Why is the DRV in Paris? What is the evidence? (Among the hypotheses:

a. Out of weakness, to accept a face-saving formula for defeat.
b. To negotiate the withdrawal of U.S. (and NVA) forces, and/or a compromise political settlement, giving a chance for NLF victory in the South.
c. To give the U.S. a face-saving way to withdraw.
d. To undermine the GVN and U.S./GVN relations, and to relieve U.S. military pressure in both North and South Vietnam.
e. Out of desire to end the losses and costs of war on the best terms.)

There appears to have been differences of opinion in Hanoi concerning the situation in the south and appropriate strategies. These differences affect Hanoi's reasons for being in Paris. Thus, as far as our knowledge of how Hanoi thinks and feels, we see through the glass darkly if at all.

Notwithstanding, all theorists generally agree that the preponderance of evidence indicates that North Vietnam is in Paris because of a decision that it would be less costly to get the bombing stopped and to negotiate the US out of South Vietnam (SVN) than to continue fighting for another five to ten years, and that they are pursuing objectives b and d above.

(All five hypotheses apparently are contributory in some way to North Vietnam's (NVN) position in Paris. It appears there has been considerable debate in Hanoi over a correct strategic line and its proper tactical implementation. The essence of the discussion seems to be whether NVN should adopt an "offensive strategy" looking once again for dramatic military results or adopt a more flexible combination of political and military tactics. Evidence is that their intention are to adopt a more flexible combination of political and military tactics. There are several factors which may have influenced this direction:

-- First of all, and probably the most important is a conviction that Hanoi cannot win a war through large-scale, offensive military actions.

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Hanoi knows that continuing such a strategy would involve high losses without commensurate gains. The North Vietnamese further believe that the effort necessary to support large-scale fighting results in a serious weakening of the ideological struggle in both North and South Vietnam.

-- Closely allied to these propositions, is the probable conviction that the US will to persevere in South Vietnam is weakening and can eventually be undermined through a combination of the threat of indefinite military struggle coupled with pressures and gestures toward compromise and political settlement.

There is strong evidence that North Vietnam is in Paris to negotiate a withdrawal of US forces, to undermine the GVN and US Government relations, and to provide a better chance for Viet Cong victory in the South (hypotheses b and d).

-- It appears that a military victory in SVN is beyond Hanoi's capabilities as long as US forces remain and that Hanoi has become increasingly aware that the political dimensions of the struggle would have to assume greater significance in their overall strategy.

(1) By contrast with the Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese, the overall strength and effectiveness of allied forces has improved sharply. Alterations of US tactics have increased the combat effectiveness of US units, and Allied intelligence has been more successful in detecting enemy movements since Tet. More firepower has been added to Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) by modernization and expansion.

(2) In the last six months our military efforts against enemy main force units seem to be significantly improved. COMUSMACV has begun to concentrate much more on area control than on kills. He has been aided in this approach by his defense in depth, particularly around the major cities. Moreover, since our "understanding" with Hanoi with respect to the DMZ, he has been able to redeploy one division from northern I Corps to III and IV Corps, and to free up for operations in the Da Nang area a division previously held in reserve for a DMZ contingency. The enemy has also been deterred from launching large scale attacks and attacks on cities, apparently because of the present disposition and tactics of our forces or because he is unwilling to violate our understandings concerning attacks on major population centers, or because he too may be in the process of changing his tactics.

(3) Despite allied successes, recent intelligence indicates that most enemy main force units have returned to SVN from border sanctuaries where they withdrew in September 1968. Further the number of infiltrators recently entering the pipeline to SVN recently increased significantly. These factors point to a continuing enemy capability to launch offensive operations.

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(4) Although there has been considerable improvement in RVNAF capability, these forces are beset by a number of weaknesses and basic faults and remain highly dependent on US forces for support and continued improvement.

-- Politically, the enemy's prospects are brighter; despite some surface calm in the South Vietnamese political system, it is a changing and highly fragile device.

(1) Uncertainties about Communist military plans, the course of the Paris meeting, and the policies of US government have produced a widespread mood of apprehension in South Vietnam. There is acute concern that US domestic political considerations may lead the US to not consider GVN interests in the quest for a settlement in Vietnam.

(2) The GVN political system as it is now is probably inadequate for a political confrontation with the enemy. South Vietnam leadership remains divided and uninspiring. The Vietnamese nationalists have no national political organization to match the communists. Without an effective political organization, the lower level and local nationalist leadership is vulnerable to disintegration if the tide should appear to be moving in favor of the communists. Further, there is no large disciplined GVN structure in the rural areas to match the VC organization (See responses to questions 18, 22-24); and despite allied efforts to destroy the VC organization, it will probably remain a viable structure for some time.

-- With respect to pacification, while there has been some progress, the situation is not as favorable to the GVN as some believe. The recent Special National Intelligence Estimate on this subject concludes that:

a. The pacification program as a whole has made a significant contribution to the prosecution of the war and strengthened the political position of the Government of South Vietnam (GVN) vis-a-vis the Communists. Thus far the GVN's principal success has been in expanding its presence into the countryside. Providing permanent security for these gains has been more difficult. Security conditions continue to fluctuate with the intensity of combat. Low level terrorism, political agitation, and propaganda efforts by the Viet Cong (VC) continue to hamper progress, particularly since no more than a promising start has been made in reducing the effectiveness of the VC infrastructure. A large part of the countryside is still contested and subject to the continuing control of neither side.

b. As for gaining the allegiance of the people, this is almost impossible to measure. The turnout in the 1967 elections and the failure of the Communists to gain popular support at Tet suggest progress. Apprehension over the settlement of the war and the firmness of the
American commitment tends to reduce popular confidence. The most common attitude among the peasants, however, continues to be one of war-weariness and apathy.

c. Saigon now seems finally to have accepted the need for a vigorous pacification effort. However, progress may still be hampered by the political situation in Saigon, continuing inefficiency, corruption, and the parochial concerns of the GVN.

d. Another major uncertainty is how much time is left to make up past deficiencies and consolidate current gains. Over the next several months, further progress in pacification will almost certainly not make the GVN much more able to cope with the VC, given peacetime conditions, than it would be today; a significant advance in this respect would probably require at least a year.

e. Finally, there is the question of how the Communists will react to the growing pressures on them. Despite improvements in the overall security situation, gains in pacification are still vulnerable to adverse military developments. The chances are good that the Communists will attempt to make an intensified effort to counter the gains in pacification and they will probably have some success. Thus, consolidation of gains is likely to continue to be a very slow and uncertain process.

-- COMUSMACV considers that hypothesis b is probably the strongest motivation behind the enemy's presence in Paris and is certainly the best documented. There have been numerous enemy documents and reliable reports that set forth these objectives, and his propaganda, as well as public pronouncements, proclaim them. Typical in tone and thrust is a report on new Viet Cong policy from a highly reliable agent just four days prior to the bombing halt. In describing the new policy, he said that in the near future the VC may approve negotiations with the GVN and the Americans in order to bring about a cease fire and a coalition government. But it must be emphasized from the beginning that a coalition government is only temporary. The parallel was drawn with someone on a long journey. One must stop and rest before continuing. The ultimate goal is still a communist South Vietnam. There might be a cease fire, but after a period of time there would be another general uprising. US withdrawal is an equally important objective and receives equal attention. For example, a recent report from Paris indicates that key National Liberation Front leader, Tran Bu Khien, has told a confidant that the chief aim of the National Liberation Front was to get the United States out of South Vietnam at all costs. After that, the National Liberation Front could take care of vietnamese problems including reunification. Similar attitudes have been expressed by other National Liberation Front leaders as well as stated in enemy documents.

-- COMUSMACV considers that hypothesis d also is well documented as an enemy intent which may now be a key element of his strategy. As early as March 1968, the sixth resolution of the Central Office, South
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Vietnam (COSVN) pointed out the mutual dependence of US presence in South Vietnam and the continued existence of the present Government of Vietnam structure. It set forth the specific objective of driving a wedge between the two. This obviously remains a prime enemy tactic. An undated document signed by the Undersecretary of the Central Office, South Vietnam Party Committee and promulgated subsequent to the bombing halt, contains the enemy's current view of his overall situation and opportunities. It sees the United States urgently "trying to find ways for withdrawal of troops from South Vietnam and to de-Americanize the war in South Vietnam." It goes on to judge that these US attempts will be no different under a new Administration. The enemy believes that controversy exists within the GVN/US camp. He states that, "The US people and the people of the world want the US troops to depart Vietnam as soon as possible; whereas, the United States wants to prolong the period of withdrawal so that the puppet government can be consolidated." Within this controversy he sees opportunity, the possibility to exploit situational developments which would result from the "swift solving of the Vietnam problem by either Johnson or Nixon, Diplomatically." Evidence continues to mount that the enemy sees these opportunities in a weakening of the Government of Vietnam that would result from allied controversy and tensions. For example, Directive No. 34, issued on 12 December 1968 by the VC Current Affairs Committee to Tay Ninh Province, goes into substantial detail in describing the various situations, and conditions which could bring about an abrupt transformation of the GVN. The first would be a coup d'état brought on as a result of US pressure to reshuffle the GVN Cabinet and, thus, ease the differences between the US and GVN negotiations. The second would be an open break between Thieu and Ky, leading to conflict between the Government of Vietnam and elements of the RVNAF. The third would result from a direct move by the US to replace the present leadership of the GVN. The fourth would be the complete replacement of the present GVN as a result of the popular uprising. In this document, the enemy goes on to say that the first condition would afford him the best opportunity and the second would be profitable to him locally and throughout the country. He makes no comment on the third. However, it is significant that he parenthetically states that there is little likelihood of the fourth contingency - the first evidence that he has lost face in the popular uprising concept. All evidence indicates that his military, political, and diplomatic efforts are devoted to aggravating these tensions, thus weakening the GVN to such a point that he can force a coalition government upon it.

CINCPAC considers that a combination of hypotheses b and d appear to be the key elements of the enemy's negotiating strategy. He notes that Hanoi has not acknowledged the presence of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces in South Vietnam. The communist position has not changed. This was reaffirmed by Ha Van Ieu on 19 January 1969 when he asked the press to stress that the basis for the Paris talks remained the four points of the National Liberation Front (NLF) of South Vietnam. Having secured major concessions in 1968, i.e., total halt of aerial, naval and artillery bombardment in North Vietnam, and representation in Paris.
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without being required to reciprocate, his next objectives would most likely be the withdrawal of US troops and continued exacerbation of US/GVN relations.

-- The JCS concur with COMUSMACV's and CINCPAC's views noted above - in particular that hypotheses b and d are the primary reasons for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's continued presence in Paris. The other hypotheses are also supported in some degree of available information. The Joint Chiefs of Staff concur with the US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, that, at the time of the failure of the third offensive, there was a significant reduction in the number of infiltrators in the pipeline, which reduced the enemy's capability for future offensives; infiltration did not cease and it subsequently was stepped up.

(1) In response to the question as stated, the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe the enemy first came to Paris in May in order to secure the complete halt of bombardment and other acts of war against North Vietnam. The advent of spring and the coming good-weather period over the industrial heartland of NVN was an additional factor which probably affected the decision by the DRV to come to Paris. From the first session on 13 May 1968 until the total bombing halt was announced on 1 November 1968, this platform was repeated in each meeting in various terms and was played repeatedly in press releases.

(2) Although we certainly do not believe the propaganda claims of the enemy, they have shown that their statement of objectives are true expressions of their desires. As stated again on 25 January 1969 and on 30 January 1969 by the North Vietnamese and VC representatives in Paris, they are continuing negotiations first to secure the withdrawal of US/Free World Forces, and second to establish a new government in South Vietnam in accordance with the program of the National Liberation Front. Third, they seek eventual reunification of north and south.

(3) In the course of the negotiations, the other side can be expected to use all measure of propaganda and negotiating ploy in an attempt to discredit the GVN and its Armed Forces, and to drive a wedge between the United States and the GVN.

There is some evidence to support the view that North Vietnam is in Paris out of a position of weakness. (hypotheses a and e).

-- While there is no evidence that North Vietnam seeks a face-saving formula for defeat, hypotheses a and e, above, are otherwise so closely related that they can be treated as one. The best evidence supporting both is the huge losses the enemy took during 1968 and the failure of his general offensive/general uprising strategy. The enemy losses of 291,000 men more than offset the massive infiltration effort he had mounted. With the failure of his third offensive, there were no more infiltrators in the pipeline moving south - a factor which severely reduced his capability for future large-scale offensives.

-- COMUSMACV reports that despite repeated attempts, the enemy had been unable to seize and hold a single military objective. His battle- field performance was declining rapidly as was demonstrated in the
demilitarized zone, at Thuong Duc, Duc Lap, and fire-support base Dot. He had failed to achieve the popular uprising, and his campaign to proelyte the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) to his side had met with no success. The gain in population control he had achieved with Tet was only temporary; by the end of December, the accelerated pacification campaign of the Government of Vietnam had surpassed their pacification progress of 1967 and had surpassed the campaign goals for 1968 established before Tet. The air interdiction program, combined with severe weather, had nearly closed his supply routes from the north, and he could no longer logistically support his forces in the demilitarized zone or in the northern provinces of the I Corps Tactical Zone.

There is some minor and older evidence to support the view that North Vietnam is in Paris to give the US a face-saving way to withdraw. (hypothesis c).

COMUSMACV reports that some of the pre-Tet captured documents deal-ing with the possibility of negotiations allude to it. For example, notes taken by a Viet Cong cadre in late December 1967 state, "In case it is necessary to talk (peace) with the United States, the peace conference will be conducted in the line of 'creating an honorable defeat' for the United States." There have not been such references in recent evidence of enemy plans or intent.

And finally, some consider that the North Vietnamese are in Paris only because they were so forced by US peace initiatives and pressures of world opinion. Proponents of this view argue that:

-- The enemy has been able, and can continue to control both his and our casualties. This has been an integral part of his overall strategy. His attacks are designed to have the maximum psychological impact by inflicting heavy allied casualties and projecting an aura of country-wide strength. If the enemy does control casualty rates and, as indicated below, is not limited by manpower or logistical shortages, then the entire notion of winning the war by attriting the enemy force is untenable, at least at present force and activity levels.

-- The second principal factor working to defeat the allied strategy of attrition is the external manpower and materiel provided by North Vietnam and the Communist Bloc nations. Without this support, the military war would have slowed down or ended long ago; with it, the VC/NVA can continue to fight almost indefinitely. North Vietnam has relied primarily on external Communist aid and economic austerity at home to meet the steadily increasing military requirements of the war in the South and the bombing-induced difficulties in the North. The Soviet Union, Communist China, and Eastern European nations provide the bulk of the combat equipment and materiel used by enemy units in South Vietnam. The cost of this support to North Vietnam is negligible. Our interdiction campaign has failed to stop the movement of these supplies to SVN.
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In summary, it appears that the prevailing evidence supports the view that North Vietnam is in Paris primarily to get US forces out of South Vietnam and to provide a better chance of VC/NLF political victory in the South.
What is the nature of evidence, and how adequate is it, underlying competing views (as in the most recent NIE on this subject, with its dissenting footnotes) of the impact of various outcomes in Vietnam within Southeast Asia?

-- The difference of opinion in NIE 50-68 between the Army and Air Force on the one hand and the remainder of the intelligence community on the other over the impact of a "good" vs a "bad" Vietnam settlement on the future of Southeast Asia reflects a differing evaluation of the same basic data. For the most part, these assessments derive from public and private statements by local officials and from diplomatic reports. Past national reactions to threats and crisis, and overall estimates of both the military and political weaknesses of each country are also weighted in these evaluations.

DIA has indicated that the Army/Air Force dissent resulted from their more heavily weighting the public declarations of Asian politicians and the weaknesses of the nations; whereas the other intelligence agencies emphasized the power of growing nationalism in focusing the opposition to externally inspired and oriented communist movements, especially insurgencies. CINCPAC tends to support the Army/Air Force emphasis on the public statement of Southeast Asian leaders, noting that Thailand's Foreign Minister Thanat has expressed his fear that US withdrawal will result in a Vietnamese version of the 1962 Laos accords which he considers a sellout. Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew warned, on 4 November 1968, that the most important outcome of the war would be to decide what is to happen to South Vietnam's neighbors. Chiang Kai-Shek, in a message to President Thieu, stated "if the US withdraws as a result of a split with the Government of Vietnam, South Vietnam, Thailand, and all Southeast Asia will crumble and fall prey to the communists and the Free World cause in Asia would be irreparably damaged."

Public statements by national leaders, however, must always be treated carefully since the opinions expressed may be: (1) more concerned with present problems than future situations; (2) intended to influence the US; or (3) responsive to domestic political pressures. Moreover, in considering the post-Vietnam environment in Southeast Asia, it is important to remember that the outcome of the war in the South will be only one of the factors, and not necessarily the most important one, affecting developments. While the Vietnam settlement will have a significant psychological impact on Southeast Asian perceptions of US power and commitment, North Vietnamese strength, and the future of communism in the area, Vietnam will only set the political tone, not determine the eventual outcome for each country. Other important factors will be: (1) the North Vietnamese and Chinese postures with respect to supporting insurgencies elsewhere in the area; (2) the degree of involvement in the area of extra-regional powers (Japan, USSR, India, Australia, UK, France); (3) the individual reactions of the countries to their specific internal situations. The compounding of uncertainties due to these multiple consider-
ations makes it extremely difficult to judge the effect of a specific Vietnam outcome in isolation. Hence the generally cautious and qualified assessments in the NIE.

-- With respect to the impact of an unfavorable Vietnam outcome on Thailand, the Navy dissent is based upon judgments that: (a) Thailand is already engaged in a searching reappraisal of its geographical situation and future foreign policy orientation; (b) Thai leaders are deliberately signalling this fact to the United States; (c) their official and unofficial public statements to this effect are being confirmed by clandestine reporting of their private attitudes; and (d) the Thai appraisal of their strategic situation following the postulated communist takeover of the rest of Indochina would be a very realistic one in terms of what help they might expect from the United States in confrontations with Communist Chinese power short of general war. (Clandestine reporting indicates that the Thais may have undertaken to establish communications with Communist China via Pakistan over the question of the Chinese-sponsored insurgency in Thailand.) In this situation, the Navy concludes that Thailand would opt for a policy that maximizes her maneuverability in dealing with all powers in the area, and this would probably entail early movement toward a loosening of Thailand's security ties with the United States.

-- There is general agreement in the intelligence community that US performance in Vietnam is being closely watched by leaders in Southeast Asia. Nor are these leaders insensitive to the US public reaction to our involvement. Many of them genuinely fear that if the US retreats from its engagement in the region, the communists will move to take advantage of the individual weaknesses of the unprotected countries. Seeing themselves exposed to communist pressure without powerful US backing, some Asian leaders might feel compelled to accommodate the new realities. The dissents in the estimate reflect concern that the changes in this direction might be swift in the wake of an unfavorable settlement in Vietnam; whereas the majority believes that the record of the past would indicate that radical changes in policy would be some time in emerging.
QUESTION 3

How soundly based is the common belief that Hanoi is under active pressure with respect to the Paris negotiations from Moscow (for) and Peking (against)? Is it clear that either Moscow or Peking believe they have, or are willing to use, significant leverage on Hanoi's policies? What is the evidence, other than public or private official statements?

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On the basis of intelligence derived from analysis of Hanoi's known diplomatic relations with China and the Soviet Union; reports from third country diplomats; and continuing study of public and private statements by officials of the three countries, there does not appear to be significant pressure by Moscow or Peking on North Vietnam. Moreover, it seems likely that leaders in both China and the Soviet Union recognize the limitations of their power over Hanoi's policies. Hanoi over the years has been extremely adroit at balancing between the two by avoiding involvement in the Sino-Soviet ideological split and leaving the subtle impression that attempted intimidation by one might force it into the arms of the other. Both can be expected, however, to continue their efforts, public and private, to influence North Vietnamese decisions in Paris and in the conduct of the war. At best, the Chinese probably hope to impress on Hanoi that any Paris settlement will not alter China's support for wars of national liberation throughout Southeast Asia, while the Soviets presumably are busying their influence in the hope of having decisive impact either to prevent a breakdown or to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiations. Both sides continue to send aid to Hanoi adequate to support its war needs.

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Relations between North Vietnam and China cooled after Hanoi's decision last April to enter into negotiations. Negotiations are not a part of the Maoist script for wars of national liberation. But Peking probably recognizes that it cannot block a compromise settlement if Hanoi desires it. Furthermore, North Vietnam appears to have ignored from time to time China's doctrine of "protracted war" because of Defense Minister Giap's known preference for "big victory" a la Dien Bien Phu. After having failed to dissuade the North Vietnamese from going to Paris, China sharply reduced its media coverage of the war, slighted the North Vietnamese at various communist celebrations, completely ignored coverage of the Paris talks, and may even have withdrawn some construction troops from North Vietnam. Manifesting its intent to continue supporting insurgency in the region, China has again begun road construction in northern Laos and announced that the insurgency in Thailand is a war of national liberation. Further, there are some indications that Peking may be bypassing Hanoi and seeking more direct contact with the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam. Hanoi has been careful not to exacerbate the situation and has sent Le Duc Tho to Peking on each return trip to Paris presumably to keep the Chinese informed. All evidence suggests, however, that while Hanoi may listen attentively to its northern ally, its leaders keep their own counsel.

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Relations between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam have been good throughout the war and the Soviets have supplied vast amounts of aid and
supplies reaching record levels in 1968 with further increases probable in 1969. Conversations with Soviet officials, diplomatic reports, and public statements indicate that the Soviets desire a negotiated settlement of the war, but are probably unwilling to use their aid as a direct lever. Although North Vietnam apparently recently accepted some Soviet proposals on procedural questions, Hanoi for its part will, no doubt, try to avoid giving Moscow the impression it has a voice or a veto in North Vietnam's negotiating position. In this connection, Hanoi's uncharacteristically vigorous support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was somewhat of a surprise (and was not calculated to improve relations with China which condemned the Soviet action). Ambassador Thompson's year-end summary offers a succinct and accurate appraisal of the Soviet position:

"In Vietnam, the Soviets have openly and privately pressed for talks looking toward a political solution. We see no reason why they should not continue to use their leverage with Hanoi in this direction, but they are likely to continue to employ it with caution, letting Hanoi call the signals. At the turn of the year, for example, support in Soviet media for the positions of the DRV and the NLF was vocal and unequivocal, and we think it unlikely that the Soviets will go far in pressing Hanoi toward concessions unless the talks are near breakdown."

* Moscow Airgram 2351; 31 December 1968
How sound is our knowledge of the existence and significance of stable "Moscow" and "Peking" factions within the Hanoi leadership, as distinct, for example from shifting factions, all of whom recognize the need to balance off both allies? How much do we know, in general, of intraparty disputes and personalities within Hanoi?

-- Our knowledge of DRV politics and key personalities remains fragmentary and largely second-hand. It derives primarily from second-hand diplomatic reports and a continuing close scrutiny of the public statements and actions of Hanoi officials. On the basis of this limited evidence it appears misleading to characterize any faction within the Politburo as either "Moscow" or "Peking" oriented. This is true mainly because most of the problems with which the Hanoi leadership must deal are issues of tactics and timing particular to the Vietnam situation. Chinese and Soviet ideologies can offer only the most general guidelines; often, no doubt, they are irrelevant. Moreover, even on issues where disagreements exist a strong element of nationalism and a shared view of the gravity of the situation work to produce unity and loyalty once decisions are made.

-- While the Hanoi leadership has exhibited remarkable external cohesion over time, there is evidence of considerable internal shading of opinion on both military and political-ideological issues, and there have been hints of intensive periodic debates on future courses of action. For instance, there is reason to believe a heated review of strategy for the "fight-talk" phase of the war took place late last summer.

-- On the question of military strategy there has been disagreement between the number three man in the official hierarchy, Truong Chinh, and Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap. Truong Chinh has consistently supported the Maoist doctrine of "protracted war" and violent revolution, most recently in a speech released last August. Because of this espousal of the Chinese line on wars of national liberation coupled with his doctrinaire ideological militancy, Chinh has been identified as the leader of the "pro-Chinese" faction. General Giap, whose brilliant victory over the French at Dien Bien Phu has conditioned his subsequent military outlook, has argued for a "big victory" in the current struggle with the U.S. Aside from several people closely identified with either Giap or Chinh, there is no clear evidence of the positions of most of the Politburo. Moreover, somewhat contradictory public statements suggest the issue raised last summer in the post-Tet policy debate may yet be unresolved.

-- On political and ideological issues there is evidence of a loose grouping of militants who favor an aggressive approach to both foreign and domestic policy. In addition to Truong Chinh, this group includes: the number two man, Le Duan; the senior member of the Paris delegation, Le Duc Tho; and Deputy Premier Hoang Quoc Viet. A more moderate and pragmatic approach is
taken by another portion of the Politburo (often identified misleadingly as the "Moscow" faction). This group includes Premier Pham Van Dong; Defense Minister Giap; Pham Hung, Le Thanh Nghi; and Van Tien Dung. It is impossible to judge how cohesive or stable these groupings are or clearly which has most power. Ho Chi Minh has consistently remained aloof from these groupings, presumably promoting consensus or playing one group off against another.

-- A somewhat different analysis of the groupings in the Hanoi leadership is offered by DIA and the JCS. Basing their conclusions largely on public statements and writings of the individuals, DIA and the JCS believe there are three broad groups generally active in the North Vietnamese Politburo. The distinctions among them, however, are by no means solid or suggestive of rigid factions. The groups reflect, at best, in this view, the general political philosophy to which these individuals adhere, and are regarded as useful only to a certain degree to identify the general approach of a man to political and national problems. Over the years, in the DIA/JCS view, the groupings in the Politburo have been as follows:

a. Militant. Favoring an extreme and aggressive approach to both foreign and domestic policy:

(1) Le Duan
(2) Le Duc Tho

b. Moderate. Inclined to greater caution in domestic and foreign policy:

(1) Pham Van Dong
(2) Pham Hung
(3) Vo Nguyen Giap
(4) Le Tanh Nghi
(5) Van Tien Dung (alternate member)

c. Neutral. Open to persuasion:

(1) Truong Chinh
(2) Nguyen Duy Trinh

-- But whatever the internal alignments in the Politburo may be, the most important consideration favoring unity and discouraging open identification by a person or group with either China or the Soviet Union has been the widely shared fear of alienating either. This need to delicately balance and offset relations with the two Communist giants explains Hanoi's studied neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute and the muting of internal preferences by Politburo members.
QUESTION 5

What is the evidence supporting various hypotheses, and the overall adequacy of evidence, relating to the following questions:

a. Why did North Vietnamese Army units leave South Vietnam last summer and fall?

b. Did the predicted "third wave offensive" by the North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong actually take place? If so, why did it not achieve greater success?

c. Why are Viet Cong guerrillas and local forces now relatively dormant?

(Among the hypotheses: (1) response to Viet Cong/North Vietnamese battle losses, forcing withdrawal or passivity; (2) to put diplomatic pressure on the United States to move to substantive talks in Paris; (3) to prepare for future operations; and/or (4) pressure of US and allied operations.)

SEE ANSWERS AT TABS A, B AND C
QUESTION 5a

Why did North Vietnamese Army units leave South Vietnam last summer and fall?

The three most likely reasons for the withdrawal of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units from South Vietnam (SVN) during the latter half of 1968 are: (1) military necessity as a result of losses inflicted by allied forces; (2) a gesture to persuade the United States (US) to order a complete bombing halt; and (3) a change in enemy strategy based on the opinion that he now may be able to gain more politically than he ever has been able to gain militarily.

The enemy traditionally has withdrawn his forces (particularly North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units) from South Vietnam (SVN) whenever he has felt the need to rest and refit them. He always has enjoyed relative safety from allied operations in North Vietnam (NVN) and Laos and complete immunity in Cambodia. In all three countries, the flow of supplies to the enemy base areas near the borders of SVN and his employment of these base areas are documented. He withdrew his units from SVN last summer and fall following his second and third offensives, respectively. In both instances, his decision to withdraw units was prompted by several factors, including the pressure of allied operations, heavy battle losses, and a need to prepare for future operations. The fact that most of the units returned to SVN for tactical operations is evidence of the last factor.

There were additional considerations regarding the enemy's withdrawal of units from the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and military region Tri Thien-Hue last fall.

--- Allied interdiction efforts south of the 19th parallel had reduced significantly the logistic support for these forces.

--- The DMZ area suffered logistically because allied forces had uncovered enemy supply and munitions caches of unprecedented magnitude. For example, units of the 3d Marine Division uncovered 19 caches in the 320th Division area during the period 10-23 September 1968 which contained: over 11,000 rounds of rocket and mortar ammunition; 7,300 grenades, 850,000 rounds of small arms ammunition; 1,500 mines; and 4,600 pounds of TNT. In the months of August and September, friendly units in I Corps seized over 1,000,000 pounds of rice, further increasing the enemy's logistics problems.

--- There were numerous prisoner of war reports and captured documents describing food shortages in the military region Tri Thien-Hue. For example, an officer prisoner of war from the 5th Regiment stated that a lack of rice had created morale problems. Rice was gathered daily in the mountains, but deliveries were inadequate because of allied blockades.
of transportation routes. A rallier from the 803d Regiment declared that as a result of food shortages, the troops went without a noon meal. A late July 1968 notebook entry by a quartermaster cadre of the 812th Regiment spoke of men facing imminent starvation and disclosed that food shortages had hampered preparations for the third offensive. These reports are typical of many received during September.

While there is substantial evidence that military necessity may have forced the enemy to withdraw some of his forces from SVN in the summer and fall of 1968 within the enemy's broad strategy, political determinations well could have played an equally important role in his disengagement.

-- Although the evidence suggesting a political motive for the withdrawals is less obvious, there are indications that Hanoi was trying to influence a US decision to declare a complete bombing halt of NVN. The enemy's desire to obtain a complete bombing halt and guarded inferences out of Hanoi support the hypothesis that there was a political motivation behind the withdrawals.

-- The speed with which the 320th NVA Division returned to NVN and the fact that the NVN delegation approached the US delegation in Paris shortly after the division's return to NVN, strongly suggests that the enemy seized upon the opportunity to turn fault to virtue by withdrawing forces he could no longer support effectively as a seeming concession to attain the bombing halt.

-- Moreover, the withdrawals did not follow previous patterns. Some of the forces withdrawn from the DMZ area went further north in NVN than in previous years. In addition, in September and October, a greater number of units withdrew to border sanctuaries in Laos and Cambodia than previously had been witnessed.

-- Other political considerations which may have influenced communist motives were their awareness of the rising unpopularity of the war in the US, the ramifications of the 1968 US Presidential campaign, and expressed US interest in negotiating an early reduction of its commitment in SVN.

-- All of these considerations, taken together with the military defeats inflicted on enemy forces, may have led the communists to the conclusion that they had much to gain in the short term by agreeing to negotiations as a part of a long-range strategy to continue fighting while negotiating.

There also are indications the enemy changed his strategy based on the opinion that he may be able to gain more by increased political activity than he ever has been able to gain through military efforts. He decided that the best time to accomplish these political initiatives is now, before the full effect of Government of Vietnam (GVN) programs to gain support of the people can be realized. At present the major threat to allied objectives
In SVN is the enemy's effort to extend his political control over the population and claim a facade of legitimacy for his authority. It is estimated that the enemy has established "liberation committees" in over half of the villages in SVN, and over 60% of the population could be said to live in areas subject to some VC political activity. In support of this effort, enemy military capabilities are significant and he still is capable of maintaining the military initiative. It is estimated that the total enemy military strength committed against or posing a threat against SVN is 265,000-355,000.

In summary, both military and political motives influenced the enemy's decision to withdraw forces from SVN in the summer and fall of 1968. On the surface, military necessity may appear to be the dominant factor, but in reality, political determinations may have been more important.
QUESTION 5b

Did the predicted "third-wave offensive" by the North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong actually take place? If so, why did it not achieve greater success?

An enemy "third-wave offensive" did take place and it began the night of 17-18 August 1968. It initially was evident in the sharp rise of enemy-initiated incidents and in enemy killed in action. Enemy large-scale attacks totaled 6 in June, 2 in July, and 3 in the first half of August, with 10 battalion-size and 1 regimental-size attacks. Enemy assaults and attacks by fire more than doubled in the week of 18-24 August over the previous week (38 assaults/attacks by fire to 91). The enemy killed in action also more than doubled, from 2,483 during the period 1-17 August to 5,534 during the period 18-24 August. The number of enemy incidents and killed in action remained at a relatively high level through the first week of September.

Numerous captured documents and prisoners of war attested to the fact that a third offensive was both planned and launched by the enemy. In addition to the increase in enemy incidents and killed in action, there is hard evidence relating to enemy plans for a third offensive and his own admission that he had launched one. These include at least 183 captured documents, agent reports, and the statements from at least 16 prisoners of war.

In the III Corps, especially, numerous reports made specific reference to the "Third General Offensive," and indicated August as the time for the attacks. A notebook from the Central Office, South Vietnam (COSVN) Subregion 4 specified that preparations for the "climaxing phase" were to be completed before 30 July. Another notebook contained detailed plans for an attack against Saigon, and stated that from 15 June to 30 July 1968, the unit concerned was to prepare for the "third climax." All rear services preparations were to be completed by 5 August 1968. A prisoner of war, who was a battalion political officer, stated that a meeting scheduled for 7 to 9 July 1968 was to plan for a third offensive, which he estimated would begin sometime after mid-August. A political officer who rallied on 26 July 1968 described plans for major enemy units in the III Corps Tactical Zone during a "forthcoming third offensive."

The enemy's lack of success in his third offensive is predominantly a reflection of what has been a continual deterioration of his tactical capabilities since the 1968 Tet attacks.

In the Delta, his plans to attack Cai Lay and Can Tho had been compromised and preempted. Thus, he had been unable to launch any sizeable offensive action there.

His attacks on III Corps' peripheral targets did not weaken Saigon defenses and his forces had been driven back to the Cambodian sanctuary, unable to reach the capital.
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-- In II Corps his only major attack had been at Duc Lap. Four regiments were not able to take this outpost.

-- The three-plus division force he had been building all summer in northern military region 5 never was able to consolidate near Danang. They spread out along the coast attacking population centers and the outskirts of Danang itself. These attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to him and he was forced inland. His DMZ units were ineffective. Their mission was to tie down and attrit allied forces; instead, they suffered heavy casualties as well as loss of caches, and were forced out of the country.

-- To a lesser extent, the enemy’s assessment of his potential for the future probably brought about an early decision to cut short his offensive plans.

Concurrent with the decided decline of the enemy’s tactical capability has been a significant improvement in allied intelligence, which has allowed allied forces to anticipate enemy movements and locate his forces as well as his logistical activity. As a result, it has been possible to shift B-52 and tactical air assets, applying them to the most lucrative targets. In addition, improved intelligence has been instrumental in preempting enemy actions on the ground. Well in advance, his plans, targets, and timing for both the second and third offensives were well known to allied forces.

-- For example, it was learned from two highly reliable agents that B-52 strikes directed against a COSVN headquarters element and units of the 9th VC Division forced the enemy to cancel his plans for attacks on Tay Ninh City the end of July. The early detection of the 95C NVA Regiment’s move toward fire-support base Dot led to destruction of his artillery elements before they deployed to firing position. Consequently, his infantry was exposed to the heavy losses they subsequently sustained. The enemy himself has recognized the improvement of friendly intelligence and views it with considerable alarm.

-- For instance, a document captured last summer in I Corps contained notes indicating that allied intelligence was excellent, stating, "we frankly acknowledge that we are defeated in that field." More recent reports evidence that COSVN admits to great difficulty in carrying out large-scale operations because of improved allied intelligence.

In summary, the enemy’s "third-wave offensive" began on the night of 17 August 1968 with a sharp increase in the number of attacks against military installations and population centers throughout SVN. By the time the offensive crested during the week of 18-24 August, comparative data showed there had been a three-fold increase in the level of his military activity—from a weekly total of about 30 attacks during each
of the first two weeks of August to 100 for the initial week of the offensive. Although the attacks occurred in widely scattered areas of the country, it soon was evident that the tempo and intensity of the "third-wave" never would reach the proportions of Tet, or even of the Second Offensive in May. Enemy actions during this phase were characterized by economy of force, a greater stress on preparations, and the avoidance of high-risk operations. The enemy sought chiefly to draw friendly forces from key defensive positions by attacks against outlying positions, but allied preemptive operations disrupted these plans. Captured documents indicate that the "third wave" was designed to do what the two previous offensives in 1968 had failed to accomplish--i.e., to destroy the Government of Vietnam (GVN) and to secure a "popular uprising".
c. Why are the Viet Cong guerrillas and local forces now relatively dormant?

There is no evidence that Viet Cong (VC) guerrillas and local forces are now relatively dormant. On the contrary, enemy documents captured subsequent to the bombing halt called for renewed emphasis on guerrilla activity and a build-up in guerrilla strength.

Enemy activity since the bombing halt has been characterized by small-scale harassment, standoff attacks by fire, sapper and terrorist attacks. The predominant part of this activity has been carried out by guerrillas and local forces in support of attempts to consolidate and strengthen their position in the rural areas. Guerrillas and local forces also are trying to screen the deployment of enemy main force units into attack positions, especially in III Corps.

During the last six months, the only significant drop in categories of activity credited to guerrillas and local forces has been the decline in the number of acts of sabotage, as illustrated by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Incident</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Jul-Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>1,372</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>1,135</td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>7,070</td>
<td>18,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>1,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabotage</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1,609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 6

What rate of NVA/VC attrition would outrun their ability to replenish by infiltration and recruitment, as currently calculated? Do present operations achieve this? If not, what force levels and other conditions would be necessary? Is there any evidence they are concerned about continuing heavy losses?

Current Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) estimates for 1968 place enemy gains from infiltration and recruitment at approximately 298,000, as opposed to enemy losses of about 291,000. Excluded from this loss count are the unknown casualties inflicted by B-52 strikes, tactical air, and ground artillery. MACV estimates that the enemy's gains and losses in South Vietnam (SVN) roughly balanced out for the year of 1968. If it is assumed that the enemy can infiltrate and recruit approximately 300,000 men a year, then allied forces would have to attrit the enemy at the rate of about 25,000 per month. Present operations (those since September to December 1968) have attrited an average of about 18,000 men per month. This difference of 7,000 men per month is not because the allied force level is inadequate, but because the enemy chooses not to engage.

The enemy has access to sufficient manpower to meet his replenishment needs for at least the next several years, even at the high 1968 loss rate of about 291,000. Approximately 120,000 physically fit males reach the draft age each year in North Vietnam (NVN). Prior to 1968 they have more than offset the requirements for infiltration into South Vietnam (SVN) -- 90,000 infiltrators in 1966 and 82,000 in 1967. About 250,000 men appear to have infiltrated in 1968, but even this level can be maintained by tapping the large pool of nonmilitary manpower available in NVN. For example, there are about 1.8 million physically-fit males in NVN aged 15 to 34; only about 45 percent (875,000) are in the NVN regular (475,000) or paramilitary (400,000) armed forces. The cessation of bombing probably has freed an additional 200,000 troops and labor force personnel of the approximately 600,000 total who were involved in anti-aircraft defense, repair activities and transport. Moreover, NVN has additional alternatives open with regard to the availability of manpower which include: reducing the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces committed to SVN; lowering physical standards for induction; requesting "volunteer" support from other Communist countries; and increasing the rate of food imports to free large numbers of marginally productive agricultural workers.

Even at the all time high enemy loss rates (340,000 annual rate) during the first six months of 1968, the Viet Cong (VC)/North Vietnamese Army (NVA) could replenish their forces for more than four years by depleting 33% of their joint pool of able-bodied manpower.

At 4th quarter 1968 rates, VC/NVA infiltration and recruitment is running about 170,000 per year and so are enemy losses, as shown in
The table below. With an annual VC/NVA draft class of about 166,000
able bodied men, the enemy can maintain this rate of losses almost
indefinitely without any significant depletion of his total manpower pool.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated VC/NVA Personnel Gains</th>
<th>Estimated VC/NVA Personnel Losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infiltration 128,000 a/</td>
<td>Combat Deaths 109,584 c/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment 42,000 b/</td>
<td>Died of Wounds 38,354 a/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL GAINS 170,000</td>
<td>Prisoners 8,774 e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Defectors 14,677 e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL LOSSES 171,389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a/ Estimated by taking all source infiltration estimate for 1st quarter
1969 and multiplying by 4.
b/ Taking MACV's current recruitment estimate of 3,500 per month and
multipling by 12.
c/ Taking 4th quarter 1968 rate and multiplying by 4.
d/ Died of wounds = .35 x KIA (MACV estimate).
e/ Average of 1967 and 1968 statistics.

Assuming that VC/NVA losses could be boosted back up to the rates
for the first half of 1968, the highest ever, the enemy still could
replenish his losses for quite a while, depending on how far down he is
willing to draw his manpower pool. At the first half 1968 rates, the enemy
would lose about 340,000 personnel per year, assuming that MACV's combat
death and died of wounds figures are correct. At this rate the total
VC/NVA able-bodied manpower pool of 2.3 million would be depleted at
a rate of about 175,000 per year. Assuming that the NVA replenish
VC losses after the VC run out of manpower, it would take 13 years to
exhaust the manpower pool, 6.5 years to cut it in half and 4.4 years to
deplete it by a third.

Moreover, it is unlikely that the high enemy loss rates of January --
June 1968 could be maintained by allied forces unless: (1) the enemy
generates massive Tet offensive type attacks; (2) allied forces become
much more efficient and effective; and/or (3) allied force levels are
increased greatly.

Even if the enemy initiates massive attacks, the evidence is quite
strong that he calculates the casualties he is willing to take before he
goes into the battle and withdraws if casualties exceed acceptable levels.
To support this, there is a very strong relationship between the level of

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enemy attacks and the level of enemy casualties. Thus, the enemy is unlikely to launch sustained major attacks unless he figures he can stand the losses.

A higher tempo of allied operations is unlikely to raise enemy casualties to the January - June 1968 levels, unless the allied kill rate can be doubled. Unfortunately, there is little or no relationship between the tempo of allied operations and fluctuations in enemy (or US) combat deaths. Thus, unless allied commanders can wrest the initiative from him, the enemy can be expected to control his losses within a broad range.

Another way enemy losses might be raised is to simply increase allied troops to the point where the desired level of losses is inflicted. It appears that the 4th quarter 1968 losses are at about the level the enemy must sustain in order to maintain his presence in the countryside. If so, more allied troops in the field ought to be able to raise the enemy loss rate. During the 4th quarter 1968, allied strength averaged 1,606,000 men, who inflicted enemy losses at a yearly rate of 170,000 or 106 per 1000 allied troops. At this rate it would take more than 3 million allied troops to raise the yearly rate of 340,000 enemy losses, assuming the enemy continues to avoid contact and allied efficiency remains constant.

The foregoing troop estimates are unrealistic, because it is likely that the enemy combat death rate per 1000 allied troops would increase as more troops were added. Moreover, any large scale troop increase would have to come from outside SVN, since the Government of Vietnam is deep into its manpower pool and at current desertion rates will not be able to maintain present Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) force levels. Since US and other free world forces generally outperform RVNAF in killing the enemy, some gains would be expected from this substitution. However, if the difference in performance is due to difference in mission (i.e., pacification versus sweep), then the gains would be reduced. In any case, it appears that 500,000 to 1,000,000 US and other free world forces would have to be added to insure a level of attrition unacceptable to the enemy. Allied casualties, of course, would increase as the enemy casualties increased.

The prospects of continuing losses, even at a rate considerably less than 1968, would not be attractive to the enemy unless he thought that he was moving progressively toward his objectives. If he opts to continue the war, he would be required to consider carefully the relationship between his strategy and his losses. The high loss rate of 1968, for example, was a consequence of his offensive tactics, the forward deployment of his main forces during the first nine months of the year, and his effort to achieve a maximum impact, both politically and militarily, in a short period of time.
The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) believe that the enemy's actions in the last quarter of 1968 and thus far in 1969, emphasizing economy of force tactics and standoff attacks by fire, reflect the enemy's awareness that he cannot absorb the losses inflicted in 1968 over a protracted period of time and still maintain the level of battlefield effectiveness required to attain his goals. Some of the consequences of another year like 1968 would be that the enemy's organized and more or less full-time fighters would suffer about a 100 percent attrition in SVN each year, and the enemy's main and local combat forces in SVN would be almost entirely NVA.

Present operations are not outrunning the enemy's ability to replenish by infiltration or recruitment, and it will be exceedingly difficult in 1969 for allied forces to attrit the enemy at 1968 rates unless the enemy again chooses to launch large-scale offensives such as the Tet last year. Major enemy units appear recently to have finished a lengthy period of refitting, retraining and replenishment in sanctuaries outside the borders of SVN and in NVN. In addition, large-scale infiltration from NVN apparently is underway to keep enemy units at optimum strength. Perhaps the only area in which the enemy may be hurting is recruitment in SVN, currently estimated at a level of 3,500 per month. The reported gains made in pacification and the impetus of the Accelerated Pacification Campaign suggest that this figure now may be too high.

MACV considers current allied force levels adequate to accomplish enemy attrition at a rate of 25,000 per month. Under present rules of engagement, the most favorable condition that would assist allied forces to increase enemy attrition would be the resumption of a large-scale offensive by the enemy. Air and other type attacks against enemy troops and installations in Cambodia, and perhaps in the panhandle of NVN, would compound the enemy's attrition and might raise it beyond the level which he would be willing to sustain or accept. There are no other conditions under present rules of engagement which would increase significantly the ability to attrit him.

Force levels which would enable the allied forces to attrit the enemy beyond his ability to replenish by infiltration and recruitment have not been calculated based on any changes in the present rules of engagement. Such force levels would vary with a determination of US objectives with regard to each of the other countries of Southeast Asia. For example, a lodgment in NVN might require from three to four divisions with air support, while sustained operations in the Lactian panhandle might require an additional three divisions with air support. Present allied forces in SVN might be able to achieve the objective postulated if militarily confining restraints, which have characterized the war to date, were partially or wholly lifted.
The JCS previously have recommended military actions under certain alternatives which they believe: (1) are feasible in terms of force, costs, time and risks; and (2) can be undertaken to either render the enemy incapable of continuing the war, or cause him to recognize the inevitable destruction of his capability to continue the war.

The JCS considers that, should a decision be made to resume full-scale hostilities with a view to achieving the objective postulated, authorities should be granted: (1) for closure of ports in NVN by mining; (2) for unrestricted air warfare against all targets of military and/or economic significance in NVN to within several miles of the Chinese border; (3) extension of normal naval surface operations to within 15 miles of the Chinese border; and (4) expanded current and overt operations, as required, in Laos, Cambodia and the demilitarized zone (DMZ), supported by air power.

There is evidence to indicate that the enemy is concerned about continuing heavy losses. Much of the evidence is contained in captured documents and prisoner interrogation reports in which concern is reflected about sickness, desertions, shortages of cadre personnel, poorly trained and tardy replacement personnel, and other problems. According to US commanders, however, the best evidence can be found in the pattern of enemy actions since the third offensive in August and September of last year.

General Abrams has characterized the enemy's third offensive as a conservative campaign marked by much greater tactical flexibility, in which the enemy began to pull his forces away once his casualties began to mount. Analysis of the enemy's daily combat deaths during the third offensive shows his apparent concern for a lessening of casualties. For example, there was a decided peak coinciding with his initial staggered attacks in mid-August; then there was a drop to below the average of 280 combat deaths per day which he had sustained during the so-called June-July "lull." This was followed by an increase in his combat deaths as he turned to secondary targets such as Thuong Duc; then, when the third offensive finally was called off, his combat deaths returned to about the "lull" level.

The enemy's concern for losses also can be seen in the pattern of offensive actions which have occurred since the third offensive. These have emphasized economy of force tactics and stand off attacks by fire, with most of the contacts since September 1968 having been at allied initiative. In the past several months the enemy generally has been reluctant to engage in any large-size combat operations and consistently has sought the security of his border sanctuaries.
National Liberation Front (NLF) leaders in Paris have stated that large-scale engagements in the past had proved too costly. A reliable report from a VC cadre states that the Central Office, South Vietnam (COSVN) has learned through experience that large forces can be intercepted by allies as they attempt to move into and out of cities. Recent evidence shows that the enemy thinks a big offensive against Saigon would not be worth the price in terms of losses he would have to pay. However, it must be pointed out, that should the enemy see an opportunity which he can exploit for meaningful military and political gain, the losses he would suffer would be secondary to the attainment of such an objective.
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QUESTION 7

To what extent do the United States/Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces and the North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong share in the control and the rate of Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army attrition, i.e., to what extent, in terms of our tactical experience, can heavy losses persistently be imposed on Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army Forces, despite their possible intention to limit casualties by avoiding contact? (Among the hypotheses:

a. Contact is predominantly at Viet Cong tactical initiative, and we cannot reverse this; Viet Cong need suffer high casualties only so long as they are willing to accept them, in seeking contact; or

b. Current Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army loss rates can be maintained by present forces - as increased "x" percent by "y" additional forces - whatever the Democratic Republic of Vietnam/Viet Cong choose to do, short of further major withdrawal.)

The enemy, by the type action he adopts, has the predominant share in determining enemy attrition rates. The Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) believes, however, that heavy losses can be and are being imposed upon the enemy regardless of the tactics he adopts in South Vietnam (SVN).

-- During 1968, the enemy's total monthly casualties (permanent losses) ran from a low of approximately 15,000 for July and October to a high of 40,000 to 41,000 in February and May. It is significant that the two high months (February and May) encompassed the peak of his Tet and second general offensives. As a broad rule, when the enemy attacks his casualties increase; when he evades, hides, or uses attacks by fire, his casualties decrease.

-- During 1968 the enemy's minimum monthly permanent losses from all sources totaled 15,000. During the last 4 months of 1968, when the enemy avoided large-scale offensive actions, his permanent losses averaged 18,000 per month.

Allied military strategy in SVN assumes that allied forces are superior to the enemy forces because of greater allied combat manpower, firepower, mobility and support. In terms of total armed men, the allies outnumbered the enemy about 6 to 1 at the end of 1968, but the allies had only a slight advantage over the enemy in terms of combat troops on offensive operations. This is because about 25% of the allied maneuver battalions are tied down protecting base areas, lines of communication and pacification operations. Conversely, the enemy's small logistic and defensive requirements and reliance on local populace leave most enemy main force units free for offensive operations. As a result, allied forces committed to offensive operations only slightly outnumber the enemy troops in maneuver battalions; in terms of rifle platoon manpower the two sides are nearly equal.

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Past experience indicates that the enemy tries to fight in a way that nullifies the allied advantages in manpower, firepower, mobility and support. One way the enemy does this is to mass his forces to exploit favorable tactical situations while tying down most of the allied forces through small attacks and harassments against allied bases and cities. The cost in enemy lives is high, but it prevents the allies from turning their resource superiority into a decisive military advantage.

Base areas in North Vietnam (NVN), Laos and Cambodia provide the enemy with a strategic advantage and a military sanctuary which permits him to choose the time and place of his offensive activity in SVN and provide a respite from allied operations. The enemy has the strategic initiative in SVN, and like a criminal in the city, he decides when and where he will strike, if the "climate gets too hot", he merely "lies low" for awhile. When the fighting becomes too intense, he can break or avoid contact by retreating to his base area sanctuaries.

Withdrawal of main-force units to base sanctuaries in NVN, Laos and Cambodia permits the enemy to regulate his casualty rate to a significant extent. In spite of the heavy casualties he sustained in 1968, he has been successful in maintaining even increasing his force structure in SVN. In fact, during four years of intensive combat in SVN and unprecedented bombing of NVN and Laos, the enemy has more than doubled his combat forces, successfully sustained high casualty rates, doubled the level of infiltration, and increased the scale and intensity of the main-force war.

Allied operations do result in increased enemy casualties, but most often when the enemy is willing to engage in large-scale reaction and counter operations. From time to time, allied forces are able to cut off or trap enemy forces and impose unexpectedly high casualties on a particular unit. Such actions are too infrequent, however, to enable a continuing heavy casualty rate on the scale of early 1968 so long as border sanctuaries outside SVN are available.

Statistical analysis supports the hypothesis that the enemy exercises the greatest share in the control of the rate of enemy attrition. The allies never have persistently imposed significant losses on enemy forces when he has sought to avoid them.

Little or no relationship exists between the tempo of allied operations and fluctuations in either enemy or US combat deaths. A significant increase in allied operations is not accompanied by a significant increase in enemy or allied combat deaths, nor does a reduction in allied operations reduce deaths.
A very strong relationship exists between enemy-initiated attacks and enemy combat deaths, and there is an even stronger relationship between enemy-initiated attacks and US combat deaths.

Statistical analysis supports the hypothesis that the enemy holds the military initiative in SVN, as measured by his ability to influence casualty rates. Taken alone, the statistical findings must be considered tentative, but they accord well with past experience, which indicates the enemy can control his casualty rate, to a great extent, by choosing where, when, and how often he will fight. He tries to avoid contact with allied troops under unfavorable conditions by blending into the population or vanishing into jungle base areas during large allied operations.

Another way to show that allied forces cannot persistently impose heavy losses on enemy forces, except when the latter seek heavy combat, is to compare the tempo of operations and casualties during the 2nd and 4th quarters of 1968. The former was a period of high enemy activity while the latter was a period of significant lull. Despite increases in allied battalion days of operation, large and small operations, and force strength, the enemy reduced the monthly average of his combat deaths by 41% between the 2nd and 4th quarters of 1968. However, the changes in allied operations in SVN did produce a more favorable than usual kill ratio (6.0) in the 4th quarter of 1968. This improvement is only a marginal contribution to the effort since enemy yearly losses at this rate, while high, probably would not be considered unacceptably heavy by the enemy. A comparison of monthly averages during the 2nd and 4th quarters of 1968 is shown on the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators (Monthly Averages)</th>
<th>2nd Qtr 1968</th>
<th>4th Qtr 1968</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enemy Combat Deaths</td>
<td>15,540</td>
<td>9,132</td>
<td>-41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enemy Initiated Attacks</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>-59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Combat Deaths</td>
<td>1,575</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>-57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Combat Deaths</td>
<td>3,212</td>
<td>1,529</td>
<td>-52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Bn. Days of Opn.</td>
<td>7,520</td>
<td>8,890a/</td>
<td>+18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Large Ops.</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>639a/</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Small Unit Ops. (000)</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>205a/</td>
<td>+13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Force Strength (000)</td>
<td>1,507</td>
<td>1,606</td>
<td>+07%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The enemy combat death rate of 9,132 per month shown above probably represents a good indication of the combat death rate that the current
allied forces can impose on the enemy when he is working hard to avoid contact. The following table shows that the rate would be 24% above the 1967 rate, but 40% below the 1968 rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enemy Combat Deaths</th>
<th>Annual rate at 4th Qtr 1968 Level</th>
<th>Total 1968</th>
<th>Total 1967</th>
<th>Total 1966</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>109,584</td>
<td>181,146</td>
<td>88,104</td>
<td>55,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Combat Deaths</td>
<td>8,184</td>
<td>14,561</td>
<td>9,358</td>
<td>4,989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the ability to control casualties is an integral part of the overall enemy strategy in SVN. His attacks are designed to have the maximum psychological impact by inflicting heavy allied casualties and projecting an aura of country-wide strength. Severe enemy personnel losses, similar to those of early 1968, can be repeated only if the enemy chooses to remain in the field where he will be vulnerable to allied action. Experience has shown that enemy casualties increase in proportion to enemy offensive activity, or in reaction to allied operations. In either case, the choice to stand and fight or to avoid contact rests with the enemy.
What controversies persist on the estimate of Viet Cong order of battle; in particular, on the various categories of guerrilla forces and infrastructure? On Viet Cong recruiting, and manpower pool? What is the overall adequacy of evidence?

The elements composing enemy strength in South Vietnam (SVN) are divided into two broad areas: (1) the military order of battle, or military threat; and (2) other organized portions of the insurgency base. The military threat, in turn, is composed of four elements: (1) North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces; (2) Viet Cong (VC) main and local forces; (3) administrative services (or support) forces; and (4) guerrillas. The total population under enemy control, including the agents and sympathizers in Government of Vietnam (GVN) controlled areas, is the insurgency base.

The Communists attempt to organize all elements of the population; however, only those elements such as the infrastructure, self-defense militia and assault youth, which deal primarily with population/area control and provide some support to the combat forces, are considered appropriate for separate quantification. Although these organized blocks of the population are a problem for any long-range pacification effort, they are not considered as part of the military threat. On previous occasions, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), by including many of these organizations in its assessments, has estimated the enemy threat in SVN at a total strength in excess of one-half million. In the opinion of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), such inclusions appeared to increase the actual enemy military threat well beyond its realistic capability and attribute to the enemy an exaggerated military strength.

In the past, estimates of the enemy threat in SVN have proved to be closer to the actual military threat than the order of battle (OB) figures at the time, which were based only on collateral intelligence. The following table compares the unadjusted OB figures at the time with the retrospectively adjusted OB figures as of year-end 1968.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength in Thousands</th>
<th>Jun 65</th>
<th>Dec 65</th>
<th>Dec 66</th>
<th>Dec 67</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unadjusted Military Threat</td>
<td>92.8-</td>
<td>121.1-</td>
<td>225.6-</td>
<td>218.6-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>128.1</td>
<td>245.6</td>
<td>223.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Military Threat</td>
<td>200.6</td>
<td>224.7</td>
<td>286.4</td>
<td>244.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, it can be seen that in June 1965 the OB figures at the time were less than half of what retrospectively adjusted OB figures now reflect. Subsequent improvement in methods of collecting and evaluating information have provided more accurate OB figures in later years.
In terms of the total military threat, the present divergencies between the national-level (DIA/CIA) estimates and field (MACV) estimates are not significant enough to cause a change in strategy. The differences, in part, stem from the problem of balancing gains and losses, the different methodologies used to compensate for the lack of precise evidence, the strict acceptance criteria normally employed by MACV in developing order of battle data, and differences in analytical judgments.

The following comparison of DIA/CIA estimates and MACV estimates as of year-end 1968 is preliminary and may be subject to further change. The comparison is intended primarily to update and to bring together in one place the varying numbers, so as to facilitate understanding of this complex issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Threat</th>
<th>DIA/CIA Estimates</th>
<th>MACV Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combat Forces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVA</td>
<td>105,000 - 125,000</td>
<td>106,000 (116,000)&lt;br&gt;a/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>45,000 - 55,000</td>
<td>37,000 c/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>150,000 - 180,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVA</td>
<td>10,000 - 20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>45,000 - 55,000</td>
<td>42,000&lt;sup&gt;d/&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>55,000 - 75,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerrillas</td>
<td>60,000 - 100,000&lt;sup&gt;e/&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>59,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Military Threat</td>
<td>265,000 - 355,000</td>
<td>244,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a/</sup> An estimated 20,000 - 25,000 of these NVA troops are serving in VC units. This estimate excludes an estimated 28,000 NVA troops deployed north of the DMZ.

<sup>b/</sup> The MACV estimate for total NVA troops in SVN, including administrative service troops, may be increased by approximately 10,000 (to 116,000) depending upon the results of a special study of enemy administrative service troops presently nearing completion. It is not clear whether MACV estimate includes or excludes those NVA troops currently out of country.

<sup>c/</sup> Although it is implied in text of MACV response that VC regular strength could be spread from 36,000 to 40,000 the latest known best estimate is 37,000.

<sup>d/</sup> The current MACV estimate for administrative service troops is 42,000; the special study mentioned above may raise this figure above 50,000.

<sup>e/</sup> DIA/CIA believe that the military threat represented by guerrilla forces is not on a parity with that of main and local forces because probably only about one-third of the guerrillas are well-armed, trained, and organized.
The following current MACV estimates of VC recruiting during 1966 may be subject to further change: January through April, 7,000 per month; May and June, 5,000 per month; July through September, 3,000 per month; October through December, 3,500 per month. MACV believes that the VC manpower pool throughout SVN is becoming not only smaller, but also poorer in quality, although statistical data is not available to support this belief. Such judgment is based on ever-increasing recruitment difficulties, expanding Government of Vietnam control of the populace in SVN, expansion of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, and the success of the Accelerated Pacification Campaign.

Evidence substantiating strength estimates by MACV is built on the methodology employed. This methodological approach rests on three fundamental principles: (1) the estimates are based on order of battle holdings -- that hard intelligence data derived from such sources as captured documents, prisoner of war interrogation reports, and defector statements; (2) the estimates are complemented by all source intelligence, mathematically innovated into the estimates; and (3) the estimates incorporate extensive strength data as reported directly from major field commands under very specifically supervised collection programs.

Therefore, evidence regarding the NVA in SVN and the VC main and local forces is relatively good, since they are in frequent contact with allied forces and generally are organized along conventional lines. The evidence on the administrative services and guerrillas is substantially less firm and less complete, permitting only a broad estimate quantification. The guerrillas, who are not organized conventionally, who are made up of large numbers of cell to platoon-size units at the village and hamlet level, and who operate in a far less open manner, also fluctuate in strength because they are used as a manpower base for the regular forces. Basic information on guerrilla strengths is derived from reports of intelligence officers at province and district levels; this evidence generally is accepted. The MACV estimate, derived from this data, has tended to be conservative, but usually has fallen within the uncertainty spread of the DIA/CIA estimate. MACV assessments of the VC infrastructure strength, VC recruiting level, and VC manpower pool generally are accepted at the national level.

1/ Includes political cadre based on expansion of count down to hamlet level.
2/ Includes self-defense, secret self-defense and assault youth forces.
QUESTION 9

What are North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong capabilities for launching a large-scale offensive, with "dramatic" results (even if taking high casualties and without holding objectives long), in the next 6 months (e.g., an offensive against one or more cities, or against most newly "pacified" hamlets)? How adequate is the evidence?

The enemy retains a significant capability to launch offensive actions in South Vietnam (SVN) at times of his own choosing and on a broad scale within the next six months. However, it is doubtful that he can successfully carry off a large-scale offensive and achieve "dramatic" results on a par with the Tet offensive of last year.

From a quantitative standpoint, there is ample evidence that the enemy has the strength to launch a large-scale offensive during the next six months. In spite of heavy losses, his end-1968 military strength is approximately 6,500 troops greater than it was at the beginning of the year. Logistically, the combination of the bombing halt and the dry season has allowed him to replenish his stockpiles around SVN's northern borders, and he continues to resupply unhampered through Cambodia. Infiltration from North Vietnam (NVN), on the order of 40,000-50,000 troops since 1 December 1968, is adding to his capabilities.

Again, from a purely quantitative standpoint, the enemy could launch an attack through the demilitarized zone (DMZ) with an equivalent strength of two divisions, an attack against Danang by the equivalent of about one division, and an attack against Saigon with a strength of up to four or five divisions. If the 304th North Vietnamese Army Division moves to the northern I Corps area, as now destined, the enemy could launch an attack in Thua Thien with an equivalent strength of over one division.

However, from a qualitative standpoint, the enemy's chances of carrying off a large-scale offensive with "dramatic" results appear remote. During 1968, there was a marked deterioration in the combat effectiveness of enemy forces. A gross measurement of this deterioration can be found in the results of his three major offensives. Each was more poorly executed than its predecessor; each accomplished less in turn.

The enemy has growing problems influencing his quality. He has leadership problems, and in many units, morale problems. His troops appear less well trained than in the past. His in-country logistic problems have drastically increased over the last six months as allied military forces have uprooted the Viet Cong (VC) infrastructure and discovered his lines of communications and caches.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) believe that the allies in SVN have the forces and means to defeat an enemy offensive and that this is quite apparent to the Communists. For example, the enemy would risk having to
pay a high price in casualties and equipment for any large-scale attack against a major city in SVN, such as Saigon. Moreover, the enemy would risk a possible resumption of the bombing of NVN, if he attacked any major city in significant strength.

Recent intelligence reports indicate the enemy has recognized that the urban centers are defended too well for him to attack. One such report states that the Central Office, South Vietnam (COSVN), has learned through experience that large forces can be intercepted by the allies as they attempt to move in and out of cities. Therefore, future attacks would be conducted by small groups of sappers and terrorists, since high casualties would accompany large-scale attacks against the cities.

Accordingly, as intelligence indicates, sapper teams and small guerrilla forces are more likely to be used against the capital and other urban areas than substantial main forces. Under such circumstances, given the strength and distribution of allied forces, the enemy probably could not hope to achieve the "dramatic" impact attained last year at Tet and in May. Allied forces and firepower almost certainly would be successful in eventually expelling enemy forces lodged in a major urban center. Nevertheless, the enemy still might launch a large-scale offensive, if, in his opinion the risks involved were outweighed by the psychological advantages which he might achieve toward a resolution of the Paris negotiations in favor of his objectives.

The enemy's best chance for "dramatic" results probably lies in an indirect move against the pacification program. Such an effort probably would involve limited attacks against population centers to pull sizeable allied forces away from support of pacification in the rural areas. Guerrillas and local forces then would be expected to wreck as much havoc as possible in the "pacified" villages and hamlets.

In order to gain "dramatic" results in a large-scale offensive against newly "pacified" hamlets, the enemy would need to carry out successful simultaneous attacks against a substantial number of hamlets in locations throughout SVN. If this involved the major redeployment and redistribution of his forces, such movement probably would be detected. He then would be faced with the problem that plagued him throughout his 1968 campaign—the inherent risk of exposure to allied mobile forces and overwhelming firepower. He would confront the bulk of allied forces, which increasingly are deployed in continuous direct support of pacification to prevent enemy success against pacified areas and to establish a Government of Vietnam (GVN) presence and administrative apparatus.

Over the next six months the enemy's main efforts, whether direct or indirect, probably will be aimed at crippling the pacification program. The enemy places high priority on efforts to keep the populace from supporting the Saigon regime. This is illustrated by a recent National Liberation Front (NLF) communiqué which emphasizes the necessity for the Communists to extend and strengthen their political influence over the South Vietnamese populace, through the continuing development of a "national administration" apparatus to rival the GVN.
The enemy will continue to retain the strength to launch a large-scale offensive so long as he can supply his forces from and utilize his sanctuaries in Cambodia. Even though the results might not be "dramatic," the adverse psychological impact of a large-scale offensive cannot be discounted. In the opinion of the Commander in Chief, Pacific, this highlights the necessity for acceptance at the highest levels of the evidence on the enemy's use of Cambodia and the granting of previously requested authorities to deal with this problem.

Current evidence on enemy capabilities is quite good. Information comes from a variety of sources that include prisoners, returnees, captured documents, agents, covert operations, ground and aerial reconnaissance, the South Vietnamese populace and special intelligence. Such information has enabled allied forces to prepare successfully for the most recent enemy major offensives.
SECRET

QUESTION 10

What are the main channels for military supplies for the North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong Forces in South Vietnam (e.g., Cambodia and/or the Laotian Panhandle)? What portion of these supplies come in through Sihanoukville?

There is general agreement that the main channels for military supplies reaching enemy forces in South Vietnam (SVN) are the Laotian overland route and Cambodian lines of communication, with some supplies coming in through the demilitarized zone (DMZ). There is some disagreement as to the specific type, amount and destination of the supplies that come by way of each channel.

The Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) believes:

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The Laotian overland route provides military supplies for enemy forces in I Corps and northern II Corps. The enemy uses Cambodian lines of communication to move most of the military supplies for his forces in III Corps and IV Corps and parts of II Corps.

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The fact that the enemy supplies his forces in northern SVN by way of the Laotian overland route is concretely documented and accepted by the intelligence community.

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The bulk of the evidence attests that enemy forces in southern SVN receive their military supplies from Cambodia. Of 236 reports documenting the flow of ordnance from Cambodia to SVN, only 15 allude to the use of the Laotian overland route as the point of origin of ordnance shipments. Significantly, throughout the year of 1968, vehicle movements equated to only 8 tons per day being trucked south of Base Area 610 in Laos, which is 350 kilometers north of the Cambodian/Laos border. Since the minimum ordnance requirements alone for II, III and IV Corps during 1968 were about 7 tons per day, this throughput of 8 tons is insufficient to support both the enemy combat forces in the southern III Corps and the troops also manning the long line of communication. Of the 236 reports documenting the flow of ordnance, only two reports describe the flow of munitions from the tri-border area south to Pleiku and Dariac provinces in II Corps. Additionally, a Controlled American Source (CAS) road-watch team south of the sensor string on Highway 92 reveals that little or no traffic is moving past their position. From the available evidence, it has been concluded that no significant amounts of ordnance are reaching southern SVN through the Laotian overland route.

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The increasing use of Cambodia by the enemy for movement of his military supplies has become more pronounced over the last two years. According to 70 reports, Sihanoukville is the primary point of entry for...
military supplies destined for the enemy. Based on 62 reports, over 14,000 tons of munitions have been shipped there in the last two years. Thirty-three reports state that civilian carriers and the Cambodian Army probably delivered over 10,000 tons of munitions to the Cambodian/SVN border regions from October 1967 through September 1968. The complicity of members of the Cambodian Army in the arms traffic to the enemy has been well established. The involvement of Prince Sihanouk has not yet been proved; however, it is believed that he is aware of the movement of arms to the enemy and has at least given his tacit approval to it.

The Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) concurs with MACV and estimates that enemy forces in SVN presently require approximately 240 short tons per day of all classes of supplies of which about 104 short tons per day must be brought in from out of country. About 30 short tons per day originate in North Vietnam (NVN) and pass through the Laotian panhandle prior to delivery, while almost 9 tons are moved directly from NVN across the demilitarized zone (DMZ). Some 65 tons, mostly food produced in Cambodia, transit that country before receipt by enemy in SVN. About 6 short tons per day are estimated to come in through Sihanoukville, with arms and ammunition comprising almost all of these deliveries.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) note that national-level intelligence estimates indicate that the Laotian panhandle provides the primary route for war related material for the war in SVN. The JCS also note that the extensive use of Cambodian territory by communist forces has grown alarmingly over the last two years for the storage of arms and ammunition and other supplies, for sanctuary, and as a source of supply. It is clear that Cambodian sources, including elements of the Cambodian Army as well as merchants and smugglers, provide enemy forces in SVN with the bulk of their foodstuffs, medicines, and other nonlethal supplies, and also with substantial amounts of arms and ammunition. Available evidence does not permit a confident quantification of the amounts of arms and ammunition which are moving through Cambodia as distinguished from onward movement from the Laotian panhandle. In any event, it is clear that Cambodia represents a significant source of supply for enemy forces in SVN.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) overview is:

-- The evidence pertaining to the movement of military supplies originating in NVN to enemy forces in I Corps and northern II Corps is considered good. It is based on truck sightings in the North Vietnamese panhandle and upper Laotian panhandle, captured documents, prisoner interrogation reports, aerial photography, and special intelligence. The evidence pertaining to the movement of supplies south through the Laotian panhandle to the Laotian-Cambodian-South Vietnamese border area for onward distribution to enemy forces in southern II Corps and III Corps is sparser. It is based mainly on truck sightings south of Sepone on major north-south routes, portaging observed around interdiction points, and limited
special intelligence reinforced by a few prisoner/defector interrogation reports and clandestine source reports.

IV Corps arms and ammunition requirements as well as supplemental shipments to III Corps during the rainy season are believed to be supplied through Cambodia. The intelligence community long has agreed that a considerable volume of foodstuffs and nonlethal supplies from Cambodia reaches forces in Laos and SVN as a result of "legitimate" agreements and smuggling; the total may exceed 40 tons per day. Such movement, as well as that of arms and ammunition to IV Corps, is undertaken with the complicity of some high-ranking Cambodian officials. The tonnages of arms and ammunition sent to Communist forces in SVN cannot be determined, however, because of the lack of reliable information on the amount delivered to Sihanoukville and the amount stockpiled or issued to Cambodian military forces. Moreover, it is not possible to distinguish between civilian and military shipments to the South Vietnamese border area nor can cargoes or consignees be categorized.

National-level estimates indicate that during 1968 enemy forces required a daily average of about 250 short tons of supplies per day. Of this total, approximately 80 short tons (32%) were provided by external sources. By commodity, 84% of the ammunition and 24% of their food is provided by external sources; 30% of the weapons and other supplies are also externally supplied, but most of this category are weapons, almost all of which are imported. The following table shows supply requirements for enemy forces in SVN in short tons per day (STPD).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Supplies (Short Tons Per Day)</th>
<th>Total Internally Supplied</th>
<th>Externally Supplied</th>
<th>Percent Externally Supplied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food (Class I)</td>
<td>190.2</td>
<td>144.5</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons &amp; Supplies (Class II &amp; IV)</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ammunition (Class V)</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Supplies</td>
<td>249.6</td>
<td>169.8</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on 1968 figures through October.

The following table shows the flow of supplies from external channels based on national-level estimates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Channel</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
<th>Short Tons Per Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From Laos</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Cambodia</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Across DMZ</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National-level estimates indicate that Cambodia primarily supplies food and non-combat materials. On the other hand, MACV estimates that Cambodia is a large scale source of weapons and ammunition which are imported through the port of Sihanoukville and then trucked to the Cambodian/SVN border. Intelligence reports have implicated the Hak Ly trucking firm and various Cambodian Army officers, but most of these reports are from low level sources and have not permitted reliable determination of the quantity of munitions shipped.

MACV estimates that approximately 10,000 tons of military supplies were received at Sihanoukville from October 1967 through September 1968. National-level estimates list less than 2,000 confirmed tons of such material received during the same period. MACV also lists approximately 10,000 tons of military supplies delivered at the Cambodian/SVN border and connects it with the Sihanoukville deliveries. National-level estimates indicate that they may have been brought down through Laos. While evidence of Cambodian complicity is present, the methodology of the studies and the information upon which they are based are not reliable enough to make a meaningful estimate at this time.