MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT: Revising the Viet Cong Order of Battle

1. We believe the MACV Order of Battle of Communist Ground Forces in South Vietnam, which on 3 January carried the number of confirmed Viet Cong, including North Vietnamese, at Q77,120, is far too low and should be raised, perhaps doubled. A raising of the OB figure to a more realistic level would allow the intelligence community to make a better-informed appraisal of what we are up against and would enable it to grapple more effectively with such nuts-and-bolts problems as Communist manpower allocations, desertion rates, casualty estimates, and logistics. We recommend that components of the DDI, including the Collation Branch in Saigon, take on the task of researching neglected areas of the OB with all deliberate speed.

2. The OB is divided into four parts. Part One, the strength of the Main Force/Local Force (carried at 106,562), is as nearly accurate as the massaging of several hundred OB analysts in Vietnam and Washington can make it. Part Two, the strength of Viet Cong irregulars (carried at 112,570), is the subject of a detailed but as yet unpublished CIA study and is also being reviewed by MACV. Part Three, the strength of the "Combat Support" (18,653), and Part Four, the strength of the political apparatus, also called "armed political cadre," (39,175), were arrived at rather quickly some years ago and have been neglected ever since. We recommend that Parts Three and Four be reviewed.

3. "Combat Support," by present MACV criteria, includes sappers (demolition experts who are probably the elite among all Viet Cong troops), intel/recon personnel, "guards" (whatever that means), and several other categories. A recent informal review of the components by OCI showed that the numbers in some of the categories are absurdly low. (For instance, MACV lists only 700-odd sappers in South Vietnam.) Organized full-time transportation and medical units...
are omitted from the OB altogether. A more realistic estimate of
the number of "Combat Support" personnel could run as high as 150,000.

4. Who the "armed political cadre" are is murky, so it is
impossible even to estimate their numbers. That they belong in a
military OB at all is questionable. We recommend that criteria be
devised to determine who should belong in a "political" OB, and that
such an OB be drawn up as rapidly as possible and maintained there-
after. It might include, for example, the Armed Public Security
forces, who apparently serve as the Viet Cong secret police and who
are controlled directly from Hanoi.

5. We would be happy to assist in any of these proposed
endeavors in any way we can.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Distribution:
P/CI - 2
D/NE - 2

1 - VC/Military Capabilities & Intentions
✓1 - VAS Chrono
1 - GAC Chrono

Drafted: Sam Adams 11/1/67