h. Continue operation of all cultural, scientific and technical installations, schools, and hospitals. Encourage national scientific and technical development.

i. Implement PRG policy of 25 March 1975 toward former GVN military personnel. Anyone who has supported or will support the PRG will be allowed to return to his home and will be encouraged to engage in PRG activities. Those who resist the revolution will be punished. Those found guilty of anti-PRG activity "who have seriously repeated will be granted leniency."

J. Insure lives and property of foreigners. All foreigners must respect independence and sovereignty of "Vietnam" and "must seriously implement all lines and policies" of the PRG.

48. (C) In MR-3, major combined arms attacks throughout the region highlighted phase two of the communist offensive. In preparation for the offensive, the NVA infiltrated approximately six additional regiments, including the 31st NVA Division, from NVN. Infiltration of combat replacements to COSVN has been extremely high, sufficient to cover projected combat losses as well as provide an adequate manpower pool for the last half of 1975.

49. (C) On 10-11 March, combined arms attacks in Tay Ninh Province succeeded in eliminating all GVN presence west of the Yam Co Dong River and resulted in the loss of Tay Tan District, Binh Duong Province.

50. (C) The following week, elements of the 6th and 7th NVA Divisions launched major attacks in the eastern part of the region against GVN positions along QL-1 and 20, and LTL 333. They successfully interdicted these routes and overran Dinh Quan and Binh Khanh District Towns, Long Khanh Province, and Hoc Duc District Town, Binh Tuy Province.

51. (B) Another significant action was the evacuation of RVNAP from isolated positions at An Loc and Chon Thanh in Binh Long Province. The evacuation from An Loc was unopposed, but in late March, prior to the final
evacuation of Chon Thanh, Communist forces, consisting of elements of the newly infiltrated 341st NVA Division and the 9th NVA Division, unsuccessfully attempted to prevent the final exfiltration of GVN forces from Chon Thanh and destroy these forces before they could link up with the ARVN 5th Division at Lai Khe.

52. (S) NVA pressure against Tay Ninh and Hau Nghia Provinces is expected to increase soon. Intelligence suggests that major elements of the 3rd and 5th NVA Divisions are located in the Parrot’s Beak and could be committed to major attacks in Long An, Hau Nghia, and Tay Ninh Provinces. Some 9th NVA Division elements had deployed from southeastern Tay Ninh Province to Chon Thanh to assist in attacks there. Fragmentary intelligence suggests, however, that 9th NVA Division forces are again on the move. Although their destination is unknown, there are indications that some elements have moved into northern Tay Ninh Province. Current information suggests that one or two regiments of the 9th NVA Division supported by armor and artillery would attack Tay Ninh from the north and northeast while the 3rd and 5th Divisions would attack from the Angel’s Wing into Tay Ninh and Hau Nghia Provinces or along the MR-3/MR-4 border. At the same time, local forces could attack CL-1 in northern Hau Nghia. Attacks along the Saigon River Corridor or into the Iron Triangle are also possible. This would enable the Communists to move into the populated areas northwest of Saigon and threaten the capital of Binh Duong Province and the ARVN 5th Division’s rear supply lines. Other VC/NVA elements could be expected to apply pressure against the ARVN 5th Division from the north to prevent the latter from redeploying to more threatened areas.

53. (S) In eastern MR-2, the 5th, 7th and 341st NVA Divisions are applying heavy pressure against Long Khanh Province, its capital at Xuan Loc and ARVN 18th Division positions. Some 7th NVA Division forces probably remain in the southern part of GVN MR-2. If
reinforced, the ARVN 18th Division can probably meet this threat, but recent combat losses probably will preclude anything more than a strong defensive effort.

54. (S) Current indications also suggest that other 6th NVA Division forces may eventually deploy into southern Bien Hoa Province to attack QL-15 and possibly RVNAP positions in Phuoc Tuy Province. Unless territorial forces receive some ARVN support, the 6th NVA Division will probably be able to cut QL-15 for short periods.

55. (S) The GVN's reserve capability to meet the Communist threat consists primarily of two Airborne Brigades, the 8th Ranger Group, and in the near future, two Marine Brigades. Barring a complete breakdown of RVNAP will to resist, currently available GVN forces should be able to defend the vital areas of MR-3. Should the Communists significantly reinforce in MR-3 with up to two or three additional divisions and coordinate their attacks with Communist forces in the northern Delta, the successful defense of Saigon would be in doubt. Timing appears to be the key at this point. GVN chances for a successful defense of MR-3 depend on its ability to rapidly reorganize and mobilize existing forces and disintegrated units from MR-1 and 2 and the Communist's ability to redeploy forces quickly and apply heavy pressure against the demoralized South Vietnamese forces.

56. (C) In MR-4, while able to realize gradual moderate gains during the first two months of the quarter, the Communists did not pose a critical threat until events in other regions made their full impact on RVNAP morale and will to fight. RVNAP morale is a critical factor at this stage.

57. (S) Since January, the VC/NVA have conducted their usual highpoints. While no spectacular results have occurred, the highpoints represented a continuation of a year-long process by which the Communists have been
able gradually to attrite RVNAF strength, combat capabilities and morale, to establish staging areas near critical targets, i.e., Can Tho, Que-4 and My Tho, and improve and upgrade their own combat capability, free from RVNAF interference.

58. (S) This has set the stage for possible decisive attacks in the coming weeks. The greatest threats at present are focused in northern Kien Tuong Province, Dinh Tuong Province, the Que-4 corridor and Phong Dinh Province.

59. (S) In Kien Tuong Province, the 5th NVA Division, after months of futile efforts to dislodge RVNAF, has regrouped and been reinforced by two regiments of the 3rd NVA Division and the 208th Artillery Regiment. The Communists appear to be planning renewed efforts against MR-3, but have the option of again striking Moc Hoa.

60. (S) In Dinh Tuong Province, the 8th NVA Division elements probably will attempt to cut Que-4 in the west. With 2nd ARVN Division elements preoccupied by this threat, RVN ability to reinforce My Tho City to the east, where pressure may also be applied, will be seriously degraded.

61. (S) The effectiveness of Communist local forces against SVN territories, the inability of the 2nd ARVN Division to cope effectively with threats throughout its entire area of operation, and weakened RVNAF capabilities and morale have abated Communist progress. While VC/NVA operations will be costly and are not guaranteed success, such attacks will place a severe burden on RVNAF supply and reinforcement capabilities.

62. (S) Further south along the Que-4 corridor, elements of the DT-1, D-1 and D-3 Regiments are currently operating in Vinh Long Province, tripling the size of
Communist forces which have been steadily defeating RVNAF territorial forces throughout the year. The ARVN 16th Regiment/9th Division has moved into Vinh Long Province to counter the threat, but if strong Communist pressure is applied against QL-4, even a series of temporary closures will greatly exacerbate problems in adjacent areas which depend on the QL-4 artery.

63. (S) The other significant threat lies in Phong Dien Province, where all three regiments of the NVA 4th Division have moved into staging positions from which to launch strong attacks against Binh Thuy Airfield, Can Tho or QL-4. Prospects for success are not clear, but 188 Regimental elements have already moved inside the Can Tho Alpha Belt and, at a minimum, can probably conduct more shelling against Binh Thuy Airfield. The remaining provinces of the lower Delta may be able to contain coordinated attacks by Communist forces; however, the significance of this will be lost if main force NVA units cannot be defeated and crippled in their efforts to achieve rapid and strategic victories in the Delta.

64. (S) RVNAF morale, the continued availability of all three existing ARVN divisions for use in the Delta and Communist staying power will be key factors in the outcome.

65. (S) As far as the outlook is concerned, Hanoi apparently is preparing to move quickly and decisively to achieve total victory in SVN this year. The previous COSVN guidance called for a fundamental defeat of the GVN in 1975, but indicated that total victory was not anticipated until 1976. However, new COSVN guidance, summarized below, takes into account the unexpected magnitude of Communist success thus far and directs Communist forces to continue moving forward to attain total victory at an early date.

a. Communist military victories have exceeded
expectations.

(1) "Liberated" 17 provinces and the 5 largest cities in central Vietnam, with a total population of 9,300,000.

(2) Captured huge amounts of weapons and war materiel and tens of thousands of prisoners.

(3) Destroyed six main force GVN divisions.

b. GVN morale is at rock bottom.

(1) GVN ranks are divided and weaker than ever before.

(2) GVN forces have fled before the Communists really hit them and have fought no "decent" battles.

c. As a result of the above, Communist forces retain their strength; they can strike much harder and win total victory.

d. The most opportune moment for the Communist side has arrived, and communist forces must continue moving forward. The Communists will not wait until 1976 for total victory, as previous guidance indicated. Instead, they will push for total victory this year. Captured war materiel provides additional strength sufficient to "liberate" all of SVN.

e. The Communists plan to move aircraft and warships to recently "liberated" air and naval bases.

f. There will be no question of negotiations or a tripartite government at all -- these are merely stratagems to isolate the GVN.

g. More provinces in GVN NR-3 and 4 will be "liberated" in the near future and Communist forces will strike at Saigon itself "when the time comes." For the
immediate future, COSVN has ordered the "liberation" of all of Tay Ninh, Rau Nghia and Binh Duong Provinces during April.

Communist forces will not rely on military force alone, but will also induce mass popular uprising against the GVN.

66. (C) The recent movement of two Communist divisions from the northern Delta to western MR-3 and the apparent commencement of attacks by elements of three communist divisions in Long Khanh Province suggest that these communist plans are being initiated. We do not feel that the current communist force in MR-3 is sufficient to accomplish their major goals at this time. Several of the NVN reserve divisions and divisions from former MR-2 may very likely deploy to MR-3, but the arrival in MR-3 of the number of units considered decisive probably will not occur until early May. A piecemeal commitment of communist forces may benefit the GVN, which may be able to handle the current threat.

67. (C) LTC Toan, MR-3 Commander, appears confident of his ability to handle the situation in MR-3 even if significant Communist reinforcements arrive. Toan is fully aware that disorder and panic in the GVN's rear areas were as much responsible for the Communist victories up north as military pressure. Despite the massive influx of refugees, control in the rear areas is possible, although the forcefulness, planning, control and execution necessary may be beyond the capability of the current GVN leadership. Generally, although morale is low, the constant, personal influence of the MR-3 and MR-4 leadership on the troops is a positive factor.

68. (C) The GVN units currently in the field must be able to handle the present communist threat without sustaining serious losses. A retreat of 30 or more days will allow RVNAF time to regroup. Assuming that equipment is made available, two fully combat capable VNMC Brigades and one Airborne Brigade will be reorganized, equipped and deployed within one month.
At least one, and possibly two, regiments from each of the 2nd and 22nd Divisions and three ranger groups should be re-formed and ready for deployment by early May, although the combat capability of these forces will be subject to question. The replacement system, using both upgraded territorial forces and new recruits, must function efficiently to replace losses.

69. (S) At this time, we believe that, despite the statement in the CCSVN Resolution, the Communists will forgo a decisive attack on Saigon and concentrate instead on consolidating gains up north, enveloping Saigon, cutting off supply lines from the Delta and destroying ARVN units, especially in the Delta and border areas of MR-3.

70. (S) A recent pronouncement by Xuan Thuy, Lao Dong Party Central Committee Secretary, suggests that the Communists believe the final take-over of the south will not be easy, and that the current effort may be protracted. Other intelligence also points to a desire by the Communists to avoid the costs and subsequent consequences of a protracted assault on Saigon. The Communists probably hope that sufficient pressure, such as the loss of Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia and Binh Duong Provinces and several key areas in the Delta; the effective isolation of Saigon; a non-commitment of additional and necessary support from the U.S.; and other internal factors in the south will cause the GVN to crumble and be forced to surrender. This would alleviate the massive problems of feeding and controlling the population in a city where the vital facilities and resources would have been destroyed by a pitched battle. Collapse without a pitched battle would also have significant political advantages for the communists.
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(SNPD) IN CONCLUSION, THE GVN WILL PROBABLY NOT LAST
THROUGH THE YEAR, AND MAY VERY WELL FALL AROUND JUNE.
RADICAL CHANGES MIGHT PROLONG ITS LIFE. THESE WOULD IN-
CLUDE A COMPLETE CHANGEOVER OF THE PRINCIPAL NATIONAL
LEADERS. THE CURRENT CABINET RE-SHUFFLING WILL NOT BE
SUFFICIENT, SINCE IT IS FAIRLY APPARENT THAT BOTH THE
Military and civilians have lost confidence in President Thieu. The JGS Staff is extremely discouraged. New leadership, coupled with massive U.S. supplied military goods and relief aid, might permit the GVN to withstand Communist assaults for a longer period. Communist tactical errors and highly effective use of available GVN troops will be important. A Communist victory in this current campaign is virtually certain unless U.S. air power is applied in the south. The fluidity of the current situation and the numerous factors involved make timing of the GVN's fall difficult to predict. The morale and will of RVNAF and the size and speed of the Communist reinforcement into MR's 3/4 remain key factors.

XGDS-2
Ambassador Martin has reviewed this assessment and does not object to its dissemination. He believes it is a sound military estimate of the enemy's capabilities versus those of the RVNAF.

He does not believe, however, that the enemy's capabilities will be exercised to their fullest because factors exterior to the local tactical situation will operate to deter the DRV. Most significant in the exterior factors considered will be international diplomatic pressures. The prompt and adequate provision of US military assistance, not repeat not including the employment of US airpower in SVN, will in the Ambassador's view give the defending forces of the Government of Vietnam material and psychological strength to prevent the necessity of capitulation while the international pressures work to provide the basis for a new political settlement.