

March 15, 1975

Cable No. 11-DB from Brother Chien [Vo Nguyen Giap] to Brother Tuan [Van Tien Dung]

Citation:

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<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/175979>

Summary:

Cable from Vo Nguyen Giap to Van Tien Dung to provide an assessment of the situation at the Central Highlands battlefield and military strategies to deal with the enemies.

Credits:

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Vietnamese

Contents:

Translation - English

After discussions with Brothers Ba [Le Duan] and Sau [Le Duc Tho], the following is our assessment of the situation:

1. Based on information from all sources (technical information [radio intercepts], statements by the U.S. Secretary of Defense, etc.), the enemy has now clearly realized that our primary target sector is the southern Central Highlands and he has been able to make a rather good determination of the forces we have deployed there. In addition, the enemy has also concluded that our activities in other sectors are only limited actions. For that reason, the enemy has made a clear decision to concentrate his forces to make a new effort by moving in his strategic reserve forces (the airborne brigades), and he soon may also send in a number of additional ranger groups and armored squadrons (perhaps up Route 21) to launch a relatively large operation aimed at fighting us for control of Ban Me Thuot.

Even though the size of the enemy force has increased, the enemy's morale is low and he faces many problems in the logistics and support areas.

We have ample conditions to enable us to completely annihilate their entire force.

2. For that reason, the first thing we must do is to concentrate our forces in the Ban Me Thuot and surrounding area, to maintain a firm grip on our reserve forces we have on hand and realign them, and to quickly mass our heavy weapons firepower in an effort to rapidly annihilate individual enemy columns, with the first target being the enemy column in the Phu An sector, and we must be prepared to annihilate enemy reinforcements and relief forces sent in by air and overland.

The annihilation of large numbers of enemy troops in this area will be of decisive importance to the exploitation of the campaign's victory throughout the entire Central Highlands battlefield. We need to encourage our cadre and soldiers to display tremendous resolve and to seize this tremendous opportunity to complete their assigned mission in an outstanding manner by totally annihilating all of the enemy's troops and liberating the southern portion of the Central Highlands.

3. Direct all levels to reorganize and unify their command organizations. Carry out proselyting operations among the civilian population, organize local armed forces, incite the masses to sweep away all enemy troop stragglers and all reactionary leaders. Organize people's air defense efforts and take the first step toward stabilizing the lives of the local people.

4. With regard to Pleiku, systematically, step by step, surround and besiege the city, step up operations to suppress the enemy airfields and to destroy his supply warehouses. Carry out all necessary preparatory tasks on an urgent basis in order to do a truly good job against this target before the enemy has time to react.

5. The General Staff has instructed our forces in Tri-Thien to step up their operations.

6. Just as I finished writing this cable I received your Cable No. 5 TK. We are in complete agreement with your assessment that we will complete our mission much earlier than the time specified in the overall plan. We are currently studying this subject and are making urgent preparations along that line. Early next week, after I request further instructions from the Politburo, I will send you another cable.

7. I wish you great victories.

[signed]

Chien [Vo Nguyen Giap]