

Vietcong Said to Plan For Truce

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SAIGON, Jan. 11—After a lapse of two months, Communist forces in South Vietnam are again receiving instructions to prepare for a cease-fire, U.S. intelligence sources said today.

"At this point," said one ranking analyst, "they are clearly moving toward a cease-fire rather than away from one."

The evidence that preparations are being made has not yet reached the scale that it did in October when the Communists made extensive plans for a settlement that they said would take effect at the end of that month.

The U.S. sources said that Hanoi has not given its forces any data on which the cease-fire might take place, although the instructions going out are short-term in nature, covering the period between now and the end of this month.

Less Precise

One reason the instructions may be less precise than those of October, sources said, is the possibility that the negotiations in Paris could founder again.

In the view of Americans here, the North Vietnamese and Vietcong suffered a considerable military and political setback when they "surfaced" during the October false alarm.

Once located, the sources said, the Communists, especially political cadres, were easier for Saigon's military and police to round up or attack.

"Hanoi is doubtless going to be more cautious this time," said one senior analyst.

According to intelligence reports, when the October cease-fire date had passed and the situation in the Paris talks became increasingly tenuous, North Vietnam stopped handing down new directives.

ID Cards

No sweeping policy directive has been found, sources said, but among the preparations reportedly being made are these: instructions to units on how they should deal

with the International Control Commission to be named to supervise a cease-fire; renewed issuance of Vietcong identification cards and categorization of people in government-held areas by their political sentiments.

In Da nang, where the Communists supposedly planned a major effort to seize the city before the October cease-fire date, captured documents assert that a cease-fire is definitely coming and units should concentrate on the political struggle since military activity will be ending soon.

While previous orders had been to gain control of as much land and as many people as possible, the new instructions, according to analysts here, do not envision a final all-out Communist assault.

"The only reason they give for a projected winter-spring offensive, which so far has meant only an upsurge in shelling and other minor incidents," one ranking intelligence official said, "is to get the U.S. to accept a cease-fire rather than take additional land."

Recent indications of heavy Communist movement towards the south, cited in Washington as one justification for the massive bombing campaign of last month, have not been borne out, sources here said.

Infiltration into Quangtri Province along the Demilitarized Zone has been running about 60 per cent of what it was last year at this time, the sources said, apparently because the North Vietnamese expect Saigon to mount an offensive there to regain a position along the DMZ before the cease-fire.

Elsewhere in the country, intelligence shows, infiltration is about 30 per cent of what it was a year ago when the North Vietnamese were building up for their big Easter offensive.

Throughout the uncertainty of the past three months, President Thieu has not eased up in his own preparations for the military-political struggle he expects to follow a settlement in Paris.