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NSA review completed



Thirty-Third Report

**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS**

(This report covers the period from
3 October through 9 October 1973)

*This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the
Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.*

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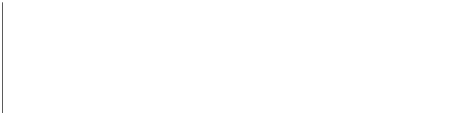
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10 October 1973



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10 October 1973

Thirty-Third Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS*

(This report covers the week from
3 October through 9 October 1973)

The Key Points

- Another 4,000 North Vietnamese troops began their infiltration trip to the south during the week. All were destined for southern Laos and those areas surrounding the Communists' new supply corridor in western South Vietnam.
- The North Vietnamese have established a new AAA divisional headquarters in northwestern MR 3 of South Vietnam.
- North Vietnamese logistic activity was light in the Laos Panhandle and northern South Vietnam, but further preparations were noted in North Vietnam for a resumption of logistic movements down the Ho Chi Minh Trail system.
- Combat activity remained at low levels in both South Vietnam and Laos.

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[REDACTED]

The Details

NOTE: This is the thirty-third in a series of memoranda summarizing evidence received during the reporting period of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, (II) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

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I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

A. Personnel Infiltration and Redeployments

1. Southbound infiltration from North Vietnam continued at a substantial rate during the past week, as six new combat groups and at least one special-purpose group were observed entering the pipeline. One other new group also was observed during the week, but at a point farther south in the system. These groups, all of which are moving toward the Laotian panhandle, have a total strength of more than 3,500 personnel. As a result of their identification, an additional 500 troops also are believed to be traveling toward southern Laos and have been added to our estimate.

2. With the addition of these groups, the total number of North Vietnamese personnel who have started south since the 15 June "second" ceasefire now stands at almost 20,000, of whom close to 18,000 have been combat troops. Two-thirds of these troops began their journey south since 1 September. Since the signing of the original ceasefire accord on 27 January, some 70,000 North Vietnamese personnel have infiltrated southward, of which about 62,000 were combat troops

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[redacted]

and almost 8,000 were civilian and military specialists. Of the total, some 45,000 have started their journey since the ceasefire, while the remaining 25,000 were in the pipeline moving southward at that time. (ANNEX B, [redacted] contains a more detailed discussion of the information pertaining to infiltration which was received during the past week.)

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3. Evidence received during the past week has identified a new North Vietnamese AAA divisional headquarters--the 377th--in Binh Long Province of northern MR 3. The division appears to have been formed in June from the NVA 210th and the 71st AAA Regiments and possibly other units. Although the 210th had been observed infiltrating into Binh Long Province in March 1973, the 71st is a new unit, probably created from some of the artillery groups which infiltrated south during the 1972/73 dry season. Tenuous evidence suggests that the division also has a subordinate field artillery regiment. This is the first time that Hanoi has ever set up an AAA divisional headquarters so far to the south. Its formation not only improves North Vietnam's command and control but also enhances its air defense capability in northwestern MR 3.

4. In addition, evidence received during the week has enabled us to identify four new NVA regiments--three in Laos and one in South Vietnam--for the first time. We do not know the exact functions of these regiments, but they apparently are rear services units rather than combat units. We also do not know precisely when they arrived in their present locations. One of these units, the NVA 575th Regiment, was operating in northern South Vietnam in late September, and its association with construction materials suggests that it is probably an engineering regiment. The three other regiments--the NVA 2nd, 57th and 58th--were confirmed as being in southern Laos during the past week, but some evidence suggests they may have been there for several months. Again, our evidence strongly suggests that the three units have engineering or transportation functions.

5. All four of these units could have been formed from new personnel entering Laos and South Vietnam, or by combining units already in-country.

Communist and South Vietnamese Regular Combat Forces in South Vietnam

South Vietnam

Regular Combat Forces

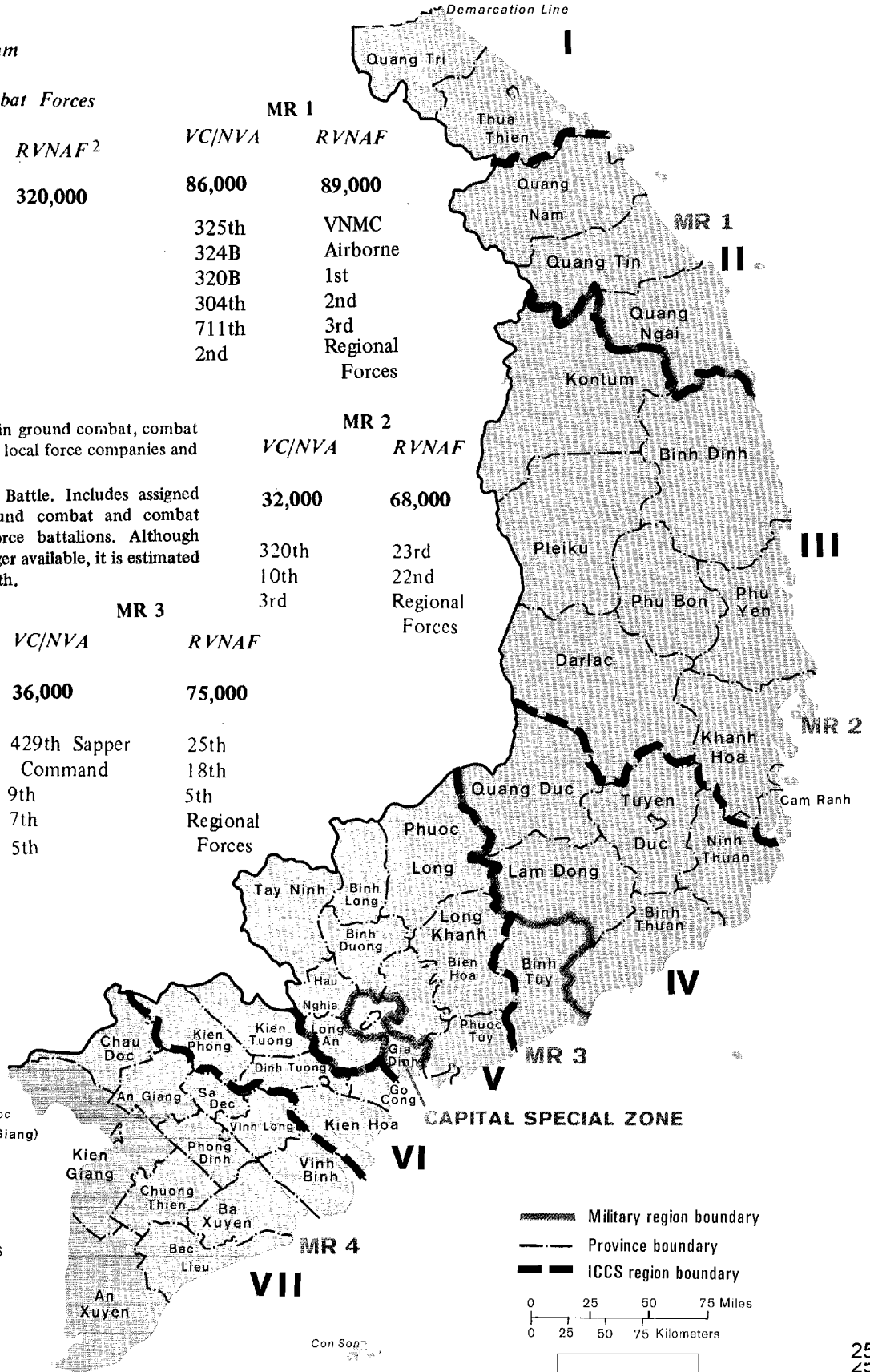
VC/NVA ¹	RVNAF ²
180,000	320,000

MR 1	VC/NVA	RVNAF
	86,000	89,000
	325th	VNMC
	324B	Airborne
	320B	1st
	304th	2nd
	711th	3rd
	2nd	Regional Forces

MR 2	VC/NVA	RVNAF
	32,000	68,000
	320th	23rd
	10th	22nd
	3rd	Regional Forces

MR 3	VC/NVA	RVNAF
	36,000	75,000
	429th Sapper Command	25th
	9th	18th
	7th	5th
	5th	Regional Forces

MR 4	VC/NVA	RVNAF
	26,000	88,000
	1st	21st
		9th
		7th
		44th Special Tactical Zone
		Regional Forces



1. Includes VC/NVA personnel in ground combat, combat support, and air defense units and local force companies and platoons.
 2. RVNAF Ground Order of Battle. Includes assigned personnel in ARVN/VNMC ground combat and combat support units, and Regional Force battalions. Although present for duty strength is no longer available, it is estimated to be about 85% of assigned strength.

Until further information is received on their origins, these units will not be added to our order-of-battle estimates.

B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies

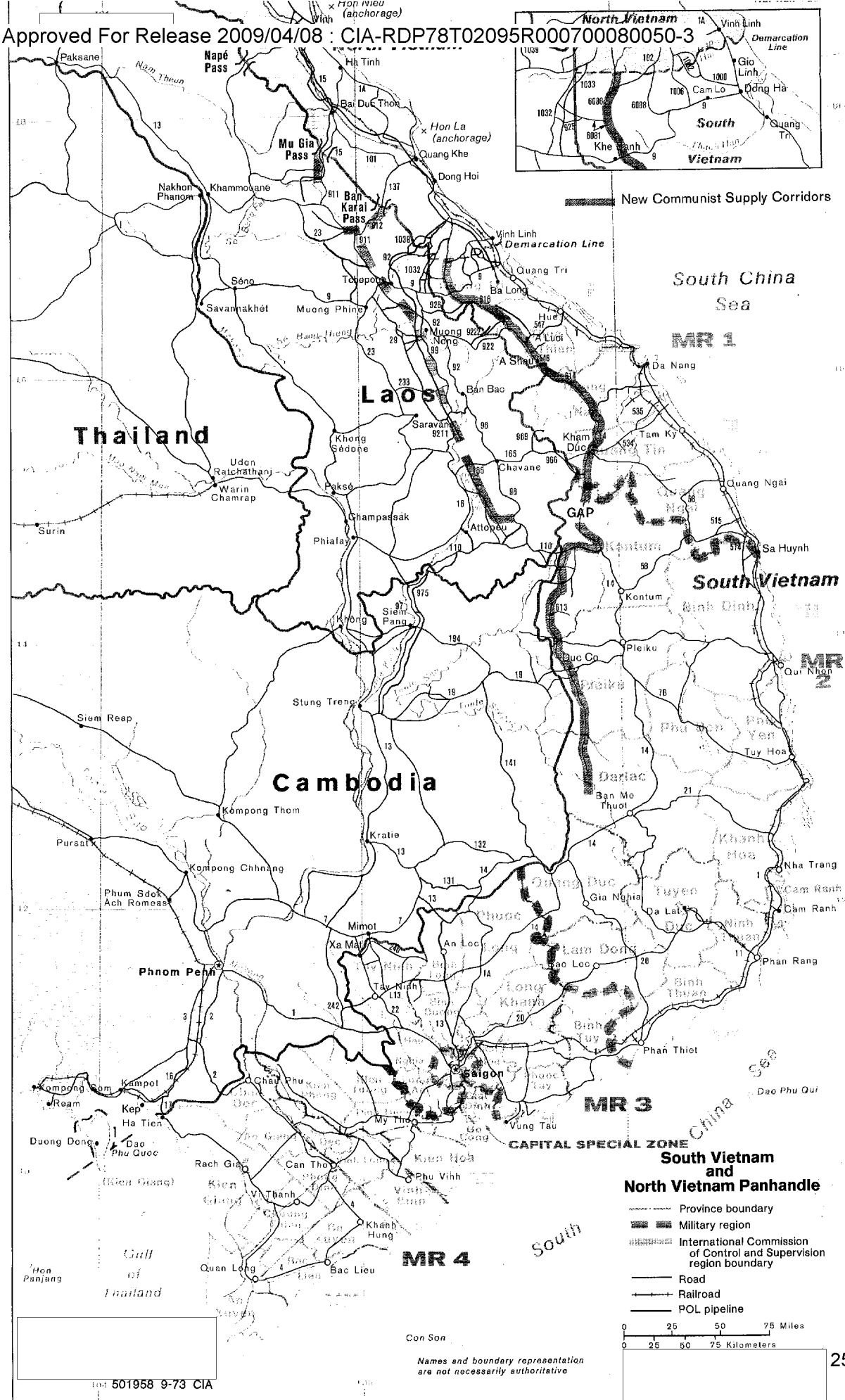
North Vietnam

6. In the week's major logistic development, we received reliable evidence concerning a large stockpile of material in southern Quang Binh Province. According to this evidence, as of 1 October, one NVA logistic unit in this area had some 4,000 tons of cargo in storage, including over 1,300 tons of munitions. Since early July some 7,000 tons of munitions have been detected moving from the Vinh area southward into Quang Binh Province, and the 1,300 tons observed in storage are undoubtedly a portion of this. Rockets, small arms ammunition and field artillery ammunition made up most of the 1,300 tons. In the earlier months of 1973, most of the identified ammunition moving through southern North Vietnam was for anti-aircraft artillery pieces.

7. Other substantial cargoes of ammunition were also observed in the North Vietnamese Panhandle during the week. The most noteworthy of these was noted on 3 October when about 90 tons of material were transported from Vinh to southern Quang Binh Province, including some 35 tons of 130-mm. field artillery ammunition (roughly 400 rounds). This is the first detected movement of 130-mm. artillery ammunition in southern North Vietnam since late spring.

Laos

8. Logistic activity in the Laos Panhandle was again very light this week. Good evidence indicates that NVA logistic units in the Ban Karai Pass area received "mobilization" orders which resulted in some personnel reassignments. Since the dry season will soon begin, the pace of logistic activity will almost certainly increase in the next month or so. There was nothing in the mobilization orders, however, which



specifically indicated that large-scale cargo movements were imminent. Some units were observed making preparations--with no great sense of urgency--to replace damaged weapons and repair communications facilities which had probably been disrupted by the recent heavy rains.

South Vietnam

9. Heavy rains in northern South Vietnam are beginning to take their toll and some NVA units are unable to move supplies. On 2 October, a unit operating along the Communists' new Western Supply Corridor near the A Shau Valley reportedly was unable to work because of the rain. Two days later, NVA logistic units in northern MR 1 near Route 9 were having difficulties because of soft and slippery ground. Probably as a result of these conditions, very little cargo was detected moving in northern MR 1 during the past week.

II. Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South Vietnam and Laos

A. South Vietnam

10. In South Vietnam, the total number of communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January, 15 June, and for the last week (3-9 Oct) are shown below:

<u>Military Region</u>	<u>Total Since 27 January Ceasefire</u>		<u>Total Since 15 June Ceasefire</u>		<u>Last Week (3-9 Oct)</u>	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
MR 1	1,343	4,691	318	1,332	27	88
MR 2	533	3,603	269	1,749	11	68
MR 3	552	3,953	150	1,377	3	57
MR 4	1,081	9,658	403	3,492	28	204
Totals	3,509	21,905	1,140	7,950	69 (107)	417 (474) <u>1/</u>

1/ Denotes totals of previous week.

11. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the charts on the following pages, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion.

B. Laos

12. There was very little military activity in Laos during the past week.

III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Capabilities in Indochina

A. North Vietnam: Fall Induction Phase Ends

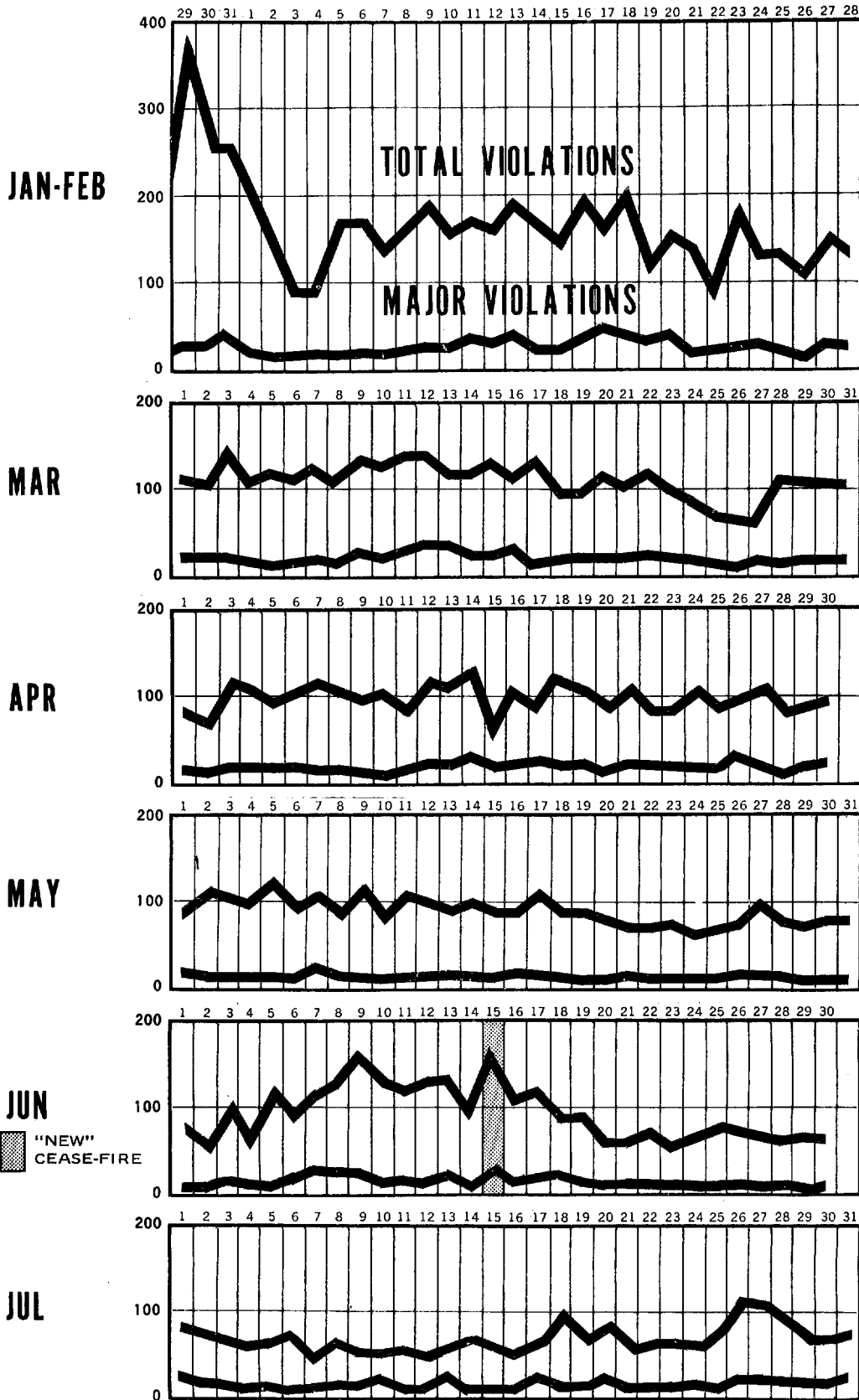
13. Hanoi's fall induction campaign which began in early August apparently trailed off and ended in September. The preliminary total of intercepted induction-related personal messages in September was 19--far below the total of 106 in August. Although such messages are at best an imprecise indicator of conscription trends over time, North Vietnamese press reports also reflect a decline in recruitment in September. Nevertheless, both press reports and personal messages suggest that the fall induction drive was substantial. Allowing for a training cycle of 3-4 months plus infiltration time, troops recruited in this, the first significant campaign since the Paris Agreement was signed last January, could not be made available in the southern war zones until the end of this year. If the training cycle has been extended to six months as some recent evidence suggests, the recruits would not be available until early spring.

(See Reverse Side of Page)



CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

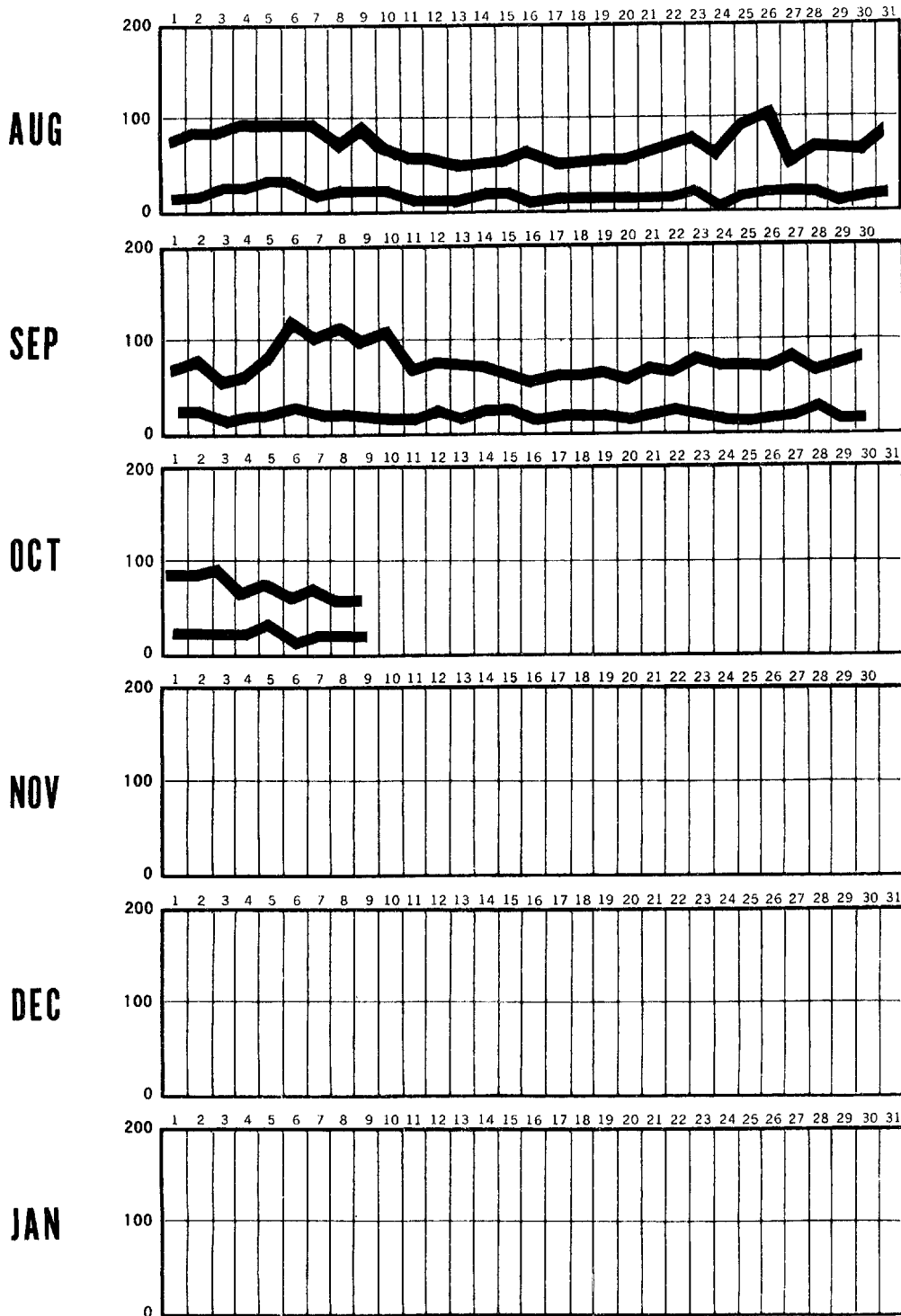
(28 JANUARY THROUGH 31 JULY 1973)





CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(1 AUGUST 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



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ANNEX B

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North Vietnamese
Personnel to the South

1. Regular combat infiltration groups continued to be detected moving south during the past week. Six regular groups (5072, 5074, 5080, 5082, 5083, and 5084), all destined for southern Laos/MR 559, were observed entering the pipeline at Binh Tram 8 in the Vinh area between 3 and 9 October, while a seventh group--5081--was detected farther south in the infiltration system. Since the step-up in combat infiltration occurred in mid-September, fourteen battalion-sized groups have been detected at the top of the pipeline in North Vietnam, eleven of which bore designators in the 5xxx series.* The detection of the seven new groups and the inclusion in our estimate of one other undetected groups which also is believed to have started south result in a total increase of more than 4,000 troops. One special-purpose group, also destined for southern Laos/MR 559, was observed at Vinh during the reporting period. In addition, five other small groups, consisting of high-ranking cadre, probably have now started toward southern Laos. These groups were initially reported in North Vietnam several weeks ago, but were not scheduled to depart until 9 October.

2. Since 1 September, more than 12,000 troops are estimated to have started southward from North Vietnam--a level greater than during the comparable period a year ago. Two-thirds of these troops, however, are destined for the southern Laos/MR 559 area. The exact disposition of these 8,000 personnel is unknown, but with the extension of MR 559's area of operation well into South Vietnam, at least some of them probably will not stay in southern Laos.

*In addition to the eleven detected groups, there is a gap of seven 5xxx series groups (with some 3,500 men) which probably have been scheduled for infiltration to the south but which have not yet been detected entering the system.

3. Table 1, below, shows infiltration starts, including specialists, from North Vietnam since 1 January 1973. Table 2 compares the infiltration of combat troops, by destination, since 1 September 1973 with the comparable period a year ago.

Table 1

Number of Personnel Entering the Pipeline
Destined for South Vietnam, Southern
Laos, and Cambodia Since 1 January 1973

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Special-Purpose</u>
January	20,000	1,600
February	10,200	2,100
March	3,250	2,250
April	1,925	1,200
May	7,175	300
June	2,200	700
July	3,650	600
August	2,200	700
September	7,000	0
October 1-9	5,100	100

Table 2

Comparative Starts by Combat Troops From
North Vietnam, by Destination
1 September - 9 October*

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>
Total	<u>8,500</u>	<u>12,000</u>
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	7,000	2,000
MR 5	1,500	2,000
B-3 Front	0	0
COSVN	0	0
Southern Laos/MR 559	0	8,000

* This table covers the infiltration of North Vietnamese troops to South Vietnam, Cambodia, and southern Laos. Infiltrators moving to northern Laos are not included.

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