Here is the basic equation from which the Order of Battle discussion proceeds:

ARMED FORCES = Regulars + Administrative + Guerrillas

This translates to the following numbers (in thousands). The bracketed figures are the upper estimates:

223 (248) = 118 + 35 (40) + 70 (90)

Westmoreland used a 242,000 total -- I do not know how he divided the spreads in Administrative and Guerrilla figures.

The rationale for the new figures based on the MAC/V Order of Battle draft of November 8 (discussed at Monday's meeting) is as follows:

Regulars:

Total estimate of 118,000 (composed of 53,000 NVA plus 65,000 VC main and local) is essentially unchanged. (Retrospectively, we now estimate that this peaked at 127,000 in September 1966 and has since declined to 118,000.)

Administrative:

New estimates put this figure at 35-40,000 full-time personnel. Previous estimate was 25,000. "This does not mean an increase of 10-15,000 ... it means simply that our intelligence data, while not firm today, is now better than in the past."

Guerrillas:

Here is where the big difference is between the old OB figure (297,000) and the new one. Previously all "irregulars" -- composed of guerrillas, self-defense and secret self-defense forces -- were carried as part of the enemy OB and estimated at 100-120,000. (The guerrillas were estimated to be one-third of this total.)
The new guerrilla estimate involves 2 changes:

1. It excludes self-defense and secret self-defense forces from the OB on grounds they should not be considered a "military threat."

2. It reflects information from captured documents which suggest that "guerrilla forces have been considerably larger than we had believed." The new estimate sets this figure at 70-90,000. (We now believe that a year ago it was roughly 150,000.)

SUMMARY: As I see it, the overall explanation is that we have (1) changed the bookkeeping system, and (2) where we formerly included all irregulars in the OB category, we now only take a portion of it -- the guerrillas. At the same time, our new estimate of guerrilla strength has increased.