PRIORITY SAIGON

FOR:

REF: SAIGON 7423(IN 79116)

1. HEADQUARTERS ANALYSTS WOULD FIND SOLUTION TO OB
   PROBLEM, AS PROPOSED, TOTALLY UNWORKABLE. SELF DEFENSE AND
   SECRET SELF DEFENSE MILITIA SIMPLY CANNOT BE DROPPED OR
   IGNORED IN THE OFFICIAL OB OR IN PUBLIC RELEASES ON ENEMY
   STRENGTH. WHILE IT IS TRUE, AS REF TEL INDICATES, THAT
   SELF DEFENSE MILITIA ARE NOT IN SAME LEAGUE WITH ENEMY MAIN
   FORCES, THEY ARE IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF ENEMY'S OVERALL
   MILITARY STRENGTH AND A SOURCE OF MANPOWER FOR MAIN FORCE
   UNITS.

2. COMPUTATIONS OF ENEMY CASUALTIES, LOGISTIC NEEDS,
   RECRUITMENT RATES, ETC., MUST INCLUDE MILITIA WITHIN ENEMY
   BASIC STRENGTH TO BE REALISTIC. AS YOU AND MACY AWARE,

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JX 239, p. 1
LARGE NUMBERS OF "MILITARY" DEFECTORS AND AN INDETERMINATE PROPORTION OF BODY COUNT KIA ARE SELF DEFENSE TYPES.

TENDENCY OF PRESS AND OTHERS TO SUBTRACT ENEMY LOSSES FROM TOTAL ANNOUNCED ENEMY STRENGTH, IF IT OMEGS MILITIA, WILL PRODUCE SAME MISLEADING CALCULATIONS WHICH HAVE HAUNTED US IN PAST. VIEW IN REFTEL THAT INFORMATION ON MILITIA EMEY STILL POOR ALSO APPLIES TO POLITICAL STRENGTH, WHICH ENEM UNDER PROPOSED SYSTEM, HAS ACCEPTED AND POSSIBLE CATEGORIES. WHY NOT USE SAME BREAKOUT FOR SELF DEFENSE WHEN INCLUDING THEM IN OB.

3. IN OUR VIEW, IT IS TIME TO BE AS REALISTIC IN PUBLIC AS IN NECK PRIVATE WITH NATURE OF ENEMY FORCE WE ARE FACING. WE THINK IT POSSIBLE THAT SAIGON AUTHORITIES ARE OVEREMPHASIZING DIFFICULTY OF EXPLAINING JUMP IN FIGURES ADEQUATELY TO "HIGH LEVELS" IN WASHINGTON. SEVERAL CIA STUDIES AND SOME BY OTHER INTELLIGENCE COMPONENTS HAVE
BROACHED PROBABILITY THAT ESTIMATES ARE UPCOMING WHICH WILL
BE MUCH HIGHER. ANSWERS QUESTIONS WE NOW GET FROM HIGH
LEVELS INVOLVE WHEN COMMUNITY IS GOING TO COME UP WITH THESE
NEW ASSESSMENTS.

4. WE BELIEVE PROPER HANDLING OF SELF DEFENSE MILITIA
IN OB WOULD INVOLVE PLACING THEM IN SEPARATE CATEGORY
BETWEEN MILITARY AND POLITICAL ELEMENTS. RELEASE OF ENEMY
STRENGTH FIGURES TO PUBLIC AND WITHIN GOVERNMENT WOULD THEN
BE ACCOMPANIED BY CAREFUL DEFINITIONS OF ALL CATEGORIES
WITH STATEMENT EMPHASIZING PART TIME, QUASI-MILITARY STATUS
OF SELF-DEFENSE MILITIA. WE BELIEVE THIS SOLUTION WOULD
HELP LESSEN IMPACT OF JUMP STRENGTH AND IN STRENGTH AND
WOULD ALSO HELP EXPLAIN WHY INTRODUCTION OF HALF-MILLION
US AND FREE WORLD TROOPS HAS NOT TIPPED SCALE DECISIVELY
IN FAVOR OF ALLIES.

JX 739, P.3

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5. ON OTHER ASPECTS OF REPTEL WE HAVE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS: NEW FIGURE OF 60,750 FOR STRENGTH OF "GUERRILLAS" MAY STILL BE TOO LOW. WE NOTE THAT DOCUMENT TRANSLATED IN CDEC 02-1846-66 WHICH ALLEGEDLY QUOTES VIET MINH THUAN AS SAYING VC HAD 180,000 "GUERRILLAS" (AS WELL AS 250,000 "MILITIA") IN 1965, NOW SUPPORTED BY NOTEBOOK OF XXX U/L CADRE TRANSLATED IN CDEC 08-1704-67. CADRE'S NOTEBOOK, WHICH LISTS 191,296 AS NUMBER OF MALE AND FEMALE GUERRILLAS IN 1965, HAS THEN BROKEN DOWN BY REGION. IT LISTS "MILITIA" X SEPARATELY.

6. STRENGTH OF ADMIN SERVICES, LISTED AS 24,813, IS STILL PATENTLY TOO LOW. LARGE NUMBERS OF ADMIN SERVICE TYPES HAVE NOT YET BEEN INCLUDED IN OB. OLD NUMBER OF 18,000-ODD HAS BEEN EXPANDED ONLY BY ADDITION OF A FEW COSVN-LEVEL SERVICE ELEMENTS, AND OTHER ODDS AND ENDS. WE FEEL ACTUAL STRENGTH OF ADMIN SERVICES MAY BE IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF 75-100,000.

JX 239, p.4
7. RE POLITICAL CADRE IN OB MENTION IN PARA 4,

REFTEL. WHAT IS GRAND TOTAL OF REVISED POLITICAL STRENGTH?
£20,000 (TOTAL OF ACCEPTED AND POSSIBLE), OR 140,000
LISTED AS POSSIBLE. WE ASSUME LATTER.
ORIG: CIA OPERATIONS CTR
UNIT: OCI
EXT: 7551
DATE: 2 JUNE 67
CONF: OCI 4

TO: PRIORITY SAIGON
OCI SAVA NFAC/COC
FOR: LOUIS SANDINE
REF: SAIGON 7423 (IN 79916)

1. HEADQUARTERS ANALYSTS WOULD FIND SOLUTION TO OB PROBLEM, AS PROPOSED, TOTALLY UNWORKABLE. SELF DEFENSE AND SECRET SELF DEFENSE MILITIA SIMPLY CANNOT BE DROPPED OR IGNORED IN THE OFFICIAL OB OR IN PUBLIC RELEASES ON ENEMY STRENGTH. WHILE IT IS TRUE, AS REF TEL INDICATES, THAT SELF DEFENSE MILITIA ARE NOT IN SAME LEAGUE WITH ENEMY MAIN FORCES, THEY ARE IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF ENEMY'S OVERALL MILITARY STRENGTH AND A SOURCE OF MANPOWER FOR MAIN FORCE UNITS.

2. COMPUTATIONS OF ENEMY CASUALTIES, LOGISTIC NEEDS, RECRUITMENT RATES, ETC., MUST INCLUDE MILITIA WITHIN ENEMY BASIC STRENGTH TO BE REALISTIC. AS YOU AND MACV AWARE.
LARGE NUMBERS OF "MILITARY" DEFECTORS AND AN INDETERMINATE
PROPORTION OF BODY COUNT KIA ARE SELF DEFENSE TYPES.
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STILL POOR ALSO APPLIES TO POLITICAL STRENGTH, WHICH
UNDER PROPOSED SYSTEM, HAS ACCEPTED AND POSSIBLE CATEGORIES.
WHY NOT USE SAME BREAKOUT FOR SELF DEFENSE WHEN INCLUDING
THEM IN OB.

3. IN OUR VIEW, IT IS TIME TO BE AS REALISTIC IN
PUBLIC AS IN PRIVATE WITH NATURE OF ENEMY FORCE WE
ARE FACING. WE THINK IT POSSIBLE THAT SAIGON AUTHORITIES
ARE OVEREMPHASIZING DIFFICULTY OF EXPLAINING JUMP IN FIGURES
ADEQUATELY TO "HIGH LEVELS" IN WASHINGTON. SEVERAL CIA
STUDIES AND SOME BY OTHER INTELLIGENCE COMPONENTS HAVE
BROACHED PROBABILITY THAT ESTIMATES ARE UPCOMING WHICH WILL BE MUCH HIGHER. QUESTIONS WE NOW GET FROM HIGH LEVELS INVOLVE WHEN COMMUNITY IS GOING TO COME UP WITH THESE NEW ASSESSMENTS.

4. WE BELIEVE PROPER HANDLING OF SELF DEFENSE MILITIA IN OA WOULD INVOLVE PLACING THEM IN SEPARATE CATEGORY BETWEEN MILITARY AND POLITICAL ELEMENTS. RELEASE OF ENEMY STRENGTH FIGURES TO PUBLIC AND WITHIN GOVERNMENT WOULD THEN BE ACCOMPANIED BY CAREFUL DEFINITIONS OF ALL CATEGORIES WITH STATEMENT EMPHASIZING PART TIME, QUASI-MILITARY STATUS OF SELF-DEFENSE MILITIA. WE BELIEVE THIS SOLUTION WOULD HELP LESSEN IMPACT OF JUMP IN STRENGTH AND WOULD ALSO HELP EXPLAIN WHY INTRODUCTION OF HALF-MILLION US AND FREE WORLD TROOPS HAS NOT TIPPED SCALE DECISIVELY IN FAVOR OF ALLIES.
5. On other aspects of Reftel we have following comments: New figure of 60,750 for strength of "guerrillas" may still be too low. We note that document translated in CDEC 02-1846-67 which allegedly quotes Nguyen Chi Thanh as saying VC had 180,000 "guerrillas" (as well as 150,000 "militia") in 1966. Now supported by notebook of U/l cadre translated in CDEC 05-1704-67. Cadre's notebook, which lists, 191,296 as number of male and female guerrillas in L(§$), has them broken down by region. It lists "militia" separately.

6. Strength of admin services, listed as 24,813, is still patently too low. Large numbers of admin service types have not yet been included in OB. Old number of 18,000-odd has been expanded only by addition of a few cosvn-level service elements, and other odds and ends. We feel actual strength of admin services may be in neighborhood of 75-100,000.
7. RE POLITICAL CADRE IN OB MENTION IN PARA 4,
REFTEL. WHAT IS GRAND TOTAL OF REVISED POLITICAL STRENGTH?
220,000 (TOTAL OF ACCEPTED AND POSSIBLE), OR 140,000
LISTED AS POSSIBLE. WE ASSUME LATTER.
PRIOIRTY SAIGON
OCI SAVA NFAC/COC
FOR: LOUIS SANDINE
REF: SAIGON 7423(N 7/16)

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-2-

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JX 239A, P.3

749
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