

SAIGON 75

Chronicle of a Death Foretold

The UP! (Under Pressure!) series offers simple and fast playing strategy games on new historical topics, aimed preferably at being played back-to-back, i.e. allowing each player to experience the challenges faced by both sides.

Playing a game from the *UP*! series will put your nerves through the mill. Indeed the situations on offer are deliberately chosen for their asymmetric qualities, with one of the sides up against the quasi-inexorable pressure of its adversary. Will you manage to change the course of history?

This, the first game of the *UP*! series, *Saigon* 75 allows you to relive the fratricidal struggle between North and South Vietnam from the summer of 1973 to spring 1975.

Each game turn represents a season of three months. One of the players controls the "communist" forces of the North, comprising the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and the Viet Cong (VC); they are referred to as NV. The other controls the «liberal» forces of the South, i.e. the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN); this side is referred to as SV.

The game is played on a board representing a map of the southern part of Vietnam, divided into 20 provinces, each province being identified by the name of a town or district. (Example: Kon Tum). Cambodia, Laos and North Vietnam are also represented, and constitute territories that may only be used by NV forces. Around the map, on the game board, there is also a turn record track as well as different tables used to manage unit activation and to determine the desertion rates of South Vietnamese troops

Note: the terms "units", "troops" or "forces" are used interchangeably throughout the rules. We will refer to "Components and Set-Up" and "Sequence of Play" through the **C** and **S** letters. **[C.2]** will refer to the second part of "Components and Set-Up".

Summary

Components and Set-Up

Sequence of Play

- 1. Turns and Phases
- 2. Determining Unit Availability
- 3. Event cards
- 4. Movement
- 5. Stacking
- 6. Combat 6a. Procedure 6b. Retreat Restrictions 6c. Bonus Battle Dice
- 7. Air Unit Attrition
- 8. Province Control Check
- 9. SV Forces Desertion
- 10. Momentum Tokens (turns 3, 5 & 7)

Special Rules for Turn 8 (Spring 1975) Victory Conditions Check

List of Events

Components and Set-Up

1. Choose a side

HƯỚC BINIT

Each player chooses the side he is going to play (**NV** or **SV**) and takes the corresponding units, markers and the 5 Battle Dice.

Common elements :





2. Initial Set-Up of Units and Markers

The majority of the provinces are marked with coloured squares and rectangles, representing the units that start the scenario there. Place the corresponding cubes and pieces on each zone. Les 3 Momentum Tokens are each placed **at random** in the following provinces: Quảng Trị, Đà Nẵng and Bình Định. Each player places his *Activation Markers* +1 on the spaces provided on the game board (adjacent to their respective activation tracks).

3. Place additional units

The **SV** player has additional units (listed below) which he places in the provinces of his choice:

 Rangers (3)
Marines (4)
Unit of River Patrol Boat (2) only in Cà Mau, Cần Thơ, Kiến Giang, Long An provinces (SV player's choice)

Paratroopers (3)

4. Set up Reserves

All NV divisions, Việt Cộng (VC) battalions and the 5 Infiltration Markers are placed in the NV Reserve Pool on the board. The Quyết Thầngmarkers are placed in their dedicated space below the NV Reserve Pool.

5. Housekeeping

The D6 is placed near the board within reach of both players, while each player keeps his 5 Battle Dice in front of him.

The **NV** player places the reduced NV division cubes in front of him, off the board. Likewise, the **SV** player places in front of him, and off the board: the Air Support markers and the reduced SV division cubes. In addition, the **SV** player takes his 2 air attrition dice.

NVA ACTIVATIONS

1-3

PHASE DE JEU JOUEUR NV

Resolution des combats

Carte eve

1D6+2 (max. 8)

1D6+3 (max. 9)

1D6+4 (max:10)

ALL +2 Viet Cong Units 🍘 🍘

NV PLAYER GAME PHASE

Play event card (mandatory)

Resolve combats

TTTTT SUBLIVIAN

<u>6. Place the turn marker on box 1 of the</u> Turn Record Track (Summer 1973)

7. Prepare the Event Cards

For your first games:

Hand three Event Cards **[S.3]** to each player. Each player draws a new Event Card at the end of his *Event Card* sub-phase, so that at the start of each turn he will always be in possession of a full hand of three cards. Since the game comprises twenty Event Cards, four cards are put aside before starting play; these cards remain unknown to either player.

For players familiar with the game:

Hand eight Event Cards to each player. The remaining four cards are set aside (see above).



Sequence of Play

1. Turns and Phases

A game lasts a maximum of eight turns. Each turn is divided into two phases, the **NV** player's and then the **SV** player's.

Each phase consists of a number of consecutive sub-phases. The player whose phase it is, is called the "active" player; his opponent is the "passive" player.

NV Player Phase

- Determine Unit Availability [S.2]
- Event Cards [S.3]
- Move units [S.4]
- Resolve combat [S.6]
- Check Province Control [S.8]

SV Player Phase

- Determine Unit Availability [S.2]
- Event Cards [S.3]
- Move units [S.4]
- Resolve combat [S.6]
- Check Province Control [S.8]
- Test for SV Unit Desertion [S.9]
- Momentum Tokens (only on turns 3, 5 & 7) [S.10]
- Check Victory Conditions



2. Determining Unit Availability

The active player tests for his units' availability by rolling 1D6 and referring to his *Unit Activation Table* on the game board. This table also indicates the <u>maximum number of units</u> <u>that can be activated</u> for the current Phase. It is not possible to carry any non-activated units forward to the next turn. (**Exception:** Air Support/air transport markers **[S.6]**).

The result of the NV Unit Activation Table indicates the number of infantry divisions (reduced or not) that he can activate during his phase. This includes units located in South Việt Nam, and/or those present in the *NV Reserve Pool* (historically these units were located in Cambodia/Laos/North Việt Nam) that can enter South Việt Nam (by means of the arrows on the game board). These units can move **and/or** attack freely.

<u>In addition</u> to these units, the **NV** player may activate up to 2 extra VC battalions.

The Quyết Thầng militia markers **[S.8]** are not units, and therefore do not form part of the unit availability process.

The result of the *SV Unit Activation Table* indicates the number of units the **SV** player can activate during his phase. It represents the combination of the number of units that he can move and/or attack with, and the number of Air Support or air transport markers he can place in the relevant spaces on the game board. Buying an Air Support marker costs 1 activation point but its later use is free as long as it is not eliminated from the game.

The Air Support/Air Transport spaces may not contain any more than 5 markers. The SV player can use them to support combats in attack or in defence **[S.6]** or to transport Rangers units **[S.4]**.

Those units that have been activated are placed on their "Activated" side as an aide-

memoire (identified by a red dot). At the end of the active player's phase all these units are turned back onto their non-activated side (i.e. with no red dot visible).

The **NV** player has 3 Activation Markers +1, the **SV** player has 2. An Activation Marker +1 allows a player to add one extra availability point to the result obtained from the Activation Table.

Several Activation Markers +1 may be used in the same turn, but a player may not exceed a turn's availability limit as expressed on his Activation Table. Each Momentum Token [S.10] that the **NV** player has also allows him 1 extra activation but, as above, a turn's availability limits as displayed on his Activation Table may not be exceeded.

3. Event Cards

There are 20 Event Cards; 6 to the advantage of the **SV** player, 12 to the advantage of the **NV** player, and 2 "neutral" ones.

Each card has:

- the event name
- a background color indicating which camp is advantaged by the event
- an illustration
- a description of the event's consequences in game terms



The active player must play one of the cards in his hand, and the event associated with it is in effect during his phase.

Each card is discarded after the event has been fulfilled, or at the end of the active player's phase depending on the card. (**Exception:** if the *Crisis in Saigon* event has been played by the **NV** player, it must be retained on the gameboard as an aide-memoire until the **SV** desertion phase.

After discarding, the active player then draws a new card in order to restore his hand to three cards. (**Exception:** ignore this stage if you have chosen the eight-card hand option suggested in **[C.7]**).

4. Movement

All units have 1 movement point, apart from mechanised SV units that have 2 [S.4].

Moving into an adjacent province costs 1 movement point. Two provinces are adjacent if they share a common border. **Example:** the province of An Lộc is adjacent to the provinces of Phước Bình, Saigon and Long An as well as Cambodia.

A unit may only move voluntarily once per turn, during its movement phase.

Only NV units may move from a border province of South Việt Namto a zone representing Cambodia/Laos/North Việt Nam (and vice versa).

Any unit entering an enemy controlled province must cease moving immediately.

Any unit may freely leave a province that contains units from both sides.

All movement must adhere to the stacking rules [S.5].

Marine, Rangers and parachute units may use special movement <u>instead</u> of their normal movement. Marine brigades may be moved from one <u>coastal</u> province to any other non-adjacent coastal province. This special movement may also be used to satisfy Retreat after Combat conditionst **[S.6]**.

Parachute brigades may be moved to any other non-adjacent province.

Ranger battalions may move like parachute brigades, but must use an Air Support counter for each battalion thus moved (available in the *Air Support* spaces on the map). Air Support counters used in this fashion are subject to an Air Support attrition die roll **[S.7]**.

River Patrol units may only move between provinces where the Mekong River flows (Cà Mau, Cần Thơ, Kiến Giang, Long An).



SV mechanised units have two movement points. They must stop moving as soon as

they enter a province that contains a mountainous terrain symbol (Kon Tum, Pleiku, Đắk Lắk, Đắk Nông) and/or is enemy controlled [S.4 and S.8].



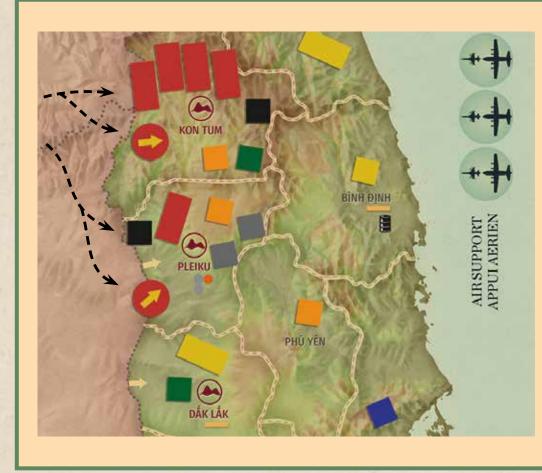
The *Quyết Thầng* militia markers **[S.8]** may not move.

5. Stacking

Stacking controls the number of units (reduced or not) that a province can contain. A province may not contain more than <u>five</u> units of any kind from the same side.

Militia markers and Air Support markers do not count for stacking. If the stacking limit is exceeded at the end of a movement or Combat Phase, the excess units are eliminated at the owning player's choice.

There are no stacking limits in the Cambodia /Laos/North Vietnam.



Activation, Movement, Stacking

This is Turn 1 (Summer 1973). The **NV** player scored 5 on the activation die roll for a total of 7 activated NV divisions and 2 VCs.

He decides to invade Kon Tum with 4 NV divisions and 1 VC unit, then move 1 NV division and 1 VC unit to Pleiku. He also places 1 Infiltration marker in each province.

The **NV** player has reached the maximum of units stacked at Kon Tum (the marker does not count).

6. Combat

Any unit belonging to the active player that is in the same province as at least one enemy unit may engage in combat. It is never compulsory to attack. An individual unit may only take part in one combat per Combat Phase.

At the end of all his movements, the active player declares the combats he wishes to initiate. He chooses the activated units that will fight, and decides the order in which the combats will take place. There may only be one combat per province.

There is no obligation to attack with all the units present in a province. Those units not engaged in the combat are not affected by the results of that combat. On the other hand, during an attack all the enemy units present must take part in the defence.

Exception: a Việt Cộng unit may only be attacked if at least one Rangers or River Patrol unit is taking part in the attack. Should this not

be the case, the NV player may choose not to engage his VC battalion(s) in the combat. A Việt Cộng unit which attacks suffers all combat results that may be inflicted by the defender (whether a Rangers or River Patrol unit is present or not).

The results of combat are considered to be simultaneous. A combat in a province lasts only one round; i.e. the dice are only rolled once per combat sub-phase in each province.

6a. PROCEDURE

The players roll as many dice as there are units engaged in the combat, plus any possible bonus Battle Dice **[S.6]**.

The attacker first of all announces how many combat units he is engaging in the attack as well as his bonus Battle Dice. The defender in turn declares if he is using any bonus Battle Dice to support <u>all</u> of his combat units. Each player then rolls his dice.

A player may not roll more than 5 Battle Dice per combat. The defender applies the results of the Battle Dice to his troops <u>first</u> (losses then retreats). Then the attacker does likewise.

Dice results:

Ø:no result

X (reduction) : an enemy division is reduced (the playing piece is replaced by a cube). A division that is already reduced, or any other kind of unit, is removed from the game.

R (retreat) : the number of **R** results each side has rolled are compared and the balance is calculated. For each **R** result thus obtained, an enemy unit must retreat into an adjacent province (see below).

Example: if the **NV** player rolls 2**R** and the **SV** player 3**R**, the balance is 1**R** against the NV. Therefore 1 NV unit must retreat.

Quyết Thầng militia markers **[S.8]** are unaffected by **R** or **X** results.

6b. RETREAT RESTRICTIONS

Retreats must be made into an adjacent province under friendly control <u>that contains</u> <u>more friendly units than enemy units</u> (reminder: Les marqueurs milice *Quyết Thầng* militia markers do not count as units **[S.2]**). In the event it cannot retreat, the unit concerned is reduced (and may therefore be eliminated).

A Marine brigade in a coastal province may retreat to any other SV controlled coastal province.

Only NV units may retreat into Cambodia/ Laos/North Vietnam. In that case they are placed in the NV Reserve Pool.

The **NV** player may at any time in his Reserve Pool "reconstitute" a complete division out of two reduced divisions.

If there are more R results than there are units to retreat, the extra results have no effect.

If a unit's retreat into a province would exceed stacking limitations, then that unit is eliminated. A NV division may choose to be reduced rather than retreat. SV units may choose to retreat voluntarily after combat.

If the outcome of the R and X results is such that all the units of one side must be withdrawn from the province where the combat took place, the last unit to retreat may be exempted from retreating at the owning player's choice.

6c. BONUS BATTLE DICE

At the start of the game the **NV** player has 5 *Infiltration* counters. Each counter allows him a bonus Battle Die that can be used in a combat taking place in a province <u>adjacent</u> to the infiltration zones, i.e. adjacent to Cambodia, Laos or North Việt Nâm.

In order to use the *Infiltration* counter, the **NV** player must be the attacker in the combat in question. Only one counter may be used per combat; the player must announce its use before rolling the dice. Each *Infiltration* counter is discarded after use.

The **NV** player benefits from a bonus Battle Die <u>if he is the defender</u> in a combat taking place in a province that contains a *Quyết Thầng* militia marker **[S.8]**. Where a province is occupied <u>solely</u> by at least one SV unit after combat, the *Quyết Thầng* militia marker is removed.

The **SV** player has a number of Air Support markers available to him (these may not be used before the **SV** player's phase in turn 1). In combat, the **SV** player may use one Air Support marker per friendly unit engaged on the ground. Each Air Support marker gives the **SV** player a bonus Air Support Battle Die for the combat. (**Tip:** as an aide-memoire the Air Support markers used in a combat are placed in the province where the combat is taking place until the air attrition checks have been made **[S.7]**).

Using an Air Support marker is "free" and is not equivalent to activating a unit.

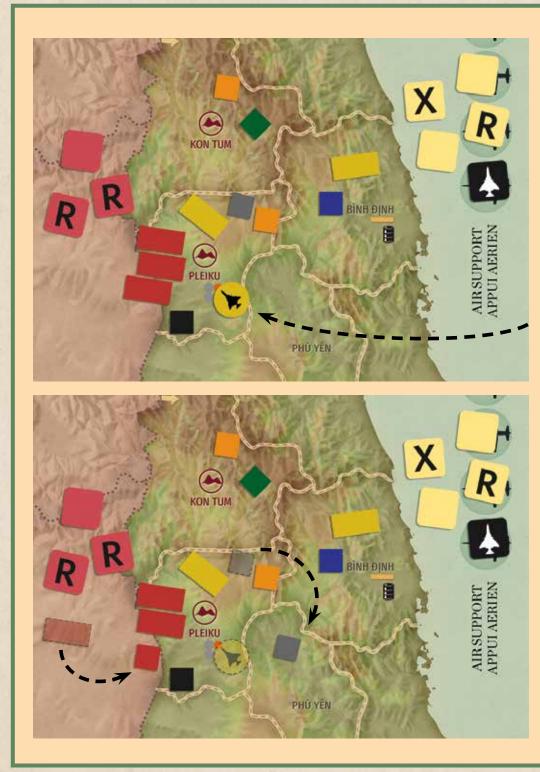
Unused Air Support markers are kept for the next turn.

Certain events on the cards will allow the players bonus Battle Dice.

Each Momentum Token allows the player to receive 1 bonus Battle Die.

However many bonus Battle Dice the players receive, the total number of Battle Dice is always limited to 5 per combat.

In the course of a combat, the attacker is the first to declare the number of bonus Battle Dice he is using. At no point may he change this decision. Thereafter, the defender may decide if he wishes to allocate any bonus Battle Dice.



Combat, Retreat

The **SV** player has previously played the *Ammunition Shortage* card.

He decides to attack with all his activated units in Pleiku. This is possible because a unit of rangers is present in the area. He also adds 1 Air Support marker previously activated. He will roll 4 yellow dice and 1 black dice (for the attrition of air units).

The **NV** player defends himself with 3 divisions and his unit VC. He will only roll 3 dice because of the SV card.

<mark>SV results</mark> : ØØXR NV results : ØRR

As the defender, the **NV** player first applies the loss to one of his NV divisions. The **SV** player must then retreat one of his units (2**R** against 1**R**). He decides to move the mechanized unit to Phu Yen.

The province has not changed sides.

The black die result eliminates the Air Support marker used.

7. Air Unit Attrition

For each combat the **SV** player rolls a number of bonus Air Support Battle Dice equal to the number of Air Support markers he has committed. For every aircraft symbol rolled, one of the Air Support markers engaged in the combat is eliminated for the rest of the game. This represents enemy AA fire as well as maintenance and supply problems. If an Air Support marker is not eliminated, it is placed back on an Air Support space and becomes immediately available again.

8. Province Control Check

At the start of the game all the provinces in South Việt Nam are under South Vietnamese control.

After each combat, and after the SV unit Desertion Phase, control of the provinces is checked.

A province that is occupied solely by units from the one side is controlled by that side.

A province occupied by units from both sides is controlled by the NV if it contains a *Quyết Thầng* militia marker, and by the SV if it doesn't.

After each Combat Phase, the **NV** player places a *Quyết Thầng* militia marker in each province he controls. This marker, as well as indicating NV control of the province, also allows the NV player a bonus Battle Die for each combat in defence taking place in that province. Each province may only contain one *Quyết Thầng* marker.

If a unit belonging to the SV player enters a province controlled by the NV where there is a *Quyết Thầng* militia marker <u>on its own</u>, then the marker is immediately removed and the province passes into SV control. In this event, the SV unit ceases its movement immediately. There may only be one *Quyết Thầng* militia marker per province controlled by the **NV** player.

If, after combat in a province under NV control:

- only the Quyết Thầng militia marker remains, then it stays in place and the province remains under NV control.
- the SV player has more units than the NV player, then the Quyết Thầng militia marker is removed and the province is returned to SV control again. (Exception: in Saigon province the SV player only needs to have as many units as the NV player).

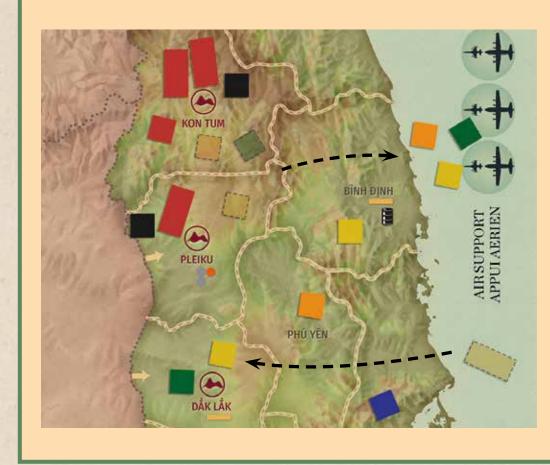
Any empty province not under NV control, i.e. without a *Quyết Thầng* militia marker, is considered to be under SV control.

9. SV Desertion

The **SV** player counts the provinces controlled by the **NV**, rolls a die and consults the *Desertion Table* on the board in order to calculate the number of SV units that desert. A full strength SV division represents two units for this purpose. It is permissible to simply reduce a division; this counts as one unit deserting.

Units that desert are removed from the board by the **SV** player in the following order:

- first, units in provinces that border Cambodia/Laos/North Việt Nam and that are occupied by units from both sides;
- second, units in provinces that border Cambodia/Laos/North Việt Nam;
- third, units in a province occupied by units from both sides, <u>with the exception</u> of Saigon;
- finally, all other SV units.



Desertion

The **NV** player controlling 6 provinces, his opponent gets a result of 4 after rolling the die during the desertion phase of the SV forces.

He decides to remove from play the two units in Kon Tum, the one in Pleiku and to reduce the division at Dak Lak.



10. Momentum Tokens (turns 3, 5 & 7)

During this sub-phase of turns 3, 5 and 7, the players check which side controls the province where the Momentum Token is located whose number corresponds to the turn that is just finishing.

If the province is controlled by the SV, the Momentum Token is permanently removed from the game.

If the province is controlled by the NV, the **NV** player collects the Momentum Token, and places it in front of him for future use.

During his turn the Momentum Tokens allow the **NV** player to (his choice):

- have 1 extra activation (Unit Availability Phase [S.2])

- re-roll any one of his dice (Unit Availability Phase [S.2], Combat Phase [S.6])
- discard 1 card and draw a replacement card from the 4 cards set aside during the game set-up (this card can be played at any time)
- move 2 units using strategic movement (to be carried out at the start of the movement phase) [S.4]). These 2 units can be moved anywhere on the map and are considered to be activated. They may therefore take part in combat. Exceptionally they <u>do not count</u> towards the maximum number of units that may be activated in the current turn. (this is counter to rule [S.2]).

After use, each Momentum Token is withdrawn from the game.

Special Rules for turn 8 (Spring 1975)

If, on the last turn units from both sides occupy Saigon province, the SV units may not leave the province, and <u>must</u> attack; this means that units present in Saigon must be given priority for activation. If there are not enough activations to activate all the units in Saigon, only those units that have been activated may fight. However, combat results suffered by the SV side are applied to all units, even those that were not activated.

Check victory conditions

If, at the end of any turn, the **NV** player controls Saigon province (it contains a *Quyết Thầng* marker) the game ends with a NV victory.

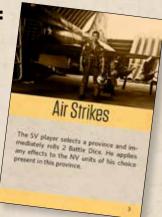
If the **NV** player is not in control of Saigon province at the end of Turn 8, the **SV** player wins the game. (Even if he has no units

remaining in Saigon. Given the resistance displayed by the ARVN, the United States decides to intervene to save South Vietnam by engaging its air forces once more, in particular the formidable B-52s)

Events

Events Favourable to the SV Player

Counter-attack (E-01): The **SV** player gets an extra Battle Die to use in the next Combat Phase. He must announce the use of this bonus die before rolling the dice.



Ammo Shortage (E-02): The NV must roll one less Battle Die for

each combat during the next Combat Phase. If the modified number of Battle Dice falls to 0, then the NV player rolls no dice.

Air Strikes (E-O3): The SV player selects a province and immediately rolls 2 Battle Dice. He applies any effects to the NV units of his choice present in the province. The SV player does not need to have Air Support markers in reserve to use this event. By the same token, attrition of air units is ignored for this event.

Strategic Redeployment (E-04): Allows the SV player to redeploy up to 5 units anywhere on the map (except the Cambodia/ Laos/North Việt Nam zones). Movement restrictions are ignored for this redeployment, except for River Patrol units, which may not leave the Mekong. If played during the SV phase, any units redeployed using this event are considered activated and to have already moved. These units may participate in combat. Despite this, they do not count against the maximum number of units that may be activated for the current turn (this is an exception to [2.2]). The SV player carries out the normal procedures during the Unit Availability Determination phase.

Intelligence (E-05): the **SV** player may reroll, or force his opponent to reroll, a Battle Die during the next Combat Phase.

Stubborn Resistance (E-06): the **SV** player ignores all R (retreat) results for all his units engaged in a combat during the next Combat Phase. Applies to one combat only, and is declared after the dice have been rolled.

Neutral Events

Limited Offensive (E-07): Roll a die. On a result of 1 or 2, no combat is possible during the next Combat Phase. On 3 or 4, only one combat is possible during the next Combat Phase. On 5 or 6, two combats are possible during the next Combat Phase.

Tropical Rainstorm (E-08): each player must remove one of his Battle Dice for each combat during the next Combat Phase. If the modified number of one side's Battle Dice is reduced to 0, that side does not roll for the combat.



Events Favourable to the NV Player

Armoured Support (E-09): The **SV** player suffers an extra X result in a combat during the next Combat Phase, at the **NV** player's choice. The **NV** player must announce this extra result after Combat Resolution.

Viet Cong Attack (E-10): If the card is played during the SV phase, SV mechanised units may not move during the current movement phase, (but may retreat if necessary). If the card is played during the NV phase, SV mechanised units do not receive any

Battle Dice for the next Combat Phase.

Paralysed Leadership (E-11): If the card is played during the SV phase, the availability of SV units (<u>except</u> *activation markers* +1) is divided by 2 (rounded down) for that phase.



If it is played during the NV phase, during the next Combat Phase the remaining R results (after reciprocal elimination of R results) of a combat are transformed into X results. The **NV** player makes this choice after the dice have been rolled.

Ho Chi Minh Directive (E-12): +1 DRM on the NV *Unit Activation Table*; + 1D6 if the event is played in Turn 8 (Spring 1975). The event is cancelled if played by the **SV** player.

Corruption (E-13): If played during the **SV** player's phase, the **NV** player chooses up to 4 SV units, that become unavailable for the rest of the phase. These units may neither move nor attack. If the event is played during the **SV** player's phase in Turn 8 (Spring 1975), units in Saigon may not be selected; failing which the event is ignored. If the event is played during the **NV** player's phase, all X results suffered by NV units in a combat (**NV** player's choice) are transformed into R results.

Crisis in Saigon (E-14): The **NV** player is considered to be in control of an extra province during the SV Desertion Phase. If the **NV** player plays this event, it must be kept on the game board as an aide-memoire until the SV Desertion Phase.

Diversion (E-15): A SV unit (chosen by the **NV** player) is immediately moved by the SV player to an adjacent SV controlled province. If this move is impossible, or would cause overstacking, the unit is eliminated.

Evacuation (E-16): The **NV** player chooses a province (except Saigon). The **SV** player must immediately retreat 2 units out of that province. This counts as a retreat, and the rules regarding retreat and overstacking must be followed.

Poor Morale (E-17): The **SV** player rolls one less Battle Die for every combat in the next Combat Phase. If the modified number of Battle Dice for a given combat falls to 0 (including bonus Battle Dice), the **SV** player does not roll for this combat.

Viet Cong Infiltration (E-18): The **NV** player can immediately place a VC unit in any province (the unit may, or may not, already be in South Vietnam). During the *Unit Availability Determination* phase the NV player may still activate 2 of his VC units as normal.

Uprising (E-19): The **NV** player may add 1 Battle Die to each of 2 combats during the next Combat Phase. This must be declared before each of the combats.

Mountaineers Revolt (E-20): At the **NV** player's choice, a SV unit in a mountain province may neither move nor fight (including in defence). This must be announced at the beginning of the phase.