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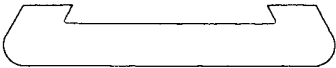
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NPIC/IEG (12/83)

13 DECEMBER 1983

**ENGINEER/RIVER CROSSING EXERCISE
SON DONG ARMY BARRACKS AND SCHOOL, VIETNAM (SWN)**

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1. SIGNIFICANCE: ONE OF THE LARGEST ENGINEER/RIVER CROSSING EXERCISES IDENTIFIED IN VIETNAM WAS UNDERWAY IN A RESERVOIR NEAR SON DONG APPROXIMATELY 80 NM SOUTH OF THE CHINA-VIETNAM BORDER [REDACTED] (SWN)

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2. REMARKS: A 790-METER LONG COMBINATION PMP/TPP PONTON BRIDGE CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 70 PMP SECTIONS AND 57 PROBABLE TPP FLOATING SUPPORTS SPANNED ONE BRANCH OF THE RESERVOIR AT 21-02-40N 105-28-31E (GRAPHIC 1). IN ADDITION, AN 80-METER LONG PROBABLE TPP PONTON BRIDGE CONSISTING OF EIGHT FLOATING SUPPORTS JOINED A SMALLER PENINSULA WITH THE MAIN SHORELINE. THIRTY SMALL POWERBOATS WERE IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE PONTON BRIDGE, WHICH APPEARED TO BE OPERATIONAL. FIVE PMP CENTER UNITS (ON CARRIERS), ONE PMP RAMP UNIT (ON CARRIER), AND AT LEAST 15 PIECES OF PROBABLE ENGINEER-ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT WERE AT AN ENGINEER SUPPORT AREA IMMEDIATELY EAST OF THE PONTON BRIDGE. AN ADDITIONAL PMP CENTER UNIT WAS BEING LAUNCHED/RETRIEVED AND FIVE PROBABLE TPP PONTON SECTIONS WERE AGAINST THE SHORELINE NEAR THE SUPPORT AREA. (SWN)

ADDITIONAL RIVER CROSSING EQUIPMENT WAS NEAR SON DONG ARMY BARRACKS AND SCHOOL, APPROXIMATELY 1.5 NM EAST-NORTHEAST OF THE PONTON BRIDGE (GRAPHIC 2). FOUR K-71 (PTS) TRACKED AMPHIBIOUS VEHICLES AND TWO GSP HEAVY FERRIES WERE ON THE MAIN ROAD, APPROXIMATELY 900 METERS WEST-SOUTHWEST OF THE INSTALLATION. AT LEAST TEN GSP, ONE PROBABLE PTS, AND THREE EMPTY PROBABLE PMP PONTON CARRIERS WERE DISPERSED IN A NEARBY WOODED AREA. TEN GSP AND 15 EMPTY PMP CARRIERS REMAINED IN AN OPEN AREA AT THE WEST END OF THE INSTALLATION. FOUR ADDITIONAL GSP (NOT ON GRAPHIC) WERE ON A DIRT ROAD BETWEEN THE PONTON BRIDGE AND THE INSTALLATION. INITIAL DEPLOYMENTS FOR THE EXERCISE WERE OBSERVED IN THE AREA [REDACTED] (SWN)

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ANALYST'S COMMENTS -- THIS LARGE EXERCISE CONFIRMS THE CONTINUING EFFORT BY THE PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM (PAVN) TO ENHANCE THEIR RIVER CROSSING CAPABILITIES AND TECHNIQUES. THE FACT THAT THE PONTON BRIDGE CONSISTS OF BOTH PMP AND PROBABLE TPP BRIDGING EQUIPMENT INDICATES THAT THE PAVN ARE CAPABLE OF INTEGRATING THEIR AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT AND COORDINATING THEIR ENGINEER UNITS. SOME OF THE ENGINEER/RIVER CROSSING EQUIPMENT OBSERVED IN THE EXERCISE MAY HAVE DEPLOYED FROM VIET TRI ENGINEER DEPOT 2 [REDACTED] APPROXIMATELY 8 NM TO THE NORTHWEST WHERE THE SAME TYPE OF EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY OBSERVED. (SWN) [REDACTED]

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3. [REDACTED] COORDINATES 21-03-18N 105-31-05E (S)

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