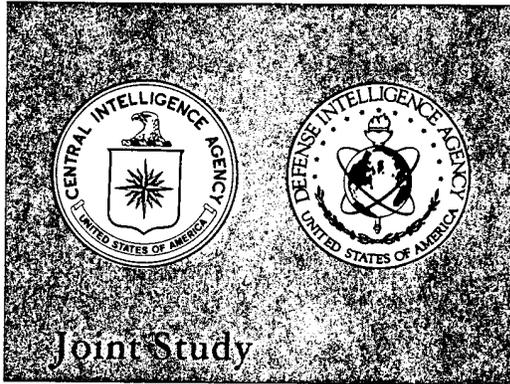


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# Survey of Communist Military Developments in Indochina



~~Top Secret~~



February 6, 1975

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**SURVEY OF COMMUNIST  
MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA\***

(This report covers the period  
January 23 - February 5, 1975)

The Key Points

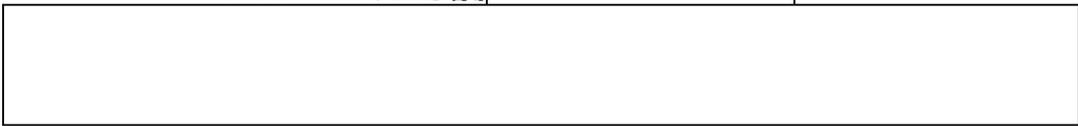
- [redacted] more than 25,000 troops have been sent to MRs 3 and 4 since mid-November - 10,000 higher than the comparable period a year ago.
- A large North Vietnamese transportation effort is [redacted] to begin in early February.
- [redacted]
- The Khmer Communists have mined the lower Mekong River. In addition, they have transported large quantities of military supplies from northeastern Cambodia to the central and southern part of the country.
- With the sharp drop in supplies coming up the Mekong, stocks in Phnom Penh declined substantially during January.
- A recent CIA/DIA study, estimating 67,000 Khmer Communist combat forces in Cambodia, is at Annex B.

\* This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

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February 6, 1975

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**Preface**

This report summarizes evidence received during the reporting period of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military supplies toward and into South Vietnam, (II) significant combat activity, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

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[redacted]

DETAILS

I. Infiltration and Redeployment of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

*Personnel Infiltration*

1. [redacted]

[redacted]

2. Hanoi's dispatch of 49,500 troops so far this season now exceeds that of a year ago at this time (see the accompanying table). [redacted]

[redacted]

Comparative Starts of Troops from North Vietnam

	<u>1972/73</u>	<u>1973/74</u>
Total regular infiltration cycle, Sep 1-Jun 30	94,000	94,500
	<u>1973/74</u>	<u>1974/75</u>
Total regular infiltration starts, Sep 1-Feb 5	48,000	49,500
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

[redacted]

*Redeployments*

3. Another North Vietnamese antiaircraft artillery (AAA) regiment has withdrawn from South Vietnam. [redacted] Vietnam indicate that the NVA 260th AAA Regiment is in Ha Bac Province northeast of Hanoi. The 800-man regiment, last located in Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam in 1973, deployed north [redacted] some time late last year. As a result, the North Vietnamese air defense structure in South Vietnam currently consists of one SAM and 23 AAA regiments with a total of 24,000 troops.

[redacted]

*Logistic Developments*

4. Rear services activity was highlighted by a report that a large transportation effort is slated to begin in early February. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] This [redacted] effort is designed to prepare the storage areas for the receipt and dispatch of large amounts of cargo that will begin moving early in February. In northern South Vietnam, the NVA 541st Support Regiment is rebuilding and improving its storage facilities along NVA Route 14, and it seems likely that this also is related to the upcoming transportation effort.

5. Detected supply shipments during the past two weeks varied widely between geographic areas. In southern North Vietnam, there were fairly heavy ordnance shipments. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] In contrast, detected supply shipments through northern South Vietnam were light. [redacted]

[redacted]

6. In Laos, photography of the Communists' dual-lane road in mid-January showed moderate traffic levels. [redacted]

# Communist and South Vietnamese Regular Combat Forces in South Vietnam

## South Vietnam

### Regular Combat Forces

		MR 1	
VC/NVA <sup>1</sup>	RVNAF <sup>2</sup>	VC/NVA	RVNAF
180,000	355,000	80,000	96,000

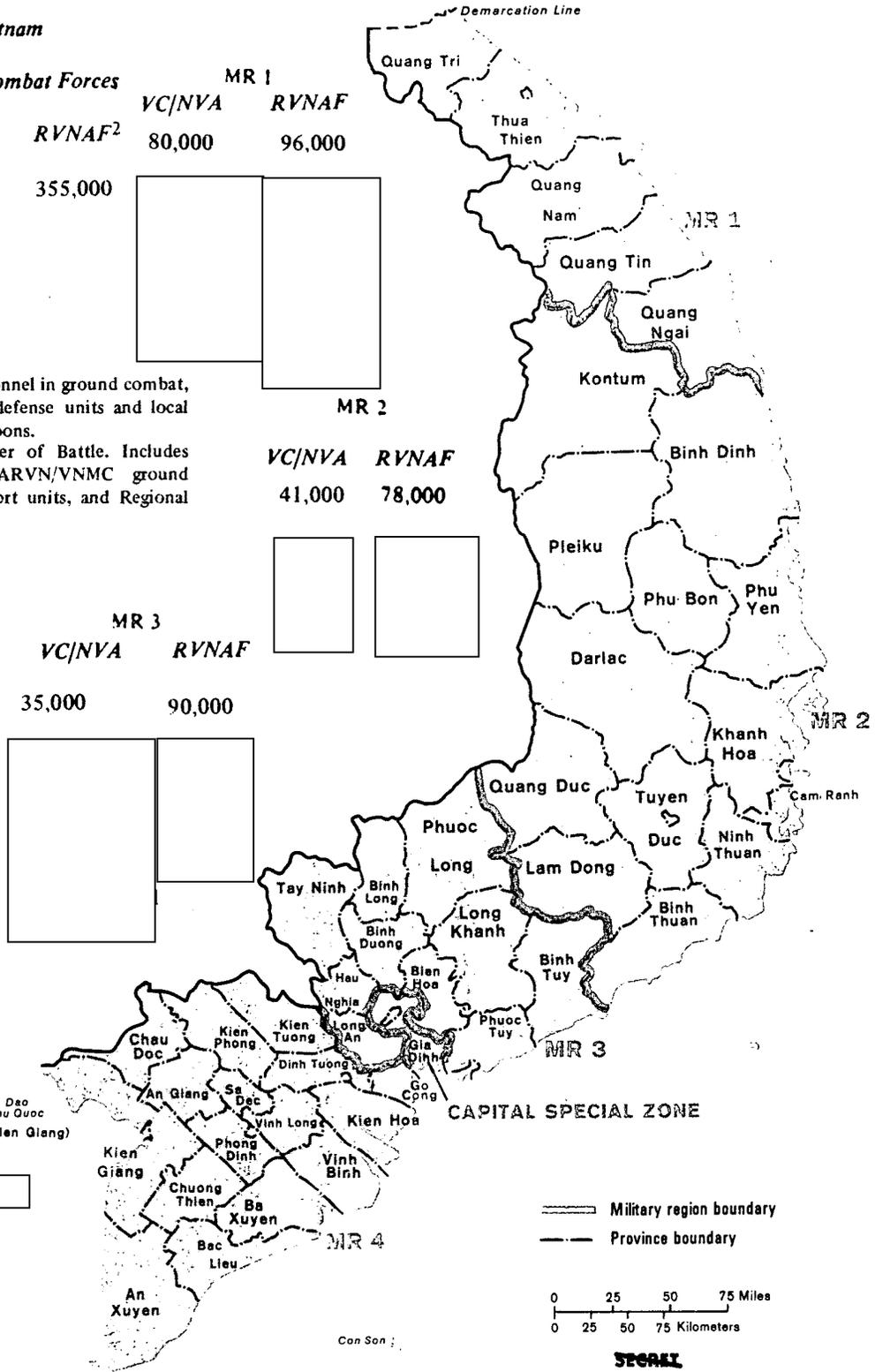
1. Includes VC/NVA personnel in ground combat, combat support, and air defense units and local force companies and platoons.

2. RVNAF Ground Order of Battle. Includes assigned personnel in ARVN/VNMC ground combat and combat support units, and Regional Force battalions.

		MR 2	
VC/NVA	RVNAF	VC/NVA	RVNAF
35,000	90,000	41,000	78,000

		MR 3	
VC/NVA	RVNAF	VC/NVA	RVNAF
24,000	91,000		

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— Military region boundary  
 - - - Province boundary

0 25 50 75 Miles  
 0 25 50 75 Kilometers

[redacted]

[redacted] Following the pattern reported previously, few trucks were actually observed on the Communists' dual-lane road in South Vietnam. [redacted]

[redacted] ng  
[redacted]

**II. Combat Activity in South Vietnam**

7. Combat activity in South Vietnam remained at a moderate level during the reporting period, as Communist units apparently were resting and refitting in preparation for renewed fighting. Most of the activity during the period was initiated by the South Vietnamese.

8. In MR 1, ARVN forces continue to meet resistance as they consolidate their hold on the Mo Tau/Bong Mountain area in Thua Thien Province. Farther south, in Quang Ngai Province, government sweep operations are meeting heavier resistance as they move into areas occupied by the NVA 52d Brigade. In MR 2, the Communists harassed government positions on the high ground overlooking the An Lao Valley in Binh Dinh Province. The commander of the ARVN 23d Division has deployed elements of the ARVN 53d Regiment from Pleiku to Ban Me Thuot City to counter the unconfirmed move of the NVA 320th Division to the Darlac/Quang Duc Province area.

9. In MR 3, daily attacks-by-fire on Tay Ninh City and sporadic rocket attacks on Bien Hoa Air Base continued. In MR 4, Communist forces captured the town of Long Khot in Kien Tuong Province in mid-January. Government-initiated operations in Kien Tuong Province near the Cambodia border continue to make contact with NVA 5th Division forces. Communist forces reportedly have suffered heavy casualties in these actions.

**III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities in Indochina**

[redacted]

10. [redacted]  
[redacted]



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

11. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

12. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

13. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

14. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

15.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

16.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

17.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

18.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

19.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

20.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

21.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[redacted]

*Tall King Radar Now Operational in North Vietnam*

22. A Tall King early warning radar, now in operation in the Hanoi area, is possibly being used to provide maximum early detection of SR-71 high-altitude reconnaissance missions. This radar enhances North Vietnam's early warning capability against reconnaissance flights.

23. The Tall King increases Hanoi's tracking capabilities to a distance of at least 400 miles. In addition, the North Vietnamese have been engaged in extensive efforts to develop a capability to shoot down an SR-71, but their ability to down a high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft remains minimal.

24. [redacted]

[redacted]

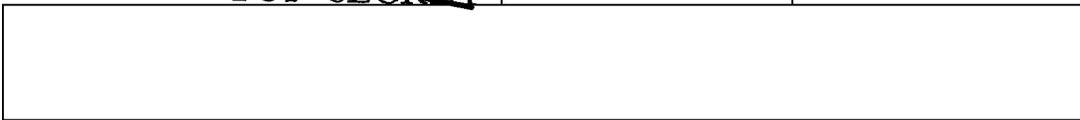
*NVA Fighter Regiment Completes Move to Bai Thuong*

25. On January 22, seven additional MIG-17 fighters flew from Kien An Air Base area near Haiphong to Bai Thuong Airfield in the northern panhandle. This essentially completes the shift of the entire 923d Fighter Regiment to Bai Thuong [redacted] There are now 34 MIG-17s stationed at Bai Thuong, the largest number ever. Some of these aircraft could deploy farther south in the panhandle to Vinh and Dong Hoi airfields, whose runways have recently been improved.

[redacted]

26. [redacted]

[redacted]



*ARVN and NVA Ammunition Expenditures During January*

27. South Vietnamese ammunition expenditures dipped only slightly in January, despite a much sharper decline in reported Communist firings. As the following table illustrates, the ARVN expended an average of 13,120 artillery rounds daily during January, 6% below December's level. Communist heavy weapons expenditures dropped 27%, from 820 rounds daily in December to 600 rounds in January. As a result of this decline, Communist expenditures in January were below the daily average of 710 rounds fired during 1974, while expenditures by South Vietnamese forces remained well above the average of 10,300 rounds daily last year. The initiation of several ARVN counteroffensive operations was largely responsible for the continued high level of ARVN expenditures.

**Daily ARVN and NVA Ammunition Expenditures in South Vietnam**

	<u>Rounds</u>				
	MR 1	MR 2	MR 3	MR 4	Total
ARVN artillery					
1974 average	2,040	2,460	2,980	2,820	10,300
December 1974	3,700	1,960	3,880	4,370	13,910
January 1975	3,040	2,470	3,470	4,140	13,120
NVA artillery, rocket, recoil-less rifle, and mortar					
1974 average	350	110	170	80	710
December 1974	170	30	480	140	820
January 1975	100	80	260	160	600

*Deliveries of Military Equipment to the Khmer Communists*

28. Since the beginning of the year, large quantities of military supplies have been transported from northeastern Cambodia to the central and southern parts of the country. During the first three weeks in January, at least six convoys of

[redacted]

20 to 30 trucks each transported cargo to the battlefields around Phnom Penh and along the lower Mekong. [redacted]

[redacted]

29. The southward movement of these military supplies indicates that the KC are trying to launch a second round of attacks in the capital area. The overall level of combat activity in recent weeks also has declined somewhat, likewise suggesting that KC units may be preparing for new attacks.

#### KC Use of Mines in the Lower Mekong

30. The KC laid mines in the lower Mekong during the past week as part of a continuing effort to interdict the river. [redacted]

[redacted] The first damage from the mines occurred on February 3, when three tugs were destroyed while they were returning to South Vietnam from Phnom Penh. Two days later, three additional tugs in an upriver convoy were sunk and the remainder of the convoy turned back.

31. [redacted]

[redacted]. If the use of mines in the lower Mekong becomes widespread, the movement of convoys both to and from the capital would be further endangered and ship crews would become even more reluctant to make the trip. The Khmer Navy at present has an extremely limited minesweeping capability, and KC use of sophisticated floating and submersible mines would present extreme difficulties to clearing operations.

#### Status of Stocks in Phnom Penh

32. Because of the disruption of Mekong River traffic, Phnom Penh's stocks of critical supplies dropped sharply during January. The three small river convoys that did make it to the capital city carried about 20,000 tons of rice, POL, and ammunition, less than 40% of what was delivered during January 1974 (see the following two tables).



**GKR Stocks for January 31, 1975<sup>1</sup>**

**Mekong Convoy Deliveries<sup>1</sup>**

			Tons	
	Tons	Days Supply	Jan 1974	Jan 1975
Rice	25,000	42	<b>Total</b> 51,800	<b>20,000</b>
POL	11,500	40	Rice	7,500
Ammunition	9,800	16	POL	5,500
			Ammunition	7,000

1. Data are approximate.

1. Data are approximate.

33. The GKR has already taken steps to ration government supplies of US PL-480 rice, by cutting off shipments of rice to the countryside - a measure facilitated by temporarily greater availabilities of locally produced rice. This has resulted in a decline in the consumption rate of GKR stocks in Phnom Penh from 825 to 600 tons per day. The reduced rate can probably be maintained over the next couple of months, after which deliveries from Phnom Penh to the countryside will have to be resumed.

34. As local rice supplies again dwindle, deliveries via the Mekong will probably have to be increased to about 25,000 tons a month. In addition, 17,000 tons per month of POL and almost 14,000 tons a month of ammunition will be needed to match last year's delivery rate for February through June.

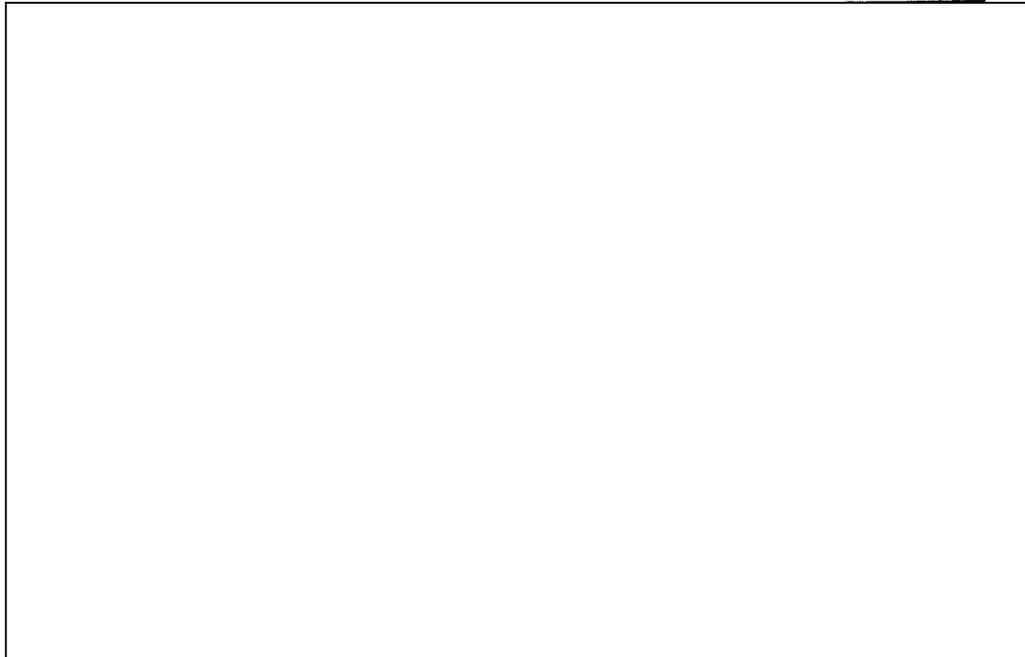
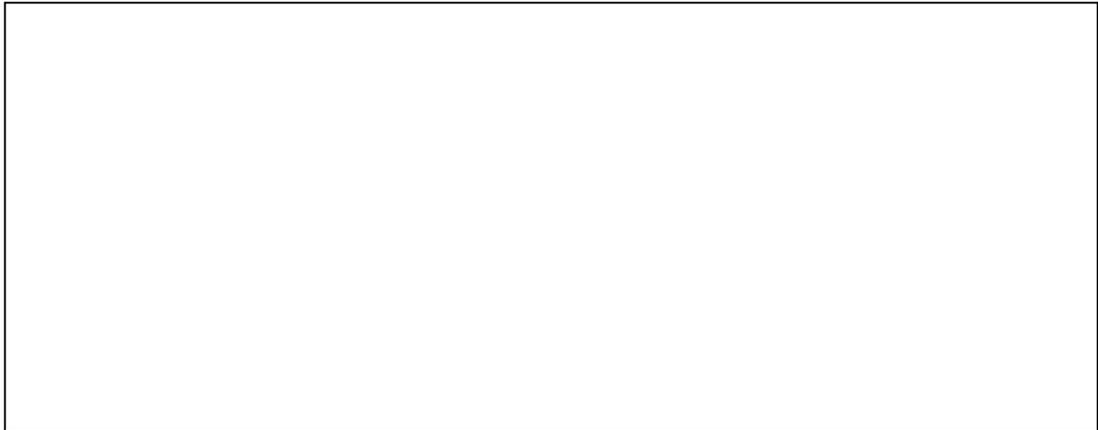


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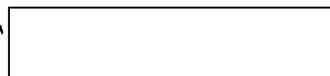


ANNEX A

INFILTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE PERSONNEL  
TO THE SOUTH



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ANNEX B

CIA/DIA ESTIMATE OF THE KHMER COMMUNIST  
ORDER OF BATTLE

Since late last summer, the Khmer Communists (KC) have increased the threat to the GKR by substantially expanding their combat forces. As of January 15, KC combat strength was estimated at 67,000 troops, an increase of 10,000 since August [redacted] and 16,000 (31%) over the May 1974 estimate. Of the total, 55,000 troops are in main force units, while the remainder are assigned to local force companies and platoons. Although FANK still maintains a much larger combat force (about 120,000), recent improvements in the KC force structure have reduced the government's manpower advantage. Countrywide, major KC units now include 6 divisions, 3 brigades, and 11 independent regiments.

The increases in the KC combat order of battle reflect both an expansion in the number of line units and the addition of new authorities to improve command and control of existing units. On a net basis, 3 new regiments and 20 independent battalions have been added to the order of battle since August. Most of these are new units created by drawing troops and cadre from older battalions, supplemented with recruits. The combat effectiveness of these units is relatively high. In other instances, however, units were formed entirely from fresh recruits with little training or from upgraded district forces (who in turn were replaced by new personnel). These units are much less effective and contribute only marginally to KC capabilities.

The KC also have improved their operations markedly by creating four new division and four new regimental headquarters. [redacted]

On a regional basis, KC strength in MR 203 registered the largest net increase between August and January - doubling to a total of about 12,000 troops. The increase resulted both from the establishment of three new divisional headquarters in late 1974 and the creation of several new regiments. These units, plus others that have recently moved into the region from MR 607, have participated in the strong and well-coordinated attacks along the Mekong River during the past month.



[redacted]

Large expansions in KC strength also occurred in MRs 304 and 405, which showed increases of more than 3,000 and 5,000 troops, respectively. KC combat troops in MR 304 now number about 9,000, while there are some 14,000 troops in MR 405. Most KC combat units in these regions are deployed along lines of communication and around provincial capitals, although some have moved closer to Phnom Penh during the past two months.

KC combat troops in MR 607 decreased slightly during the period and now number some 17,000 troops – the highest regional total in the country. The decline resulted primarily from the movement of several units out of the region into MR 203. Similar small declines also occurred in other regions.

The dramatic increase in KC combat strength since August is unlikely to be duplicated in upcoming months. The KC ordinarily use the wet season to expand their force structure because of the generally low level of combat. During the dry season, the Communists usually concentrate on replacing the heavy losses sustained in the fighting and maintaining the combat effectiveness of their units.