

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

INFORMATION

MAY 19 1971

SECRET/SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: GENERAL HAIG 19/

SUBJECT: Situation in Long Tieng in Northern Laos

CIA has informed us that the CIA Station Chief in Vientiane believes the situation in the Long Tieng area of Northern Laos, while still serious, is not critical at this time. One North Vietnamese regiment has been badly mauled and is pulling away from Long Tieng, and the remaining units of the 312th and 316th NVA divisions in the general vicinity are under strength. Enemy capabilities have thus been affected.

On the other hand, the situation among the Long Tieng defenders has improved.

[redacted] Morale is [redacted] 25X1
better today than at the beginning of April. This in turn has had a favorable effect on the morale of General Vang Pao and his Meo troops. The Meo performance is now the best in several months.

While it is still possible that the enemy may try to launch one more major attack on Long Tieng before the rainy season begins about mid-May, the strength of the defenders is greater than that of the 4500 enemy troops deployed in the immediate Long Tieng area. If an attack comes, it might be on the birthday of Ho Chi Minh, which is May 19. Even without an attack, the enemy will probably try to maintain positions in and around the Plain of Jars through the rainy season to provide a head start for the next dry season offensive. Nevertheless, Generals [redacted] Vang Pao believe that the Long Tieng situation has been stabilized for the moment and they are beginning to think in terms of offensive action of their own beginning in June. 25X1

Comment: Hopefully the CIA assessment is correct. The situation at Long Tieng today is very reminiscent of what it was this time last year, when the North Vietnamese as well as the Long Tieng defenders were showing signs of wear and tear. The North Vietnamese, though, are at the end of a much more difficult logistics system. If Long Tieng does succeed in holding out, the crucial factor will clearly be [redacted] 25X1
who have been sent in during the past year.

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