

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

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INFORMATION

JDL 7 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: North Vietnamese Infiltration

(Signed) HK

Provided below is the comparative study on North Vietnamese infiltration which you recently requested.

Infiltration during the dry season. Communist infiltration during the 1969-1970 dry season (October 1969 through April 1970) was far less than during the same period a year ago.

- From October 1968 to April 1969, approximately 102,800 personnel in 175 groups moved south.
- During the same period ending in April this year, 127 groups containing about 58,400 personnel started toward South Vietnam.
- This amounts to 48 groups less, or some 44,000 fewer troops.

The rainy season period. When the rains came last year, the Communists closed down their transportation system in the Laotian Panhandle and only a trickle of infiltrators moved southward during the summer months.

- This year, the Communists also began to cut back on troop infiltration in early April and only a few groups started south during late April and May.

The difference. The major difference this year is that the Communists are attempting to maintain their transportation system in Laos during the rainy season.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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NSA, DIA reviews completed.

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- Because of our operations in Cambodia, it appeared at first that Hanoi decided to keep its Laotian transportation system open in order to move supplies rather than men.
- As late as the end of May well after the decision had been made to keep the Ho Chi Minh Trail open, intercepted Communist messages still indicated that practically no troops were to move south during June.
- But on June 4, these orders were changed and infiltration stations were told to expect many southward moving groups.

June infiltration. As forecast, troop movements did pick up; some 15 groups containing 5,700 personnel have been noted moving so far in June.

- There is a problem in assessing this movement, however; only three of these 14 groups bear the usual infiltration numbers associated with assignment in South Vietnam. Two of them are assigned to the two northernmost provinces in South Vietnam, with the third slated for the Central Highlands area.)
- The destination of the other 12 groups remains uncertain. They may be headed for south Laos, where enemy transportation units are being troubled by harassing attacks and also fear larger scale allied ground assaults. They could also be destined for Cambodia.
- Of course, at least some of these 12 groups may be destined for South Vietnam despite their unusual designators.
- If so, we believe it most likely that they would be headed for I Corps. The Communists have been gradually beefing up their forces in this area during the last two months by dispatching several regiments from the North which have moved outside the regular infiltration system, and some of these peculiarly designated groups in the system may be part of the overall increase. In any event, enemy action in I Corps will probably pick up in the near future.

Outlook. By keeping their Laotian transportation system open this year, the Communists are reserving the option to move considerably more men and supplies south than they did during the rainy season last year.

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- The increase in infiltration observed during June is by no means massive, and could still be a temporary trend.
- Nevertheless, in view of all the circumstances, it seems likely that a comparatively higher level of infiltration will continue during the rest of the rainy season.

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INFORMATION  
June 29, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: John H. Holdridge

SUBJECT: Memorandum for the President on North Vietnamese  
infiltration

In response to a request passed to us by General Haig, a memorandum for the President has been prepared on North Vietnamese infiltration.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you sign the memorandum for the President at Tab A.

Attachment

JHH/sfp/6-29-70

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