

## DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL RECORD (NIXON PROJECT)

| DOCUMENT NUMBER | DOCUMENT TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE OR CORRESPONDENTS | DATE               | RESTRICTION |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1               | Memo          | McManis to Haig                 | October 8,<br>1969 | B           |

FILE GROUP TITLE

National Security Council, Vietnam Subject Files

BOX NUMBER

89

FOLDER TITLE

Intelligence Predictions of Enemy Offensives

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NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS PROJECT  
DOCUMENT CONTROL RECORD

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SECRET

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

October 11, 1969

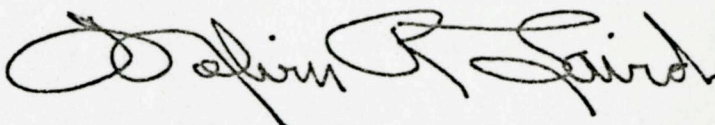
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: "Batting Average" in Predicting Enemy Activity

Enclosed is a tabulation of enemy offensives and high points since Tet 1968 showing the ability of MACV and the Intelligence Community to identify early indications of these increased operations. These data represent a "batting average" of 82 percent with an average lead time of nine days. The Intelligence Community makes its estimates from the same sources as MACV; therefore, the indications are almost identical. These indications are based on data such as rallier reports, captured documents, and communications intelligence which sufficiently reinforce one another to be credible. From a set of alternatives a course of action is judged to be most probable and, on this basis, commanders are able to plan for and execute appropriate preemptive operations to destroy, reduce, disrupt or counter the enemy.

A significant example of a successful preemptive action after a valid indication of a major offensive occurred in the Tay Ninh area in August 1968. Ralliers, captured documents, communications intelligence, and posture of NVA/VC forces indicated a developing threat to Tay Ninh City. The enemy objective was to seize and hold the city for several days. By increasing the number of maneuver battalions, artillery support, tactical air sorties and B-52 strikes, MACV challenged the enemy far from the city and so severely weakened his forces that the primary objective was abandoned.

Because of the successful preemptive actions taken at all levels, caution should be exercised in using this "batting average." These preemptive actions can delay an offensive, prevent it from being initiated or weaken it beyond recognition. Accuracy as to the probable beginning date of the enemy offensive or high point is not as important as the amount of time provided to the commander by intelligence agencies to allow preemptive actions. In each offensive and high point shown in the attachment, early notification was available to commanders.



GROUP-3

Downgraded at 12 year  
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| OFFENSIVE/HIGH POINT  | DATE OF ESTIMATE | OCCURRED                                  | LEAD TIME  |
|-----------------------|------------------|---|--|
| Tet-68 Offensive      | 20-22 Jan        | 29 Jan                                    | 7-9 days<br><br>All sources predicted offensive or attacks but no level or intensity indicated. Scope was to be country wide.              |
| May Offensive (1968)  | 1-3 May          | 4 May                                     | 1-3 days<br><br>Earlier reports indicated general time frame, i.e., 15 Apr-25 May. After 1 May, sense or urgency noted in all source data. |
| July Offensive (1968) | 11 July          | late July/Early August<br>(Did not occur) | 10-15 days<br><br>19 July evidence indicated offensive set back until after 5 Aug.   |
| Aug Offensive (1968)  | 4-12 Aug         | 18 Aug                                    | 6-14 days<br><br>Sources vague; indicated offensive was for mid-August.  |

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 INTERVALS: NOT AUTOMATICALLY  
 DECLASSIFIED. DOD DIR 5200.10

| OFFENSIVE/HIGH POINT       | DATE OF ESTIMATE | <del>DID NOT OCCUR</del> OCCURRED  | LEAD TIME  |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| Post-Tet Offensive<br>1969 | 2-6 Jan          | <del>PREDICTIONS THIS EARLY IN JANUARY DID NOT FORESEE ATTACKS AT THE END OF FEBRUARY</del> 23 Feb | <del>18-21 days</del><br>All sources appear to all select Tet as "Period" for the next offensive. (Tet over on 19 Feb)   |
| May Highpoint<br>1969      | 5-7 May          | 11 May   | 4-6 days<br>Widely scattered reports of impending highpoint. Rallier from I Corps says attacks were to begin on 10 May. Urgency of preparations noted on 7, 8 and 9 May. |
| June Highpoint<br>1969     | 31 May           | 5 Jun  | 2-5 days<br>Preparations for unspecified date evident from mid-May. Sense of urgency noted 3 & 4 June.   |
| June Highpoint<br>1969     | 12 Jun           | 15-16 Jun<br>(did not occur)   | 2-3 days<br>Highpoint pre-empted by Allied operations according to one source.   |
| July Highpoint<br>1969     | 1 Jul            | 9-10 Jul<br>(did not occur)  | 9-10 days<br>Highpoint did not take place.   |

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| <u>OFFENSIVE/HIGHPOINT</u> | <u>DATE OF ESTIMATE</u> | <u>OCCURRED</u> | <u>LEAD TIME</u>  |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---|
| August Highpoint<br>1969   | 1 Aug                   | 11 Aug          | 10 days<br><br>Low level reports<br>indicate 10 Aug as<br>date.   |
| Sept Highpoint<br>1969     | 13-21 Aug               | 4 Sep           | 14-21 days<br><br>Document directs<br>units to prepare for<br>action on 2 Sep.<br>4-10 Sep reported as<br>date on 21 Aug. |

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| <u>DATE OF PREDICTION</u> | <u>DATES PREDICTED THAT<br/>ATTACKS WOULD OCCUR</u>  | <u>OCCURRED</u> | <u>DID NOT<br/>OCCUR</u> | <u>RESULTS</u>   |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------|--------------------------|--|
| July 1, 1969              | Highpoint to occur on<br>July 9th and 10th   |                 | X                        | Did not materialize  |
| August 1, 1969            | Indications that an<br>increase in attacks<br>would occur on August<br>10th                          | X               |                          | Enemy launched heaviest<br>attacks in two months on<br>August 11th   |
| August 15, 1969           | Next highpoint scheduled<br>for August 19th, including<br>follow-up ground attacks                   |                 | X                        | Increase in sporadic fire<br>attacks did occur on August<br>19th, but far below original<br>estimates        |
| August 21-31, 1969        | Increase in enemy<br>attacks scheduled for<br>early September.                                       | X               |                          | Enemy increased rocket and<br>mortar attacks during the<br>period of September 4th through<br>September 6th. |
| September 30              | Reports that the enemy<br>is positioning for attacks<br>to take place in early<br>October in the DMZ | X               |                          | Ground action took place 6<br>miles south of the DMZ on<br>October 9th and 10th.                             |

DEFENSE PREDICTIONS OF ENEMY OFFENSIVES

| <u>DATE OF PREDICTION</u> | <u>DATES PREDICTED THAT<br/>ATTACKS WOULD OCCUR</u>                 | <u>OCCURRED</u> | <u>DID NOT<br/>OCCUR</u> | <u>RESULTS</u>   |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|--|
| January 2-6, 1969         | End of January  |                 | X                        | Predictions at this point were for a Tet Offensive. Highly doubtful that indications would become apparent two months before the attacks occurred.       |
| January 28-30, 1969       | Attacks to occur during the week of February 2d                     |                 | X                        | Although there was a slight increase in the number of attacks, the intensity did not reach the level indicated.  |
| February 13, 1969         | Major military effort within the next two weeks                     | X               |                          | Enemy units launched 117 attacks by fire throughout the country.   |
| March 3, 1969             | Next phase of offensive will be launched between March 4th and 11th |                 | X                        | Did not occur within the time frame predicted. Country-wide attacks by fire did take place on March 17th, but main force units were still not committed. |
| May 5-7, 1969             | Increase in enemy attacks imminent                                  | X               |                          | May Action Phase launched on May 11th.   |
| May 31, 1969              | Next highpoint to occur within five days                            | X               |                          | On June 6th, 70 rocket/mortar attacks were launched throughout the country   |
| June 12, 1969             | Next highpoint to take place at the end of June                     |                 | X                        | Enemy initiated activity for the last part of June at lowest level of year.  |