

Author: 8 73 541

By: ~~85~~ NARA Date: 11-6-01

3d Brigade INTSUM 163-68, dtd 11 Jun 68, para 11:

"11. Brief Discussion of Enemy Capabilities and Vulnerabilities:

a. Capabilities: The enemy retains the capability to harrass and conduct fire and ground attacks against friendly installations in up to battalion-size attacks. He is also capable of maintaining pressure upon the Saigon area for an extended period, while continuing to replenish his supplies and personnel lost during the recent general offensive.

b. Vulnerabilities: The enemy continues to remain vulnerable to friendly air support and artillery fire.

12. Conclusion: The enemy will continue to conduct attacks by fire on friendly installations and ground attacks of a probing nature against fire bases and outposts. He will continue to maintain pressure on the Saigon area as long as it will benefit his position in the Paris Peace Talks."

3d Brigade INTSUM 179-68, dtd 27 Jun 68

"AO RAPID (AO STREAM) is used by the enemy as an infiltration route to the Saigon area. The principal infiltration route parallels the Saigon River. The 273C Regt (AKA Quyet Thang Regt), estimated strength 200 men, is present attempting to infiltrate to base areas in the Trapezoid and Boi Loi woods to refit and retrain. This unit has suffered heavy losses in recent contacts and is probably moving in small dispersed units. The Cu Chi Regt, 400-600 men, composed of the 7th IF Bn and 8th Arty Bn, is felt to be dispersed in AO RAPID. The 275th VC Regt is believed to be located vic XT5221. One of its probable missions is to secure LOC's and assist the passage of reinforcing main force and infiltration elements to the Saigon area. These enemy units can be expected to remain dispersed and to assist the passage of enemy reinforcing elements to the Saigon area."

3d Brigade INTSUM 207-68, dtd 25 Jul 68, para 3f(3):

"25 July, source: 25th Inf Div G-2: Agent reports that the Cu Chi VC District Party Committee has been reinforced for 'C188'. Their intentions are to attack Cu Chi District from 22 to 29 July 1968. It was learned that their coming attack will rocket the 25th Inf Div with 200 rounds that have been brought into the area. Their principal intention is to block our reinforced road (Hwy 1). Source also reported that they will occupy this district during their coming attack from one to two days prior."

8 73 541

By ~~RS~~ NARA Date 11-6-01

3d Brigade INTSUM 210-68, dtd 28 Jul 68, para 3f(1):

"Source: 25th Inf Div G-2: On 27 July vic XT508224 B 1-506 Inf found 1 VC KIA (BC). Documents taken from the body identified C4 Company, K2 Bn, 268th Regt. Promotion orders trace Tung's advance in the unit from assistant platoon leader to platoon leader, to assistant company commander, to assistant political officer, to political officer. The documents identify the CO of the 268th Regt as Tran Ba Tong. OB NOTE: It is believed that the enemy unit contacted by the 3d Bde 101st Abn was the 7th Bn, Cu Chi, 268th Regt, and not the 275th VC Regt which was suspected earlier. The C4 Company, K2 Bn, is probably the 1st Co, 7th Bn, Cu Chi. A PW and other documents found in the area confirm the presence of the 1st Company. Both PW and documents indicate the 3d Bde 101st contacted the 7th Bn initially on 25 July. Shortly thereafter, three companies withdrew from the area and left the C1 Company behind. This company subsequently broke contact. Total known losses to the Bn are 28 VC KIA (BC); however, a PW stated his company strength alone had declined from 120 to 60-70 men, indicating far greater casualties were inflicted. Based upon interrogation, the 7th Bn is believed to be combat effective and to be composed mostly of NVA fillers."

3d Brigade INTSUM 238-68, dtd 25 Aug 68, Inclosure 1:

"The enemy attacks in northern III CTZ signalled initiation of the combat phase of the third general offensive. These attacks were undoubtedly designed as a diversion from the enemy's primary objective, the capital city of Saigon. Analysis of contacts during the week indicates that the 7th NVA and 9th VC Divisions committed only token forces from each of their Regts in an attempt to get significant allied forces committed to those areas, while the two divisions moved around their flanks. We believe that the 5th VC Division was attempting to move down the axis of the Saigon River and was inadvertently involved in the fighting west of Dau Tieng. We believe it was the most seriously hurt of the three divisions and has probably withdrawn into southern War Zone 'C'. This action, as well as allied operations particularly in Long An Province, and the exposure of the movement of the Dong Nai Regiment, has probably caused the enemy to once more slip his schedule for the attacks on Saigon. Considering current enemy dispositions, the only units in position to attack Saigon immediately are the 268/273C Regt's of SR-1 and the 1st Regt, SR-4.

The nature of the heavier attacks by fire throughout the week indicates the Arty units are either in position, or are accompanying Sub-Region main force units.

We can expect attacks by both rocket and mortar in support of limited objective ground attacks to continue throughout the Corps to force our attention from Saigon.

8 73 541

By ~~88~~ NARA Date 11-6-01

The 5th VC Div was intercepted in its southward movement with the 33D NVA Regt suffering rather extensive casualties. It now appears that the entire division has returned to southern War Zone 'C'. Failure of the 5th Div to succeed in its southward move has likely caused a postponement of the assault on Saigon. Depending on the extent to which the 33d Regt was hurt and on the immediate availability of replacements, it may be necessary for new missions to be assigned to the Regt's prior to a renewed attempt to move.

The 7th NVA Div remains in the vicinity of Loc Ninh and is expected to move south along the Song Be River axis at a predetermined time.

The 9th VC Div has broken contact and moved west to the Tay Ninh-Cambodian border area. We suspect that the 273d Regt has remained in the vicinity of Tay Ninh city for several days both to feign the presence of the Div in the area and to screen the movement of the other two Regt's. The 271st and 272d Regt's may have begun their southward movement toward BA THU with the 273d Regt probably scheduled to follow.

In summary, we believe that the enemy will continue harassing and diversionary attacks throughout III CTZ. Finally, we now believe that the enemy will make his major effort against Saigon after 1 September."

3d Brigade INTSUM 242-68, dtd 29 Aug 68, para 3f:

"(3) 28 August, source: 525th MID Intelligence Report: On 17 August 1968 the Central Communist Party sent to the NLF SVN a secret order to launch the THU DONG (summer and autumn) campaign beginning on 19 August 1968 and ending 2 September 1968. After 2 September 1968, the 3d general attack campaign will begin and last to November 1968. The principal targets are:
a. destroying the radar installations near Cambodia and Tay Ninh City,
b. ravaging Hau Nghia Province in order to set up a way for troops to enter Saigon, c. move troops to 'y' Bridge near Saigon. As of 27 August 1968, the 269 Bn along with 2 NVA companies are located in the vicinity of My Thanh village XT440025.

(8) 28 August, source: 25th Inf Div Agent Report: Agent reports elements of the 275th and 101st NVA Regts are to attack Trang Bang and 2 US fire bases (3d Bde 101st fire bases are in the area) during nights of 28 and 29 August. Source also stated that if the units noticed heavy reinforcement, they would not attack."

3d Brigade INTSUM 243-68, dtd 30 Aug 68, Inclosure 1:

POW Reports

POWs 1-5: All wounded, no interrogation.

8 73 541

By ~~88~~ NARA Date 11-6-01

3d Bfigade INTSUM 246-68, dtd 2 Sep 68, Inclosure 1:

Assessment of the Current Enemy Thrust

"1. Indications and evidence increased during the week that the enemy plans to make the 3d offensive a prolonged campaign. The current enemy plan appears to be as follows:

a. The 5th VC Division and the 101st NVA Regiment will continue operations against the 25th ARVN and 25th US Infantry Divisions in order to inflict casualties and tie down friendly forces. This will be accomplished by attacks on allied installations, centers of communications, interdiction of lines of communication by ambush.

b. The 7th NVA Division will operate against the 5th ARVN and 1st US Infantry Divisions while securing the Binh My base areas and enemy lines of communication to Cambodia.

c. Forces in MR-2 will operate against the 9th US Division in order to hold it in place. MY THO, CAI LAY, and Hwy 4 are the most likely target

d. Enemy forces in outlying areas will conduct limited objective attack within their capabilities.

e. The Sub Regional Forces will attack Saigon. However, rather than the commitment of all available forces simultaneously, the Sub Regions will commit only elements to that main objective with the remaining elements assigned other objectives within the respective Sub Regions. The attacks on Saigon will be supported by attacks by fire as well as by sapper and terrorist activity. Since the GVN will have little choice but to attempt to keep the life of the city as normal as possible, these activities will mostly be conducted during daylight hours with the attacks by fire at night. We can expect increased interdiction of the main lines of supply into the city, primarily routes 1, 4, and 20, as well as the LONG TANH shipping channel. In short, the enemy will attempt to disrupt the city as much as possible.

f. The 9th VC Division will most likely not participate in the early stage of the attacks, but will either await a favorable opportunity to attack, or will be committed in a desperation effort at a later time.

g. In conclusion, the enemy's primary objective is still, as it consistent has been, the city of Saigon. High ranking PW's and captured documents state that the enemy considers the period of US elections and the Paris Peace Talks as critical to his efforts to cause the withdrawal of the US forces and the formation of a coalition government. The third offensive is aimed directly at obtaining his objectives by the exertion of military pressure. The enemy will therefore attack and attempt to maintain constant pressure on the city while simultaneously conducting operations throughout the remainder of the III Corps Zone. We believe that the first ground action will commence on or shortly after 1 September 1968."

8 73 541

By ~~88~~ NARA Date 11-6-01

3d Brigade INTSUM, 261-68, dtd 18 Sep 68, para 3f:

"(3) 17 September, source: 25th Inf Div G-2: PW's captured during the attack on FSB Pope XT546308, 16 Sep 68, report the assault was conducted by the 1st and 2d Battalions of 101st NVA Regt. The CP location of the 101st NVA Regt is north of Thanh An (XT530378). The two battalions were detected before the attack began. One of the four prisoners stated 40 of his company consisting of 60 men were killed or wounded during the attack, so he ran. All four of the prisoners were from different companies. The 2d Bn had been in the area for only three weeks. Over 50% of the Battalion consisted of new replacements. They had come to RVN in infiltration group 2010, some 500 strong. They had received 3 months of training in NVN. 2d Bn is located in the Boi Loi, one and one half hours march from FSB Pope. The morale of the unit is low because of B-52 strikes and artillery. This prisoner was 18 years old and of the Buddhist faith. Upon arrival in RVN, all troops were issued new equipment."

3d Brigade INTSUM:

"Assessment of the current enemy threat: While the enemy maintains the same capability and geographic dispositions noted last week, he has temporarily scaled down his third offensive.

(1) There are no indications of any movement away from the Saigon area. The Dong Nai Regt, the Quyét Thag Regt, and the 1st Regt of SR-4 will probably initiate minor ground actions around the Saigon area, but will not launch a sustained assault on the city. Sapper and terrorist patterns will continue.

(2) Though we do not believe the enemy has altered his primary objective, that being the assault on Saigon, it is apparent that the schedule to be used in that assault has been substantially changed. Near the end of August, all indications pointed to an imminent attack on Saigon led by the sub-regional forces and exploited by the 9th VC Div. The attacks on Tay Ninh and Loc Ninh areas among others, the assaults on the 25th Div by elements of the 5th VC Div, the reported and indicated southward movement of at least elements of the 7th NVA Div and finally, the relative lull in activity the end of August all led to that conclusion. One week ago it became apparent that the enemy had altered his plan for a major assault on the capital and that much smaller scale attacks, if any, could be expected. During this past week it has become clear that the enemy has slowed down his offensive. Among the possible explanations for this, two are foremost. First the enemy's tactical plan- the very heart of his plan was the need to draw friendly forces away from Saigon; that plan failed. Second - and not so clearly known - is the extent to which allied operations have hurt his posture. His forces in SR-3 have certainly been seriously disrupted and this fact, in itself, may have forced the current standdown. The 33d NVA Regt suffered serious casualties in its engagements with the 25th Div and those

8 73 541

By ~~88~~ NARA Date 11-6-01

losses may have been greater than the enemy could sustain. Casualties as a result of air strikes are seldom accurately determined, but there have been reports that they have been heavy. The reports and indications of the southward movement of the 7th NVA have ceased, the heavy ground attacks against the US 25th Div have been substantially scaled down, and the overall level of enemy initiated incidents have declined.

(3) We have concluded that based on the enemy's current operations, he has been forced to re-assess his tactics as well as his timetable. The halt in the expected assault on Saigon was itself a change from his previous pattern. Never before had he halted or pulled back once committed. This new found flexibility will likely be repeated in the weeks ahead if at all possible. He will attempt to become more opportunistic, he will probe for possible weak spots and he will attempt to exploit any favorable situation that might arise.

(4) The current concentration of forces around Trang Bang (101st and 33d NVA Regt, 267 Bn, 269 and D QY Bns, elements of Cu Chi Regt and at least one Bn of 275th NVA Regt) are indications of major forthcoming activity in this area designed to decisively engage the 25th US Div. In addition, recently received information suggests that the 9th VC Div has a similar mission secondary to its primary mission of conducting operations in the Saigon area. We conclude that the enemy's stated objective of destroying the 25th US Div prior to an assault on Saigon has not changed; only the locale in which that effort will be made has been altered. Instead of seeking to engage the 25th Div in the vicinity of Tay Ninh, the scene has shifted to the Trang Bang area. It is expected that the pattern of activity observed in Tay Ninh in August will be repeated in the Trang Bang area in the near future. If the attacks succeed in drawing forces away from Saigon or in inflicting extensive damage on the 25th US Div, the assault on Saigon would likely proceed. If the attacks in the Trang Hang area failed, it is likely that the 5th VC Div will again withdraw northward to replenish its forces and plan future operations.

(5) Concurrently with the anticipated enemy activity in the Trang Bang area, we expect that attacks by fire and ground probes will continue throughout the III CTZ. Finally, the enemy will increase IOC interdiction and may attempt to destroy major bridges.

AUTHENTICATED BY:



ROBERT C. CHIPPS
CW2, USA
ASST AG