IN A RELATED ISSUE, SINCE EARLY JANUARY 1973, THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS THAT NVN WAS PREPARING TO IMPROVE ITS AIR DEFENSES IN QUANG TRI PROVINCE. THERE HAD BEEN ELEMENTS OF 10 NVN AAA REGTS OPERATING IN QUANG TRI PROVINCE PRIOR TO 2 JANUARY. BY THE END OF JANUARY, TWO ADDITIONAL REGTS, THE 216TH AND 28TH, HAD DEPLOYED TO THE PROVINCE. WITH THE 28TH REGT ORGANIZED FROM ELEMENTS OF A SUPPLY BINH TRAM IN LAOS.


SINCE LATE JANUARY, THERE HAS BEEN EVIDENCE OF NVN EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE NEW WEAPONS
AND EQUIPMENT. ON 23 JANUARY, THE HQ, 263RD SAM REGT
WERE LOCATED NEAR KHE SANH. WHILE THE INITIAL SAM SITE AT
KHE SANH WAS IDENTIFIED AS OCCUPIED IN PHOTOGRAPHY OF 17 FEB.
A REVIEW OF TAC RECON REVEALED EARLY CLEARING PREPARATIONS
ON 24 JAN FOR A FIELD DEPLOYED SITE, WHICH BECAME OPERATIONAL
BY 6 FEB PHOTOGRAPHY. HOWEVER, PHOTOGRAPHY BETWEEN 6
AND 17 MARCH REVEALED THAT THE EQUIPMENT WAS REMOVED.
A HIATUS IN SAM DEPLOYMENT AROUND KHE SANH ENSUED
DURING MARCH. ONE SITE WAS DETECTED OCCUPIED ON 21 MARCH
AND TWO ADDITIONAL SITES WERE OCCUPIED BY THE END OF THE
MONTH. A FOURTH SITE WAS IDENTIFIED AS OCCUPIED ON 17
APRIL, BRINGING THE TOTAL TO FOUR OCCUPIED AND FOUR UN-
OCCUPIED SITES. THE 263RD SAM REGT (THE CONTROLLING
AUTHORITY FOR THESE SITES) HAS A TOTAL OF FIVE SUBORDINATE
FIRING BATTALIONS. ONLY FOUR BNS WERE IDENTIFIED IN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MID APRIL. THE REMAINING BATTALION MAY
HAVE REMAINED IN RESERVE AS SEEMS TO BE STANDARD NVN
PROCEDURE.

THE OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR THE BUILDUP OF AIR DEFENSE FORCES IN QUANG TRI PROVINCE, ESPECIALLY NEAR KHE SANH IS THAT THE BUILDUP IS RELATED TO THE NVN DESIRE TO DEVELOP SOME AIR RESUPPLY POTENTIAL IN THEIR AREA OF INTEREST. OF MORE IMPORTANCE IS THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS THAT IT CREATES FOR SVN. WHILE THE INITIAL SITE DEPLOYED AT KHE SANH MAY HAVE BEEN FOR POLITICAL IMPACT, THE SUBSEQUENT REAPPEARANCE OF OCCUPIED SITES MAY MEAN THAT NVN FEELS THAT NEITHER SVN NOR THE U.S. WILL TAKE ACTION TO STOP THEM.

CONCERNING ENEMY INTENTIONS IN NORTHERN MR-1, AVAILABLE INTELLIGENCE IN THE B-5 FRONT INDICATED THAT THE ENEMY PLANNED TO INITIATE LOCALIZED ATTACKS NE AND SW OF QUANG TRI CITY SOMETIME FROM MID-APRIL TO MID-MAY. ALTHOUGH THESE ATTACKS HAVE NOT MATERIALIZED TO DATE, THEY CONTINUE TO REMAIN A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY. THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS ARE APPARENTLY TO HOLD THE AIRBORNE AND MARINE DIVISIONS IN
TO:

PLACE IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE CVN FROM RECONSTITUTING A RESERVE FORCE THAT COULD BE UTILIZED MORE DECISIVELY ELSEWHERE, AND TO STRENGTHEN THE ENEMY'S DEFENSIVE POSTURE IN KEY SPOTS. ADDITIONALLY, THE ENEMY INTENT MAY ALSO BE TO REPEAT A PREVIOUSLY NOTED TACTIC OF ATTEMPTING TO PROTECT HIS WEAKENED POSITION, DUE TO THE DEPLOYMENTS OF ELEMENTS OF THREE DIVISIONS TO NVN, BY LIMITED SHOWS OF AGGRESSIVE ACTION.

(c) IN MRTTH DURING THE PAST MONTH, ENEMY ACTIVITY, WHICH CONSISTED PRIMARILY OF ATTACKS BY FIRE AND SMALL, BUT NUMEROUS GROUND CONTACTS, HAS CENTERED ALONG THE THREE BEST ENEMY AVENUES OF APPROACH TO THE LOWLANDS SURROUNDING HUE. THESE APPROACHES GO FROM BA 114 ALONG THE SONG BO VALLEY TOWARDS THE AN LO BRIDGE, FROM THE A SHAU VALLEY, ALONG RTE 547, TOWARDS HUE, AND FROM SOUTH OF FSB VEGHEL TOWARDS FSB RIFLE AND PHU BAI. OVER 80% OF ALL THE ENEMY INDIRECT FIRE IN MR-1 IN THE PAST MONTH HAS BEEN DIRECTED AGAINST
FROM:

TO:

ARVN FORCES DEPLOYED ALONG THESE CORRIDORS. THE ENEMY FORCES INVOLVED, THE 324B NVA DIV, SUPPORTED BY THE 5TH AND 6TH REGTS, MRTTH, APPARENTLY HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THREE GOALS BY THIS LATEST ACTIVITY: THE PROTECTION OF THE VITAL SUPPLY CORRIDOR (ROUTE 548) FROM BA LONG TO THE FSB VEGHEL AREA; SECURING OF HIGHGROUND OVERLOOKING AN LO BRIDGE; AND THE DISRUPTIVE EFFECT ON NEWLY RESTRICTED REFUGEES. CONCERNING THE FIRST POINT, RECENT INTELLIGENCE HAS INDICATED THAT EN FORCES ARE ATTEMPTING TO IMPROVE THIS NETWORK AND TO BRING INCREASED AMOUNTS OF SUPPLIES TO FORWARD BASE AREAS CLOSER TO HUE, FROM WHICH ANY FUTURE ATTACKS ON THE CITY COULD BE STAGED. IN REGARDS TO POINT TWO, BY DOMINATING THE AN LO BRIDGE AREA, WHICH WAS AN ENEMY GOAL DURING THE INITIAL STAGES OF THE CEASEFIRE PERIOD, THE ENEMY WOULD CUT THE VITAL LOC WHICH SUPPORTS THE MARINE AND AIRBORNE DIVISIONS NEAR QUANG TRI CITY AND SUBSEQUENTLY WOULD FORCE THESE UNITS TO FIGHT ON BOTH THEIR FRONT AND
REAR: 324B DIVL FORCES PRESENTLY COMMITTED IN THIS AREA DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF SECURING THE AN LO AREA AT THIS TIME. ELEMENTS OF THE DIVISION WERE UNABLE TO HOLD THE AREA AROUND THE BRIDGE AT THE TIME OF THE CEASE-FIRE, AND ARVN COMMANDERS ESTIMATE THAT FOUR TO FIVE FULL STRENGTH ENEMY REGIMENTS WOULD BE NEEDED TO EFFECTIVELY INTERDICT QL-1 IN THIS AREA. HOWEVER, THE PRESENCE NEAR THE BRIDGE DOES CAUSE CONSIDERABLE CONCERN TO ARVN COMMANDERS IN THE AREA. FINALLY, WITH POINT THREE, THE ENEMY MAY HAVE A DISRUPTIVE EFFECT ON THE NEWLY RESETTLED REFUGEES IN SOUTHERN HAI VANG AND PHUONG DIEN DISTRICTS.

(C) IN MR-3, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY CONTINUES TO OCCUR AT TONLE CHAM, WHERE ELMS OF TWO INFANTRY REGTS, SUPPORTED BY ARTY ELEMENTS CONTINUED TO APPLY PRESSURE ON TONLE CHAM. ABFS AND OCCASIONAL LIGHT GROUND PROBES HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE ACTION, COUPLED WITH PSYWAR BROADCASTS VIA LOUDSPEAKER. THE ENEMY SEEMS DETERMINED TO FORCE THE
RANGERS TO WITHDRAW AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THIS CONTINUOUS PRESSURE, RATHER THAN OVERRUNNING THE CAMP BY A CONVENTIONAL ASSAULT. THE THEME SOUNDED BY THE ENEMY IN HIS PSYWAR EFFORT IS THAT THE FRIENDLY FORCES ARE IN ENEMY-CONTROLLED TERRITORY AND, THEREFORE, MUST WITHDRAW. ALTHOUGH THE ENEMY DOES APPEAR TO HAVE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO OVERTAKE FRIENDLY RESISTANCE BY CONVENTIONAL ASSAULT, HE APPARENTLY PREFERENCES, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, TO FORCE WITHDRAWAL INSTEAD, THUS OBVIATING ANY ACCUSATION OF A CEASEFIRE VIOLATION.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TONLE CHAM TO THE ENEMY COMES FROM SEVERAL FACTORS. IT IS AN ISOLATED ARVN OUTPOST IN ENEMY DOMINATED AREA; IT DENIES THE ENEMY FREE ACCESS TO THE VITAL SAIGON LOGISTICS CORRIDOR; AND IT IS A THREAT TO ENEMY COMMAND, CONTROL AND LOGISTICS COMPLEX. IN BRIEF, TONLE CHAM IS A THORN IN THE ENEMY'S SIDE. HE WANTS TO GET RID OF IT, BUT NOT AT THE PRICE OF PERPETRATING A CLEAR-OUT VIOLATION OF THE CEASEFIRE ACCORDS.
OR DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE COMMUNIST MILITARY CAPABILITY.

THEREFORE, THE KEY INDICATORS TO THE ENEMY'S INTENT TO
RESUME FULL-SCALE MILITARY OPERATIONS WILL BE A SURGE
IN THE INFILTRATION OF INFANTRY REPLACEMENTS AND THE
RECOMMUNICATION TO THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE 304TH, 308TH AND
312TH NVA DIVISIONS. TO DATE, SHIPMENT OF ARMOR, ARTILLERY
AND SUPPLIES BY THE ENEMY PROBABLY REPRESENTS A PREPARATION
TO BE ABLE TO PURSUE THEIR SECOND OPTION AND NOT A CLEAR
CUT DECISION TO RESUME FULL-SCALE MILITARY OPERATIONS.
ESTIMATE POINTS OUT THAT

1) THE ENEMY WILL CONTINUE TO INFILTRATE MEN AND MATERIEL INTO RVN TO SUPPORT HIS POLITICAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS;

2) THE NVA HAS NOT INFILTRATED SUFFICIENT INFANTRY REPLACEMENTS TO RAISE MANEUVER UNITS TO THE LEVEL OF STRENGTH NECESSARY TO SUPPORT A MAJOR MILITARY OFFENSIVE;

3) ALTHOUGH THE ENEMY CAN MOVE SUFFICIENT SUPPLIES TO BEGIN A COUNTRYWIDE OFFENSIVE, EXCEPT IN THE NORTHERN AREA HE CANNOT STOCKPILE ADEQUATE QUANTITIES TO SUSTAIN THIS OFFENSIVE;

4) THE VC/NVA WILL NOT LAUNCH SUSTAINED COUNTRYWIDE OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS, AND

5) THE ENEMY WILL CONDUCT A PRIMARILY POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WHILE MAINTAINING AN AGGRESSIVE DEFENSE AND SELECTIVELY USING MILITARY FORCE TO SUPPORT POLITICAL OPERATIONS AND EXPAND AREA AND POPULATION CONTROL UNTIL A CLEAR CUT DECISION IS MADE BY HANOI TO RESUME THE WAR, WE CAN EXPECT TO SEE WIDESPREAD MILITARY OPERATIONS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE EITHER POLITICAL FOOTHOLDS...
FROM:  

TO:  

PRINTED ACTIONS CAN HAVE THE FOLLOWING BENEFICIAL EFFECTS FOR THE

PRESUMED POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL OF ARVN SECURITY FORCES

FROM ROUTE, MOVEMENT OF SUPPLIES INTO DINH TUONG AND KLAH
NOA, AND CONTRACTION OF OUR CLAIMS OF CONTROL OVER THE
WATERFRONT. ALTHOUGH ARVN FORCES HAVE APPARENTLY SECURED
THE BANKS OF THE RIVER, THE ENEMY WILL PROBABLY TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF ANY GOVERNMENT FORCES COMPLACENCY ALONG THE MEKONG TO
RENEW ATTACKS AGAINST CONVOYS.

IN CONCLUSION, COSVN DIRECTIVE 2–73 SPELLED OUT A
POLICY OF POLITICAL STRUGGLE SUPPORTED BY THE MILITARY IN A
SECONDARY ROLE. CURRENT ENEMY ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE REPUBLIC, AS WELL AS THEIR RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS APPEAR TO FIT WITHIN THIS DIRECTIVE.

OUR CURRENT ESTIMATE REMAINS THAT MILITARY OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT SVN WILL PROBABLY BE DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO SUPPORT THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, AND TO ENHANCE THE ENEMY's MILITARY POSITION AND CONTROL OVER "LIBERATED" AREAS.
ACTIONS CAN HAVE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS FOR THE ENEMY. ARVN COMMANDERS BELIEVE THAT THE ENEMY'S INTENTION IN ATTACKS NEAR HONG NGU MAY ALSO BE TO DRAW FRIENDLY SECURITY FORCES AWAY FROM THE SAMPAN ALLEY, AND THUS FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT OF NEEDED SUPPLIES INTO DINH TUONG AND KIEN HOA. IN ADDITION, BY AMBUSHING CONVOYS AND PREVENTING THEIR MOVEMENTS INTO CAMBODIA, THE ENEMY HAS SUCCEEDED IN EMBARRASSING THE GVN, SINCE EVENTS DO NOT SEEM TO SUBSTANTIATE GVN CLAIMS OF CONTROL OVER THE MEKONG WATERWAYS.
IN MR-4, THE ENEMY HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN ATTEMPTS TO SECURE ACCESS POINTS ALONG THE MR-4-CAMBODIAN BORDER. ONLY IN MR-4 DO ENEMY FORCES LACK SECURE ENTRY POINTS FROM BORDER BASE AREAS INTO SVN. DURING THE PAST MONTH, ENEMY FORCES CONCENTRATED IN THE HONG NGU AREAS. HOWEVER, INDICATORS SUGGEST THAT THE ENEMY MAY RENEW ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH SAFE ENTRY ROUTES IN THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA AND IN THE AREA FROM CAI CAI TO THE ELEPHANT'S FOOT. IN THE HONG NGU AREA, AN ESTIMATED SIX UNDER STRENGTHED ENEMY BATTALIONS, SUPPORTED BY ROCKET AND MORTAR UNITS ATTEMPTED TO EVICT FRIENDLY FORCES AT HONG NGU AND HARASS CONVOYS MOVING ALONG THE MEKONG NEAR THE BORDER DURING THE PAST MONTH. ALTHOUGH THE ENEMY PROBABLY DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO CAPTURE HONG NGU AT THIS TIME, AND SUBSEQUENTLY SECURE AN ACCESS POINT AND CONTROL TRAFFIC ALONG THE MEKONG, HE DOES RETAIN THE CAPABILITY TO CONDUCT HARASSING ABFS AGAINST HONG NGU AND RIVER CONVOYS. EVEN THESE LIMITED