

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

MORI/CDF C03235365 Pages 1-2, 4

SECRET/SPOKE

INFORMATION
January 22, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Phil Odeen

SUBJECT: The Threat

The CIA has reformulated its threat assessment (Tab A) to incorporate the latest intelligence as well as the discussion of last week's SRG meeting.

The highlights of this assessment are as follows:

-- Manpower infiltration (see Table 1). Total NVA infiltration to Vietnam, Cambodia and South Laos is running about 22% ahead of last year. Almost all of this increase is associated with northern South Vietnam (B-3, MR-5 and MR TTH); infiltration to COSVN for Cambodia and MR 3 and 4 shows a decrease compared to last year. The overall infiltration for this dry season could range between 130,000 and about 210,000, an appreciable increase over last year.

-- Supply infiltration (see Table 2). Overall supply input into Laos is about 25% below last year's level but is rapidly increasing. If the acceleration of supply movements, which has occurred in the last few weeks continues, the enemy could exceed his inputs total of the comparable 1970-71 period by mid-February. There is no firm explanation of this lag in supply movement, although increased food shipments from Cambodia may well be the answer.

Based on this infiltration situation, the CIA judgment is that the enemy will be prepared to launch sustained combat offensives in MR 2 within a month, in MR 1 within one or two months, and in Cambodia within four months. In each of these areas, however, the CIA believes that the enemy could significantly accelerate its preparations and act more quickly than currently indicated.

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Attached to B cover memo, H-E 5019, 29 Jan. 1972

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On the whole, therefore, the CIA credits the enemy with a substantial offensive capability in northern South Vietnam that could be used within a month or two. In South Vietnam and Cambodia, however, it seems clear that such a capability does not exist now and would take months to develop.

In considering the enemy's intentions to utilize this capability, the CIA makes the following points:

-- The COSVN directive it recently reported does not pinpoint the forces and magnitude of the upcoming attacks. It does suggest that to some degree the man force activities will be combined with the anti-GVN effort in the cities and countryside.

-- The follow-up directives indicate that "the communists would like to make it rival Tet 1968, although they realize that targets will have to be chosen more selectively and that the campaign will not be sufficient to defeat the GVN."

-- The directives also stress military activities in MR 3 and 4.

According to the CIA, however, these reports should not be accepted at face value since COSVN's authority is limited to these areas and its directives are bound to exaggerate their importance.

On the whole, the CIA judgment is that the enemy can and will launch major offensive operations in MR 2 and probably also in MR 1 over the next month or so, but that MRs 3 and 4 along with Cambodia will remain relatively quiet except for diversionary attacks designed to tie down the GVN's reserves.

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TABLE 1

<u>Area</u>	<u>1971/72</u>	<u>1970/71</u>	1971/72 as a % of <u>1970/71</u>
COSVN	27,400	33,000	- 17
B-3	32,600 *	3,800	+750
MR-5	8,000	4,300	+ 86
MR-TTH	4,000	3,100	+ 29
S. Laos	<u>6,800</u>	<u>20,100</u>	<u>- 66</u>
TOTAL	78,800	64,300	+ 22

* This includes a recently established large gap fill of 11 groups (6,300 personnel). We believe that the information establishing this gap is valid and that subsequent information will demonstrate that the extrapolation was warranted.

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TABLE 2

	<u>1971/72</u>		<u>1970/71</u>		<u>1971/72</u> <u>as a % of</u> <u>1970/71*</u>
	<u>Dry Season</u>		<u>Dry Season</u>		
	<u>Minimum</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>Maximum</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>Minimum</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>Maximum</u> <u>Estimate</u>	
	<u>Tons</u>				
October	390	2,529	817	3,266	71
November	2,652	4,722	4,726	7,096	62
December	5,110	7,249	7,254	9,703	73
January 1-18	6,314	7,556	7,488	8,910	85
Total	14,466	22,056	20,285	28,975	74
	<u>Tons per Day</u>				
	132	201	184	263	

* Percentage calculation based on mid-point comparison.
1969/70 data is not comparable to that of the subsequent
two seasons and therefore is not included in this tabulation.

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