Communications with Communist and Workers Parties of Socialist Countries

Fund No. 5  
Inventory No. 64  
Case No. 478

Information from the General Staff, Armed Forces of the USSR on the situation in the DRV;

[Information] on the "Ba Be" plan conducted by the DRV in South Vietnam.

Translation of:

reports and speeches of the Secretary of the TsK PTV\* before the propaganda workers and leadership of central institutions;

[reports and speeches] of the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Vietnamese People's Army in TsK PTV Politburo sessions "On the results of VNA\* offensive actions" in South Vietnam and on goals of further combat actions;

a report of the Governmental Council session on the state plan for the development of the DRV's 1972 national economy.

\* DRV - *Demokraticheskaya Respublika V'etnama*, Democratic Republic of Vietnam

TsK PTV - *Tsentralnij Komitet Partii Trudyashchikhsya V'etnama*  
Central Committee of the Workers Party of Vietnam

VNA - *V'etnamskaya Narodnaya Armiya*, Vietnamese Peoples Army

Handwritten note on cover memo from Pyotr Ivashutin, head of Soviet military intelligence (GRU) states:

"Please prepare a short report (special delivery) for the Politburo of the TsK KPSS (Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) about the Prisoners of War."

signed,

Katushev\*

\* (Konstantin Katushev was a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party who handled relations with communist countries)

REFERENCE TO DOCUMENT NO. 38995, DATED 1 DECEMBER 1972

ASSIGNMENT IS COMPLETED AND NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED  
BASED UPON DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVENTS.

Briefed to Comrade K.F. Katushev.

Department Chief of the Central Committee of the Communist Party  
of the Soviet Union (CPSU) I. Ogniyetov - 6 February 1973.

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{123} General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, Main  
Intelligence Directorate ((Glavnoye Razvedivatelnoye Upravleniye -  
GRU))

Report by Deputy Chief of Staff of the Vietnamese National Army.  
General-Lt. Chan Van Quang, "On the Final Analysis of Offensive  
Operations in South Vietnam and Requirements for the future Armed  
Struggle."

Presented at the session of the Politburo of the Worker's Party of  
Vietnam (Partiya Trudovo Vjetnama - PTV) on 26 June, 1972.

(Translated from Vietnamese\*)

{127} Dear comrades!

Strong groupings of American and "puppet" forces are located  
along the fronts of South Vietnam in the vicinity of Bien Hoa, around  
Saigon, in the areas of Cam Ranh, Da Nang, Hue, and Quang Tri. The  
force groupings in the areas of Dong Ha, and Quang Tri are the  
strongest. The Americans and their "puppets" have concentrated a

large number of units and sub-units on this small piece of territory (17 x 5 KM). These include: 6 Infantry Brigades; 1 Marine Brigade; 4 Armor Battalions; and 4 Battalions and 8 Batteries of Heavy Artillery. This group of forces is approximately equal in size to two Infantry Divisions. These were the forces defending this region. In addition, the area south of the Demilitarized Zone, along Highway No. 9, was defended by two Infantry Divisions. Thus, a rather powerful group of forces was concentrated in this area. All of these forces operated out of 4 fortified positions, which were located not too far from one another.

{134} As I already mentioned, Nixon decided to escalate the bombing of Hanoi and Halphong. Saigon, relying on American air support and the mining of ports, made optimistic statements.

{135} However, after 3 weeks of fighting the puppet forces still remained in place and the situation remained unchanged. At first, we encountered difficulties, but we were prepared for them ahead of time. Already having combat experience, the difficulties were overcome. We knew, that the Americans would resume the bombings, but felt that they would not lay strikes to the north of the 20th parallel. In fact, it turned out that the Americans attacked Hanoi. At first, this was unexpected by us. After that, we were able to stabilize the situation and we inflicted retaliatory strikes against the American air forces. Consequently, during the initial period of the resumption of the bombings, we experienced difficulties and reacted passively. Despite the fact that the Main Forces ((NVA)) of our Air Defense Forces ((Protivo-Vozdushnaya Oborona - PVO)) and artillery were concentrated towards South Vietnam, and our PVO system in the North was weakened, we were able to respond to the

American air attacks. Therefore, the struggle against the enemy's air forces north of the 20th parallel was primarily conducted by our Air Force and Rocket Troops.

The Americans struck our strategic and military targets, and they were successful. In the West, this was primarily valued for the following reasons:

In 4 years of Air War under Johnson, the Americans had not achieved the type of results that were achieved during only 1 month under Nixon. And we really see, that the Americans were successful. We began to have problems because with the resumption of the bombings, we suffered considerably more casualties than we did during Johnson's presidency. These losses were inflicted upon us within a short span of time.

All the same, we had completely decided to continue providing aid and support to South Vietnam despite the hardships which were caused for us by the re-start of the bombings and mining of our ports. As for the task of delivery of food and fuel to the front by means of sea lines of communication, we initially encountered complications. But this issue is now completely resolved. We now see, that the bombing of the port of Haiphong was not as effective as expected. Already, after the start of the bombings, battles broke out on the plains and in the Mekong River Delta, where the offensive and uprising of the population wiped military bases and destroyed Strategic Hamlets and Villages. The liberated areas were expanded and many cities were freed, while a large number of the enemy's forces were destroyed. In many districts, the [136] administrative system created by the "Saigon Puppet" government, in the course of 4 years of "Pacification," was totally eliminated within one month. Saigon came under the threat of

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attacks from the North along Highways No. 13 and No. 22, where our forces carried out an offensive (Loc Ninh and An Loc). The Saigon command returned an Airborne Brigade to Saigon, and sent 3 extra Battallions to the area of Tai Nguyen. The 22nd Infantry Division of the "Puppet" army operated in the area of Kontum. The Saigon command believed, that our offensive in the direction of Quang Tri had no strategic significance, and American Military theoreticians believed, that an offensive in this direction was a mistake made by the "enemy" on the Northern Front.

{137} Within only 3 months the enemy lost more than 30,000 personnel only counting Killed in Actions. 5 Operational groups, Brigades, Regiments, 13 Infantry Battallions, and 10 Artillery Battallions were put out of action. A great deal of combat equipment and arms were destroyed, to include more than 150 aircraft of various types, and over 1,000 military vehicles.

The Insurrection of the population led to the destruction of "Strategic Hamlets" and liberation of new areas. The population took control in many provinces and districts from Quang Tri to Ca Mau. Work aimed at the demoralization of the "puppet" troops achieved its first results. A large part of the 56 Infantry Regiment, subordinate to the 5 Infantry Division, either surrendered or crossed over to the side of the people. The revolts also played a role among self-defense troops and units.

{138} Comrades, during the 3 month period of our offensive, the people and armed forces of liberation have achieved great victories. Heavy casualties were inflicted upon the troops of the "puppet"

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army. Thus, significant casualties were experienced by the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 21st, and 22nd Infantry Divisions, an Airborne Division, and a Marine Division.

Mobile Operational Groups and other Divisions have also suffered losses. Almost 1/2 of the "puppet" army's 13 Divisions have been put out of action, despite the fact, that they have received powerful air support, including the support of B-52 Strategic Bombers.

{144} At the present time, the central issue is the Paris Peace {145} Accords on Vietnam. Nixon and Laird are seeking a means for the creation of favorable conditions on the fronts in order to have a durable position at the peace talks. Nixon wants to resolve the Vietnam issue by means of peace negotiations. At the same time, the enemy has started a counter-offensive against our liberated areas in the provinces of Quang-Tri, Binh-Dinh, and Binh Long. These are the primary strategic thrusts of the enemy's counter offensive. The enemy believes, that if he can re-capture Quang Tri, more favorable conditions for the successful conduct of the Paris Peace Talks will be created. Taking into account the actions of the enemy in these areas, the State Council, the Defense Council, the Military Department of the Central Committee, and the High Command have developed an operational plan for the Fall-Winter period of 1972-73. Our main <sup>GOAL</sup> on the military fronts during this period are as follows:

1. As the situation is growing more complicated in North Vietnam, we must pay special attention to the situation on the front, as the American air forces continue bombing. It is necessary to avoid any danger of a worsening of conditions for us, otherwise, the Americans can increase attacks against our irrigation infrastructure and thus

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create definite difficulties for us.

2. We are also preparing for the liberation of the city of Hue. The liberation of Hue, following the freeing of Quang Tri, shall have a major political significance. It can facilitate Nixon's lose during upcoming elections. Therefore, we must liberate Hue prior to the presidential elections at any price, despite any difficulties. We must destroy the enemy force groupings in the area of Hue, which at present is rather strong. From the military point of view, Hue is not significant by itself. But in the Political and Diplomatic contexts, the capture of Hue has a significance, in as much as this is the ancient capital of Vietnam. We must liberate Hue in order to complicate the elections for Nixon, and it is possible, that the American people will vote him out of office. The beginning of operations for the liberation of Hue is set for September of 1972. We intend to send significant forces to this area. The regions of Quang Tri, Dong Ha, and Khe Sanh shall serve as a launching pad (Platzdarm) for the liberation of Hue. We fully intend to surround Hue, and liberate the city.

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{146} The plan for the destruction of the large group of forces in Hue was developed by the High Command, and agreed to by the State Defense Council. We plan to concentrate 2 Reinforced (Special) Regiments and 1 Tank Regiment for this purpose. Thus, the forces which we plan to concentrate in this area are equal to approximately 1 Division. In addition, 1 Division will be located in this region, which is ready to attack Hue from the direction of Da Nang. After the start of our offensive the enemy will definitely dispatch his Strategic Mobile Forces to the area. But we intend to completely destroy the enemy. Hue has very strong defensive emplacements, and we must

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liberate adjoining areas during our advance on the city. The operation for the liberation of Hue has a significant meaning for the northern part of South Vietnam.

3. We will continue to carry out the task of creating a threat for the enemy in the vicinity of Da Nang, which is an American military base. The U.S. is preparing to turn over complete control of this base to the "puppet" army, which must assume full control of the Da Nang area. Therefore, we shall continue to create a strong threat to Da Nang, operating from our positions in the Quang Ngai and Quang Nam provinces. This has an important strategic and tactical significance for us. We will deploy several Special Regiments to this region, and in this manner, impede the enemy from moving his mobile reserves to the area of Hue.

4. The plateau of Tai Nguyen is the 3rd area of combat operations. This is an important and special area which warrants special attention. Therefore, from Kontom to Ban Me Thuot we must [147] continue to conduct combat operations with the goal of freeing territory and establishing control over Highway 19, which leads out to Qui Nhon. This is an important objective, therefore we intend to concentrate two Divisions there. When we conduct our offensive against Hue, we will, at the same time, continue operations in the areas of Kontum, Ban Me Thuot, Pleiku, and along Highway No. 19, and we will force the enemy to send his strategic mobile forces to these areas. We intend to widen the area of combat operations on the plateau of Tai Nguyen.

{147} 5) The regions of Tay Ninh, Loc Ninh, and Chon Thanh make up the fourth strategic direction. This is a rather large area, through which run Highways No. 13, and No. 14, which both have to be cut. These are important lines of communication which lead to Saigon.

We have already prepared plan SR-8 - The plan for combat operations in Cambodia. At the present time, the High Command and the State Defense Council are reviewing this plan. The "Neak Loung-10" plan is also ready, and this plan further develops the SR-8 plan, and is directed against the Lon Nol faction in Cambodia.

At the same time, we are planning to liberate the areas of An Loc, Lai Khe, and Chon Thanh, in preparation for the upcoming execution of plan S-6. This is the plan for the offensive against Saigon during the Presidential elections of Nixon, but will only be executed if the necessary conditions exist.

Another area of combat operations is the South Vietnamese-Cambodian border districts of Chau Doc and Binh Tuong, which we must also expand. At the present time we have sent the 7th Division and several Independent Regiments into this area, and their mission is to operate in the Mekong River Delta area.

Consequently, the primary points of our upcoming plan are: The offensive against Hue; the liberation of the areas of Kon Tum, Ban Me Thout, and Highway No. 19; the expansion of combat operations in the area of Binh <sup>OC</sup>Lik with the aim of a breakout to Lai Khe, Chon Thanh, and the preparation of conditions for the realization of plan S-6. Furthermore, we plan to also activate combat operations in the plains of the Mekong River Delta area, along the South Vietnamese -

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Cambodian border.

{149} However, leaders at the tactical and strategic levels did allow some mistakes on the fronts. I am raising this issue today so that we can mutually work out necessary measures for the elimination of these defects, and in order to save our comrades from repeating similar mistakes in the future.

At the present time, at the height of the ideological struggle, we have experienced several negative ideological tendencies. We have already observed the appearance of these tendencies, in part, during the course of carrying out the decisions and orders of the State Defense Council and the Supreme High Command. For the successful conduct of future offensive operations we must analyze similar tendencies and work out a correct attitude towards them.

{150} Several comrades from the command staff have poorly executed the directives of the Supreme High Command, as a result of which the time frames for the execution of combat operations have become bogged down, and this is causing us considerable harm.

\* which ones?

{160} In the course of our offensive, the enemy has lost almost 180,000 personnel from his regular ((RVN)) and militia ((RF/PF)) forces. This represents 1/3 of all of the enemy's casualties from 1969 to 1970. If, in 1968, in accordance with Thieu's order, personnel between the ages of 18 to 33 years old were called up for duty, then this year personnel between the ages of 17 to 44 years old are being drafted. In 1972, even officials from the administrative organs of agricultural areas were mobilized. However, despite all of these tricks, Thieu did not succeed in

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completely making up for the losses. According to data provided by the Western press, Saigon's army has only compensated for 2/3 of its losses.

{164} The disposition of our forces in accordance with the plans and intentions of the Supreme High Command and the general Staff, prior to the start of our general offensive were as follows:

In total we had 14 Divisions, 2 Reserve Divisions, and 6 Independent Regiments. Of this total of 14 Divisions, we deployed 8 to South Vietnam. We have deployed these Divisions in the following manner:

-In addition to 2 Independent Regiments which we had in Da Nang, we deployed two Divisions in the areas of Quang Tri, Hue, and Da Nang.

165 -1 Division in the vicinity of Tay Nguyen.

-1 Division and 2 Independent Regiments in the plains portion of the 5th Combat Zone, between Quang Nguyen, Nha Trang, and Phu Yen.

-2 Divisions and 2 Independent Regiments in the areas of Loc Ninh, Tay Ninh, and to the north of Saigon.

-The remaining two Divisions were placed in the Mekong River Valley from <sup>GIA</sup> ~~Da~~ Dinh up to Ca Mau, and in the border districts with Cambodia.

Thanks to this disposition of forces, we have forced the enemy to disperse 11 of his 13 Divisions. We have sufficiently significant reserves as well, to include 2 Divisions in Cambodia, and 2 Divisions in Laos.

In North Vietnam, we have created Independent Coastal Defense

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Artillery Regiments, which together with Independent Air Defense Regiments (PVO), have been used to organize the defense of the coast line, as well as other sites on the territory of North Vietnam. This has freed up still another 2 Reserve Divisions.

In relation to our losses during the time of offensive starting from 30 March, I can report the following:

A) We have lost 140,000 personnel from regular forces, including 7,000 in the area of Quang Tri; 12,000 in the area of the 5th Combat Zone; and 9,000 in the Tay Nguyen area. The remaining casualties were suffered in the district of Binh Long - And these were heavy losses for us. But in comparison with the Saigon "puppet" army, our losses were 2 times less. The heavy losses, especially in the area of Quang Tri, were caused as a result of artillery shelling and strategic air strikes by the U.S. air forces, and as a result of a lack of high discipline in our troops, and insufficient masking of our concentrations of Shock groupings. Casualties directly resulting from the conduct of offensive operations were comparatively low.

B) We lost the following amount of combat equipment and weapons:  
-Trucks, Armor Personnel Carriers, and Prime Movers - 872 pieces.

-67 Tanks in Quang Tri; 93 in Binh Long and <sup>Tay Ninh</sup>~~Thi Nghe~~, and 104 in Tay Nguyen.

These heavy losses of mechanized equipment were caused as a result of air attacks, artillery strikes, and the poor organization of our Air Defense System (PVO). In Infantry and artillery armaments, we lost more than 3,000 pieces. We lost more than 100,000 tons of food

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supplies (primarily as a result of air strikes on our Rear Service Support Storage sites). Yet, our losses were 2 times less than those of our enemy.

In this same period, the U.S. lost almost 200 aircraft over the Democratic Republic of Vietnam ((Demokraticeskaya Respublika Vietnam - DRV)), while we lost only 27 aircraft.

And so, I have briefed you on the losses suffered by both sides during the period beginning with the start of our general offensive. I will discuss the issue of the situation and casualties in Cambodia and Laos, in my next briefing.

How can such losses be explained?

1. PERSONNEL: Because of the massive use by the enemy of artillery and air forces, with which he contained our offensive operations, as well as the undisciplined execution of command that also led to heavy losses. In order to avoid losses caused by the enemy's fire, we attempted to hold our fighting formations as close to the enemy's position as possible. However, the enemy managed to discover our force groupings at significant distances, and this enabled him to effectively utilize artillery and air strikes against our forces. In the course of the Dong Ha offensive, which was not carried out at a sufficiently rapid pace, the enemy was able to actively use air and artillery strikes on a wide scale in support of his troops, while our forces suffered significant damage. The same situation occurred during the attack of La Bang and Quang Tri. We also suffered losses while still located at forming up positions, as a result of poor camouflage and insufficient masking of our force concentrations.

2) COMBAT HARDWARE: Losses are primarily explained by the poor

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arrangement and weakness of our system of Air Defense (PVO). Taking advantage of his air supremacy, the enemy's air force subjected our Mechanized units and sub-units to savage bombings. It is necessary for us to make corresponding conclusions, and improve the Air Defense system of our mechanized and Tank units and sub-units, in order to insure their security when we begin execution of plan S-6. Our losses of means of transportation are primarily explained by the poor camouflaging of areas used for the concentration of vehicles, which in turn, were easily discovered by the enemy and quickly subjected to massive air attacks.

In addition, as experience shows, we still have not sufficiently established a clear system of command and control of our forces, as well as Political Educational work among the troops. There have been occurrences of insufficient discipline and a low level of recognition of combat duty.

These represent the main reasons for the heavy losses of our forces. It is also necessary to note, that among a number of our commanders, there is a lack of high quality tactical training and combat experience.

\*Originally translated from Vietnamese into Russian.