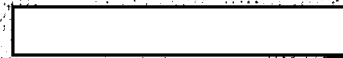


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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600
22 July 1966

State Dept. review completed

ARMY review(s) completed

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
FURTHER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION
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22 July 1966

HIGHLIGHTS

Recently captured North Vietnamese soldiers claim that in addition to elements of the North Vietnamese 324th Division in northern Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam, there are also two other North Vietnamese divisions available for assignment to this area. One is in Laos and one is in reserve in Military Region IV of the DRV.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:

Operation JOHN PAUL JONES by US airborne and ROK Marine task force elements began yesterday in coastal Phu Yen Province (Para. 1). Operations CEDAR RAPIDS and FILLMORE have ended (Paras. 2-3). Reports of PAVN/VC plans in the northern part of South Vietnam (Paras. 4-6). Recent intelligence reports indicate the Viet Cong may be planning increased attacks on airfields in South Vietnam (Para. 7).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:

25X1 [redacted] the primary purpose of Father Quynh in sponsoring an opposition group to the present government is to maintain the possibility of future Catholic-Buddhist cooperation, and that Quynh plans no direct antigovernment action (Para. 1).

[redacted] The deputy chief of the Buddhist chaplains claims that the government is restricting contacts between Tri Quang and other monks (Para. 3).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

There is nothing of significance to report.

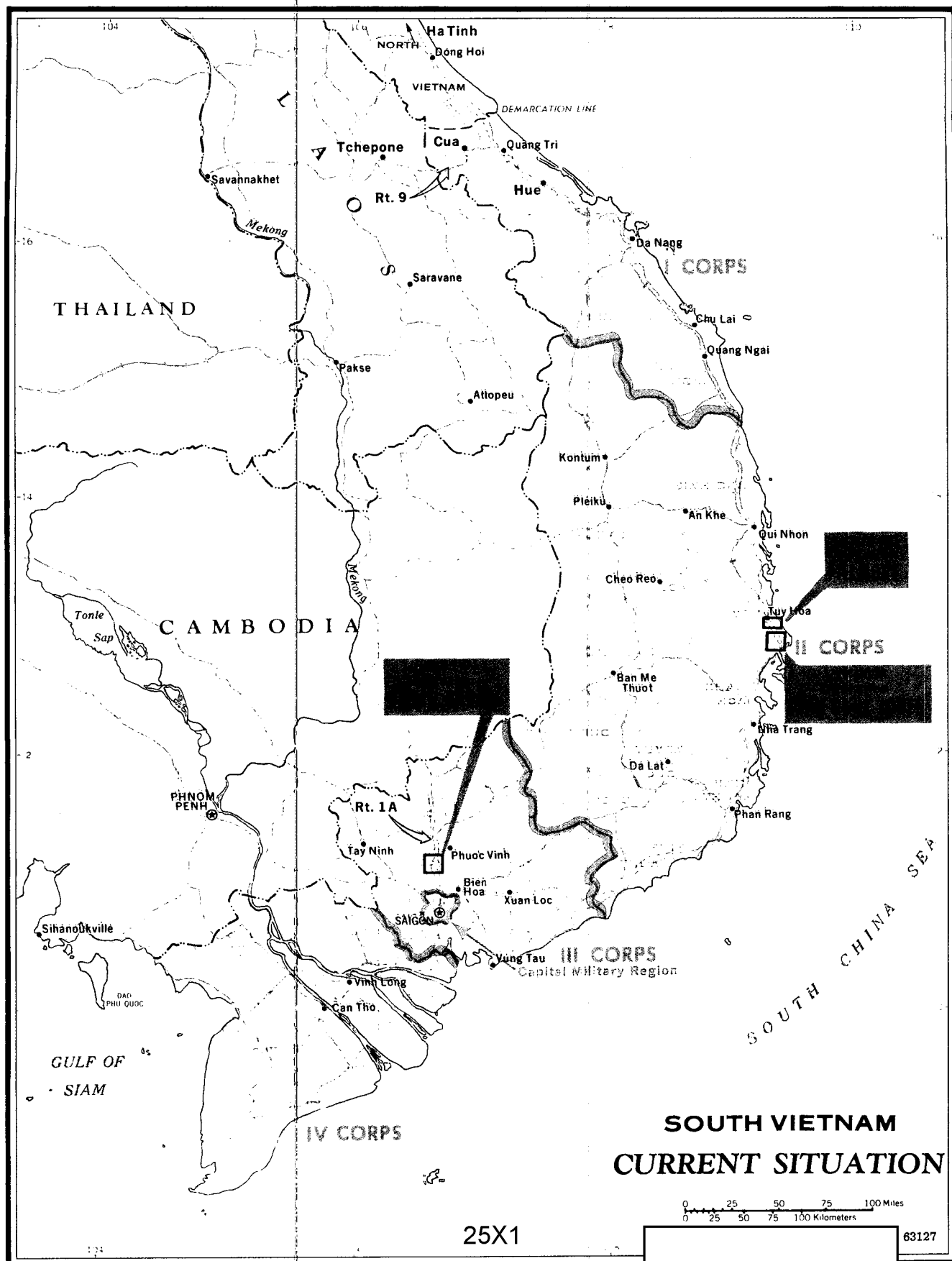
IV. Other Communist Military Developments:

There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: According to two recent reports, Hanoi does not intend to execute US pilots (Para. 1). The Chinese chief of state, speaking on Vietnam, reiterated China's support for the DRV but made no commitment to specific action. (Para. 2).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Three battalions of the US 101st Airborne Division and the 2nd Korean Marine Brigade yesterday began a major new ground operation--JOHN PAUL JONES--in coastal Phu Yen Province. The operation calls for the joint allied task force to seize and hold vital terrain in the Wung Ro pass and bay area, and to provide security for engineer work being conducted along lines of communications between the bay and the provincial capital of Tuy Hoa.

2. Operation CEDAR RAPIDS, a joint US - South Vietnamese search-and-destroy operation along Route 1A in Binh Duong Province, ended today. Cumulative casualties include three Americans killed and nine wounded; two enemy were reported killed and two suspects detained.

3. Operation FILLMORE, a joint US-Korean rice-harvest security operation in coastal Phu Yen Province that began on 24 March, ended yesterday. Friendly casualties totaled 30 killed (ten US) and 144 wounded (94 US). A total of 73 Viet Cong were killed and 475 suspects detained.

PAVN/VC Plans

4. A recently captured North Vietnamese soldier, who states he was a member of the intelligence company of the 90th Regiment of the 324 "B" Division, has provided additional information on VC/PAVN plans in Quang Tri Province in northernmost South Vietnam. He said that two battalions of the 812th Regiment, 324th Division, had the mission of attracting two ARVN battalions into the Cua area of Quang Tri Province. Other forces would attack reinforcements moving from Hue to Quang Tri. He also reported that another division was in Laos near Tchepone and would attack along Route 9, while a third division would be in reserve in Military Region IV in the DRV. MACV

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comments that this information corresponds with that provided by a second lieutenant from the 812th Regiment. The lieutenant reported that the 304 "B" Division had replaced the 324 "B" at its garrison at Ha Tinh in the DRV and was ready to reinforce PAVN forces in South Vietnam.

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7. According to MACV, recent intelligence reports indicate that the Viet Cong may be planning an increase in the number of attacks against US and South Vietnamese airfields. The Viet Cong have been relatively successful during the past few months in attacking airfields, and the Communists may well intend to step up this activity.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

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1. [REDACTED]

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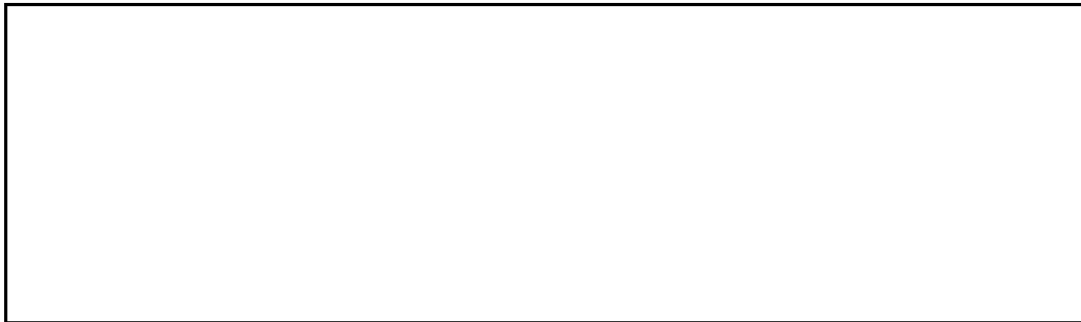
[REDACTED] Father Hoang Quynh, the outspoken Catholic leader of the group known as the "Front of All Religions," views his public opposition to the Ky-Thieu government as a political necessity. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Quynh's principal aim is to work for future unity between Buddhists and Catholics. Quynh is said to believe that his purposes can be served by keeping his views before the public, but does not intend to take positive action which could lead to retaliation.

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3. Thich Ho Giac, Tam Giac's deputy chief of the Chaplains Corps, reportedly informed a US Embassy officer that access to Tri Quang at the Duy Tan clinic as of 19 July was difficult because of government restrictions on visits by monks. Tri Quang was apparently prevented from attending a meeting of the Buddhist Institute, presumably held at a pagoda in Saigon. The northern extremist cleric was, however, permitted to attend Father Quynh's reception for various leaders of religious factions on 21 July.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

US Pilots in North Vietnam

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1. [REDACTED]

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prominent Liberation Front official had said that the US pilots in North Vietnam would "not be placed before firing squads." He also said that the North Vietnamese would attempt to get the pilots to sign statements sympathetic to the Vietnamese Communist position, and that they would be held in areas where the US was apt to bomb. This information cannot be confirmed although one other DRV official is reported to have said recently that the pilots will not be executed. The information on Hanoi's intention to place the prisoners in areas where US air strikes were expected in the hopes of averting such strikes is still very much in the rumor category.

Chinese on Support For Vietnam

2. A statement by Liu Shao-chi at a Peking mass rally on 22 July appears to be still another Chinese effort at demonstrating support for Hanoi without committing Peking to any specific course of action. Liu asserted that the Chinese "have made every preparation to take such actions at any time and in any place as the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples deem necessary for dealing joint blows at the US." The reference to "joint blows" conveys the impression of direct Chinese involvement in the war but does not go as far as Peking's pledges in the spring and summer of 1965 to send "volunteers" to Vietnam "if needed."

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