1. (U) USDAO Saigon Monthly Intelligence Summary and Threat Analysis (MISTA) for October 1974 follows.

2. (C) This month's MISTA contains the following subjects:

   North Vietnam
   - Political Developments
   - Logistics
   
   South Vietnam
   - Military Regions
     - Activity
     - Order of Battle
   
   Conclusion

3. (U) In political activity, Hanoi Radio on 8 October broadcast a "PRG Statement" which ruled out the possibility of any negotiations as long as President Thieu remains in power. The statement called for all dissidents to unite in overthrowing President Thieu:

   (The PRG) "... invites all political forces, regardless of their political and religious characters, and all individuals, regardless of their background...to join one another in unity and in concerted actions...(to) the overthrow of Nguyen Van Thieu and his clique, and the establishment in Saigon at an early date of an administration willing to implement the Paris Agreement seriously."

   "The PRG stands ready to talk with such an administration in order to rapidly solve the problems in South Vietnam; and only such a Saigon administration can hold real negotiations with the PRGRSV..."
4. (U) The "PRG Statement", which was fully endorsed by a 9 October editorial in Nhan Dan, the Lao Dong Party newspaper, is the Communists' most dramatic effort to date to capitalize on political unrest in the South and tie Hanoi directly to an unequivocal demand that President Thieu be deposed before the South Vietnam "problem" can be solved through negotiations.

5. (U) North Vietnam is having problems balancing its economic recovery in the North with the support of the war in the South. Articles in the party's theoretical journal have defended its "correct leadership" while admitting that there were those who opposed party policies relating to the war in the South and reconstruction and development in the North. An August article blasted cadre for failing to "correctly reflect the spirit of collective resolutions," stating that while carrying out their official duties some individuals have said things "not in accordance with the viewpoints, guidelines, and policies of the party and state." These individuals were admonished to follow the leadership: "We can freely express our views in a debate. But once the resolution is adopted, the minority must yield to the majority and the lower echelons must obey the highest echelons." A September Hoc Tap article even more strongly denounced distorters of party lines and policies and "counter-revolutionary elements" opposed to the regime. Those who have "erroneous views", it is claimed, offer a good breeding ground for "alien and hostile tendencies" to flourish and develop into a "current of evil thoughts." The article claims that it is an urgent task to correct these "evil thoughts:" "We must resolutely expose and smash all hostile tendencies and thoughts in all forms and the current of evil thoughts that is now prevalent in our society. The aforesaid tendencies and thoughts are very dangerous, because they are focused mainly on the basic tasks specified in our party's revolutionary line and on the basic factors that insure the success of our country's revolution." The article distinguished between those who have "hostile thoughts" and those who have "erroneous thoughts." The former are most dangerous and must be "resolutely punished."
6. (U) Those who are merely incorrect in their thinking and not opposed to the regime itself must be "severely criticized" to help them "overcome petit-bourgeois thinking."

7. (C) In short, it appears that Hanoi perceives political dissent and indifference to its policies to be a serious problem and is serving notice that such opposition and indifference will no longer be tolerated. The tone of the more recent article suggests that crackdown on "free thinkers" and shirkers may occur.

8. (S) NVA logistics activity during October was highlighted by the introduction of additional weapons to NVA units in RVN. On 18 October a convoy of 190 trucks with 16X57MM guns was photographed moving south in the NVN panhandle.

9. (S) Although final estimates of Communist logistics shipments for October are not available, apparently all classes of supplies are being delivered to NVA forces in RVN both across the DMZ and by sea to the port of Dong Ha. The following is a comparison of NVA shipments to RVN this year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>SEABORNE</th>
<th>OVERLAND</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>18,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>8-10,000</td>
<td>18-20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>8-10,000</td>
<td>18-20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>8-10,000</td>
<td>18-25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>10-15,000</td>
<td>8-10,000</td>
<td>18-25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>10-15,000</td>
<td>8-10,000</td>
<td>18-25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20-30,000</td>
<td>40-50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. (S) About 5 percent of all supplies imported this year are estimated to be ammunition. Even at that low percentage, the NVA was able to stockpile roughly 3.5 tons of ammunition for every ton expended. Estimates of Communist ammunition expenditures for a general offensive have been based upon the 1972 experience. Increased Communist manpower and weapons in South Vietnam require a new look at the estimate. Assuming the commitment of the North Vietnamese reserve, Communist strengths will be significantly greater than in 1972:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>SEABORNE</th>
<th>OVERLAND</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>10-15,000</td>
<td>6-8,000</td>
<td>16-23,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>10-15,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>22-27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105-125,000</td>
<td>86,500-108,500</td>
<td>191,500-233,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTALS (EST)     INCREASE OVER 1972
COMBAT PERSONNEL 276,000    70 percent
ARTILLERY        500      110 percent
ARMOR            700      150 percent
AA GUNS          1,800   250 percent

Estimates of Communist ammunition stockpiles are as follows:
- MR-1 and 2       30,000 tons
- MR-3 and 4       24,000 tons
- TOTAL            54,000 tons

Lack of detailed information precludes anything but a very "soft" estimate of how long Communist stockpiles would last under the expected density of a 1975 offensive. DAO concludes: Overall, Communist forces in South Vietnam will not
face an ammunition shortage if they opt for a general
offensive. With the addition of four of the six reserve
divisions to MR's 1 and 2, and two divisions to MR's 3
and 4, Communist ammunition would last as indicated:

- MR-1 and 2: 8 months
- MR-3 and 4: 15-20 months

It must be noted, however, that this estimate assumes no
ammunition shipments during the offensive. With the im-
proved logistics system and stockpiles of over 25,000 tons
of ammunition in southern NVN, the Communists retain the
capability to replace expenditures, particularly in northern
MR-1. Additionally, a general offensive would not last a
year. Therefore, our conclusion remains: Logistics in
general, and ammunition in particular, will not be a limiting
factor in an NVA general offensive.

11. (S) Throughout the past wet season, NVA engineers con-
tinued to improve the strategic western highlands corridor--
the Route 14 complex. Although essentially completed and
motorable from the DMZ to MR-3 earlier this year, much of
Route 14 remains single lane and in need of up-grading.
South of Route 9, engineers are constructing a new dual lane
road designed to by-pass the existing and occasionally
weather-hampered single lane road. When finished, the new
road will provide dual lane access from Route 9 to the A
Shau Valley and relieve some congestion at Khe Sanh. Farther
south in the Tri-Border area, work is continuing on dual
lane sections that will by-pass existing lower capacity
single lane roads.

12. (S) Overall, portions of this strategic route with
improved earth surfaces may be impassable for short periods
following heavy rains; however, the route can be reopened in
a few days by engineers with modern road working equipment.
Information does not indicate that and segments are currently
impassable.
13. (S) During the coming dry season, NVA supplies and infiltration groups bound for MRTT and MR-5 will apparently move south in RVN on Route 14 from Khe Sanh. Logistics and infiltration groups destined for the B-3 Front and COSVN will probably move west along Route 9 into Laos to the south Laos road, then south to the Tri-Border area. From there, COSVN-bound traffic will continue south on Route 14, as was the case during the previous dry season.

14. (S) In addition to the construction and improvement of the Route 14 complex, the NVA has continued work on its pipeline. 4 October photography revealed a new POL storage facility in Quang Nam (P). Although the pipeline has not been detected this far south, it is expected to be extended to the Tri-Border area to support traffic on Route 14.

15. (S) Further south, 29 October photography revealed that the pipeline has been completed through a section of Cambodia to a point near the RVN MR-3 border. Although not yet photo-confirmed, an agent and a rallier report that the pipeline has reached the Loc Ninh area. The extension of the pipeline to Loc Ninh will permit more efficient support of expected heavy dry season logistical and infiltration activity and will free some trucks, previously used to haul bulk POL, for munitions/personnel movement.

16. (C) Military activity in MR-1 during October continued to focus on southern Thua Thien and central Quang Nam Provinces. Communist local forces continued a high level of harassing actions, including a significant upsurge in sapper attacks and LOC interdictions.

17. (C) In Thua Thien Province, major activity revolved around NVA-controlled No Tau Mountain as the ARVN 1st Division initiated efforts late in the month to dislodge NVA 324B Division forces from strategic highground taken in early September. NVA forces continue, however, to hold the key terrain.
18. (C) In Quang Nam Province, on the battlefields created by the NVA summer offensive, RVNAF Airborne Division probes northeast of Thuong Duc continued to draw attacks by fire from defending 304th Division forces. Airborne forces secured a strategic highpoint, Hill 1062, on 2 October, but were driven back on 31 October, following a massive ABF and ground attack. NVA forces, however, paid a high price of over 200 killed in retaking the hill. Periodic flareups in major ground activity also occurred south of Duc Duc, but NVA 2nd Division forces were repulsed by defending Ranger and 3rd Division forces.

19. (C) Elsewhere in the region, the military situation remained essentially unchanged, although local forces continued numerous harassing and probing attacks, particularly against isolated outposts in Quang Tin and against ARVN 2nd Division and territorial forces in Quang Ngai Province.

20. (S) In command and control developments, the NVA 3rd Corps was identified in Quang Nam Province. The new corps, currently in its formative stages, consists of the NVA 2nd Division and local force elements. As the corps structure develops, the 52nd Brigade in Quang Ngai Province and a possible new division formed from existing independent units in Quang Nam will probably come under its direction. Formation of the 3rd Corps is indicative of an enduring and determined commitment to a military solution in South Vietnam.

21. (S) Following analysis of OB holdings and consultation with ARVN OB analysts, DAO Saigon has deleted three independent regiments in Quang Tri Province -- the 31st Infantry and the 38th and 45th artillery -- from its OB estimate. The current OB estimate for MR-1 is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISIONS</th>
<th>5 (4 Inf, 1 AD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REGIMENTS</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRIGADES</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BATTALIONS</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMBAT PERSONNEL</td>
<td>90-100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22. (S) Concerning the order of battle, in northern MR-1, the 325th Division, one independent infantry regiment, and supporting armor and artillery elements are deployed in an arc extending from northeast of Quang Tri City southwest to northern Thua Thien Province. To the rear are the Hq/304th Division and its subordinate 9th Regiment. None of these units has engaged in sustained offensive activity since the ceasefire and they are considered fully combat capable.

23. (S) Defending against these forces are the RVNAF Marine Division along the ceasefire line in Quang Tri Province, the 2nd Airborne Brigade Opcon to the Marine Division operating northwest of Hue, and the 15th Ranger Group Opcon to the 2nd Division in a corps forward reserve status west of Hue. The Marine Division has performed well against sporadic heavy attacks and is rated highly effective. Ranger forces have performed less well against occasional heavy pressure, but they too are in generally good condition.

24. (S) In Southern Thua Thien Province, the NVA 324B Division, with two subordinate infantry regiments and one artillery regiment, has combined with the 5th and 6th Independent Regiments since late August to assert control over strategic highground southeast of Hue. These forces have suffered heavy casualties during recent ARVN counterattacks.

25. (S) Facing the 324B Division is the ARVN 1st Division, whose performance since late August has been below expectations. The division has taken heavy casualties and morale is rated low. Current 1st Division activity against Mo Tau Mountain demonstrated some offensive capability, but the division, in its current state, would not perform well in the face of major NVA initiatives.

26. (S) Generally, in Northern MR-1, neither side could be expected to make sizeable gains, given the present balance of forces. This balance, however, would be substantially altered if the NVA were to commit reserve forces from NVN. In an all-out offensive, NVA forces could, at a minimum, force contraction of RVNAF defenses to a small perimeter around Hue and probably isolate the city.
22. (S) Concerning the order of battle, in northern MR-1, the 325th Division, one independent infantry regiment, and supporting armor and artillery elements are deployed in an arc extending from northeast of Quang Tri City southwest to northern Thua Thien Province. To the rear are the HQ/304th Division and its subordinate 9th Regiment. None of these units has engaged in sustained offensive activity since the ceasefire and they are considered fully combat capable.

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25. (S) Generally, in northern MR-1, neither side could be expected to make sizeable gains, given the present balance of forces. This balance, however, would be substantially altered if the NVA were to commit reserve forces from NVN.

26. (S) In Southern MR-1, NVA main forces, consisting primarily of the 2nd Division and most of the 304th Division, are concentrated in an arc from northeast of Thuong Duc to southeast of the Que Son Valley. The 2nd Division has borne the brunt of major offensive activity since mid-July, suffering substantial casualties. The 304th Division units, likewise, have seen substantial activity, but have not suffered the attrition that the 2nd Division has. Both divisions are in essentially defensive positions and appear to be receiving an adequate flow of replacements. They have considerable potential to renew major attacks.

27. (S) Opposing these forces in forward positions are the 12th Ranger Group at Duc Duc and the 1st and 3rd Airborne Brigade defending along LTL-4 between Thuong Duc and Danang.

28. (S) The only remaining substantial NVA/VC forces in MR-1 are the 52nd Brigade and local force units of the Quang Ngai Provincial unit. These forces retain the capability to sustain indefinitely their campaign to erode security in
the province, but they have only limited capabilities to conduct major offensive operations.

29. (S) Overall, in MR-1, the initiative lies with the NVA. RVNAF have no significant reserve and must deploy and redeploy to meet the shifting threat. The NVA has a six-division strategic reserve in NVN, sizeable elements of which could be committed in a short time.

30. (C) In MR-2, communist activity during October was at the lowest level in several months. The most significant military development was the RVNAF intrusion into the Southern An Lao Valley of Binh Dinh Province. Elements of the 3rd NVA Division offered only light and ineffective resistance to this incursion which began in mid-October; but by late October, NVA forces appeared to be pulling back from forward positions to meet the threat. RVNAF control of strategic terrain and destruction of key bridges have hindered Communist logistics movement in rear areas. In the highlands, 10th NVA Division elements overran Chuong Nghia Outpost on 3 October, eliminating the last remaining isolated SVN position in Kontum Province.

31. (S) Communist Order of Battle in MR-2 is:

| DIVISIONS | 3 (Inf) |
| REGIMENTS | 21 |
| BATTALIONS | 137 |
| COMBAT PERSONNEL | 35,000-40,000 |

32. (S) In Binh Dinh Province, the 3rd NVA Division has been operating since late July against elements of the 22nd ARVN Division. Despite extensive rebuilding after taking prohibitive losses in the recent summer campaign, the 3rd Division is considered barely combat-effective and has the capability of mounting only limited attacks. Recent ralliers and PW's have reported that some elements of the Division incurred 50 per cent casualties and experienced serious leadership
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28. (S) Opposing these forces in forward positions are the 12th Ranger Group at Duc Duc and the 1st and 3rd Airborne Brigades defending along LTL-4 between Thuong Duc and Danang. The ARVN 3rd Division is currently spread throughout Quang Nam Province. The 57th Regiment, on the southern flank of the airborne force, is the only unit in forward positions. The 12th Ranger Group recently assumed front-line responsibilities and has responded well to heavy attacks near Duc Duc. It is considered an effective fighting force. Airborne units, since deployment to Thuong Duc in August, have performed aggressively. These forces have suffered moderate attrition, but remain at or near full combat effectiveness. The ARVN 3rd Division has been severely depleted as a result of constant combat since July and its combat effectiveness is rated marginal.

29. (S) The only remaining substantial NVA/VC forces in MR-1 are the 52nd Brigade and local force units of the Quang Ngai Provincial unit. These forces retain the capability to sustain indefinitely their campaign to erode security in the province, but they have only limited capabilities to conduct major offensive operations.

30. (S) The ARVN 2nd Division has also seen continuous combat in recent months in Quang Nam and can be considered to be only marginally effective with little potential for conducting major operations.
problems at the company and battalion level in recent fighting. Although replacements are augmenting the 3rd Division in company and battalion-size complements, these troops are inexperienced and probably not yet fully integrated. Long-standing problems with leadership cadre will undoubtedly persist.

33. (S) In the Central Highlands, B-3 Front responsibility is divided between the 10th NVA Division in Kontum and the 320th NVA Division in Pleiku. Both divisions have engaged in only sporadic activity in recent months and are considered fully combat-effective. With the exception of late September-early October attacks by the 28th Regt/10th Division against Chuong Nghia Outpost, most of the division's activity has been limited essentially to an aggressive defense of newly-constructed LOC's northeast and southeast of Kontum City.

The division is capable of conducting effective limited attacks against forward RVNAF positions around Kontum City and presents a credible threat to critical LOC's in southern Kontum Province and northeast Pleiku Province.

34. (S) In Pleiku Province, the 320th NVA Division has experienced serious morale, discipline and health problems and has not performed effectively in limited offensive operations. The 8th Regiment conducted strong attacks in April and August against ARVN outposts and a district town, but in both cases was defeated with serious personnel losses. The unit is still rebuilding. The 320th has the capability of conducting limited attacks against the Pleiku City defensive complex west and southwest of the city.

35. (S) RVNAF responsibility for defense of the Central Highlands is shared by the 23rd ARVN Division, the II Corps Ranger Command, and elements of the 22nd ARVN Division.

36. (S) ARVN forces in the highlands have the capability to deal with limited attacks, such as those experienced since the ceasefire. II Corps has shown an amazing capability to react to Communist threats over wide areas.
31. (S) Overall, in MR-1, the initiative lies with the NVA. RVNAF have no significant reserve and must deploy and redeploy to meet the shifting threat. The NVA has a six-division strategic reserve in NVN, sizeable elements of which could be committed in a short time. Such a commitment would tip the balance overwhelmingly in favor of the NVA.

32. (C) In MR-2, Communist activity during October was at the lowest level in several months. The most significant military development was the RVNAF intrusion into the southern An Lao Valley of Binh Dinh Province. Elements of the 3rd NVA Division offered only light and ineffective resistance to this incursion which began in mid-October; but by late October, NVA forces appeared to be pulling back from forward positions to meet the threat. RVNAF control of strategic terrain and destruction of key bridges have hindered Communist logistics movement in rear areas. In the highlands, 10th NVA Division elements overran Chuong Nghia Outpost on 3 October, eliminating the last remaining isolated GVN position in Kontum Province.

33. (S) Communist Order of Battle in MR-2 is:

| DIVISIONS  | 3 (Inf) |
| REGIMENTS | 21      |
| BATTALIONS| 137     |
| COMBAT PERSONNEL | 35-40,000 |

34. (S) In Binh Dinh Province, the 3rd NVA Division has been operating since late July against elements of the 22nd ARVN Division. Despite extensive rebuilding after taking prohibitive losses in the recent summer campaign, the 3rd Division is considered barely combat-effective and has the capability of mounting only limited attacks. Recent ralliers and PW's have reported that some elements of the Division incurred 50 per cent casualties and experienced serious leadership
37. (C) In MR-3, activity was very low and consisted mainly of ABF's and minor ground probes against territorial positions and outlying outposts. The inactivity of main force units was partially compensated by increasing sapper attacks and terrorist incidents in the area surrounding Saigon.

38. (S) The Communist Order of Battle in MR-3 is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISIONS</th>
<th>REGIMENTS</th>
<th>BATTALIONS</th>
<th>COMBAT PERSONNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 (3 Inf, 1 Art, 1 Sap, 1 AA)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>40-45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39. (S) The principal enemy threat in western MR-3 is posed by the 5th NVA Division, currently located in the Parrot's Beak area. This division is considered the second worst Communist division in-country and has not accomplished its assigned tasks. Brief forays by the division into western MR-3 and along the Kien Tuong Border of MR-4 have not been particularly successful. The future area of operation of this division is unknown, but reports indicate it will again attempt to move into MR-4.

40. (S) Opposing the 5th NVA Division in western MR-3 is the 25th ARVN. Its mission is to assist territorial forces in providing security for western MR-3 and guarding the western and northwestern approaches to Saigon.

41. (S) In Central Military Region 3, COSVN has deployed the 9th and 7th NVA Divisions with QL-13 roughly being the dividing line. The 9th NVA Division is understrength as a result of constant commitment since last spring. 1975 infiltrators will probably bring it up to strength. It has not been particularly effective in offensive actions, but has proven, in the case of Route 7, to be adept at holding terrain. The 7th NVA Division has also suffered heavy losses and needs some replacements. It also has not been particularly effective in attacking major ARVN field positions. At least one additional NVA division will be required to conduct effective offensive operations in GVN MR-3.
problems at the company and battalion level in recent fighting. Although replacements are augmenting the 3rd Division in company and battalion-size complements, these troops are inexperience and probably not yet fully integrated. Long-standing problems with leadership cadre will undoubtedly persist.

35. (S) The 22nd ARVN Division has three of its four regiments in Binh Dinh, only two of which are currently committed. The remaining regiment is committed in Kontum Province. The 41st Regiment has performed well in counter-offensive and clearing operations and is currently spearheading the ARVN drive into the An Lao Valley. The 42nd Regiment has also performed creditably. The 47th Regiment, however, has received criticism for its lack of offensive drive since moving to Binh Dinh Province in late May. It has recently undergone refitting and unit training at the division base. The 22nd Division has also taken fairly heavy losses in recent fighting, with some battalions far understrength due to a shortage of replacements. Leadership cadre at the division and regimental level are performing well, but the division's most serious losses occurred at the Junior Officer and Senior NCO levels.

36. (S) On balance, the 22nd ARVN Division is not only capable of defending its AO, but is conducting aggressive offensive operations. It faces the prospect, however, of moving most of its units to the Central Highlands for the dry-season campaign there. Responsibility for the defense of Binh Dinh Province will then fall largely to ranger and territorial forces.

37. (S) In the Central Highlands, B-3 Front responsibility is divided between the 10th NVA Division in Kontum and the 320th NVA Division in Pleiku. Both divisions have engaged in only sporadic activity in recent months and are considered fully combat-effective. With the exception of late September-early October attacks by the 28th Regt/10th Division against Chuong Nghia Outpost, most of the division's activity has been limited essentially to an aggressive defense of newly-constructed LOC's northeast and southeast of Kontum City.
42. (S) Opposing these two Communist divisions is the 5th ARVN Division, supported by two or three ARVN regiments from other divisions in MR-3. Its mission is to guard the northern approaches to Saigon.

43. (S) Elements of the 7th NVA Division and two other regiments (33rd and 274th) are the principal enemy forces in eastern MR-3. The Communists apparently plan to use two regiments in the area as the core of a new division. With the addition of another regiment to the area, this new division could be successful in interdicting key LOC's and harassing GVN positions and populated areas. Terrain favors 7th Division attempts to move south towards Bien Hoa, but it is doubtful whether it could permanently secure the area just north of the Dong Nai River.

44. (S) The 18th ARVN Division has the responsibility of defending the eastern part of the region, including the critical area north of Bien Hoa. In addition, the division is the corps mobile reserve.

45. (S) Throughout MR-3, based upon the current Communist threat, RVNAF are capable of performing their assigned missions, defending their AO's, and successfully reacting to Communist initiatives.

46. (C) Activity in MR-4 was at its lowest level since June. The usual monthly highpoint was far less damaging than preceding ones, but it did allow the VC/NVA to consolidate their position in critical areas of western and southern Phong Dinh Province. Nevertheless, the well-established pattern of deteriorating security and GVN control continued despite relatively low level of VC/NVA initiatives. Current indications point to stepped up activity for the remainder of the year, as Communist forces begin their yearly rice and tax collection effort.
The division is capable of conducting effective limited attacks against forward RVNAF positions around Kontum City and presents a credible threat to critical LOC's in southern Kontum Province and northeast Pleiku Province.

38. (S) In Pleiku Province, the 320th NVA Division has experienced serious morale, discipline and health problems and has not performed effectively in limited offensive operations. The 48th Regiment conducted strong attacks in April and August against ARVN outposts and a district town, but in both cases was defeated with serious personnel losses. The unit is still rebuilding. The 320th has the capability of conducting limited attacks against the Pleiku City defensive complex west and southwest of the city.

39. (S) RVNAF responsibility for defense of the Central Highlands is shared by the 23rd ARVN Division, the II Corps Ranger Command, and elements of the 22nd ARVN Division. Currently, the 23d Division Headquarters, its 44th Regiment, and the 40th Regiment/22nd Division are deployed in Kontum Province, while the remaining two regiments of the 23rd and Ranger elements are holding Pleiku Province. II Corps, however, is in the process of consolidating the 23rd Division in Pleiku Province and moving the Ranger Command to Kontum Province.

40. (S) The 23rd Division is rated low, although its 53rd Regiment performed creditably in Quang Duc Province a year ago and in the relief of Plei Me Outpost in late August of this year. The 44th and 45th Regiments took heavy casualties in Kontum Province and were temporarily rated combat ineffective in July. Most battalions of the division are understrength, and the division generally suffers from equipment shortages, leadership problems and low morale. The various Ranger Groups have checkered reputations, but are considered combat-effective.

41. (S) ARVN forces in the highlands have the capability to deal with limited attacks, such as those experienced since the ceasefire. II Corps has shown an amazing capability to react to Communist threats over wide areas. In the face of concentrated NVA attacks, however, ARVN forces would probably exhibit temporary ineffectiveness and would lose some terrain before they could regroup and be reinforced by the 22nd Division.