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File: Vietnam

21 July 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted]

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SUBJECT : Estimates of the Infiltration of Supplies
and Personnel to North Vietnam

Attached is our response to your questions relating
to enemy logistics in the war in Vietnam.

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[redacted]
Chief, Trade and Services Division

Distribution: (S-2408)
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OER/T/SP; TR: [redacted] (21 July 67)

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ARMY review(s) completed.

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Infiltration of Personnel and Supplies into South Vietnam

I. Supplies

1. The major entry routes from North Vietnam into Laos for trucks carrying supplies into the Panhandle are now the Mu Gia Pass primarily and Route 137/912 secondarily. The road system is supplemented by portering on trails and by river transportation on the Se Bang Hieng from North Vietnam and by river transportation on the Se Kong from Cambodia.

2. The overall volume of supplies delivered into the Panhandle on these routes from North Vietnam and on the Se Kong from Cambodia during the 1966-67 dry season probably exceeds the volume estimated to have been delivered during the 1965-66 dry season. Some movement of supplies will continue during the 1967 rainy season. We cannot estimate with confidence the total delivered January to June 1967, because of the lack of observations on Route 137/912. But taking into account all available data, and the known improvements in the road system, and truck sightings we estimate, after allowing for losses in transit and for the requirements of the Communists in Laos, that during the year beginning 1 October 1966 an average of over 40 tons a day will have been made available for stockpiling in southern Laos or for subsequent delivery to the Communists in South Vietnam. Over 30 of the 40 tons will have moved from North Vietnam and the other 10 tons will have moved through Laos from Cambodia

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on the Se Kong and Route 110.

3. We estimate that most of the Class II, IV and V supplies required by the Communist forces in South Vietnam from external sources are delivered from North Vietnam through Laos. The tonnage received by the Communists in South Vietnam from Cambodia through Laos is mainly rice. (See paragraph 7. below, for the estimate of logistic requirements of the Communist forces in South Vietnam.)

4. It is not possible to estimate the volume of supplies moved across the DMZ in 1967. We do estimate that in 1966 the Communists obtained at least 3,000 tons of rice from North Vietnam for use in the DMZ area. Some of this rice may have entered Quang Tri from the trails through Laos. In addition, NVA forces in Quang Tri are almost exclusively dependent on external sources for supplies other than food. VC forces in Quang Tri depend on external sources to some extent also. The frequent movement of NVA forces in Quang Tri province back and forth across the DMZ makes it impossible, however, to make a firm estimate of the total logistical movements across the DMZ.

5. Attempts to infiltrate supplies by sea have continued during January through June 1967, but we do not have adequate intelligence to assign quantities to the amount that may have been infiltrated successfully. Supplies infiltrated by sea probably consist mainly of weapons and ammunition and some medicine. The total

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volume infiltrated by sea is estimated to be small, however, compared with the Communist requirements for supplies from external sources.

6. We do not have an estimate of the total volume of supplies delivered directly from Cambodia into South Vietnam in the first half of 1967. In 1966 shipments of rice from Cambodia to Communist forces in South Vietnam and Laos amounted to at least 20,000 tons. Of this amount about 5,000 tons probably were delivered on the Se Kong into Laos some portion of which subsequently moved to South Vietnam. We estimate that an average of 25 tons a day may be delivered to Laos on this route during this year of which an average of 10 tons moves to South Vietnam. Deliveries of rice on other routes directly into South Vietnam during 1967 appears to have decreased, however. This conclusion is based on the lack of reporting of the type received in 1966 regarding shipments and official sales, the scarcity of rice in Cambodia, and the effort made this year by the Cambodian government to control rice sales and to stop rice smuggling. Deliveries of other types of supplies -- consisting mainly of goods that can be purchased on the open market -- may have increased this year, but the overall volume remains small compared to the quantity needed by the Communists.

7. As the following tabulation indicates, in mid-1967 about one-fourth of the daily supply requirements for NVA and VC regular and administrative support forces in South Vietnam was drawn from

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sources outside of South Vietnam (in short tons):

	<u>Total</u>	<u>External</u>
I (Food)	162	36
II and IV (Weapons, Quartermaster, Engineer, Medical, Signal, Chemical, etc.)	20	6
III (POL)	Negl.	Negl.
V (Ammunition)	10	9
	.	
Total	<u>192</u>	<u>51</u>

There is a growing dependence on external sources for supplies, including food. This is partly the result of the growing proportion of North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam, especially since they are generally deployed in food deficit areas, and partly because of Allied denial efforts. VC guerrilla forces may require a very small amount of external supplies, principally ammunition, but the bulk of their supplies is obtained almost exclusively from local sources within South Vietnam.

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II. Personnel Infiltration

1. USMACV estimates of NVA infiltration are given below.

	<u>Accepted</u>	<u>Possible</u>	<u>Total</u>
1965	25,800	9,000	34,800
1966	53,500	28,500	82,000
1967			
Jan	600	1,400	2,000
Feb	1,200	900	2,100
March	2,300	5,500	7,800
April	500	300	800
May	500	---	500
June	---	---	---
	<u>5,100</u>	<u>8,100</u>	<u>13,200</u>

2. The above MACV estimates of NVA infiltration for the period January through June 1967 do not accurately reflect the number of troops that have actually infiltrated into South Vietnam. There are other gross indications that the number of troops infiltrated was much higher.

3. The above estimates are incomplete because of the time that elapses between the date a NVA group infiltrates and the date it is "discovered" to the satisfaction of MACV. For example, the following data illustrates changes in MACV reporting of January-June 1966 NVA infiltration.

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<u>Date of Estimate</u>	<u>Total Infiltration</u>
July 1966	32,675
October 1966	53,302
December 1966	54,587
June 1967	54,400

As can be seen from the above, MACV's infiltration estimates require a number of months to "firm up." This time lag -- about 3 months in the above example -- has not remained the same since 1966. The increasing share of replacement and filler troops in total infiltration makes rapid identification more difficult and has caused the current detection period to extend beyond six months in many cases. Indeed, changes are still being made in 1965 infiltration totals.

4. Of the 13,200 infiltrators carried by MACV for the first half of 1967, 7,000 are believed to have crossed the DMZ. Nearly all of the remainder traveled through Laos. A very small number of VIP infiltrators enter South Vietnam by sea infiltration from North Vietnam or third countries.

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