

PRIORITY 25X1

SECRET



1968 FEB 28 02 44Z

OUT64472

Declassification Review by NGA

P 280226Z FEB 68
FM NPIC WASHDC
TO AIG 7840

BT

SECRET [redacted] CITE NPIC 3127.

REF A: GN T946/T906, 23 JAN 68.

REF B: NPIC MSG 2939, DTG 072150Z, FEB 68. (OUT 64283)

1. ANALYSIS OF RECENT AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY REVEALS INCREASING MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE A SHAU VALLEY OF SOUTH VIETNAM INCLUDING A POSSIBLE HELICOPTER PAD OR RUNWAY RECONSTRUCTION AT A LUOI AIRFIELD, A POSSIBLE DROP ZONE AT A SHAU AIRFIELD, AND ROAD AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONSTRUCTION.

2. IN MARCH 1966 COMMUNIST FORCES OVERRAN AND TOOK CONTROL OF THE GENERAL AREA OF THE A SHAU VALLEY, SOUTH VIETNAM, INCLUDING THREE SPECIAL FORCES STRONGPOINTS AND ASSOCIATED AIRSTRIPS, A SHAU (1607N 10705E), A LUOI (1616N 10713E), AND TA BAT (1613N 10716E). THIS AREA GENERALLY PARALLELS THE LAOTIAN BORDER AND IS SERVED BY ROUTE 548, AN EXTENSION OF LAOTIAN ROUTE 922, WHICH WAS RECONSTRUCTED AND MAINTAINED DURING THE DRY SEASONS BY COMMUNIST FORCES. THE THREE AIRSTRIPS WERE HEAVILY DAMAGED BY CONTINUING U.S. AIRSTRIKES AND UNTIL 23 JAN 68 NO SIGINIFICANT ACTIVITY EXCEPT ROAD CONSTRUCTION, REPAIR, AND REHABILITATION WAS NOTED.

3. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION DESCRIBES RECENT ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH TWO OF THE AIRSTRIPS AND SUGGEST THAT PREPARATIONS MAY BE UNDERWAY TO PROVIDE AN AIR DROP/AIR LANDING CAPABILITY. THIS ACTIVITY IS REMINISCENT OF THAT NOTED DURING THE 1967 REPEAT 1967 TET TRUCE PERIOD WHEN THE COMMUNISTS DROPPED SUPPLIES AT THE DIEN BIEN PHU AIRSTRIP, NORTH VIETNAM.

4. A NEWLY CLEARED AREA APPROXIMATELY 90 FT SQUARE IS EVIDENT ON PHOTOGRAPHY OF A LUOI AIRFIELD, AT THE NORTHWEST END OF THE 1,375 FT RUNWAY AT UTM XD385002. THIS CLEARING COULD POSSIBLY BE USED AS A HELICOPTER PAD OR COULD REPRESENT INITIAL EFFORTS TO RECONSTRUCT THE RUNWAY. VEHICLE TRACKS EXTEND INTO THE AREA FROM ROUTE 548, WHICH FOLLOWS THE ALIGNMENT OF THE LONGER UNSERVICEABLE RUNWAY. A PROBABLE SMALL SUPPORT BUILDING IS LOCATED 120 FT SOUTHEAST OF THE CLEARED AREA. NONE OF THIS ACTIVITY WAS NOTED ON PHOTOGRAPHY OF [redacted] (REF A).

5. ROUTE 548 IS SERVICEABLE TO THE A SHAU AIRFIELD, LOCATED JUST 9 NM SOUTHEAST OF A LUOI AIRFIELD, AND CONTINUES ACROSS THE BORDER INTO LAOS. TRACK ACTIVITY EXTENDS WEST FROM ROUTE 548 AT THE A SHAU AIRFIELD TO A POSSIBLE DROP ZONE IN A CLEARING BETWEEN THE OLD ABANDONED U.S. SPECIAL FORCES CAMP AND THE MAIN RUNWAY AT 16-07-12N 107-20-00E (YC495834). SCATTERED UNIDENTIFIED MATERIAL IS NOTED IN THE VICINITY OF THE CLEARING.

6. NEWLY IDENTIFIED ROAD CONSTRUCTION OBSERVED ON PHOTOGRAPHY OF [redacted] EXTENDS NORTHEAST FROM ROUTE 548 JUST NORTH OF TA BAT

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SECRET



GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

AIRFIELD TOWARD SOUTH VIETNAM ROUTE 547, WHICH IN TURN EXTENDS TOWARD THE HUE AREA. APPROXIMATELY 6 NM PRESENTLY SEPARATE THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION FROM ROUTE 547 AT BA HI. A 4 NM SECTION OF ROUTE 547 FROM BA HI TO NUI MAY NHA APPEARS TO BE IN DISUSE. THE REMAINING PORTION OF ROUTE 547 INTO HUE IS SERVICEABLE.

7. FIVE AAA SITES (4 OCCUPIED) ARE AT YD347040, YD304091, YD296085, YD279093 AND YD268104 DISPERSED ALONG ROUTE 548 NORTHWEST OF A LUOI AIRFIELD. THESE POSITIONS WHICH ARE ROAD SERVED AND LARGER THAN NORMALLY OBSERVED IN SOUTH VIETNAM COULD HANDLE ZPU-4 OR LARGER WEAPONS.

8. A NEW TELECOMMUNICATIONS OPEN-WIRE TRACE WAS OBSERVED UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN SOUTH VIETNAM, ON [REDACTED] PHOTOGRAPHY, FROM 16-17-30N 107-08-12E (YD283022), ABOUT 0.5 NM EAST OF THE LAOS/SOUTH VIETNAM BORDER. THIS TRACE EXTENDS GENERALLY SOUTHEAST AND TERMINATING 2.5 NM WEST OF A LUOI AIRFIELD AT 16-16-15N 107-11-14E (YD337001). THIS TRACE WILL SERVE THE A SHAU VALLEY AND IS PROBABLY A BRANCH LINE OF THE LINE GENERALLY PARALLELING ROUTE 922 (REF B).

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[REDACTED]

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MAP REF: AMS SERIES L 7014, SHEETS 6441 II AND IV, 1ST ED.

GP-1

S E C R E T [REDACTED]

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END OF MESSAGE

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