MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

SUBJECT: Order of Battle

The CIA estimate on enemy recuperability after the TET offensive has obviously knocked into a cocked hat the laboriously produced NIE. (Incidentally, if Sheehan had compared the CIA estimate with OSD end-January figures, the discrepancies would have even more startling than his comparison with the November NIE.)

On an informal basis, DIA has given me the following preliminary comments on order of battle:

- MACV's exhaustive analysis indicates guerrilla strength of slightly less than the January O/B of 72,600. (CIA says 100 - 120,000.)

- MACV interrogation has produced no evidence that any members of a Self Defense Militia took part in the TET offensive -- in fact, no evidence of the existence of such an organization.

- DIA and MACV have no basis for any increase in the estimate of administrative services and political-military cadre.

- They have no evidence that VC recruitment capability has doubled to 6,000 - 10,000. (As a one-time surge capability, it is credible but not as a long-term proposition.)

- Losses since 21 February -- which CIA has not taken into account -- should not be simply discounted as "normal" losses.

I understand that the preparation of a new NIE is under consideration. You may wish to lend your weight to the urgent preparation of such a document. In the process you may wish to:

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- again insist on a retrospective order of battle (If the intelligence community is to come up with a radically different order of battle, they have an obligation to retrospectively adjust past estimates.); and

- urge that the order of battle section of the NIE be published without waiting for completion of the entire NIE -- which would probably lag O/B estimates by several weeks to several months.

ROBERT N. GINSBURGH