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THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ROLE IN THE ORIGIN,
DIRECTION, AND SUPPORT OF THE WAR
IN SOUTH VIETNAM

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PREFACE

This study sets forth the evidence as reflected primarily in captured Vietnamese Communist documents and in the interrogations of Communist defectors and prisoners of war showing the extent and depth of Hanoi's role in originating, directing, and supporting the present conflict in South Vietnam.

During the past two years, the number of enemy documents captured by allied forces in the course of operations against Communist headquarters and bases in South Vietnam has greatly increased. The number of prisoners and defectors from Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units has also grown substantially and the resulting interrogations have provided considerable information substantiating and supplementing that in the documents.

[With the use of] these sources, it is now ^{made it} possible to reconstruct the North Vietnamese role in the war with greater detail. Hanoi's strategy between the 1954 Geneva Agreements and the 1959 decision to launch a full-scale military effort against the Saigon government, for example, can be depicted reasonably well, even though the evidence -- based primarily on captured documents, the public statements of Vietnamese Communist leaders, and reports from the U.S. mission in Saigon -- is still indirect and fragmentary.

The evidence of Hanoi's control and direction of the war after 1960 is more direct since it is now based not only on a substantial number of captured enemy documents, but also on the statements of numerous prisoners and defectors. In so far as Hanoi's physical support of the war in the form of men and material infiltrated to South Vietnam, the evidence for the period from 1960 to 1963 is now very substantial and makes an incontrovertible intelligence case. The evidence has mounted to massive proportions for the years after 1963, as Hanoi poured men and arms into the South. We believe the case for these years is so strong as to be unassailable, [even among the general public.]

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SUMMARY

Hanoi's Role in the Origin of the Present War

It is clear, as described in the first sections of this study, that Hanoi's role in the current war has its roots in the Viet Minh fight against the French.

The end of the war against France brought a shift in the tactics ordered by Hanoi in South Vietnam, but occasioned no change in the degree of North Vietnamese control of the insurgent apparatus or in the aim of the Communist Party to complete the "unfinished revolution" in the South. Certain key Communist leaders and several thousand cadre were left behind to form the nucleus for the renewal of the "struggle." Directives from the North initially ordered the stay-behinds to use "political" action, i.e., everything short of armed action, to guarantee the carrying out of the countrywide elections envisaged under the Geneva Agreements.

did not appear viable

Hanoi's policy in 1955, was probably dictated by ^{the} belief that it was following the one easiest and least costly road to gain control of the South. The [viability of the] southern government of Ngo Dinh Diem ~~appeared~~ exceedingly precarious. Even if it should survive, Hanoi had everything to gain in going ahead with the proposed national elections. After extensive purges, Hanoi's own organs of control were strong enough to ensure that the overwhelming majority of the people in the North, who numbered some three million more than the populace in the South, would vote as dictated by the Communists. In Ho Chi Minh, moreover, Hanoi had a national hero who would probably have gained more votes in South Vietnam than any rival candidate.

The government of Ngo Dinh Diem, however, demonstrated considerable resurgence and refused to comply with Hanoi's demands for elections, basing its refusal in part on the evidence that the North Vietnamese would not allow proper international supervision of the voting in the North. While opposing the elections, Diem was able to bring some order out of the postwar chaos in the South and to assert the authority of his own government. His efforts to extend his writ were frequently heavy-handed and in time contributed to growing discontent in both rural and urban areas.

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During this early period, however, some of the Communist Party leaders in the South began to fear that Hanoi's policy of political opposition to Diem was doomed to failure. By the end of 1955, these southern leaders, including Le Duan, estimated that their position was declining vis-a-vis the government. (Diem's efforts to break up the Party apparatus in the South [redacted] were having considerable success.)

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Le Duan and his followers subsequently set forth the thesis that "heavy military pressure" should be brought to bear against Diem. Hanoi apparently agreed, however, only to a small-scale increase in armed harassment and Le Duan continued to push for the inauguration of a full military campaign against Diem. Although the strategy debate continued for the next two years, half measures [of] both [a] military and political nature were being applied by the Communists against Diem.

In early 1959, at a Central Committee meeting in Hanoi, the initiation of an allout military and political campaign to bring Diem down was finally authorized by the Party leaders. It is worth noting that, at the time this decision was made, there were relatively few American military personnel in South Vietnam. It was not until 1961 that the U.S. [changed its basic policy and] sent a significant number of advisors to assist the South Vietnamese Army. By that time, Hanoi's decision to open a full-scale military effort in the South was nearly two years old, and the Diem government was in dire need of outside assistance as a result of Viet Cong military pressure [aided and directed from North Vietnam].

Hanoi's Role in the Control and Direction of the War

The first major political move by Hanoi in support of the developing insurgency was the establishment of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam -- a decision probably taken at the Central Committee meeting in early 1959. Although the public birth of this organization was apparently two years in the making, as Hanoi probably waited for the insurgency to buildup [background] momentum in the South, it was a very logical step for the North Vietnamese who have persistently operated behind the facade of front movements in Indochina starting with the old Viet Minh league during and after World War II.

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Hanoi apparently hoped to use the NFLSV as a cover for all facets of Viet Cong activity in South Vietnam, military as well as political, and to support its claim that the insurgency was an indigenous phenomenon. Shortly after the Front was formed, it announced that all insurgent forces had been organized into a "Liberation Army" under the NFLSV. Behind the scene, nevertheless, Front activities were tightly controlled by the Communists. Several documents have been captured which describe in considerable detail the role of the party in organizing, training, and indoctrinating the IAF. Other documents describe the party control of the political appendages of the Front. The overt leadership of this organization, moreover, is demonstrably a collection of men with long histories of association with Communist causes and organs in North and South Vietnam.

In the effort, probably, to give the Communists an open and explicable voice in the NFLSV, Hanoi created an ostensibly independent Communist party in the South in 1962 -- the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP). However, captured documents and the testimony of prisoners have confirmed that the PRP is nothing more than a cover name for the Lao Dong or Communist Party apparatus in the South. There is evidence in captured documents, too, that Hanoi took considerable pains to conceal the rôle of the Northern party authorities in the South, warning against the revelation of any material connecting Hanoi with the insurgent operations.

The influx of rank and file North Vietnamese soldiers during the last three years has been accompanied by a heavy input of North Vietnamese officers at all command echelons in Viet Cong regular units. Prisoners and documents strongly suggest that at least one-third of all officers at the battalion level or above in Viet Cong regular units north of Saigon are infiltrators from North Vietnam. Similar sources have revealed that the overall insurgent apparatus is now controlled at the top level by high North Vietnamese military officers, including politburo member Nguyen Chi Thanh, and senior generals Tran Van Tra, and Tran Do. It is probable also that North Vietnamese generals Hoang Van Thai and Chu Huy man are also directing military operations in the South.

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A series of documents captured during the past year has provided evidence confirming that the central committee and the politburo in Hanoi still set down the strategic and the overall tactical guidelines for the war upon which the detailed directives and instructions to the rank and file are based. These documents show that the strategy used by the insurgents in the South during much of 1966, at least, was based on the resolution adopted at the secret 12th conclave of the Hanoi central committee held in late 1965.

Hanoi's Role in the Support of the War

Even before the Party Central Committee meeting in 1959, Hanoi had begun to lay the groundwork for logistical support of the military insurgency in the South. A supply route through the Laotian panhandle to feed manpower South was organized beginning in 1958. This operation was expanded in 1959, and an extensive seaborne infiltration apparatus was also set up. Active preparations for the training of large numbers of infiltrators to take cadre and command positions in Viet Cong units also began in the North during this period. These men were drawn primarily from the physically fit southerners who had been regrouped to the North after service with the Viet Minh. Many of them had remained in active military service in the North, receiving extensive and disciplined training.

By 1961, the infiltration operation from the North had moved into high gear. The entry of over 8,600 men into the South by the end of the year has subsequently been confirmed by the statements of several prisoners or defectors from each infiltrating group and by the notations of captured Communist documents. There is persuasive, but less substantial information, indicating the entry of over 2,200 more men during this period. This input formed an important component of the Communist regular military force structure in South Vietnam which was estimated at that time at around 25,000 men.



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[Study of] interrogation reports show that the vast majority of the infiltrators were well-trained officers or senior non-commissioned officers and that they took leading positions within the insurgent military structure. At least 50 percent of them probably were members of the Communist Party.

In the early years through 1963, the Viet Cong forces equipped themselves largely through the capture of weapons from ARVN units and outposts and from caches of old French and U.S. weapons left behind when the Viet Minh regrouped North. By 1961, however, evidence of Hanoi's support showed up on the battlefields in the South in the form of factory re-worked French rifles. They had been refitted to handle the Communist 7.62 round of ammunition. This was followed in 1962-1963 by the appearance of Chinese Communist submachineguns and carbines, which had been channeled to the insurgents largely through North Vietnam.

The infiltration of at least 10,000 men from the North between 1962 and January 1964 has been confirmed by rigorous military standards. (?) Evidence is available indicating that at least 10,000 others probably came south during this period. The total enemy regular force strength in the South by early 1964 ranged between 30,000 and 40,000. Thus, the infiltrators continued to constitute a major share of the Communist military strength. (This was only the beginning, however, because Hanoi, sensing victory, [had] authorized a major stepup in assistance to the South.)

Ethnic North Vietnamese soldiers, followed by organic North Vietnamese army units began to move South during 1964 in substantial numbers. The North Vietnamese decision to inaugurate a quantum jump in support of the southern war effort, it should be noted, was taken and partially implemented well prior to the appearance of US combat troops in South Vietnam in February 1965.

The overall effect of the introduction of North Vietnamese

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regulars during 1964 and 1965 was an increase of 12 regiments or 32 maneuver battalions in the combined Viet Cong - North Vietnamese force structure in the south. This force structure expanded from 29 battalions in 1964 to 98 battalions in 1965-- northern battalions numbered 32. In the first six months of 1965, this influx of northern units enabled the Communist forces to force the South Vietnamese Army to commit the last of its general reserve of fighting forces to static defense positions, and to *It also enabled* establish more extensive Communist control throughout many areas of northern South Vietnam.

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By late 1965, Hanoi's input of manpower and material was so extensive and important to the war effort in the south that Hanoi, in a secret Central Committee resolution could state, "... that the North Vietnamese main forces are the organic mobile forces of South Vietnam," i.e., the backbone of the insurgent war effort in the south. Infiltration continued during 1966, and the direct violation of the Demilitarized Zone by entire North Vietnamese combat units was initiated. The ratio of infiltrators to indigenous personnel continued to increase, despite heavy casualties and the expansion of the southern units. Modern infantry assault weapons and mortars now make up the major portion of the Communist arsenal. By mid-1966, Communist roadbuilding efforts in the Laos Panhandle had extended the original roadnet to about 700 miles, crossing the border into South Vietnam. Hundreds of trucks are now estimated to be using these roads to ferry supplies south.

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The situation in South Vietnam presently is developing in a direction which tends to make the insurgent war effort more and more dependent on North Vietnamese aid. A survey of the population available to the enemy in Communist-controlled areas and in areas under no particular control in South Vietnam indicates that sufficient draft age males are available to supply an average of some 7,000 men

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a month to the Communist military. Captured prisoners and documents, however, indicate that recruitment goals are not being met from within the south and that northerners are being relied on more and more to provide replacements for Viet Cong units as well as complete combat elements.

The Viet Cong, moreover, are dependent on Hanoi for all of the modern arms and munitions that are becoming standard equipment in Communist regular units operating in the south. It appears, in fact, that continuation of the present levels of combat or an increase in the intensity of combat would be predicated almost entirely upon Hanoi's willingness to supply manpower and materiel.

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II. CONTROL AND DIRECTION OF THE WAR AFTER 1960

Hanoi's support of the insurgency in the South expanded rapidly after 1960. The North was not only the external base for direct military and logistic support to the developing conflict as described in Chapter III, but was also the fountainhead for the expanded political apparatus of the Viet Cong, namely, the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) -- the southern subsidiary of the Lao Dong Party -- and the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NFLSV). The Front was established by the Vietnamese Communists and has remained tightly controlled by the Communist Party, initially under the traditional party apparatus in the South, and later under the cover of the PRP. The chronological process in the establishment of the Front and the PRP, together with their interlocking links, is described below.

The National Liberation Front

In his speech to the 1960 Party Congress, Le Duan declared that "we" must "help create" "a broad national united front" in South Vietnam with the "worker-peasant alliance" - - i.e., the Communist Party -- "as its basis."⁵⁸ Other speeches and documents at the Congress imply that Hanoi was, at the time, already issuing orders behind the scene for the Front's formation. Such phrases as "This



Front must rally..."; "The Front must carry out..." were used in discussing the impending organization.

We now have reason to believe that the decision to launch a new front organization had been made in Hanoi well before the Party Congress, and that Le Duan's statement and others on the Front at the Congress were probably designed mainly to prepare the rank and file of the party and the populace for the new structure. A prisoner of war, for example, has recounted a lecture given in North Vietnam by General Nguyen Van Vinh, chief of the party "Reunification Committee," in which Vinh stated that the 15th Resolution of the Party's Second Central Committee adopted in early 1959 had included a directive to "organize a National Liberation Front under the leadership of the Central Office" with the mission of conducting a "political struggle backed by an armed struggle."⁵⁹ Other Communist prisoners have also testified that the "Party" established the National Liberation Front.⁶⁰

The formation of the NFLSV was a logical step for Hanoi, since the Communists in Indochina have persistently operated under the cover of a large "front" movement. While resisting the Japanese during World War II, Ho and his comrades functioned behind the facade of the old Viet Minh league. In 1946, they formed the Lien





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Viet, or Vietnam United Front, to conceal Communist direction of war against France. When the focus shifted to South Vietnam after the French War, the North Vietnamese organized the Vietnam Fatherland Front to garner support for "reunification" with the South. This organization, headquartered in North Vietnam, had little success in luring public backing in the South, and thus Hanoi sought to build a new front organization, ostensibly independent and based in the South, with more appeal to the South Vietnamese populace. The North Vietnamese also hoped that the new front, which quickly began to operate in some foreign countries, would serve to bolster the international prestige of the insurgents.

The theory underlying the Communist front movement in Vietnam has been to establish very broad, general objectives which can be accepted by the majority of people, and then to attempt the enlistment of support from every section of the population in an all-embracing political organization. This theory is implicit in the North Vietnamese treatise on revolution in Vietnam, People's War, People's Army, written by Hanoi's minister of defense, Vo Nguyen Giap,^D and in the earlier work, quoted above by Truong Chinh.^E

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The first public announcement of the formation of the NFLSV was made by the insurgents in the South on 20 December 1960. In order,



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apparently, to sustain the fiction that the NFLSV was the product of an indigenous band of patriots in the South, Hanoi itself gave no publicity to the new organization until January 1961. Later that month, a Hanoi radio broadcast first aired the Front's ten-point political program -- a procedure suggestive of Hanoi's guiding hand in the formation of the organization. On 11 February, Hanoi again broadcast the program using a text which contained significant changes. These changes eliminated material the NVN, apparently on second thought, believed would tend to undercut potential support for the new organization in South Vietnam. Some passages which suggested Communist origin or objectives were altered or deleted. The term "agrarian reform," for example, was dropped. Vicious and bloody excesses earlier carried out under this slogan in North Vietnam had caused widespread revulsion in the South.

Partly because the Front program concentrated on the political aims of the insurgency, and also because early Front propaganda primarily stressed the political activities of the NFLSV, the impression was created that Hanoi intended the new organization to serve mainly as the overt "political arm" of the Viet Cong. In fact, Hanoi intended that the NFLSV provide a facade covering all facets of Viet Cong activity in South Vietnam, military as well

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as political.⁶¹ Shortly after the Front's formation, for example, it was publicly announced that all the insurgent forces had been organized into the "Liberation Army of South Vietnam" under the leadership of the NFLSV. Today, the Communists attempt to carry out as much insurgent activity as possible in the name of the Front.

No precise estimates are possible on the number of South Vietnamese who have been enrolled by the Communists in the Front, or who should be considered NFLSV members because of occasional participation in the activities of some Front organ. Current estimates, based on fragmentary figures in captured documents, place the number of Front members and active sympathizers at between 700,000 and 800,000. Probably over eighty percent of these are residents of rural areas where the Viet Cong are in firm control or the government presence is very shaky. It should be noted, however, that a substantial portion of the followers living in contested and GVN-controlled areas, as well as a significant number of those participating from Communist-dominated areas, are individuals who are not necessarily attracted to Communist goals in South Vietnam, but who have developed grievances of one sort or another against the Saigon government and who see alliance with the Front as the best means of opposing government policy. These are the people the Communist, using the Front, are avidly seeking to attract.

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Behind the scenes Front activities are tightly controlled by the Communists. Several enemy documents have been captured, for example, which describe in considerable detail the role of the Communist Party in organizing and directing the Liberation Army (LAF). A training bulletin of the LAF obtained in Vinh Long Province in 1964 discusses in full the "birth, nature, methods, and tasks" of the Army for the benefit of military cadre.⁶² Following are some of the statements from the document.

--"Since 1959...the Party has pushed the people to arm themselves...and has sparked a fiery revolution."

--"The Party has guided the Liberation Army in successive stages...in fighting and organization."

--"The Party directly led the Liberation Army and organized the three Branches." (i.e., regular, local, and guerrilla forces)

--"The Party set up political cells...committees and the political action system in the Liberation Army."

--"The Party indoctrinated and trained the Liberation Army unceasingly."

As to the goals of the Liberation Army -- ostensibly a "nationalist" group according to NFLSV progaganda -- the document, probably written in 1962, has the following to say.

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--"Immediate goal: Overthrow My-Diem (the U.S. and the Diem government in South Vietnam), bring about peace... preparatory to peaceful unification of the country."

--"Long term goal: extermination of the depredatory classes... ultimately a socialist, Communist state."

The document notes finally that, "when one refers to the organization of the Army, one has to concern oneself with the organization of the Party."

A copy of the Communist high command's "Regulations for the Party Committee System in the South Vietnam Liberation Army" was captured in III Corps in March 1966.⁶³ It leads off by noting that the "Liberation Army" is "an instrument for the Party" to "liberate" South Vietnam. "Therefore various Party committee echelons" from the village to the top authorities in the South "are responsible for the leadership in every field of various armed and paramilitary forces placed under their supervision." The document goes on to detail the responsibilities for operations and coordination of the Party committees at each level in guiding the LAF.

Communist control of the Front also extends comprehensively through its political sections. This is indicated both by captured documents and by prisoner statements. A Communist captured in 1962,

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for example, disclosed that "Front committee leadership at all echelons included a number of Party representatives who directed the implementation of the missions assigned to the committees."⁶⁴ He added that, "while in theory" the Front committee in his area "assumed the directing role for the zone's military, political, economic, cultural and social affairs, in reality it did not enjoy very much authority. Its principal activity was that of conducting overt propaganda campaigns among the masses."

A document captured in 1963 described the commanding party role in the affairs of the Front in the Saigon area.⁶⁵ It said that the "Front is a national organization under Party leadership" established for the purpose of uniting together all elements opposed to the Government of South Vietnam. Party members, it state, "should be thoroughly acquainted with the Front" and should carry out the "activities of the Front" in such fields as propaganda proselytism.

Perhaps the most accurate statement on the reality of the National

Liberation Front was offered by [REDACTED]

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"once South Vietnam has been liberated, the NFLSV will suffer the same fate as the Viet Minh did in North Vietnam after independence was

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gained from the French. The Front will atrophy and quickly disappear." The Communist Party, he indicated, would be the only survivor of all the Front organs and appendages.⁶⁶

The People's Revolutionary Party (PRP)

Over a year after the Front was formed, Hanoi decided to give the party apparatus in the South the appearance of independence by ostensibly setting it up as a new party, following the tactics applied in 1951 with the Indochinese Communist Party and the Lao Dong Party. In January 1962, Hanoi radio announced that a conference of "Marxist-Leninist" delegates had formed the PRP after a meeting in South Vietnam.⁶⁷ The conference decided that "workers, peasants, and laborers in South Vietnam need a vanguard group" to serve as a "thoroughly revolutionary party." The PRP, according to the broadcast, had "volunteered" to join the National Liberation Front.

Despite the efforts of the Vietnamese Communists to portray the PRP in public as an independent entity, they have readily admitted in private that the organization is nothing more than a cover name for the existing Lao Dong Party. A Communist document captured in 1962, for example, contained instructions from a provincial party in the South to district committees concerning the PRP.⁶⁸ "In regard to the founding" of the PRP, it said, its creation "is only

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a matter of strategy." In order to "deceive the enemy," it was necessary that the new organ be given the appearance of a "division of the Lao Dong Party into two and the founding of a new party." Actually, said the document, "our party is nothing but the Lao Dong Party of Vietnam, unified from North to South, under the direction of the Central Executive Committee of the Party, the chief of which is President Ho." The tactic was very similar to that used when the Vietnamese Communist Party publicly reemerged in 1951.

A 1966 party directive captured in the delta told cadre the correct party line to take during the annual celebration of the founding of the Indochinese Communist Party.⁶⁹ It stated that "on this occasion, the masses who have good sympathy towards the Party should be well informed that the Lao Dong Party and the People's Revolutionary Party are one party headed by the Central Committee with Chairman Ho at the head." The same point was made by the [REDACTED] described above, who had belonged to the party for a number of years. "The Lao Dong and the PRP are one and the same organism," he stated. When North and South Vietnam are united to form one country, "the PRP and the Lao Dong will emerge into the open as one party...under Ho's authority." Other captured party members in South Vietnam have also described the Lao Dong and PRP as identical.

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The organization of the PRP was clearly an effort by Hanoi to further the propaganda image of the insurgency in the South as an indigenous patriotic movement. It also permitted the Communists to gain an open and readily explicable voice in the NFLSV. Front conferences attended by affiliated non-Communist organizations in the Front, for example, could be more easily manipulated through the use of the PRP operating openly at the meetings. There is good evidence that Hanoi wished to avoid, in so far as possible, the connection of NVN with the insurgency in the South, when it was necessary for party spokesman to issue orders or to control the actions of non-Communist sympathizers. A Communist directive captured in 1965, for example, stated that a party unit had recently made a "true copy" of a message signed by Pham Ngoc Thac -- now Hanoi's minister of health -- which bore the line at the top: "Ministry of Public Health, Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the Civilian Medical Section of South Vietnam." The directive called on the party unit to avoid such disclosures in the future and to disguise the origin of directives received from the North and passed on in the South.⁷⁰

Similar deceptive practices to cover the NVN role were also called for in another document from a provincial PRP chapter to lower levels written in April 1966.⁷¹ This document noted that "recently, the

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Liberation news agency and radio referred much to Uncle Ho, party leadership, etc." Such propaganda is "not appropriate," said the document, which added that the "Central Party Committee" directed instead that the "role of the National Liberation Front" should be "praised." Party flags and portraits of Ho, it further stated, could "only be hung in conferences held by party chapters." The "Front flag and portrait of Nguyen Huu Tho" (Chairman of the NFLSV) should be hung at other conferences.

The Organization of the Control Lines from Hanoi

Through the analysis of prisoner statements and captured enemy documents, it is possible to reconstruct the organizational apparatus set up by Hanoi to control the insurgency in South Vietnam. ^(see Figure) This is a wiring diagram of the insurgency, so to speak. The mechanism includes a party control channel and direct military control over some NVA units by the military high command in Hanoi.

The primary control link, and the one to which all others are ultimately subordinate, runs from the policy-making Central Committee and Politburo in the Lao Dong Party in Hanoi to its top echelon in the South -- the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary

Party. According to



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[redacted] the PRP's Central Committee is made up of some 30 to 40 high-ranking Communists.⁷² The size and the composition of the committee, which may include representatives from lower echelons, varies from time to time as individuals rotate to and from the North and or within the regions within South Vietnam. Within this committee, the real decision-making power resides in a select group of its highest ranking members, a standing committee commonly known as the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN).

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COSVN corresponds to a regional party secretariat in Communist organizational structure, and the highest ranking member of this elite group is the local party secretary. Since early 1965, this position has reportedly been held by North Vietnamese Senior General Nguyen Chi Thanh. As the highest southern command of the Communist military and political apparatus, COSVN has two major subdivisions -- a Military Affairs Committee (MAC) and a Current Affairs Committee (CAC). The MAC directs the Viet Cong military effort through two subordinate organizations -- a Chief of the General Staff, and a Political Department of the Army. Beginning in 1965 and perhaps even earlier, COSVN has been heavily weighted with prominent North Vietnamese general officers.

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The MAC provides the general policy direction for Viet Cong military affairs; however, the NVA military high command in Hanoi has increasingly assumed direct control over some of the military operations in the northern provinces of South Vietnam, particularly since the introduction of entire North Vietnamese Army units beginning in late 1964.

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[REDACTED] Hanoi, between mid-1965 and 1966, detached two subregions from COSVN's MR V and placed them under its own direct control.⁷³

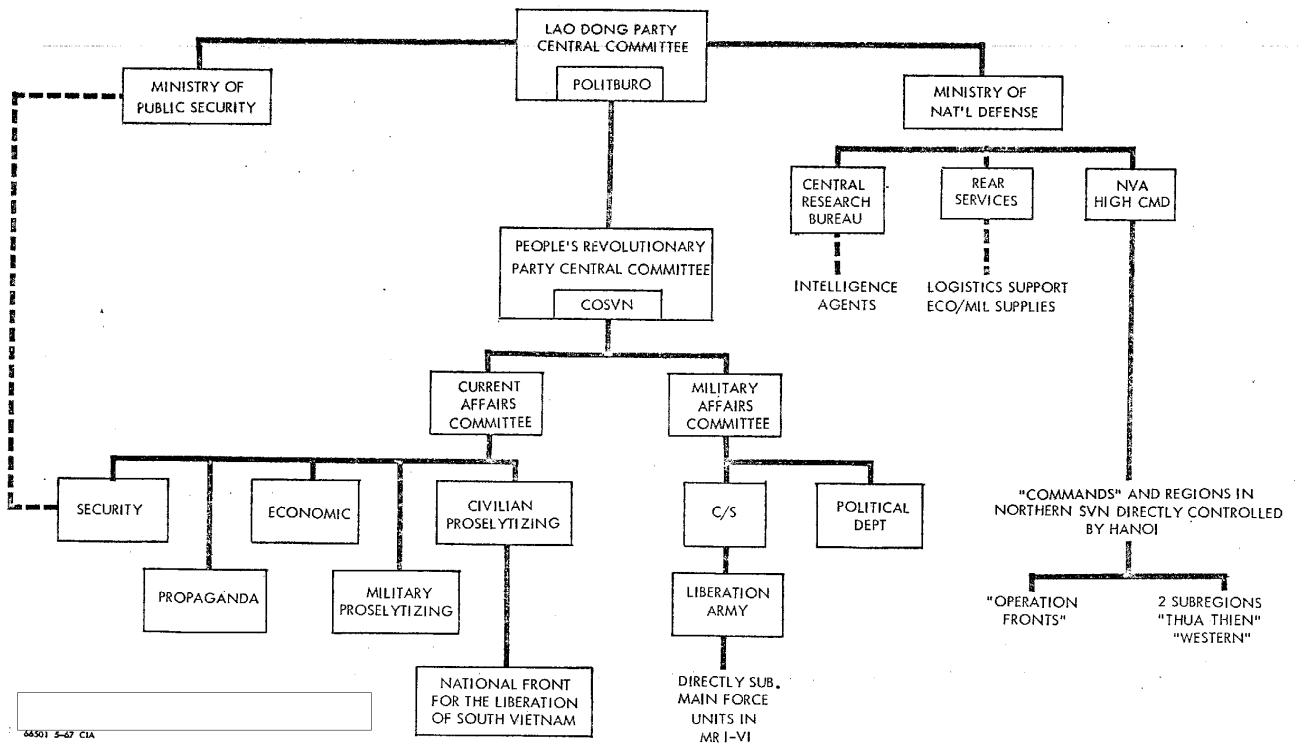
North Vietnam, he said, also exercised operational control over certain division-level elements in these two subregions and in the demilitarized zone (DMZ). The existence of special Hanoi control channels into MR V has now been noted by a large number of captured North Vietnamese Army soldiers from the area.

The second major COSVN subdivision, the Current Affairs Committee, controls the political and administrative apparatus of the insurgency. It has never been possible to identify precisely the CAC's Communist leaders, since they use pseudonyms and code names extensively. It functions through some ten internal subdivisions which encompass social and economic support activities as well as security, communications, and proselytism. Knowledgeable defectors report that it is

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this "civilian proselytizing" department which provides the main organizational channel between the Communist hierarchy and the Liberation Front.⁷⁴ The highest publicly identified PRP member, Vo Chi Cong, is [redacted] head of the CAC's civilian proselytizing department, and apparently, is the party man chiefly responsible for directing the Liberation Front.

Regional and Local PRP Organization

Under COSVN, the PRP is organized into zonal or regional, interprovincial, provincial, district, and village committees. (There are numerous captured documents and prisoner interrogations now available which describe the lower echelon organizations of the PRP.)⁷⁵ There are special zonal-level committees for Saigon and possibly other cities. These regional and local committees follow the COSVN structure and operate similarly, serving ultimately as the bridge between COSVN and the village. For example, the regional committee consists of the heads of its military and political sections plus the provincial committee leaders under its jurisdiction. The provincial committees are similarly organized. Judging from captured documents, the party structure seems quite well fleshed out at higher levels, but neither village nor district committees exist universally, particularly in NVN-controlled or in disputed territory.

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One of the most important functions of the regional committees is to oversee activities by military units under their aegis and to build up local and main force units. Although the number and types of units under their control vary considerably, regional committees usually supervise regiments, provinces supervise battalions, and districts supervise independent companies. One COSVN directive spelled out the lines of party control over the military for party organizations below COSVN.⁷⁶ The regional committee would set up a Military Committee formed of members of the regional Current Affairs Committee and other personnel, perhaps drawn from the military units as well as associated party committees. The committee was to follow orders from the COSVN Military Affairs Committee in cooperation with regional political authorities. Coordination with nonmilitary organizations for military operations was to be done through the regional Current Affairs Committee itself -- another method of insuring complete party control.

In the countryside, the party chapter or cell (chi bo) is the basic organizational unit of the PRP. It is composed of no fewer than three persons. A village committee is usually formed from the membership of local party chapters. The size of the village committee apparently varies with the number of chapters it controls. Its

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function organization and duties will also vary considerably, in large measure depending on the degree of Viet Cong control or influence in the local area. In theory, the fully developed village committee will be a miniature of the district committee organization. The village party committee, with main power vested in its Executive Committee, develops and supervises all party and "popular" i.e., (NFLSV) organizations and, when feasible, the administrative organizations in the village.

Party chapters operate clandestinely in villages under the control of the government of Vietnam and attempt to organize secret youth, peasant, and women's organizations in the name of the NFLSV. These organizations seek to involve their participants in anti-government activities, both to undercut governmental control and to build an organization of persons responsive to PRP direction who have been compromised or feel genuinely committed to the Viet Cong cause.

The Overt Viet Cong Leadership

In order to support their assertions that the insurgents represent many shades of popular opposition to the Saigon government, the Vietnamese Communists studied the ostensible leadership of the NFLSV with a number of "progressive" South Vietnamese who could not be

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positively identified as card-carrying Communists. These men were to run the day-to-day activities of the Front's public administrative apparatus, while remaining fully pliable to hard-core Communist direction in the background. The objective was to give the Front the appearance of broad representation among workers, religious orders, soldiers, farmers, and intellectuals in South Vietnam. The Viet Cong also attempted to select persons who would add prestige to the NFLSV and who would be capable of winning active public support.

It appears that the Communists had a good deal of difficulty in securing enough suitable personnel for all of the top public posts in the Front. Although the first NFLSV Central Committee announced in March 1962 reserved places for 52 members, it contained only 31 names, most of them unknowns even in South Vietnam.⁷⁷ The second Central Committee, announced in January 1964, had only 41 members.⁷⁸ Of the 31 who had served on the first committee, only about half retained their posts, suggesting that a number of the original appointees proved incapable of fulfilling their duties. Despite Hanoi's efforts to conceal the Communist domination of the Front, a number of those chosen to fill the top public posts in the NFLSV have known Communist associations.

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Most of the top NFLSV leaders are known to have long histories of cooperation with Viet Minh. The chairman of the NFLSV "Central Committee" and the Front's major public spokesman, Nguyen Huu Tho, is a lawyer who has been involved in pro-Communist agitation in Vietnam since the late 1940's. In 1949, for example, Tho was identified as the editor of a clandestine, Viet Minh-supported newspaper in Saigon. He was also active in inciting the rioting in Saigon in 1950 when U.S. warships visited the city. [redacted]

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[redacted] has labeled Tho "a straw man," with "no real power."⁷⁹

Nguyen Van Hieu, the first secretary general of the Front, was a leftist journalist who had spent most of his career propagandizing in favor of the Communists and North Vietnam. In 1948, for example, he worked in Saigon for Giai Phong (Liberation), the clandestine propaganda organ of the Communist Lien Viet Front. After the Geneva settlement in 1954, Hieu apparently concentrated on propaganda activities in behalf of the Viet Minh in educational and literary circles. A 1955 report listed him as active in the training of Viet Minh cadres for the Saigon area. He was arrested by the South Vietnamese government in 1958 for pro-Communist activities, and released a year later. He apparently moved to a jungle base of the insurgents at that time. In 1963, Hieu relinquished the post of Front secretary general and

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went to Prague where he directed the NFLSV's activities in Europe until he was recalled to Vietnam in May 1966. Hieu terms himself a socialist and is chairman of one of the "socialist" parties affiliated with the Front.

Huynh Tan Phat, the present secretary general of the NFLSV, has long been under North Vietnamese tutelage. A native of the South, he was active in the Saigon area during most of his revolutionary career, which began during his student days in the 1930's. In 1944, he was a founding member of the Democratic Party. This organization, set up under the covert leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party as part of the Viet Minh, is still extant as a component of Hanoi's Fatherland Front. In 1947, after a term in French jails, Phat began to be identified directly as a leader in various Viet Minh organizations in the South, mainly as a propaganda official. He was reported present at several meetings attended by Le Duan and other top Communist leaders in the South. He may be a secret Communist.

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Tran Buu Khiem, the head of the Front's "Foreign Affairs Commission," is reported [REDACTED] to have been a former chief of security of the Communist apparatus in South Vietnam. He made a short visit to North Vietnam in 1949, probably for training in insurgent operations. In 1954, he apparently went to North Vietnam for several years, returning

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to the South with the first waves of infiltrators around 1960. Before his emergence as a Front leader, reportedly, he was in charge of the organization of paramilitary forces in the Saigon area. It is very likely that Tran Buu Khiem is a secret Communist.

Vo Chi Cong, one of the vice chairmen of the Front Central Committee, is even more closely linked with the top Communist leaders in the South. A number of Viet Cong defectors and prisoners have identified Cong as a key figure in the leadership of the party command in the South. He is usually pinpointed as an official responsible for the civilian proselytizing activities of the party. The details of Cong's background are shadowy, although he is known to have been active in Communist front causes since the 1930's and in Viet Minh activities since 1945.

Tran Nam Trung, the name used by another high-ranking member of the Front, is actually the alias of a top Communist leader in the South.⁸⁰ Knowledgeable Viet Cong prisoners and defectors during the past several years have consistently identified Tran Nam Trung as Lieutenant General ^R Tan Van Tra, who, as noted earlier in this study, has been active as ^A a top Communist military commander in the South during much of the period since the war against the French. Tra is an alternate member of the Lao Dong Central Committee in Hanoi. He has not appeared in

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the North since October 1963 when he apparently reinfiltreated the South. ^{He} ~~and~~ is now said to be deputy commander of the insurgent armed forces in the southern section of South Vietnam. It is interesting that Tra, alias Trung, does not travel abroad or give interviews as do some other prominent Front leaders like Nguyen Van Hieu. To do so would doubtless reveal Trung's true identity.

Officers from the North

Aside from the formal mechanism of control exercised through the chain of command from Hanoi, a more extensive and far reaching informal control at all levels has been achieved by Hanoi with the infusion of a large number of North Vietnamese officers into most command levels in the Communist organization in the South. At present, North Vietnamese officers have been detected at all levels in the provinces north of the Saigon area. In the densely populated provinces south of Saigon, the Communist forces have been able to rely almost entirely on local cadre and officers. Parts of this area have been virtually unchallenged Communist preserves since the Viet Minh era, and the party's political and military apparatus is particularly well entrenched.

A January 1966 document, giving detailed personal history statements of key personnel on the military staff of Communist Military

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Region I (MR I), comprising eight provinces northeast and northwest of Saigon, lists 47 officers and senior noncommissioned officers who had been selected to attend a party meeting.⁸¹ Some 30 of the officers listed, ranging from the chief of staff through the heads, deputies, and assistants in such departments as artillery, personnel, and signal service, infiltrated South Vietnam between 1961 and 1965. Seven of those listed, all holding very high posts in the regional command, were born in North Vietnam. Several had arrived in the South in 1961. Dang Huu Thua, for example, who was born in Nam Dinh Province in the North and had been a party member since 1948, was chief of the regional operations and training staff. He had held many military positions in the South with the Viet Minh, had regrouped to the North after the French War and served with the NVA 330th Division before coming South again in 1961. He had been involved in training operations in MR I since that time. Another captured document, which described the party chapter in the training section of MR I, strongly suggests that all the battalion commanders in the section and many of the company commanders were infiltrators and party members in 1965-66.⁸²

We know [REDACTED] the Viet Cong 165A Regiment, an important military unit which operates in the districts around Saigon, that at least 8 of the 20 top officers

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at the battalion level in this regiment were infiltrators from North Vietnam as of 1965. Two of them were battalion commanders.⁸³ Statements by defectors and prisoners who served with other Communist units outside the Mekong River delta indicate that this is not an usually high percentage. Probably at least one-third of the top leadership at battalion level in the regular Viet Cong units is composed of regroupees and ethnic North Vietnamese who have infiltrated from the North.

Captured prisoners and documents have also revealed that control of the top leadership of the Communist military apparatus in the South is in the hands of individuals from the highest political and military echelons in Hanoi. The presence of North Vietnamese General Tran Van Tra in the South at various times dating back to the French War has been described in a previous section. Several defectors in a position to know have indicated that he is still in the South at the COSVN headquarters where he holds the job of deputy military commander.⁸⁴ During the past year, several high-level prisoners and defectors have identified the top Communist leader in the South as General Nguyen Chi Thanh, one of two men holding the rank of "Senior General" in the North Vietnamese armed forces. He arrived in South Vietnam in early 1965, after dropping out of sight in North Vietnam

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in late 1964. Recently, a film was captured in the vicinity of COSVN headquarters in South Vietnam which depicted General Thanh in his role as commander of the insurgent forces. Instruction documents bearing Thanh's name have also been captured in the South.⁸⁵

Among the other top North Vietnamese military commanders in the South mentioned by defectors and PWs is Lieutenant General Tran Do, an alternate member of the Lao Dong Central Committee in Hanoi.⁸⁶ He is reported to be at COSVN headquarters as a top political commissar in the insurgent armed forces. North Vietnamese officers who have defected in the I Corps Area indicate that top regional commands in the northern part of South Vietnam are held by General Hoang Van Thai, a deputy chief of staff in the North Vietnamese Army who has not appeared in Hanoi since March 1966 and by Chu Huy Man, a major general in the North Vietnamese Army and a full member of the party's Central Committee.

Hoang Van Thai apparently has as his deputy, General Nguyen Don, who is also an alternate member of the party's Central Committee. Don has been repeatedly identified over the past several years as one of the top commanders in the northern part of South Vietnam.⁸⁷

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Continuing Directives from the North

A series of documents captured during the last year has provided additional evidence to show that the Central Committee and the Politburo in Hanoi are still setting down the strategic and overall tactical guidelines on the war. These decisions are then disseminated to the rank and file, either in directives sent South or in instructions fashioned by the southern party command. Among the most revealing of the recently captured documents is the complete text of the letter over the signature of the Lao Dong Party First Secretary Le Duan, which was transmitted to the southern command and reproduced in early 1966 for lower echelons in the South.⁸⁸

The letter offers a detailed analysis of the South Vietnamese war situation. It was pegged to the secret 12th Conference of the Lao Dong Party's third Central Committee, which apparently took place late in December 1965, and to the important resolution -- designated Resolution 12 by the Communists -- passed by the Committee. Perhaps the most striking statement in the letter -- one indicative of where the Vietnamese Communist authority for decisions on war and peace resides -- is Le Duan's assertion that the "whole central headquarters has unanimously entrusted to the Politburo" the task of starting political discussions on the war "whenever necessary."

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After noting that the war situation in South Vietnam had been discussed by the "Politburo and the central headquarters," Le Duan recapitulated the events since 1963 in South Vietnam and the various Central Committee directives guiding the insurgents during that period. Before the buildup of U.S. forces in the South, he stated, "we were very close to final victory." Resolution 12, he indicated, set forth the proper response to the U.S. buildup.

It called for continued protraction of the war using both guerrilla and large-unit tactics, but with emphasis on gaining victory in the shortest possible time by the concentration of main force units for offensive action. Resolution 12 had been adopted, it should be noted, after U.S. combat troops were beginning to inflict drastic losses on the Communist regular forces in the South. Some voices in the Communist high command, other evidence indicates, were questioning whether the Communists could successfully conduct massed attacks against the American units.⁸⁹ These authorities preferred a more defensive posture by the regular forces and greater concentration on guerrilla tactics in order to tie down and sap U.S. offensive strength. The Central Committee, however, decided in favor of continuing the use of concentrated tactics.

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Another document, containing a summary of Resolution 12, indicated that the Central Committee hoped to accomplish its strategy by continued large-scale introduction of North Vietnamese troops and their use as the main mobile striking force in South Vietnam.⁹⁰ This document, produced in southern North Vietnam in April 1966, but captured in South Vietnam, cited Resolution 12 as the basic authority for the proper line on such tasks as the indoctrination and recruitment of party members. Other captured documents indicate that Resolution 12 was widely disseminated throughout the ranks in both North and South Vietnam, and that it provided the basis for specific tactical instructions to the troops by Communist leaders in the South. A 16 May letter from an unidentified military division in the North to party youth in the division, for example, stated that "led by our Party and instructed by Resolution 12," we have a "sacred appeal" urging us to "infiltrate into South Vietnam to fight."⁹¹ A document captured in the same area on 16 May contains a several page appeal for an "emulation" movement to defeat U.S. and South Vietnamese forces in "execution of the Resolution of the 12th Conference of the Central Committee." [REDACTED]

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Resolution 12 also provided the basic text for a series of speeches delivered by North Vietnamese military leaders in April and May 1966. For example, a notebook belonging to a COSVN-level cadre which contained

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records of a briefing by a man named Vinh -- possibly Nguyen Van Vinh, a deputy chief of staff of the NVA -- was captured in February 1967. The briefing presented a thorough exposition of Hanoi attitudes, expectations, and intentions regarding the war, citing as its source of inspiration the resolutions of the Lao Dong Central Committee in Hanoi.⁹² Vinh reportedly admitted that there was a considerable discussion of the proper tactics in meeting the U.S. buildup in the South, but indicated that the Central Committee and the Politburo in Hanoi had resolved the situation and decided on the necessary response. It is possible at some point, according to the notes, that "the North will conduct negotiations while the South continues fighting, or that the South may also participate in negotiations while continuing to fight." However, the situation "is not yet ripe for negotiations." Deciding when it is, is "a task entrusted by the Party Central Committee to the Politburo," again an affirmation that final policy on the war resides with the very top levels in Hanoi.

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III. HANOI'S ROLE IN THE SUPPORT OF THE PRESENT WAR
IN SOUTH VIETNAM



III. HANOI'S ROLE IN THE SUPPORT OF THE PRESENT WAR
IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Early Support Activities in the North 1959-1963

Even before the early 1959 decision by Hanoi to expand the military effort in South Vietnam, the North Vietnamese had taken a number of steps to lay the groundwork for the infiltration of men and supplies. After the decision, more extensive machinery for the support of infiltration by land and by sea was authorized. Infiltration routes were laid out, training centers were established and an orderly dispatching of infiltration groups was begun. Modern weapons were introduced during the latter part of this period and the level of military combat in the South increased markedly. By the end of 1963, the input of manpower and supplies from the North was already forming an important component of the Communist regular military structure in South Vietnam.

The Establishment of Land and Sea Infiltration Routes

Although there is evidence that North Vietnam never ceased sending agents, couriers, and individual cadre into the South after 1954, it was in 1958 that Hanoi took the initial steps to organize the movement of men and supplies through Laos and across the



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demilitarized zone (DMZ) into a coordinated and continuing effort. A captured Communist party member has revealed that North Vietnam was training mountain tribesmen native to Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces for infiltration support work in early 1958 at a school in the southern section of North Vietnam.⁹³ The tribesmen were taught how to establish and operate "secret" bases in the mountain region of Laos and South Vietnam. In March 1959, the prisoner and several other Communist cadres left on their first mission to establish such bases and to organize local units to help operate the installations. The prisoner made several such trips before his capture. He also checked on the status of previously established bases and participated in the construction of barracks-type installations in the forest which were to serve as future encampments for infiltrating troops.

Several other Communist prisoners have revealed that they were selected by the North Vietnamese authorities in early 1959 to participate in the organization of "special border-crossing teams" operating across the DMZ into Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces.⁹⁴ According to the prisoners, the teams were used to transport drugs, food, and other necessities to insurgent groups in the South.

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More extensive machinery for the support of infiltration by land and sea was authorized and established by Hanoi shortly after the 15th Resolution had been approved by the Central Committee. In April 1959, according to a Communist prisoner who participated in the work. "the Party Central Committee ordered" the formation of the "559th Transportation Group" to "support the depleted Vietnamese Communist bases in the Vietnam."⁹⁵ This organization took its designation from the date of its founding, 5 May 1959. According to the source, the "group was directly under the Party Central Committee and in close liaison with the Ministry of Security, the NVA General Staff and the Logistics Bureau."

One major subdivision of the 559th Group, according to another Communist prisoner assigned to the organization, was the "70th Battalion" set up in 1959 in North Vietnam and sent to the Laotian Panhandle as a field unit. This unit "received weapons, ammunition, mail and supplies from Hanoi" and transported them to "where they were turned over to the agency in charge of supplies" for the insurgents.⁹⁶ Another function of the 70th Battalion, according to this source, was to "escort units infiltrating from North Vietnam into South Vietnam" and to transport sick and wounded personnel from Thua Thien Province back to North Vietnam.

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Both of these organizations are still in operation in greatly expanded form. Numerous captives have described their assignment to the units for work in connection with infiltration.⁹⁷ These prisoners indicate that the transport groups organized by Hanoi were capable even in the early period of channeling substantial assistance to the Communists in South Vietnam.

Hanoi also established an extensive seaborne infiltration apparatus beginning in 1959. A number of Communist sources have described the 603d Battalion, formed in June of that year, as the basic unit for clandestine maritime operations into South Vietnam.⁹⁸ Cadre for this organization were drawn from North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units. The 603d Battalion was under the command of the NVA General Staff and was in effect a "regular NVA military unit." It was based initially near North Vietnam's Quang Khe naval base, but soon expanded to other ports. Over 250 men comprised the battalion when it was first organized. By December 1959, according to one prisoner's account, the 603d Battalion had 11 "infiltration cells" each supported by one battalion operating from several locations along the North Vietnamese coast. Over the next several years, the 603d Battalion continued to expand its operations and facilities. A prisoner captured in 1961 had taken part in 11 maritime infiltration missions to the South since 1959.

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Training for Infiltration

Apace with the establishment of the logistic apparatus, active preparations also began in North Vietnam for the training and infiltration of large numbers of personnel to assume cadre and command positions in the insurgent military units. By January 1960, a major training center for infiltrators was in operation by the NVA at a military base in Son Tay, northwest of Hanoi.⁹⁹ Instruction was given on a variety of military and political subjects useful to personnel operating in South Vietnam.

Other infiltration training operations meanwhile, were simultaneously under development as Hanoi geared to support the developing conflict in the South. The NVA 324th Division was ordered to begin the training of infiltrators in early 1960 in Nghe An Province.¹⁰⁰ This division subsequently trained a very large number of composite groups and integral military units for infiltration. The famous Xuan Mai Infiltration Training Center was also set up during this period southwest of Hanoi in the former barracks of the NVA 338th Brigade.¹⁰¹ A large number of captured infiltrators have described this school which, by 1961, appears to have been able to handle several 1,000-man classes at one time.¹⁰²





The Infiltration of Men and Supplies

With an understanding of the military and political structure of the North Vietnamese apparatus described in Section II, the real significance of the more than 18,000 persons confirmed by intelligence as having infiltrated into South Vietnam between 1959 and 1963 comes into focus. In addition to the rigid military standards employed to "confirm" the infiltration of the 18,000 men, a process which requires at least two prisoners, returnees, or documents from each group, there is substantial, but less complete, information from captured prisoners and documents indicating that at least 12,500 other infiltrators also moved south between 1959 and 1963.¹⁰³

Until late 1963, these infiltrators were virtually all ethnic southerners drawn from the pool of regrouped Viet Minh forces and supporters taken north after the Geneva cease-fire in 1954. According to Communist sources, the southern regroupees in large part were retained in military units in North Vietnam after the French-Indochina War, an indication that Hanoi was even then laying the groundwork for their redeployment south should the need arise.¹⁰⁴ They were formed into the 305th, 324th, 325th, 330th, and 338th Divisions of the North Vietnamese Army. From 1955 to 1959, these divisions were reported



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to be composed entirely of South Vietnamese.¹⁰⁵ Thus, most of the infiltrated southerners had already received extensive, disciplined military training for several years in North Vietnam prior to their movement south.

In 1959, after its decision to expand the insurgency in the South, Hanoi began to introduce northern-born soldiers into the divisions in North Vietnam composed of southern regroupees in order to replace the southerners sent south. According to one source, northern personnel in these divisions had increased to 50 percent by 1960 -- an indication of the substantial preparations Hanoi was making for infiltration.¹⁰⁶

From the interrogation of numerous captured infiltrators, it has been possible to ascertain the identity and composition of many of the groups and units sent south and thus to determine the overall parameters of the infiltration operation.¹⁰⁷ The entry of at least 26 groups of infiltrators comprising some 4,500 personnel in 1959 and 1960 has been confirmed by the interrogation of two or more captured personnel from each group. Captured prisoners and documents have also provided information on the movement of some 75 groups into South Vietnam during 1961.¹⁰⁸ The entry of over 4,100 men in these groups has been confirmed by the statements of two or more prisoners

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from each group. By the end of 1961, therefore, the infiltration of over 8,600 men from North Vietnam can be accepted as confirmed. There is, moreover, substantial, but less complete information from captured prisoners and documents, that some 2,200 other infiltrators also moved south between 1959 and 1961.

Between 1962 and January 1964, the infiltration of over 10,000 cadre and officers from North to South Vietnam has been confirmed by the testimony of numerous prisoners and captured documents. Less extensive, but persuasive evidence of the same type, is available on the infiltration of at least 10,000 other personnel from the North during this period.¹⁰⁹ This was a major increment to the strength of the Communist forces already present in the South.

The numerical aspect of infiltration from the North, moreover, is only one element of the picture. Analysis of prisoner interrogation reports shows that the overwhelming majority of the infiltrators through 1963 were well-trained officers or senior noncommissioned officers who were placed in leading positions within the Communist structure in South Vietnam, commanding all types of military elements from regimental echelons down to the squad level and carrying out a wide range of political assignments. They thus formed the core, in many respects, of the insurgent regular military and political

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apparatus and supplied much of the drive and continuity necessary for its growth into a formidable organization. The documents and prisoner interrogations of this period also strongly suggest that at least 50 percent of the infiltrators through 1961, although southerners by birth, were members of the Lao Dong Communist Party.¹¹⁰

One captured prisoner who attended an infiltration course at Son Tay, North Vietnam, in January 1960, in a class of 60, was sent south with his group in March.¹¹¹ All members of his group were experienced officers of NCOs who took leading positions in insurgent units when they arrived in the South. One became a company commander of a Viet Cong unit in Quang Ngai; another became political commissar of a battalion in the same province; another was deputy commander of the same battalion. Thus, Hanoi with veteran personnel retained in the North, was expanding its control over the insurgent units in the South apace with the growth of the insurgent forces.

At the end of 1960, the strength of the Communist main and local military forces in the South was estimated at just over 5,000, or 10 battalions. By January 1964, these forces had been expanded to over 34,000 troops formed into 29 battalions.¹¹² Local recruitment and the inducement of Viet Minh veterans in the South to return to the cause no doubt accounted for many of these newly formed units.

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The exact impact of the more than 18,000 infiltrators confirmed during this period cannot be quantified; however, considering the quality of the cadre who came south, it is certain that the input of manpower from the North was already forming an important component of the Communist structure in South Vietnam.

In the early years through 1961, the Viet Cong forces equipped themselves largely through the capture of weapons from ARVN units and outposts and from caches of old French and U.S. weapons left behind when the Viet Minh regrouped North. Local manufacture of crude hand guns and rifles also supplemented their needs. In 1961, however, Hanoi became more actively involved in Viet Cong supply needs. Modified versions of the French Mat-49 rifle began to appear on the battlefield. The chamber had been reworked to use the standard Communist 7.62 round of ammunition -- a technique requiring factory tooling that the Viet Cong were unable to do themselves judging from the smooth-bore locally made guns in use at that time and later. Chinese Communist weapons began to show up in 1962-1963 with the K-50 submachinegun and the Chinese "Red Stock" carbine among the first models to be captured. These weapons, we know from captured prisoners, were being channeled to the Viet Cong through North Vietnam. Each infiltrator usually brought at least one weapon with him, and crew-served arms were also moved in.

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By the end of 1963, approximately seven percent of the total captured weapons in South Vietnam were of Chinese Communist origin. The Viet Cong arsenal was approximately 80 percent composed of U.S. and French weapons which had been cached at the end of the Indochina War. The remainder were homemade guns.¹¹³

Expansion of Hanoi's Support 1964-1965

Optimism in Hanoi was definitely warranted in 1964. The government of Ngo Dinh Diem had fallen in November 1963, and political instability in Saigon was deepening as 1964 wore on. The grim political situation was accompanied by declining effectiveness in the army and the disintegration of the rural hamlet program inaugurated under Diem. In short, the Communists had reason to believe that they were well on their way to victory in South Vietnam, and they made a decision to push for final success by a major step-up in the supply of manpower and materiel to the South.

This step up eventually far outstripped the magnitude of the earlier effort. There was a shift in emphasis in infiltration characterized by the dispatch both of ethnic northerners in great numbers and of entire North Vietnamese regular army battalions and regiments.

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It is probable that the decision to inaugurate a further major increase in assistance from the North was at least tentatively made at the 9th session of the third Central Committee in December 1963 which, a captured document states, "assessed the balance of forces between us and the enemy and set forth plans and guidelines to win the special war."¹¹⁴ We know that Hanoi convened a "special political conference" in March 1964 to publicize the "new tasks" of the North to the populace. At the March conference, Ho Chi Minh called on "every person" in the North to "work as hard as two in order to compensate for our brethern in the South." Party leaders asserted that the war in the South was moving very favorably for the insurgents. "Our people," they said, "are currently engaged in a continuous attack " The "political crisis" in Saigon is becoming more severe and the "political authority" of the government is "steadily declining."¹¹⁵

It is worth noting that the North Vietnamese decision to inaugurate a quantum jump in support of the war effort was taken and partially implemented well prior to the appearance of U.S. combat troops in South Vietnam in February of 1965. A North Vietnamese soldier who infiltrated in late 1964 said his superiors told him in the North before infiltration that "the South is now in a situation of turmoil

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and fever. Southerners are longing for the help of NVA soldiers to unify the country quickly."¹¹⁶ rd?

Infiltration: A Shift in Emphasis

The decision to use ethnic Northern cadre rather than regrouped southerners for the big push was to some extent forced on Hanoi by the depletion of its pool of physically-fit regroupees. Many of those in fighting trim during the French War were no longer up to the rigors of the trek south and the subsequent campaigning. Analysis of PW statements and captured documents indicates that at least 50 percent of the infiltrators during 1964 were natives of North Vietnam. Many of these men were draftees, and it appears that Hanoi intended them for cannon-fodder in southern units, in contrast to the well-trained cadre sent south in earlier years.

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[redacted] was captured in Thua Thien Province.¹¹⁷ He was a native of [redacted] North Vietnam. After service in the North Vietnamese Army, he came south in May 1964 with a group of 90 North Vietnamese draftees. Another prisoner from a Viet Cong regiment which operated in Quang Ngai Province stated that native North Vietnamese troops began to reinforce his unit in the early part of 1964. The first batch consisted of some 80 replacements.¹¹⁸

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During the first six months of 1964, Hanoi's efforts to supply manpower to the forces in the South continued along previous lines with more than a thousand men a month coming south. However, at least some elements of the North Vietnamese Army regular units began preparation for infiltration as early as April 1964.¹¹⁹

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[Redacted] reported that his unit was recalled from duty in Laos to North Vietnam in April to begin preparations for the move south.¹²⁰

In August 1964, the first entirely North Vietnamese tactical unit the 808th Battalion, left the North. It arrived in South Vietnam in November to take its place as an integral northern tactical unit fighting side-by-side with southern forces.¹²¹ This deployment was followed in the fall of the year by the movement of the first elements of the North Vietnamese 325th Division. The 95th Regiment of the division arrived in South Vietnam in December 1964; the 101st Regiment in February 1965; and the 18th Regiment in April 1965. Numerous captured prisoners have described the infiltration training of these units of the 325th Division, their trek South, and the retention in NVN of cadre personnel to form the core of new 325th Division regiments who would be sent south in a new cycle of infiltration by the division in the fall of 1965.

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Typical of the captured prisoners from this first cycle of infiltration was [Redacted] in the 95th Regiment of the 325th Division.¹²² He was captured [Redacted] in Phu Bon Province. Born in [Redacted] North Vietnam, he was drafted into the 325th Division [Redacted]. He served first with his regiment in the northern Laotian Panhandle assisting the Pathet Lao in maintaining control over this key area. In April 1964, [Redacted] his regiment was ordered to leave Laos and return to North Vietnam "for preparation to infiltrate the South." In November 1964, the 95th Regiment began to move South after several months of special training on military and political tactics to be used in South Vietnam. Its infiltrating strength was about 2,000 men, the vast bulk of whom were ethnic North Vietnamese. Throughout early 1965, the regiment participated in several devastating attacks on the government's regular army units in the vicinity of Route 19 in Phu Bon Province in South Vietnam.

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Next to arrive in South Vietnam was the 101st Regiment which entered South Vietnam in February 1965 at a strength of around 2,000.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] about 10

percent of the regiment's rank and file soldiers were party members.

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[Redacted]

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[redacted]

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Another 70 percent, however, belonged to the party youth group, which is routinely the first step into party membership for young cadre. The party youth are a highly indoctrinated, well-motivated and disciplined element of the populace in North Vietnam, highly sympathetic with Hanoi's objectives. [redacted] the mission of the 101st Regiment was to "liberate the areas along National Route 14 in Kontum Province and occupy ARVN posts."¹²³

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The final regiment of the 325th Division to arrive in the first cycle of infiltration was the 18th Regiment which entered the South in April 1965 with an estimated strength of 2,000 men. According to [redacted] a captive from the unit who was drafted into the army [redacted], the unit left the North in February and arrived in April in Kontum Province. This source was wounded in an attack on government post in Binh Dinh Province in January 1966 and was captured after the battle.¹²⁴

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Following the arrival of the three regiments of the 325th Division -- which numbered about 6,000 men -- additional service units to support them were prepared for infiltration. These included a transportation battalions as well as medical, security, signal, and engineer companies.

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According to [redacted]

[redacted] these units began their infiltration in March 1965 and arrived in South Vietnam in June.¹²⁵

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[redacted]

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[REDACTED]

In addition to readying regular line units of the North Vietnamese Army for infiltration in the spring of 1964, Hanoi also formed separate regimental-sized units specifically for dispatch to the South. One of these, the 32d Regiment, was activated sometime in the spring of 1964.¹²⁶ Its personnel were drawn from various North Vietnamese Army units. Draftees who received their training at Son Tay and Xuan Mai were also added to the 32d Regiment. The regiment began its infiltration in the fall of 1964, and all three battalions had arrived in South Vietnam by March 1965.

In July 1965, four more line regiments of the North Vietnamese Army were readied and sent south. According to a number of prisoners, the 22d Regiment and the 250th Regiment, each composed of about 2,000 men, left North Vietnam,¹²⁷⁻¹²⁸ They were followed by the 33d and the 66th North Vietnamese Army Regiments.¹²⁹⁻¹³⁰ All four of these regiments deployed to the northern portions of South Vietnam, adding about 6,500 troops to the force structure.

Later in 1965, four additional regiments were readied and sent South to augment the force structure in the northern half of South Vietnam. The 6th NVA Regiment was formed out of one Viet Cong battalion and two North Vietnamese battalions.¹³¹ The 21st NVA Regiment departed the North in August and arrived in Quang Tin Province in December,¹³² and the first two rebuilt regiments of the

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[REDACTED]

original 325th Division, the 18B and 95B, began their treks south in December 1965, arriving in Phu Yen and Kontum provinces in February and March 1966. ⁽¹³³⁻¹³⁴⁾

The overall effect of the infiltration of regular North Vietnamese Army units during 1964 and 1965 was an addition to 12 regiments with approximately 32 battalions to the combined North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong force structure. ¹³⁵ The overall combined Communist military force structure in South Vietnam expanded from 29 battalions in early 1964 to 98 battalions in late 1965. At the end of 1965, the total main and local force structure, including those in North Vietnamese regular units, numbered some 84,000 troops. North Vietnamese regulars in organic units, such as the regiments of the 325th Division, accounted for more than 26,000 of these.

From a tactical standpoint, Hanoi apparently planned from the start to use the infiltrated NVA units as a mobile and flexible reserve, capable of contributing strongly to the classic concentration of forces relied on by the Communists before major attacks. By dint of their mobility, discipline, and military prowess the regular North Vietnamese Army units would help the Communists pose threats in widely separated areas of South Vietnam. The overall enemy strategy for 1964 appeared to focus on conducting widespread attacks which would force ARVN to thin out its general reserve of mobile forces in striving to

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meet the assaults. The great bulk of ARVN troops were tied down on security missions throughout the country, and the general reserve was the only remaining flexible reaction force. By mounting large and widespread attacks during 1964, Communist forces managed to whipsaw the ARVN general reserve force from one end of the country to the other, each time reducing its fighting effectiveness.

By the fall of 1964, the Communists succeeded in forcing ARVN to commit the last of its general reserve to security roles in the Quang Ngai area. In December, the Communist apparently decided to move in for the kill, setting the stage for the Binh Gia battle which marked the opening of the third phase of the war, a campaign of maneuver with multi-regimental operations.

Communist forces maintained their pressure throughout the country during early 1965 with four battalion-size attacks through the end of February. In March, however, with the arrival of the first regiments of the 325th Division in the Central Highlands, the Communists shifted their emphasis to this area, and began a fierce campaign.

During March and April, the first elements of the North Vietnamese units clashed with ARVN. The 101st NVA Regiment engaged an ARVN ranger battalion northwest of Kontum City in Kontum Province, and the 18th and 95th NVA Regiments, deployed in Binh Dinh Province, conducted major actions against the ARVN near Qui Khon in April.

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In May, two Viet Cong regiments clashed with two ARVN battalions at Ba Gia in Quang Ngai Province, and the 32d NVA Regiment seized the outpost at Duc Co and overran the district town as well as effectively seizing control of Route 19 from Pleiku to the Cambodia border. In May, at Dong Xoai, the Viet Cong had laid out the battlefield so well that they completely decimated an ARVN battalion in less than 30 minutes. This battle was followed by another multi-regimental operation at Song Be which was fought to a standoff with both sides receiving heavy casualties. In early June, the 95th NVA Regiment surrounded and badly mauled an ARVN airborne task force in Phu Bon Province. In August, the 101st NVA Regiment ranged through Kontum Province overrunning Tou Moroung District headquarters and seizing control of Route 14. The outcome of this fierce six months of fighting was that the Communist forces managed to establish effective control over the border area with Laos, the terminal point for the infiltration corridors. To all intents and purposes, they held overall control of the Central Highlands. It was the massive introduction of regular North Vietnamese Army units which enabled them to do it.¹³⁶



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Hanoi's Support as a Mainstay - 1966-1967

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By early 1966, the input of both manpower and material from North Vietnam was so extensive and important to the war effort in the south that Hanoi [REDACTED] could already state that "the North Vietnamese main forces are the organic mobile forces of South Vietnam" -- i.e., the backbone of the insurgent war effort in the South.¹³⁷ By mid-1966 Communist roadbuilding efforts in the Laos panhandle, which began in 1964, had extended the original roadnet to about 700 miles and it now approached the borders of South Vietnam.¹³⁸ Hundreds of trucks are now estimated to be using these roads to ferry supplies south. Infiltration continued to climb during 1966, and the direct violation of the Demilitarized Zone by entire North Vietnamese combat units was initiated. The ratio of infiltrators to indigenous personnel continued to increase, despite heavy casualties and the expansion of the southern units. In addition, modern infantry assault weapons and mortars introduced in large numbers since 1964 now make up portion of the combined North Vietnamese and Viet Cong arsenal.

Laos: Backbone of Hanoi's Logistics Effort

With the eastern portions of the Laos panhandle securely under Communist control, Hanoi as early as 1964 decided to augment its labyrinth of paths and trails used for infiltration of personnel by

[REDACTED]

initiating an extensive roadbuilding program which would facilitate trucking supplies to South Vietnam. At that time the motorable roads from the Laos-North Vietnam border at the Mu Gia Pass, south to the vicinity of Muong Nong in Laos, measured approximately 180 miles. A sizeable contingent of several North Vietnamese army units were deployed there to oversee the development of this roadnet.¹³⁹ The scope of this effort, which was not to become fully evident until 1966, indicates the scale of Hanoi's planning in 1964. They foresaw the need not only for a sizeable increase in manpower but also for the need to establish an adequate channel to supply these forces in increased levels of combat. The net result of the Communist roadbuilding effort in Laos since 1964 has been the extension of the existing roads more than 440 miles further south -- right across the borders into South Vietnam. From here, supplies which are trucked deep into the Laotian panhandle are transferred to pack animals or human porters which fan out into the wilderness and cross into Communist supply areas in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam.

This expansion of the roadnet indicates an ever increasing dependence on truck transport for logistic support. Judging from aerial photography and pilot sightings, it is estimated by intelligence authorities that over 300 trucks are operating on the infiltration routes in Laos alone, delivering at least 35-40 net tons of supplies each day of the dry season

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to the South Vietnamese border area.

The Impact of Infiltration on the Force Structure

The Central Committee in Hanoi in late 1965 reaffirmed its earlier decision to send organic North Vietnamese units to the South and called for their continued introduction.

A total of seven additional regiments were confirmed by intelligence as infiltrating south in early 1966. In January, three regiments were drawn from various regular line units in the north. The 141st Regiment of the 312th Division deployed south through Laos to Phouc Long Province near the Cambodian border.¹⁴⁰ The 24th Regiment of the 304th Division left its garrison area with 2,000 men and moved to Kontum Province,¹⁴¹ while the 88th Regiment of the 308th Division, also with 2,000 men, moved to Pleiku Province.¹⁴²

In February and March 1966, Hanoi dispatched four more regular army units through Laos. The 3rd Regiment, 1,500 men strong, went to Quang Tin Province.¹⁴³ The 52nd Regiment, with 2,000 men deployed to the southern portion of South Vietnam.¹⁴⁴ In March, 1600 men of the 165th Regiment also departed for the same area of South Vietnam.¹⁴⁵

The 84th Artillery Regiment which was a composite unit drawn from two separate North Vietnamese outfits -- the 68th Artillery Regiment and the 351st Division -- also left in March arriving in South Vietnam

[REDACTED]

in August.¹⁴⁶ This apparently completed the buildup of regular units Hanoi had planned, for the time being, to introduce via the Laos corridors.

In May and June, Hanoi began moving units directly across the Demilitarized Zone into the northern section of Quang Tri province. Three regiments of the North Vietnamese 324th Division, the 812th, the 90th and the 803rd were in place south of the DMZ by July.¹⁴⁷

Subsequently, battalion elements of the NVA 341st Division also moved south across the DMZ. Although the 324th and the other units which came across the DMZ suffered heavy casualties in encounters with allied forces from July through October, sizeable elements of these divisions are again operating in Quang Tri province after regroupment and replacement in southern North Vietnam. They pose part of the extensive Communist military threat now evident in northern South Vietnam. During 1966, in addition to the regiments described above, the infiltration of 37 other groups of infiltrators, totalling over 24,000 men was confirmed by the capture of two or more prisoners. Many of these were sent to indigenous Viet Cong units as replacements upon their arrival in the South.

There is sufficient evidence available to indicate that another 112 groups of infiltrators containing over 37,000 men came south during this same period. Total infiltration reported during 1966



thus amounted to over 78,000 men.

The ratio of North Vietnamese to indigenous Viet Cong battalions rose considerably during 1966.¹⁴⁸ At the end of 1965 there were 66 Viet Cong battalions and 32 North Vietnamese battalions operating in the south. The northern units then comprised about 32% of the overall Communist battalion strength. By the end of 1966, however, the number of regular North Vietnamese battalions had more than doubled over the previous year with 67 battalions in the south. The Viet Cong's force had expanded to 81 battalions during the year. Thus, in one year, Northern units had expanded to approximately 45% of the overall number of 148 Communist maneuver battalions, a fact which testifies to the growing predominance of the northern units and the increasing dependence of the southern Communist forces on Hanoi in order to continue the overall expansion of their military apparatus.

The extent of this dependence cannot be precisely quantified since the exact indigenous manpower resources available to the Communists in South Vietnam, the rate at which they can commit this manpower and their exact combat losses are unknown. The number of Communist troops killed in action is both the most important and the least reliable statistical measure used to assess the military progress of the war. The figure is subject to error because of duplications, omissions, possibly inflated body counts, and the frequent inability to



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pinpoint non-military battle casualties. These problems arise from highly mobile combat situations and the physical impossibility of accurately counting the dead in a hostile environment. The problems are compounded by Viet Cong practices of engaging impressed civilian labor as porters on the battlefield. The number of bodies buried in caves, tunnels or under debris cannot be assessed, nor can we estimate the deaths caused by aerial strikes and artillery attacks, where no follow-up ground action is taken.

According to the best information available, more than 165,000 Communist troops have been reported killed in action since 1959.¹⁵¹ With some 100,000 of the losses inflicted since 1963. In 1966, over 55,000 were killed in action. Many of these were irregular troops, however, and the losses cannot be applied directly to the Communist regular forces. On the other hand, these figures do not include enemy wounded in action nor those captured or lost to the Communist force structure through desertion or sickness. Still, however, the Communists were able to match these losses and even expand their force structure considerably during 1966. We know, however, that they did it largely by dint of the additional North Vietnamese regular units and replacements sent to the South, since the casualties absorbed by the Viet Cong have begun to put a strain on their ability to mobilize additional manpower from the local populace in

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South Vietnam. There is no way to accurately determine exactly how many men are conscripted or recruited. In 1966, one of the manpower under Viet Cong control (when considered in the light of the amount of territory either directly controlled by the Viet Cong or under no control), indicated that the male population base was adequate to support a theoretical recruitment or conscription levy of approximately 7,000 men per month this and, from what limited evidence is available on the subject, it presently appears that the Communists are having difficulties meeting such levies. There are captured documents which indicate that the increasing requirement for manpower during 1965 had already forced the VC to resort to monetary inducements and to forced conscription and returnee programs to obtain local recruits. During 1966, the manpower requirements increased even more, and the growing seriousness of the problem was reflected in many other captured documents and captive statements.

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One particularly knowledgeable source on the subject of recruitment was



He

stated that his division was short one regiment because of the lack of recruits from the area. He further complained of the quality of the recruits that were able to enlist or conscript stating that the



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regular Communist Party cadre had trouble keeping them disciplined under fire as many were under 16 years of age.

The presence of North Vietnamese in large numbers in the South has apparently become so well known among the rural populace in the Viet Cong affected areas by 1966, that the insurgent command found it necessary to provide an official explanation. In a captured document containing propaganda instructions for "questions raised by the public," insurgent cadre are told to admit that "North Vietnam is a large and stable rear area for South Vietnam and is providing us everything we need, including soldiers".¹⁵³ The southern insurgent command had also, by 1966, issued instructions for the correct treatment of ethnic North Vietnamese replacement personnel sent south to fill up insurgent units. According to a captured document issued by a division-level military authority in the South, "recruits from North Vietnam" have been assigned to South Vietnam "to liberate this part of the country."¹⁵⁴ The majority of them are "proud of their job," but many have had a hard journey getting to the South and should be given considerate treatment, the document stated. Military personnel were instructed in the document to "absolutely avoid friction . . . disrespect . . . and division" between South Vietnamese and North Vietnamese.

While it is too early to say that the Viet Cong are entirely

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dependent on Hanoi for the supply of manpower -- the only war-making commodity that on the surface appears plentiful in the south -- the growing number of North Vietnamese regular units and replacements in Viet Cong units indicates a definite trend in that direction. It might be concluded that if the Viet Cong wished to maintain the present levels of combat indefinitely or increase the intensity of the fighting with the hope of achieving a quick victory, their actions would be predicted almost entirely on the extent of Hanoi's willingness to supply the manpower.

The Viet Cong Arsenal as a Measure of Dependence of Hanoi

The Communists in the South with Hanoi's help, have armed their men in the years since 1964, with the latest automatic weapons from the Communist World.¹⁴⁹ By late 1964, the "new family" of Communist weapons which all chamber a short 7.62 round of ammunition appeared in large numbers in Viet Cong units. This new assortment of weapons included the Soviet AK-47 assault rifle, the SKS carbine, and the RPD light machine-gun. The term family is used because all of these weapons fire the short 7.62-mm cartridge model 1943.

In addition to small arms, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army units are now supplied with a variety of Soviet and Chinese machine-guns, mortars and rocket launchers. The Soviet 7.62-mm heavy

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machine-gun (SGM/SG-43) and the Soviet 12.7-mm heavy machine-gun (DSHK 38/46) are both in wide use. The 40-mm grenade launcher and the 60-mm, 82-mm, and 120-mm mortars are now in the hands of both VC and NVA units. The 57-mm and 75-mm recoilless rifles have also become commonly used weapons by the enemy. The Soviet 140-mm rocket launcher has come into use in recent months.

The percentage of weapons captured since 1963, shows the steady increase in the use of Chinese and Soviet manufactured arms.¹⁵⁰ In 1963, only 8 percent of the captured weapons were of Chinese or Soviet manufacture. In 1964, 17 percent of the captured weapons were from China or the Soviet Union and in 1965, the percentage rose to 24. Another rise was noted in 1966, to 33 percent, and presently, the weapons captured from Viet Cong main and irregular forces contain 41 percent Soviet and Chinese weapons, reflecting the degree of support required from Hanoi.

This percentage can be expected to rise even higher as the Communists attempt to simplify spare parts and ammunition resupply problems. Modern Communist arms have even trickled down to the local guerilla forces which, traditionally, are the poorest equipped elements of the Communist forces in the South. French, US and homemade versions still make up the bulk of local arsenals; however, the French arms are holdovers from the Indochina War and their use is decreasing

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rapidly because of loss, lack of spare parts and general deterioration. The smooth-bore, homemade weapons are not efficient, and they are frequently used merely to show the local populace the VC's manufacturing capability. While a limited capability to hand produce crude weapons has been developed there, no native industrial base exists which would provide the Communists with the modern arms and ammunition required to maintain levels of combat such as we have witnessed in the past three years. Future equipment for these local guerilla forces will increasingly depend on newer weapons provided by Hanoi.

As significant as the weapons themselves is the ammunition requirement for these new arms. Battle demands for rifle, machine-gun, and mortar ammunition are counted in tons. Captured or stolen U. S. Ammunition of the same caliber is not interchangeable with the "new family" weapons, and it presently appears that the Communist main forces are more and more becoming dependent on external supply to meet these increasing needs.

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THE INFILTRATION OF ORGANIC NORTH VIETNAMESE

ARMY REGIMENTS INTO SOUTH VIETNAM

1964 - 1966

UNIT	INFILTRATION DATA			STRENGTH	NO OF PRISONERS ON WHICH CONFIRMATION BASED	NO OF CAPTURED DOCUMENTS ON WHICH CONFIRMATION BASED	TOTAL NO PRISONERS TAKEN FROM EACH UNIT
	DEP NVN	ARR	SVN				
95th Regt	Oct 64	Dec 64		2,000	7	1	35
101st Regt	Dec 64	Feb 65		2,000	3	2	13
18th Regt	Feb 65	Apr 65		2,000	5	2	43
32nd Regt	Sep-Oct 64	Jan 65		1,800	4	4	53
22nd regt	Jul 65	Sep 65		2,000	5	1	42
33rd Regt	Jul 65	Oct 65		2,000	2	0	53
250th Regt	Jul 65	Oct 65		1,000	2	2	13
66th Regt	Aug 65	Nov 65		1,500	6	1	34
6th Regt	UNK	Oct 65		1,500	7	1	18
21st Regt	Aug 65	Oct 65		2,000	7	3	37
18B Regt	Dec 65	Feb 66		2,000	4	1	62
95B Regt	Dec 65	Mar 66		2,000	2	1	17
141st Regt	Jan 66	Mar 66		1,500	6	1	10
24th Regt	Jan 66	Feb 66		2,000	3	0	19
88th Regt	Jan 66	Mar 66		2,000	5	0	22
3rd Regt	Feb 66	Mar 66		1,500	2	1	34
812th Regt	Jun 66	Jun 66		1,500	2	0	15



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THE INFILTRATION OF ORGANIC NORTH VIETNAMESE

ARMY REGIMENTS INTO SOUTH VIETNAM

1964 - 1966

(CONT..)

UNIT	INFILTRATION DATA			STRENGTH	NO OF PRISONERS WHICH CONFIRMATION BASED	NO OF CAPTURED DOCUMENTS ON WHICH CONFIRMATION BASED	TOTAL NO PRISONERS TAKEN FROM EACH UNIT
	DEP NVN	ARR	SVN				
90th Regt	Jun 66	Jun 66		1,500	3	0	12
803rd Regt	Jun 66	Jun 66		1,500	2	0	7
165th Regt	Feb 66	Jul 66		2,000	1	3	1
52nd Regt	Mar 66	Jul 66		1,600	3	1	3
84th Arty Regt	Mar 66	Aug 66		1,200	1	3	1



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COMMUNIST LOSSES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1960 - 1966

YEAR	TOTAL KILLED IN ACTION
1960	5,669
1961	12,133
1962	21,158
1963	20,575
1964	16,785
1965	35,436
1966	55,524

[REDACTED]

WEAPONS CAPTURED FROM COMMUNIST FORCES
IN SOUTH VIETNAM
1960 - 1967

YEAR	TOTAL WEAPONS CAPTURED	WEAPONS MIX CHINESE	SOVIET	US	FRENCH	HOME-MADE
1960	Data not available					
1961	2,753	DATA NOT AVAILABLE - 1960 - 1967				
1962	4,049					
1963	5,397	7%	1%	28%	50%	14%
1964	5,881	15%	2%	32%	36%	15%
1965	11,695	21%	3%	35%	26%	15%
1966	18,606	29%	4%	30%	22%	15%
1967 1st quarter	8,970	35%	6%	26%	18%	15%

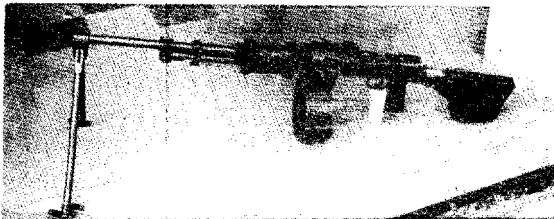
THE "NEW FAMILY" WEAPONS



7.62MM ASSAULT RIFLE (SOVIET AK-47, CHICOM TYPE 56) STANDARD FOR NVA UNITS, AUTOMATIC, SEMI-AUTOMATIC. M-1943 AMMUNITION, 600 RND/MIN (CYCLIC) 80 RND/MIN (PRACTICAL). EFFECTIVE RANGE- 440 YARDS (SOVIET, CHICOM AND NORTH KOREAN MODELS CAPURED).

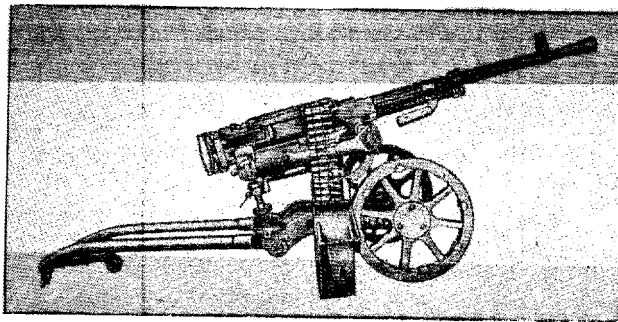


7.62MM CARBINE (SOVIET SKS, CHICOM TYPE 56) PRINCIPALLY USED IN NVA UNITS, SEMI-AUTOMATIC. M1943 AMMUNITION, 20 RND/MIN. EFFECTIVE RANGE 440 YARDS (BOTH SOVIET, CHICOM, AND NORTH KOREAN TYPES CAPTURED)



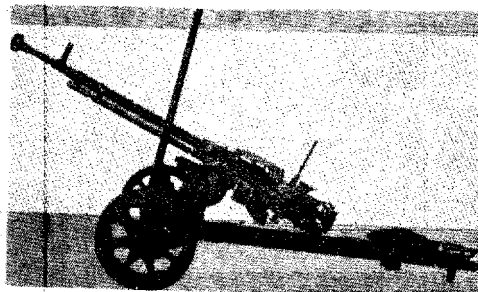
7.62 MM LIGHT MACHINEGUN (SOVIET RPD, CHICOM TYPE 56) STANDARD FOR NVA UNITS (SQUAD SUPPORT), AUTOMATIC, M 1943 AMMUNITION, 750 RND/MIN (CYCLIC), 150 RND/MIN., (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE- 875 YARDS (SOVIET, CHICOM AND NK TYPES CAPTURED)

MACHINE GUNS, MORTARS, & RECOILLESS RIFLES IN
USE BY COMMUNIST FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

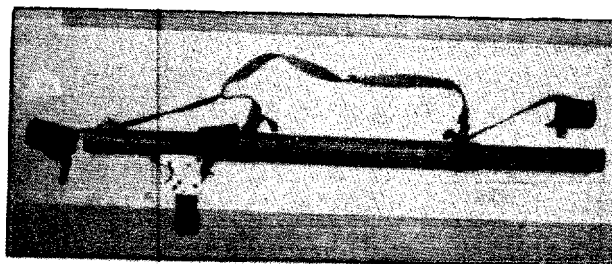


7.62MM HEAVY MACHINEGUN (SOVIET
SGM/SG-43, CHICOM TYPE 57/53)
STANDARD FOR NVA UNITS, BATTALION
SUPPORT, AUTOMATIC,
M 1908 AMMUNITION, 700 RND/MIN
(CYCLIC), 250 RND/MIN (PRACTICAL)
EFFECTIVE RANGE- 1100 YARDS
(BOTH SOVIET AND CHICOM MODELS
CAPTURED)

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12.7MM HEAVY MACHINEGUN (SOVIET
DSHK 38/46, CHICOM TYPE 54)
STANDARD FOR NVA UNITS, ANTI-
AIRCRAFT SUPPORT AUTOMATIC
ARMOR PIERCING-INCINDIARY
AMMUNITION, 600 RND/MIN (CYCLIC),
80 RND/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE
RANGE-GROUND 1640 YDS, AA 1100 YDS,
(CHICOM AND SOVIET TYPES CAPTURED)



40MM ANTI-TANK GRENADE LAUNCHER
(SOVIET RPG-2, CHICOM TYPE 56)
USED BY BOTH VC AND NVA UNITS,
80MM HEAT GRENADE EFFECTIVE
RANGE- 110 YDS, ARMOR PENETRATION
7 IN. (ONLY CHICOM TYPES CAPTURED
DESIGNATED B-40 BY NVA)



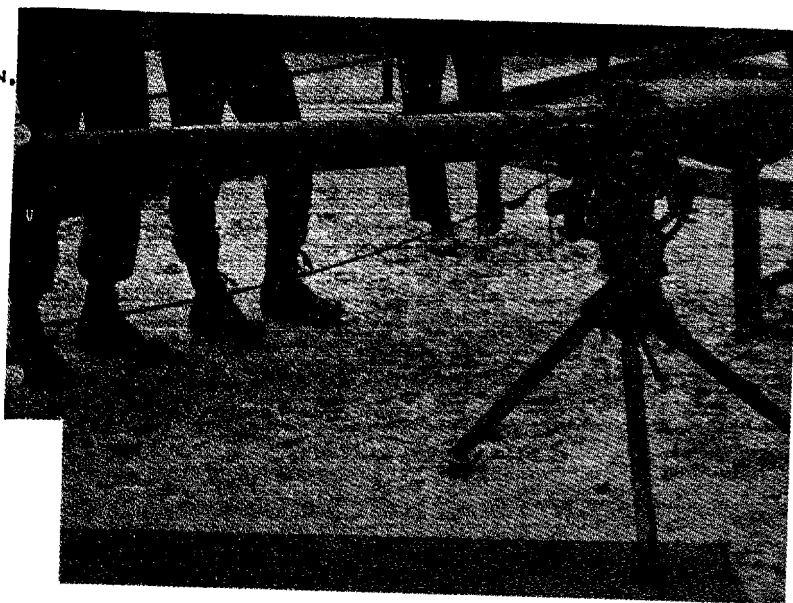
60MM MORTAR (US DESIGN, CHICOM
TYPE 31) USED BY BOTH VC AND
NVA UNITS
3.25 LB HE PROJECTILE
MAXIMUM RANGE- 1675 YDS.
(ONLY CHICOM TYPE CAPTURED)

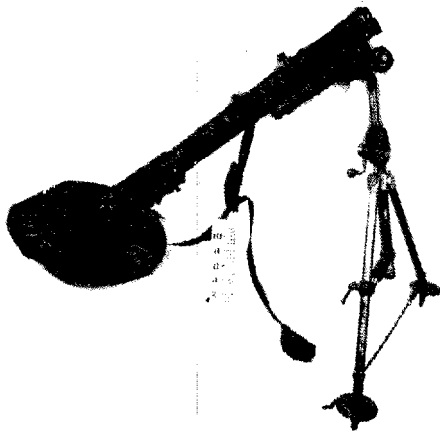
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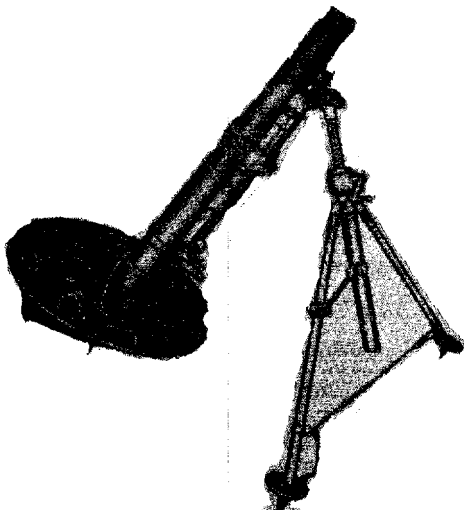
75-MM RECOILLESS RIFLE (US DESIGN,
COMMUNIST CHINA TYPES 52 AND 56)
USED BY BOTH VC AND NVA
HE AND HEAT AMMUNITION
MAX. RANGE 7,300 YARDS
ONLY COMMUNIST CHINA TYPE
CAPTURED



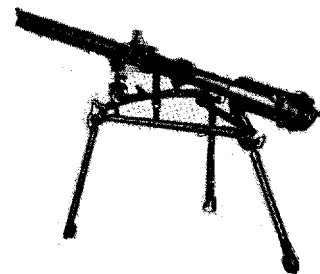


82-MM MORTAR (SOVIET M 1937,
COMMUNIST TYPE 53) USED BY BOTH
VC AND NVN UNITS
6.9 LB, HE PROJECTILE (CAN FIRE
US 81-MM AMMUNITION
MAX. RANGE 3,320 YARDS
ONLY COMMUNIST CHINA TYPE
CAPTURED

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120-MM MORTAR (SOVIET M 1943,
CHICOM TYPE 55) USED BY NVA AND
POSSIBLY VIET CONG UNITS
33.9LB, HE PROJECTILE
MAX. RANGE 6,235 YARDS
CHICOM AMMUNITION AND BIPOD
CAPTURED



57MM RECOILLESS RIFLE (US DESIGN,
CHICOM TYPE 36) USED BY BOTH VC
AND NVA UNITS
HE AND HEAT AMMUNITION
MAXIMUM RANGE-4900 YDS.
(ONLY CHICOM TYPE CAPTURED)

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EXPANSION OF COMMUNIST FORCE STRUCTURE
IN SOUTH VIETNAM
1960 - 1966

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Viet Cong Battalions	10	20	26	29	57	66	81
VC Main Force Strength	5,500	26,700	33,800	34,400	49,300	61,700	64,300
VC Guerrilla Force Strength	30,000	40,000	50,000	60,000	60,000	103,600	112,800
North Viet- namese Battalions					4	32	67
North Vietnamese Strength					2,500	26,100	48,000

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INFILTRATION OF PERSONNEL INTO

SOUTH VIETNAM¹

1959 - 1966

YEAR	CATEGORY 1 & 2 CONFIRMED	CATEGORY 3 & 4 PROBABLE	TOTAL
1959-60	4556	26	4582
1961	4118	2177	6295
1962	5362	7495	12857
1963	4726	3180	7906
1964	9316	3108	12424

YEAR	ACCEPTED ² CONFIRMED	PROBABLE	POSSIBLE ³	TOTAL ⁴
1965	23,770	1,910	8050	33,730
1966	40,900	9,000	28,700	78,600

1. In mid-October, MACV performed a complete review of available information relating to NVA infiltration into South Vietnam. This review included a reexamination of all captured documents, interrogation reports,  in the MACV files from 1 January 1965. As a result of this reexamination, new criteria and terminology for listing infiltration totals were adopted.

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2. ACCEPTED - ACCEPTED CONFIRMED: A confirmed unit/group is one which is determined to exist on the basis of information provided by a minimum of two captives, returnees or captured documents (any combination).

ACCEPTED PROBABLE: A probable infiltration unit/group is one believed to exist on the basis of information which can be evaluated as probably true provided by one captive, returnee or captured document.



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3. POSSIBLE - A possible infiltration group/unit is one which is believed to exist on the basis of information which can be evaluated as possibly true, even though no captive, returnee or document is available to verify the report of reports.

4. The total does not represent all infiltration data on hand. Other information is held which, based upon the application of consistent criteria and the professional judgement of analysts has been evaluated as insufficient to warrant inclusion in either of the above categories.

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