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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

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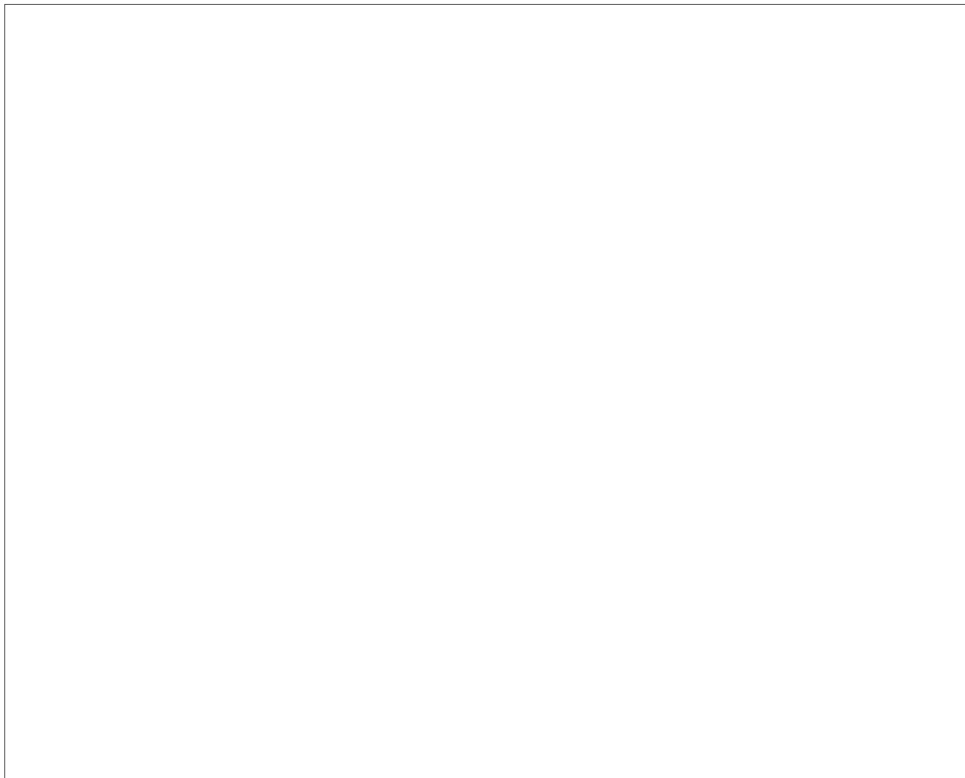
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6 December 1967

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WARNING

This document contains classified information affecting the national security of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, US Code Title 18, Sections 793, 794, and 798.



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Information as of 1600
6 December 1967

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HIGHLIGHTS

New fighting has broken out near Bu Dop on the Cambodian border.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
Fighting broke out again in the Bu Dop area on 5 and 6 December. Skirmishes were also reported in Quang Nam and Binh Dinh provinces (Paras. 1-4). Interrogations and captured documents indicate that enemy forces are improving their sapper capability through infiltration (Paras. 5-9). Prisoners in Pleiku Province report that North Vietnamese Army replacements are being used in Viet Cong local force units (Paras. 10-11). The Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics (Para. 12). (Charts)

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:

[REDACTED] The Lower House has approved more than 30 rules and has decided on its board of officers (Para. 3).

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III. North Vietnamese Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

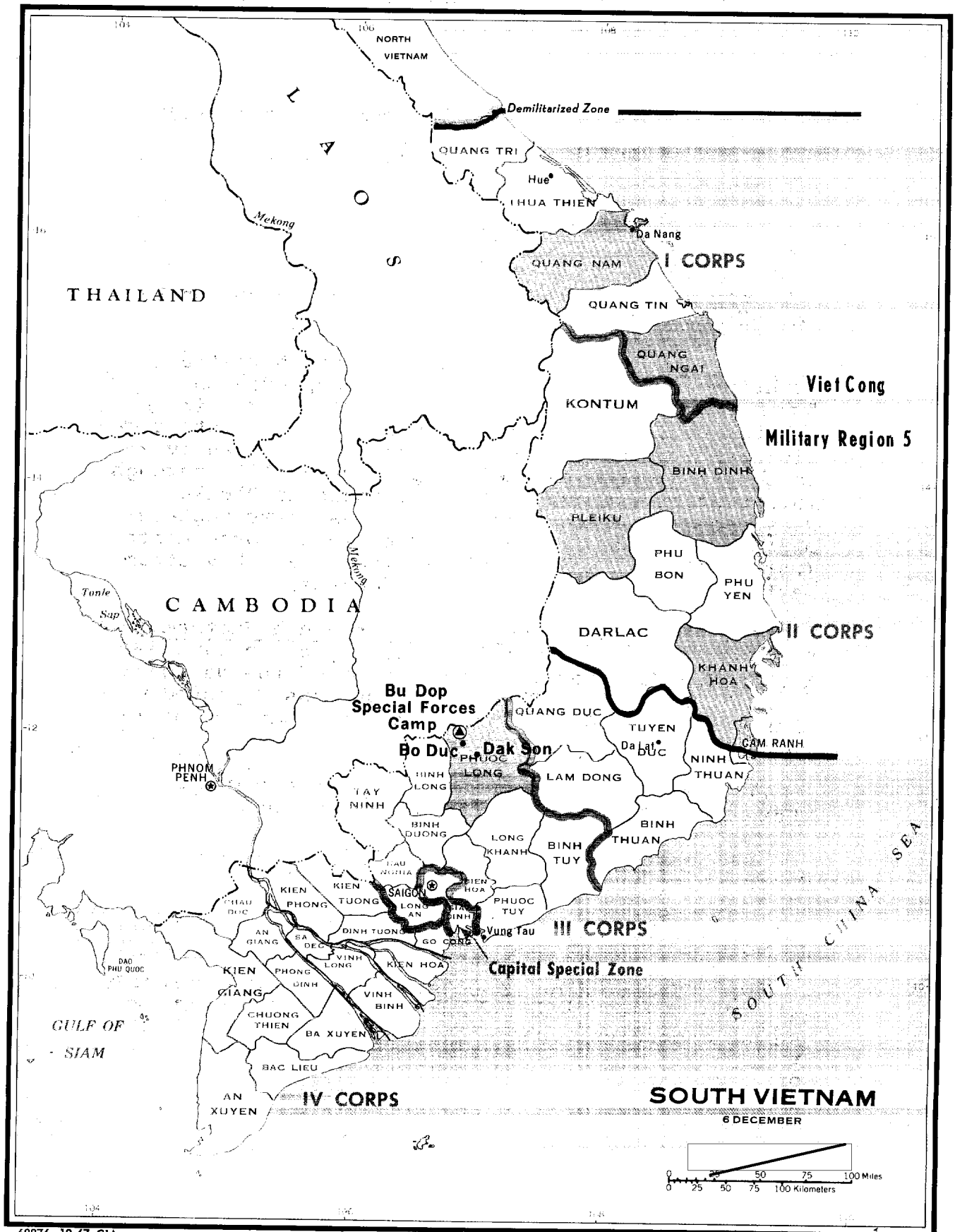
V. Communist Political Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

VI. Other Major Aspects: Cambodia has strongly rejected South Vietnam's assertion of its right to pursue Communist troops into Cambodia (Paras. 1-3).

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I. MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Fighting flared up again near the Bu Dop Special Forces camp on 5 December. US and South Vietnamese troops have been hit by sporadic mortar and rocket barrages in this area since 29 November when enemy forces attacked Bu Dop and the nearby Bo Duc District headquarters compound.

2. In the latest action a company of the US 1st Infantry Division, part of a battalion sent last week to reinforce the Special Forces camp, ran into an estimated two enemy platoons in fortified positions less than a mile from the camp's airstrip. The US troops reported killing ten enemy soldiers, possibly from the Viet Cong 272nd Regiment. Four Americans were wounded. Early on 6 December an enemy force attacked another US 1st Division patrol in the same general area.

3. There are conflicting reports concerning the attack on 5 December on Dak Son New Life hamlet located about 12 miles southwest of Bu Dop. Initial accounts of a death toll of 300 were clearly exaggerated, but late reports quote US and Vietnamese officials on the scene as stating that casualties were indeed heavy and that 40 percent of the hamlet had been destroyed. Only five deaths have been confirmed so far by Saigon. In recent months the Communists have launched an increasing number of terrorist raids on New Life hamlets and government refugee centers.

4. US troops reported 34 enemy troops were killed in two other skirmishes along the central coast on 5 December. One of these occurred in Quang Nam Province, some 27 miles south of Da Nang, and the other in coastal Binh Dinh Province. In the Quang Nam action one body was identified [redacted] as that of a North Vietnamese Army major--the commanding officer of the 3rd Regiment of the North Vietnamese 2nd Division.

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Sapper Activity in Military Region 5

5. Interrogation reports and captured documents indicate that enemy units in the Communists' Military Region 5 have reinforced their sapper capability through infiltration of individual replacements and additional units. Increased sapper capability would allow the enemy to carry out more attacks against allied rear bases, populated areas, and government administrative centers. These sappers try to inflict maximum casualties and destruction with limited risk to their own forces. They almost certainly have a psychological effect on the South Vietnamese living in contested or government-controlled areas.

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8. This is the most recent evidence of sapper infiltration into Military Region 5 and the latest of many indications which point to a new emphasis on sapper-type operations. In addition to the above mentioned units, the 407th sapper battalion and the K-90 and the K-91 sapper companies infiltrated into Pleiku and Khanh Hoa provinces, respectively, in late 1966 and early 1967. A new sapper battalion, designated the 408th, has reportedly been organized in the western highlands under the operational control of the B-3 Front.

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9. Recently captured documents provide evidence that the enemy has established a sapper school in Military Region 5. This school is believed to be independent of the region's political-military school and reportedly can train about 450 a year.

Replacements in Viet Cong Local Forces

10. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] unit had received North Vietnamese replacements in September 1967 from the 108th Infiltration Group. This is the second report of North Vietnamese Army replacements in this local force unit, according to MACV.

11. There have been a number of reports in 1967 of North Vietnamese personnel being assigned to various local force units in I and II Corps. The reports illustrate the increasing difficulties the Communists are having in recruiting personnel within South Vietnam. It seems probable that there are more North Vietnamese soldiers in local force units than reported. Many infiltration groups probably are assigned only to provinces before they arrive in South Vietnam, and their unit assignments are determined by province military authorities on the basis of local or province needs at the time of their arrival.

Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics

10. The week of 26 November - 2 December compared with the week of 19-25 November:

I. Casualties

	VC/NVA		US	
	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec
Killed	1,826	1,358	212	207
Wounded	-----	-----	1,241	633
Missing/ Captured	-----	-----	-----	---
TOTALS	1,826	1,358	1,453	840

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	GVN		FREE WORLD	
	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec
Killed	216	360	8	28
Wounded	664	799	18	38
Missing/ Captured	25	80	--	--
TOTALS	905	1,239	26	66

II. Viet Cong Incidents

	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec
Attacks	56	78
Battalion or Larger	0	2
Small Unit.	56	76
Harassment	415	305
Terrorism	39	19
Sabotage	64	40
Propaganda	17	6
Antiaircraft	194	170
TOTALS	785	618

III. Weapons Captured

	VC/NVA		GVN	
	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec	19-25 Nov	26 Nov-2 Dec
Individual	372	Not	178	186
Crew-Served	29	Reported	7	34
TOTALS	401		185	220

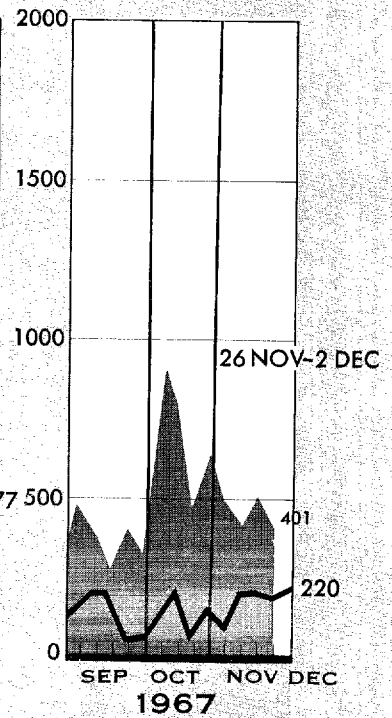
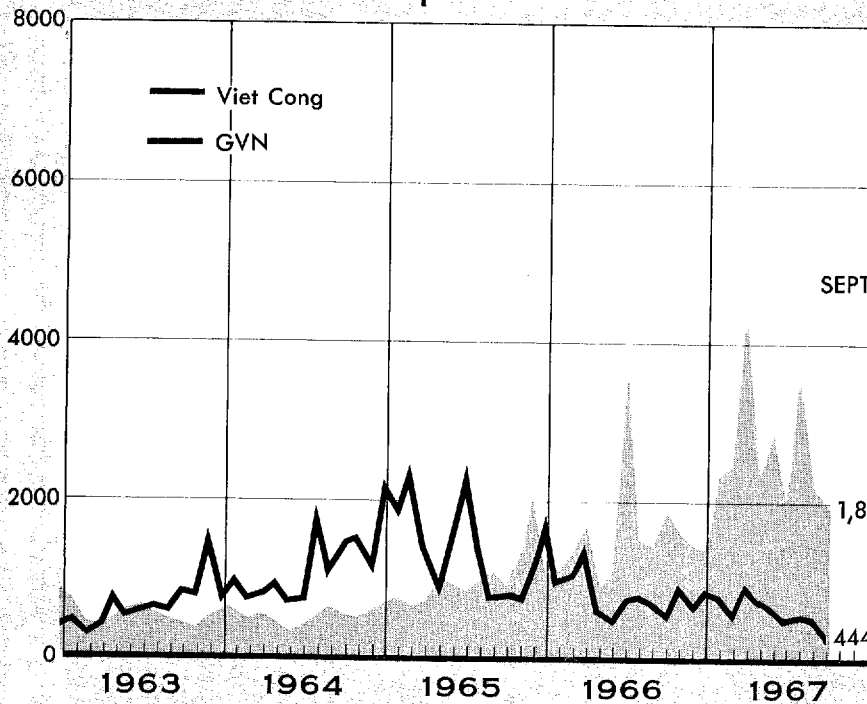
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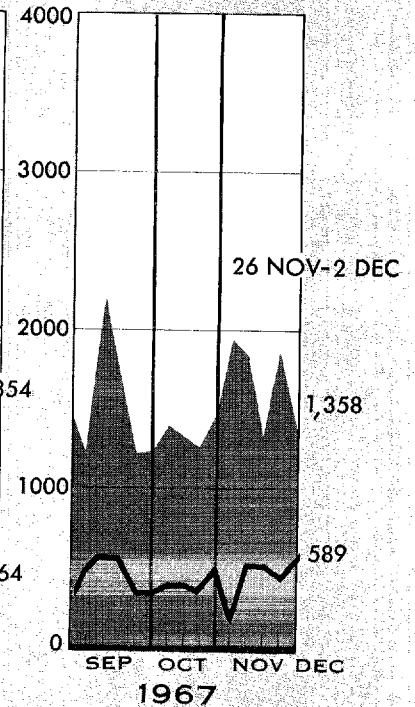
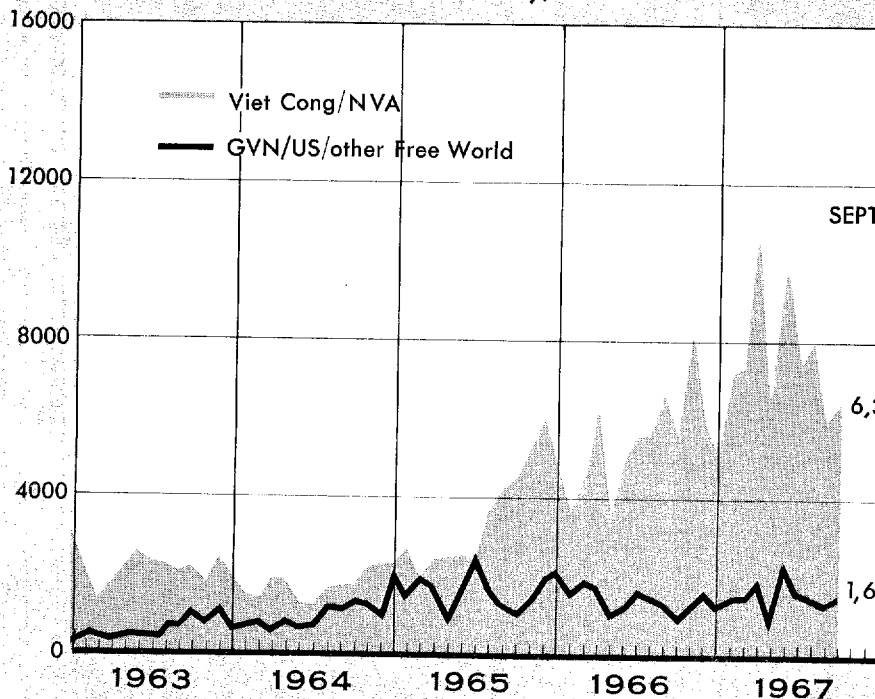
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Weapons Losses



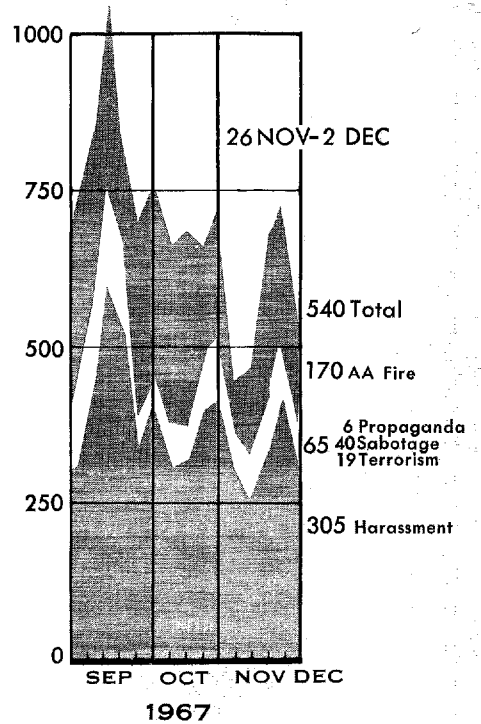
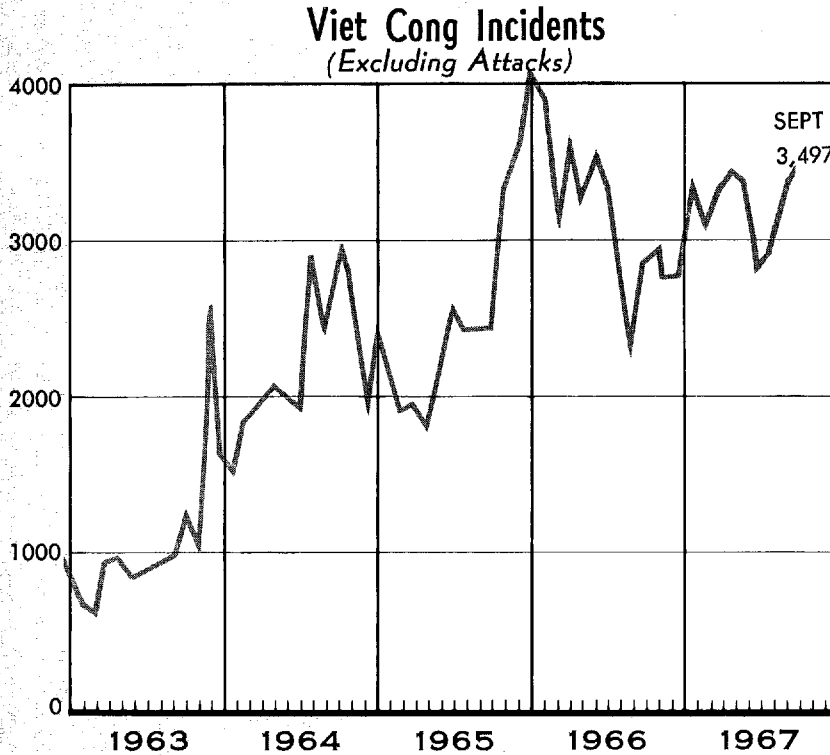
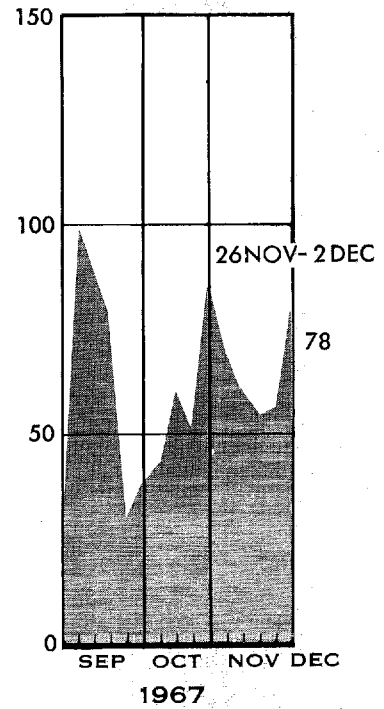
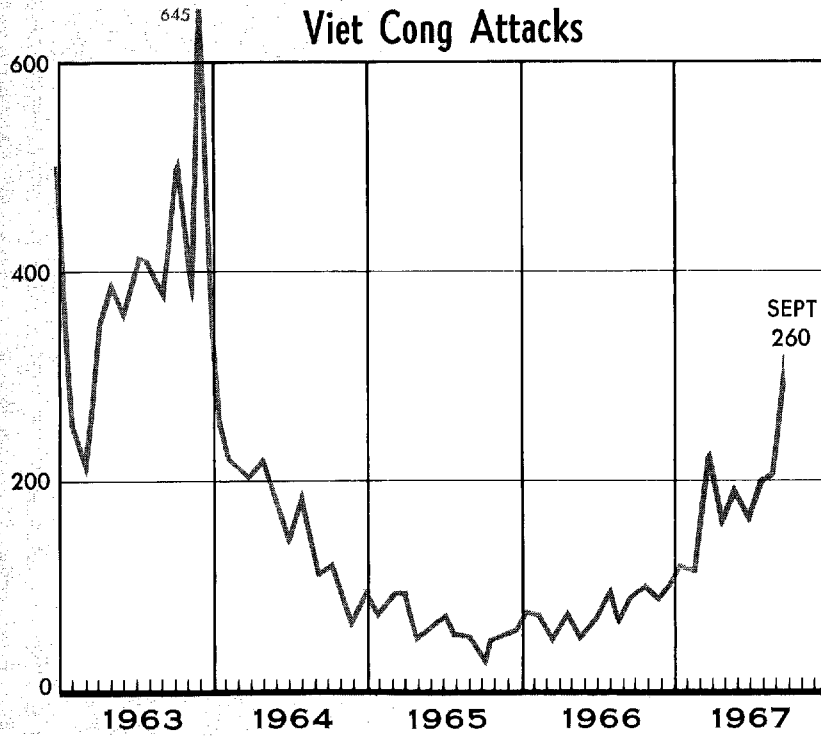
Casualties (Killed only)*



US Casualties to Date: Killed 15,369 Wounded 95,004 Captured 220 Missing 606

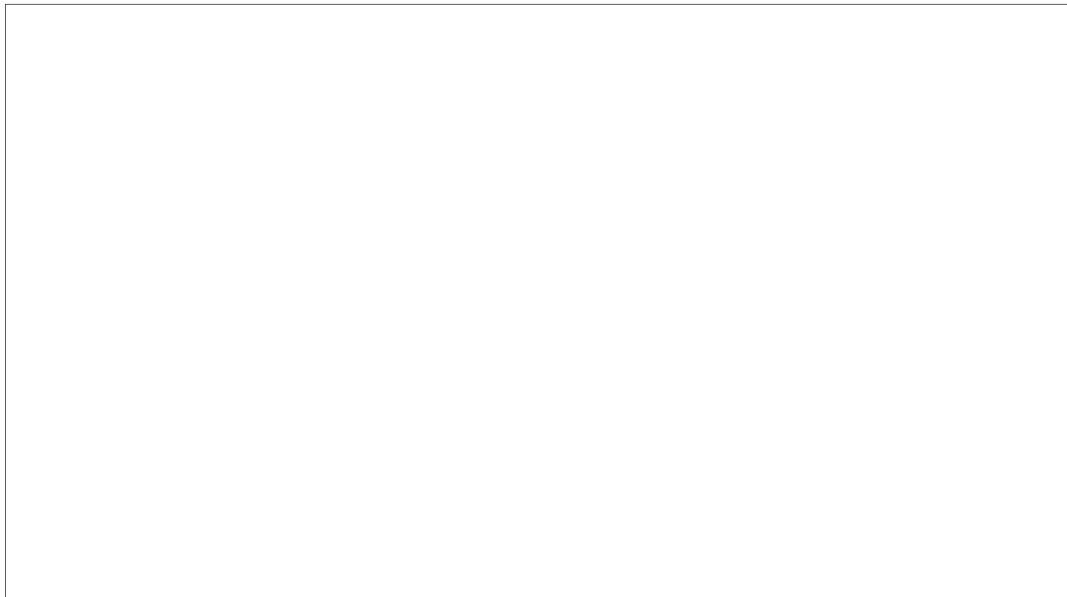
*Due to a change in the reporting of personnel losses, beginning 12 February 1967, the weekly and monthly figure will represent only personnel killed.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

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Lower House Activities

3. The Lower House is moving ahead in its rules drafting process and has approved more than 30 rules in four days of plenary debate. Among the rules approved is one dealing with the house's board of officers. These will include a chairman, two vice chairmen, a secretary general, and three deputy secretaries general. Unlike the Lower House, the Upper House substituted a full committee on internal affairs and rules for secretary general.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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VI. OTHER MAJOR ASPECTS

1. Cambodia has reacted to president Thieu's recent statement that South Vietnam reserved the right to pursue Communist troops into its territory. In an official statement issued on 5 December, Phnom Penh warned that Cambodian armed forces would resist any crossing of the border by South Vietnamese troops. It also reiterated that there are no Viet Cong or North Vietnamese forces on Cambodian territory and branded Thieu's statement as an attempt by the US and South Vietnam to "bring the war into Cambodia on false pretexts."

2. The Cambodians have expressed great concern recently over the possibility of the war spreading to their country and can be expected to use their limited ground and air forces against any allied ground units crossing the border.

3. There is no evidence, however, of any particular Cambodian alert along the border as a result of these increased fears in Phnom Penh.

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Recent intrusions by Cambodian MIGs into South Vietnam suggest that air patrols along the border have probably increased.

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