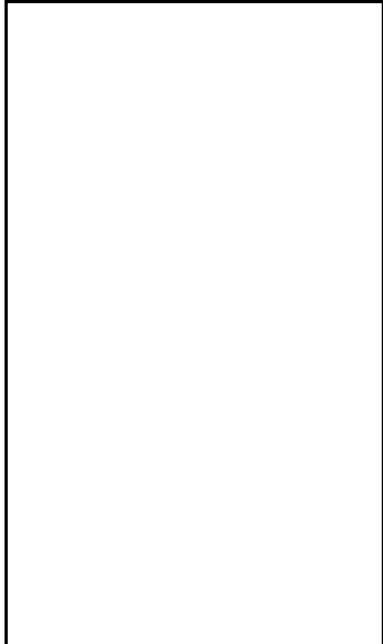
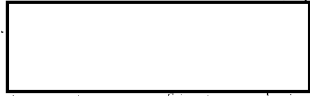


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Press Item for the DCI

Date: 8 Jun
Item: No. 20
Ref: No. _____



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UPI-107

(RED TROOPS)

SAIGON--DOCUMENTS AND PRISONERS CAPTURED DURING U.S. AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE OPERATIONS IN CAMBODIA HAVE BROUGHT A SHARP UPWARD REVISION IN COMMUNIST TROOP STRENGTH ESTIMATES, MILITARY SOURCES SAID TODAY.

IN THE III CORPS AREA, WHICH INCLUDES SAIGON, AND IN THE CAMBODIAN SANCTUARIES WEST OF IT, MILITARY OFFICIALS HAD ESTIMATED THERE WERE 55,000 COMMUNIST TROOPS.

INFORMATION OBTAINED SINCE THE START OF THE CAMBODIAN OPERATIONS IN APRIL HAVE CAUSED THIS COMMUNIST STRENGTH ESTIMATE TO BE REVISED UPWARD TO 91,000, THE SOURCES SAID.

ALLIED MILITARY OFFICIALS HAD THOUGHT THAT COMMUNIST STRENGTH IN III CORPS, AND THE CAMBODIAN SANCTUARIES HAD BEEN REDUCED BY 23,000 MEN FROM LAST YEAR.

THEY STILL BELIEVE THE REDUCTION OCCURRED BUT NOW THINK THAT INSTEAD OF 78,000 MEN IN THE III CORPS SANCTUARY AREA LAST YEAR, THE COMMUNISTS ACTUALLY HAD 115,000.

"WE DON'T THINK THEY HAVE INCREASED THEIR STRENGTH. WE JUST THINK OUR PREVIOUS ESTIMATES WERE TOO LOW," ONE MILITARY SOURCE SAID.

THE SOURCES SAID THE ALLIES HAVE STILL NOT LOCATED THE COMMUNISTS' CENTRAL OFFICE FOR SOUTH VIETNAM (COSVN), WHICH PRESIDENT NIXON ORIGINALLY LISTED AS THE MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF THE CAMBODIAN OPERATIONS.

6/8--GE123P

Comment: Cannot confirm here. NMCC is checking.