

OB Conference, April 1968

Apr 68 Conference on DCI Assessment of Enemy Strengths,
10-16 April 1968 (schedule, delegation, list
of attendees)

No Date Table: CIA Adjustments to the MACV Main and Local
Force OB, 31 Jan 68 and 29 Feb 68

No Date Table: Communist Forces in South Vietnam, 31 Jan 68
and 29 Feb 68

No Date Enemy Losses in South Vietnam

Aug 68 Infiltration Activity (Completely Rewritten from
August Briefing)

2 Aug 68 [redacted] to DD/OER memo re Infiltration Estimates
(Preliminary OER View of Infiltration attached)

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DIA review(s) completed.

Army review(s) completed.

Aug
- 1968

INFILTRATION ACTIVITY
(Completely Rewritten from August Briefing)

During the past three months there appears to have been a marked decline in the number of infiltrators that Hanoi has dispatched to South Vietnam. We estimate that about 12,000 men deployed from the North in August and that the number entering the pipeline in September and October was probably less than 8,000 men per month.

These inputs are well below those for the first seven months of 1968 when at least 30,000 men per month were sent from the North. The current pace of infiltration is comparable to the average rate per month observed in 1966 and 1967. We are somewhat less confident of the precision of our estimate for the last three months, as against the earlier months of 1968. Although we believe it roughly accurate, it appears that changes in enemy procedures on infiltration during recent months may have denied us some information.

We are not sure why the slowdown in troop deployments has occurred. We think it possible, however, that Hanoi may believe that North Vietnamese strength

in South Vietnam has met its manpower goals for the present. Total infiltration for 1968 will reach a quarter million men--and could run considerably higher. The pace appears to have been sufficient, despite the enemy's heavy losses, to raise North Vietnamese numerical strength well above the late 1967 level.

Moreover, as long as Hanoi pursues the type of economy of force tactics it used in the last enemy offensive flurry in South Vietnam in August and September, its personnel requirements are reduced. There is no convincing evidence that the decline in infiltration is due to manpower shortages in North Vietnam.

CIA ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MACV MAIN AND LOCAL FORCE OB31 January 1968

<u>Newly Identified Units</u>		21,500
304th NVA Inf Division	10,000	
320th NVA Inf Division	7,000	
31st NVA Inf Regt	1,500	
40th NVA Arty Regt	1,500	
208th NVA Arty Regt	1,500	
<u>Small Units Omitted</u>		10,000- 11,000
Specialized district units	4,000	
Specialized province units	2,000-3,000	
City units	3,000	
Unusual echelon units	1,000	
<u>TDY (5%)</u>		6,000
<u>Unlisted Support Personnel Integral to Divisions</u>		5,000- 10,000
TOTAL ADDITIONS		<u>42,500- 48,500</u>
<u>MACV Main and Local Force OB</u>		115,000
GRAND TOTAL		<u>157,500-163,500</u>

29 February 1968

<u>Newly Identified Units</u>		12,610
4th NVA Inf Regt (Ind)	1,400	
45th NVA Inf Regt (Ind)	1,400	
164th NVA Arty Regt (Ind)	1,500	
328th VC Inf Regt (Ind)	900	
14th NVA Bn	210	
70th VC MF Bn	350	
72nd VC MF Bn	350	
74th VC MF Bn	350	
529th NVA Engr Bn	350	
83rd VC MF Bn	300	
610th NVA Bn	350	

Newly Identified Units (Cont.)

101st NVA Bn	350
K-39 NVA Bn	350
408th VC Sap Bn	150
307th VC Bn	400
511th VC Bn	500
306B VC Bn	400
40th NVA Arty Regt	1,500
208th NVA Arty Regt	1,500

Other Categories

21,000- 27,000

TOTAL ADDITIONS

33,610- 39,610

MACV Main and Local Force OB

122,900

GRAND TOTAL

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COMMUNIST FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM
31 January 1968

	<u>MACV Original</u>	<u>MACV 31 March Update</u>	<u>CIA Estimate</u>
VC/NVA Main and Local Force	115,016	138,900	160,000
Viet Cong	59,397*	61,300*	60,000
NVA	55,619	77,600	100,000**
Guerrillas	72,605	60,409	110,000-120,000
Administrative Services	37,725	37,700	75,000-100,000
Sub-Total	<u>225,346</u>	<u>237,009</u>	<u>345,000-380,000</u>
Self Defense Militia	--	--	100,000
Assault Youth	--	--	10,000- 20,000
Political Infrastructure	84,000	84,000	100,000-120,000
Total	<u>309,346</u>	<u>321,009</u>	<u>555,000-620,000</u>

*Includes 10,000-12,000 NVA soldiers in VC units as replacements or fillers.

**Includes 15,000 NVA soldiers in VC units as replacements or fillers.

COMMUNIST FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM
29 February 1968

	<u>MACV Original</u>	<u>MACV 31 March Update</u>	<u>CIA Estimate</u>
VC/NVA Main and Local Forces	122,931	123,000	155,000-160,000
Viet Cong	50,263*	50,600*	45,000- 50,000
NVA	72,668	72,400	110,000**
Guerrillas	47,500	54,499	90,000-110,000
Administrative Services	33,700	33,600	75,000-100,000
Sub-Total	<u>204,131</u>	<u>211,099</u>	<u>320,000-370,000</u>
Self Defense Militia	--	--	100,000
Assault Youth	--	--	10,000- 20,000
Political Infrastructure	84,000	84,000	100,000-120,000
Total	<u>288,131</u>	<u>295,099</u>	<u>530,000-610,000</u>

*Includes 10,000-12,000 NVA soldiers in VC units as replacements or fillers.

**Includes 15,000 NVA soldiers in VC units as replacements or fillers.

2 October 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director, OER

SUBJECT : Infiltration Estimates

1. Attached are our views on a best estimate for NVA infiltration for the first eight months of 1968.

2. As is clear in the draft, two methodological approaches resting on different assumptions as to the enemy's utilization of group numbers have been employed. Each of these approaches in turn has been calculated with certain varying internal assumptions. Overall, for both methodologies and assumptions, we have come up with a range of 208,000-232,000 (210,000-230,000). We believe that this range suggests a higher degree of confidence in the estimate than is justified. Alterations of the assumptions in both of the methodologies would tend to broaden the range. We feel quite confident that the lower end of these estimates is so conservatively biased that it can stand as a minimum figure of 210,000. The same conservative bias of both of these methodologies and the many uncertainties associated with this whole problem would lead us however to broaden the estimates by some 10,000, giving us a range of 210,000-240,000.

3. We believe this range to be consistent with estimates recently proposed by other components who have worked on this problem.

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The DIA estimate seems to have remained at about 215,000, but in the light of this morning's discussions, DIA might be willing to accept a range such as we are suggesting.

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ENEMY LOSSES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The estimate of 300,000 enemy losses a year is ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ derived as a compromise between expected losses if he reverts to a protracted war and those which he would sustain if he continues the forward deployment which has characterized his operations since his repulse from the cities at Tet.

2. Protracted War.

a. Killed. Based on a study of enemy ~~actions~~ killed during 1965 to 1967, it was found that every addition of a battalion to the ~~allied~~ allied OB resulted in an increase in kills by all allied battalions. Projecting the 65-67 casualties in accordance with expected allied buildup during the remainder of 1968, it is estimated that 80,000 enemy would be killed during the final nine months of 1968. Adding this to the known 84,000 killed during the first three months, including Tet, provides a total of 164,000 killed during 1968

b. Total Losses. MACV estimates total enemy losses during 1965 to 1967 as 289,400. This includes KIA, died ^{or} of disabled ^{from} wounds, deserted, defected, and ^{PWS.} ~~captured~~. It does not include died or disabled of ~~wound~~ sickness. This figure is 1.62 times the 179,000 estimated as killed during the same period. Applying this same 1.62 factor to the estimate of 164,000 to be killed in 1968 gives an estimate of 267,000 total enemy losses during the year.

3. Forward Strategy. During the month of March, the enemy sustained approximately 14,000 killed. If he should sustain this rate through

the rest of the year, his total 1968 killed, including Tet, will be

~~not include~~ ~~decid~~ or

3. Forward Strategy. During the month of

March, the enemy sustained approximately 14,600 killed
^{attempts to maintain}
~~which~~ ~~proceeding~~ a forward deployment. If he should

sustain this rate through the rest of the year, his
total 1968 ^{killed} ~~casualties~~, including Tet, will be

~~215,000~~ ^{215,000} ~~215,000~~, and his total losses, ^{at 1.52 times the} ^{killed rate,} will

be 350,000.

4. Compromise It is felt that the enemy

will not want to protracted war but that
he will probably be unable to maintain his

Comprehensive budget 267,000 and 350,000, a

approximately 300,000. This averages 2 slightly more than 800 losses a day.

5. Justification

Although this figure appears high, being more than a 100% jump from the 1967

estimate of total losses, ^{about 164,000} (~~147,600~~), it is

believed justified for the following reasons:

- a. The basic assumption of this study ^{is} ~~was~~ to present a "Worst Case" model from the enemy's point of view. It is felt that this ^{presents a} ~~is~~ sufficiently gloomy picture ^{of his losses} without indulging in overly wishful thinking.
- b. The MAEV total loss estimates ^{do} ~~do~~ not include enemy ^{from which the 16% factor was derived} ~~losses~~. The

defection include only Chien ~~the~~ Hui, 1d can be

assumed that substantial other enemy desert, and
return home, and stay there.

~~d. No estimate is The loss estimates~~

~~of VC/NVA in South Vietnam~~

d. No estimate has been included of

enemy losses during infiltration. The 300,000 ~~enemy~~
~~total~~ within SVN ^{therefore} are considered to include these.

e. There exists a strong possibility that

the enemy will attempt more Tet-style offensives
at some time in the future, which will result

G. Summary Table

a. Protracted War Strategy

Killed

1st Qtr 68 - 84,000

Remainder of 68 80,000

164,000 Killed

Total Losses - 164,000 killed

X 1.62

267,000 Total Losses

b. Forward Deployment

Killed.

1st Qtr 68 - ~~84,000~~ 84,000

Remainder of 68 - 14,600 X 9 = 131,000

215,000 K

Total Losses - 215,000 killed

X 1.62

350,000 - Total Losses

c. Compromise - 300,000 Total Losses

SECRET

10-16 Apr 1968

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DELEGATION

SAIGON

Colonel Daniel O. Graham, USA (Chief of Delegation)
Colonel Paul Weller, USMC
Cmdr. James A. Meacham, USN
1st Lt. Kelly L. Robinson, USA

HONOLULU

Lt. Colonel George M. Hamscher, USA
Lt. Colonel James S. Wilson, USMC

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, COMPTROLLER

Jerry E. Bush*

DIA

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SERVICES*

ARMY - MAJOR Joseph R. Dinda
NAVY - Cmdr. Roy L. Beavers
MARINE - Lt. Colonel Edward W. Dzialo
AIR FORCE - Lt. Colonel Scott S. Porter
 Captain Richard L. Bohannon (alternate)

STATE

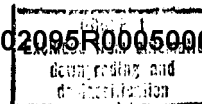
To be announced each day

NSA

To be announced

*Observed
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Conference on DCI Assessment
of Enemy Strengths
10-16 April 1968

Schedule of Conference Rooms

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Room No.</u>
Wednesday	10 Apr	0900-1630	7 E 26
Thursday	11 Apr	0900-1300	7 D 34
Thursday	11 Apr	1300-1630	7 E 26
Friday	12 Apr	0900-1300	7 E 26
Friday	12 Apr	1300-1630	4 F 31
Monday	15 Apr	0900-1630	7 E 26
Tuesday	16 Apr	0900-1630	7 E 26

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