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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600
11 August 1966

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
FURTHER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION
CONTAINED HEREIN IS **NOT** AUTHORIZED

ARMY review(s) completed.

State Dept. review completed

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HIGHLIGHTS

A considerable body of evidence indicates that North Vietnam is developing a heavy artillery defense system along its coast. Such defensive weapons would be useful to the DRV only in the event of hostile naval operations within 20 miles of its coastline.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
Operation COLORADO/LIEN KET 52 continues in the coastal flatlands of Quang Tin and Quang Nam provinces with sporadic contact reported (Para. 1). The Cai Von training center 60 miles southwest of Saigon was attacked by a two-platoon Viet Cong force yesterday (Para. 2). The Duc Co Special Forces Camp in Pleiku Province was attacked with 50 rounds of mortar fire (Para. 3). A total of 96 Viet Cong sampans were damaged or destroyed by allied aircraft in the Mekong Delta (Para. 4). Two US MPs were killed and 17 wounded by an explosion at a firing range near Saigon today (Para. 5). Viet Cong ships are continuing the movement of supplies from southern provinces to Vinh Binh Province (Paras. 7-8)

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Weekly review of South Vietnam battle statistics (Para. 14).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:

The acting chairman of the Buddhist Institute has again asked the Ky-Thieu regime to "try" the Buddhist "struggle" movement leaders if the GVN considers the movement to have been illegal (Para. 4).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:
The developing DRV heavy coastal artillery defense system is discussed in the light of photographic evidence and prisoner reports (Paras. 1-7).

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

V. Communist Political Developments: The Soviets have been approaching Western European countries in an effort to isolate the US on Vietnam (Para. 1).

VI. Other Major Aspects: Sihanouk is continuing to voice skepticism about the prospects of negotiating a border agreement with the Vietnamese Communists (Paras. 1-3).

ANNEX:

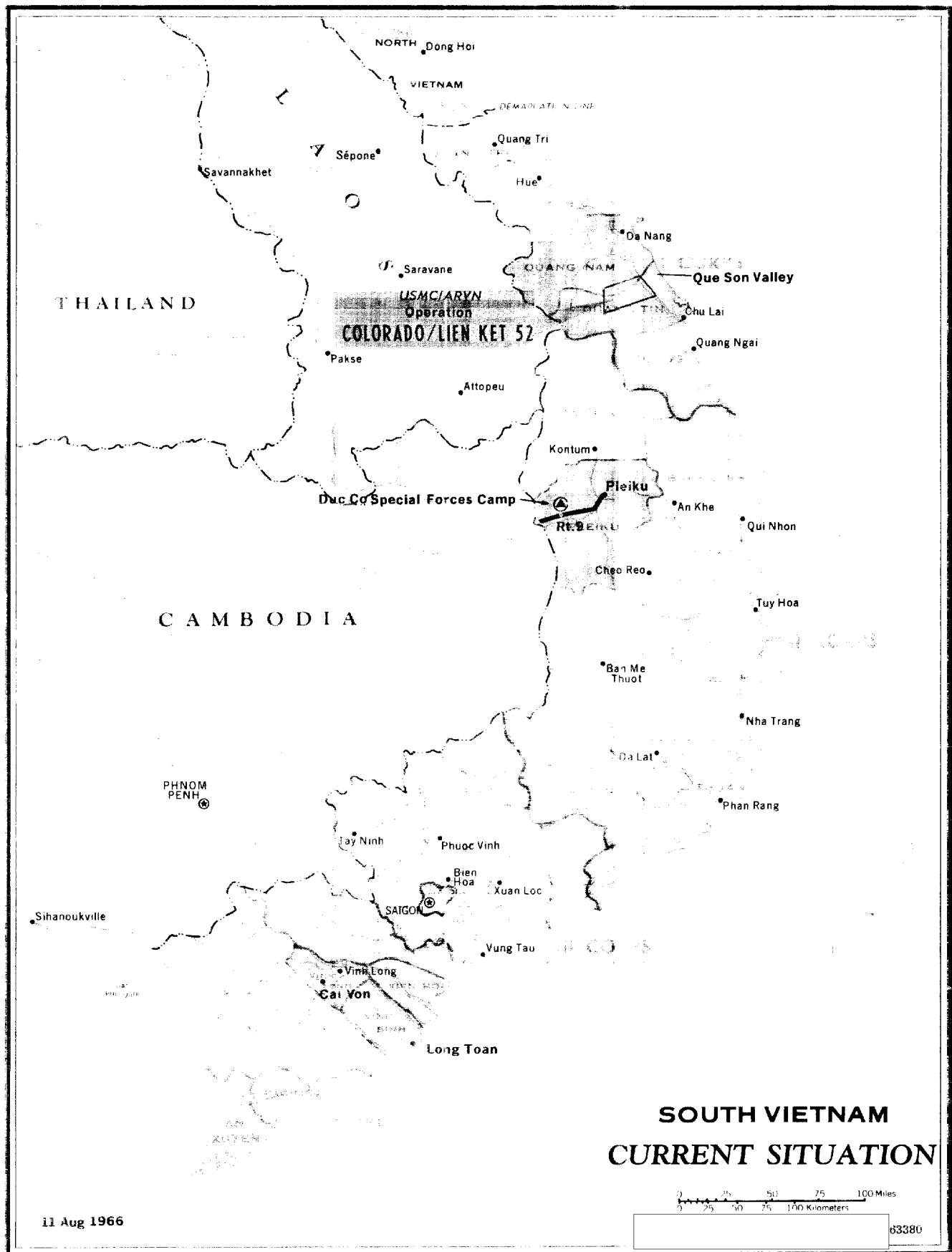
South Vietnam Battle Statistics 31 July - 6 Aug

Total Personnel Losses
Cumulative US Combat Casualties
Total Friendly Forces Personnel Losses

South Vietnam Battle Statistics 31 July - 6 Aug

Viet Cong Incidents
Viet Cong Attacks
Weapons Losses - GVN/VC

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. US and South Vietnamese Marines report sporadic contact with the enemy as multibattalion Operation COLORADO/LIEN KET 52 continues in the coastal flatlands of Quang Tin and Quang Nam provinces. The present engagements are taking place generally in the area of the Que Son Valley, a broad, fertile valley with 30,000 inhabitants who have been under the control of the Viet Cong since last November. Cumulative friendly casualties in this operation which began on 5 August now total 31 killed (16 US) and 154 wounded (88 US). Communist losses include 142 killed, 40 captured, and 21 weapons seized. The enemy casualty figure is expected to go much higher as the result of tactical air strikes--now totaling 253--which have been supporting the operation.

2. An estimated two-platoon-size Viet Cong force attacked the Cai Von training center approximately 60 miles southwest of Saigon in Vinh Long Province yesterday. The center was defended by one Regular Force platoon which suffered losses of 14 killed, 9 wounded, 3 missing and 10 weapons captured. A total of five Viet Cong were reported killed.

3. The Duc Co Special Forces Camp, located about 30 miles southwest of Pleiku town, was attacked by the Viet Cong yesterday. An estimated 50 rounds of 60-mm. mortar fire struck the base. There were no reports of casualties. This camp is located near Highway 19 in western Pleiku Province and is responsible for surveillance of the Cambodian border area.

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4. Heavy Viet Cong sampan traffic was sighted near the coast of the delta province of Kien Hoa about 50 miles south of Saigon yesterday. Tactical air strikes were called for and under the direction of a forward air controller, allied aircraft destroyed or damaged 96 sampans, and five Viet Cong were confirmed killed.

5. Two American military policemen were killed and 17 wounded by an explosion at a small-arms firing range near Saigon today. It has not been determined if the explosion came from a mine. The range is located at a military police installation in a sparsely inhabited area south of Saigon.

6. No major sea infiltration into South Vietnam was detected by allied forces participating in coastal surveillance operations during the month of July. US and South Vietnamese naval personnel detected 119,859 junks and 2,200 merchant ships and inspected 55,706 junks and 51 ships. Of those inspected, 131 junks and 1,777 persons were detained.

Movement of Viet Cong Supplies in the Delta

7. According to a report from Vinh Binh Province, weapons and ammunition are believed to be shipped from Viet Cong supply areas in southernmost An Xuyen and Bac Lieu provinces to the Long Toan area of Vinh Binh Province. The trip is reportedly made four times each month to four off-loading points. Vinh Binh provincial and local Viet Cong forces are deployed to provide security for the off-loading operations, which are reportedly completed within 24 hours. The material is then further dispersed to jungle areas.

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8. The size of the force required for security indicates that a considerable amount of weapons and ammunition may be involved in each shipment. Recent reports of small-arms fire against friendly reconnaissance aircraft flying in this area tends to confirm these reports.

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the B-52 strikes "lower the morale of the troops" but are not as effective as in the past. Now the Viet Cong have adopted the countermeasure of digging shallow holes just deep enough to crouch in until the strike is over.

10. A Viet Cong memorandum promulgating the countermeasure was captured in late April by soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The memo, dated 1 April 1966, laid down the rule that trenches should be no more than 4.5 feet deep. It further instructed that during the B-52 raids those in trenches "will squat, and plug their ears with their fingers," and that they "must not lean against the side of the trenches." Soldiers were enjoined from leaving the trenches "even when the earth is strongly shaking or the trenches are cracking."

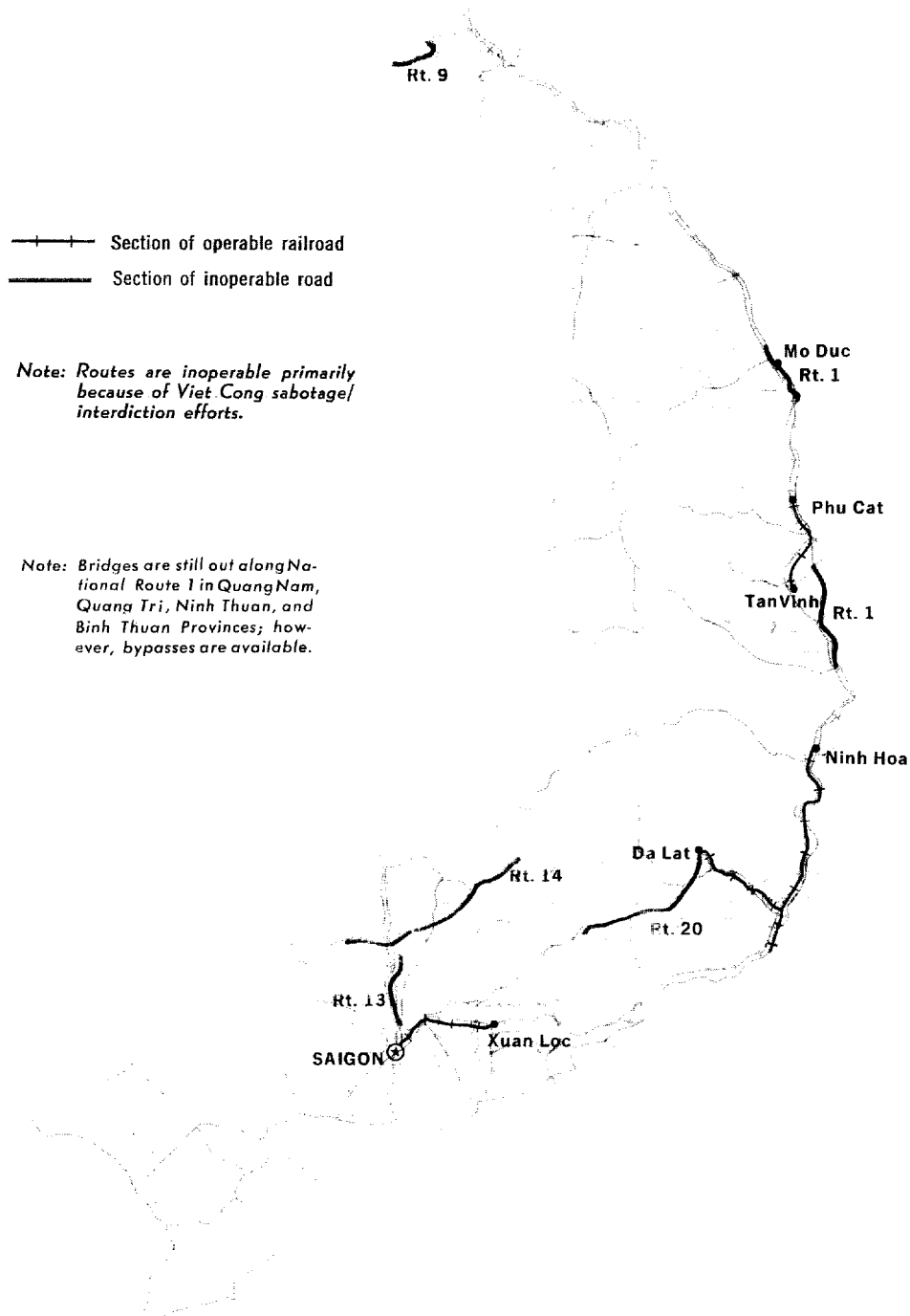
11. The memorandum also stated that if reconnaissance jets suspected of performing air photo missions were spotted, aircraft warning cells "will work on a 24-hour duty basis." Several recent prisoners have said their units have been warned well ahead of time of forthcoming B-52 raids.

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CURRENT OPERATIONAL STATUS OF MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND COASTAL RAILROAD



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Information as of 6 Aug 1966

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Status of Major Lines of Communications

13. The operational status of South Vietnam's major highways was improved this week with the opening of Route 14 north of Kontum town by establishing a bypass around a destroyed bridge. The railroad was also opened between Tan Vinh and Phu Cat in Binh Dinh Province.

Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics

14. The week of 31 July - 6 August compared with the week of 24-30 July.

I. Viet Cong Incidents

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>At-tacks</u>	<u>Regimental size</u>	<u>Battalion size</u>	<u>Company size</u>
24-30 July	20	0	0	2
31 July-6 Aug	10	0	0	1

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Harass-ment</u>	<u>Terror-ism</u>	<u>Sabotage</u>
24-30 July	487	20	34
31 July-6 Aug	443	12	23

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Propaganda</u>	<u>Anti-Aircraft</u>	<u>Total Incidents</u>
24-30 July	13	102	676
31 July-6 Aug	11	35	534

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II. Casualties

	VC/PAVN		GVN	
	24-30 July	31 July-6 Aug	24-30 July	31 July-6 Aug
Killed	1,153	649	200	130
Wounded	-----	---	426	229
Missing/Captured	<u>89</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>54</u>
TOTALS	1,242	724	657	413

	US		FREE WORLD	
	24-30 July	31 July-6 Aug	24-30 July	31 July-6 Aug
Killed	99	71	12	0
Wounded	531	615	16	6
Missing/Captured	<u>20</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	650	714	28	6

III. Weapons Captured

	VC/PAVN		GVN	
	24-30 July	31 July-6 Aug	24-30 July	31 July-6 Aug
Individual	362	Not	186	114
Crew-served	<u>33</u>	Reported	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
TOTALS	395		189	119

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

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Buddhist Developments

4. According to a South Vietnamese newspaper, the venerable Thien Hoa, the Buddhist Institute's acting chairman, on 9 August challenged "Generals" Ky and Thieu to try the "main culprits" among the Buddhists who led the "struggle" movement and to release

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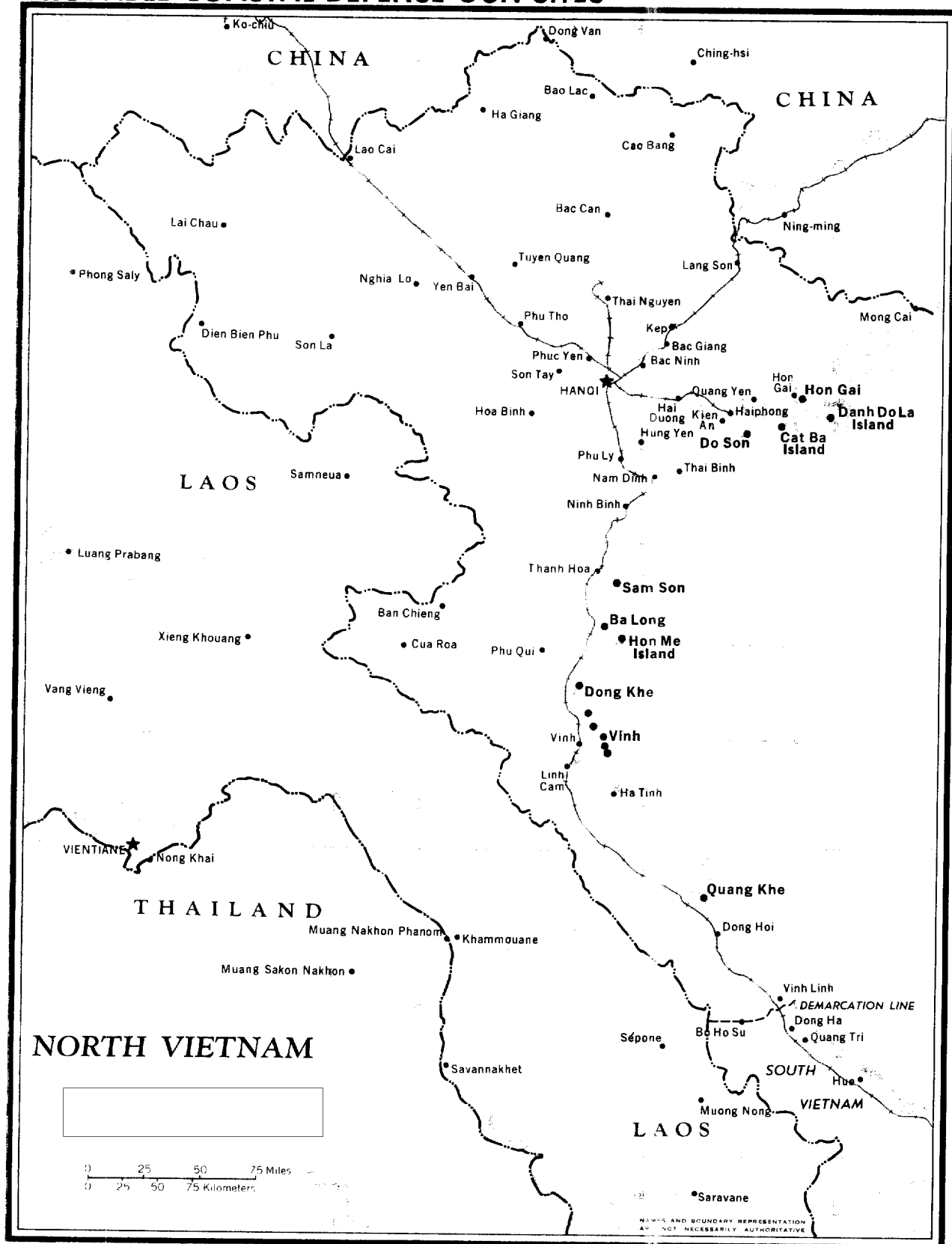
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the "senselessly" involved Buddhist accomplices, whom he numbers in the hundreds. Thien Hoa, speaking officially for the Buddhist clerical hierarchy, has made similar appeals in the past week to the government and the United Nations in an apparent attempt to rekindle the Buddhist cause and probably to demonstrate once again that there is unanimity among the church's leaders.

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PROBABLE COASTAL DEFENSE GUN SITES



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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. Photography and prisoner reports have provided a considerable body of evidence which indicates that the DRV is developing a heavy artillery defense system along the North Vietnamese coast. Most of the batteries so far detected are grouped about port areas and apparently are equipped with guns of varying calibers and origins. Defense weapons of this sort could be useful to the DRV only in the event of hostile naval operations within 20 miles of its coast. There is no evidence thus far that the coastal defense system includes either guided or free-flight missiles.

2. Operational use of one of these coastal defense batteries came on 4 April 1966 when US destroyers operating 17 miles offshore to provide search and rescue (SAR) support for aircraft striking Vinh received a single salvo from what was believed to be a large-caliber coastal defense gun. An hour and a half later the same ships observed six additional air bursts about 5,000 yards dead ahead of their course. Moments thereafter a helicopter operating with the destroyers reported that he was under heavy artillery fire. The pilot described the shell bursts as "bigger than 155-mm." and stated that they continued until he had flown 25 miles from the coast

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the fire could have emanated from any one of five known gun positions located north and south of the Song Ca River at Vinh.

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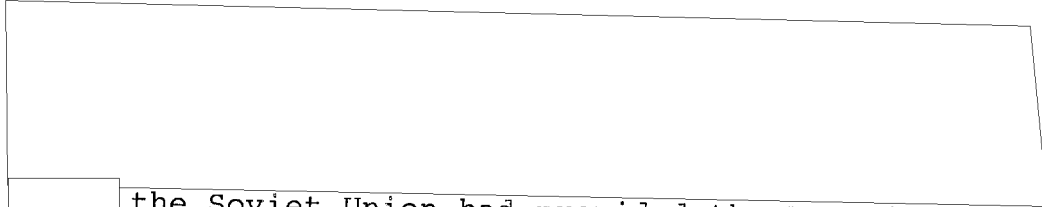
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[redacted] the Soviet Union had provided the DRV with a battalion of twelve 130-mm. guns and accompanying radar fire-control equipment. While photography now available cannot confirm the presence of guns of this specific caliber, there are a number of photographs of coastal defense sites capable of handling weapons of this general size.

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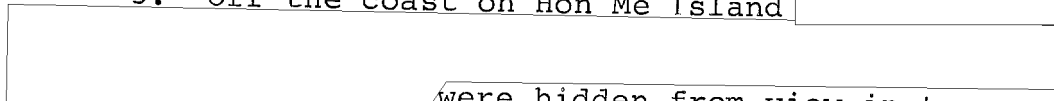
4. Along the southern coast of the DRV at Quang Khe, photography has revealed two occupied and camouflaged positions containing one probable 100-mm. field gun and a second weapon believed to be either a 122-mm. corps gun or a 152-mm. howitzer. At Dong Khe, 22 miles north of Vinh, photography [redacted] shows at least five revetted field artillery emplacements. Farther north, at Ba Long, one of the captured DRV naval sources reported that 130-mm. artillery pieces were being installed. Photography of this location [redacted] did not show firm evidence of coastal defense positions but did reveal considerable bunkering activity.

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5. Off the coast on Hon Me Island [redacted]

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[redacted] were hidden from view in tunnel emplacements and were brought out only upon receipt of orders to fire. There was no fire-control radar at the site, [redacted]

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[redacted] At Sam Son, near the river entrance to Thanh Hoa, a photo mission [redacted] showed a well-developed site with eight gun positions cut into the hills and a number of command and communications buildings.

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6. Along the northern coast of the DRV the known gun defenses begin at Do Son, the peninsula which protects the entrance to Haiphong harbor.

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[redacted]
[redacted] an artillery battalion equipped with twelve 100-mm. guns, a mobile radar site, and a fire direction control center defend this key position. Photography [redacted] tends to confirm this information. At least eight concrete revetments, bunkered ammunition storage pits, and numerous AAA positions dot the area. East of Haiphong on Cac Ba Island, photography [redacted] shows three coastal defense sites. [redacted]

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[redacted] a Chinese engineering regiment had been involved in constructing a variety of underground fortifications there, including a coastal defense installation with four tunneled positions. The photographs clearly show these sites but fail to reveal what guns may be emplaced there.

7. Other key points east of Haiphong at which coastal defense positions may have been developed include the port of Hon Gay, Phung Hoang Island and Danh Do La Island. Photography of the latter site [redacted] shows a six-bunker, mountain installation similar to the positions on Cac Ba Island.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. The Soviets have approached several French embassies and various Foreign Ministry officials to solicit French collaboration in Moscow's campaign to isolate the US on Vietnam. These behind-the-scenes moves are part of a stepped-up effort by the Soviets to persuade nonparticipation in the Vietnam war to urge restraint on the US. Moscow in recent weeks has sought to bring diplomatic pressure on the US through several non-Communist third parties including Sweden, Denmark, India, Britain, and UN Secretary General U Thant.

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VI. OTHER MAJOR ASPECTS

1. Cambodian Prince Sihanouk is continuing to voice skepticism about the prospects of negotiating a border agreement with the Vietnamese Communists. At an 8 August press conference in Phnom Penh, Sihanouk maintained that such an agreement was "far from being concluded." He reminded his audience that the 1964 attempt to strike an accord with Hanoi and the Viet Cong had been unsuccessful, and emphasized that he is not optimistic about the chances this time.

2. Sihanouk did not spell out what points were at issue with the Communists. In statements on the problem last month, he asserted that the Communists might find it difficult to accept his version of the Cambodia - South Vietnam border. There is no indication that this was a problem in the 1964 negotiations, and by raising it in the current context Sihanouk may have been indicating that this time Cambodia would press for more favorable terms. His ambiguous reference to signing an agreement with the "true Vietnam" also raises the possibility that Phnom Penh is again pushing for a single agreement signed both by Hanoi and the Viet Cong. North Vietnam held out for separate agreements during the 1964 talks.

3. Contrary to earlier reports, Sihanouk did not say that Cambodia would assist the Vietnamese Communists in the war as a quid pro quo for a border agreement. He reasserted the position that the border agreement would not affect Cambodia's "neutrality" or its desire to keep out of the war. He strenuously asserted, however, that he would not be deterred in concluding an agreement by threats of punitive action by Saigon, and indicated that Cambodia was prepared to fight if it were attacked by the South Vietnamese.

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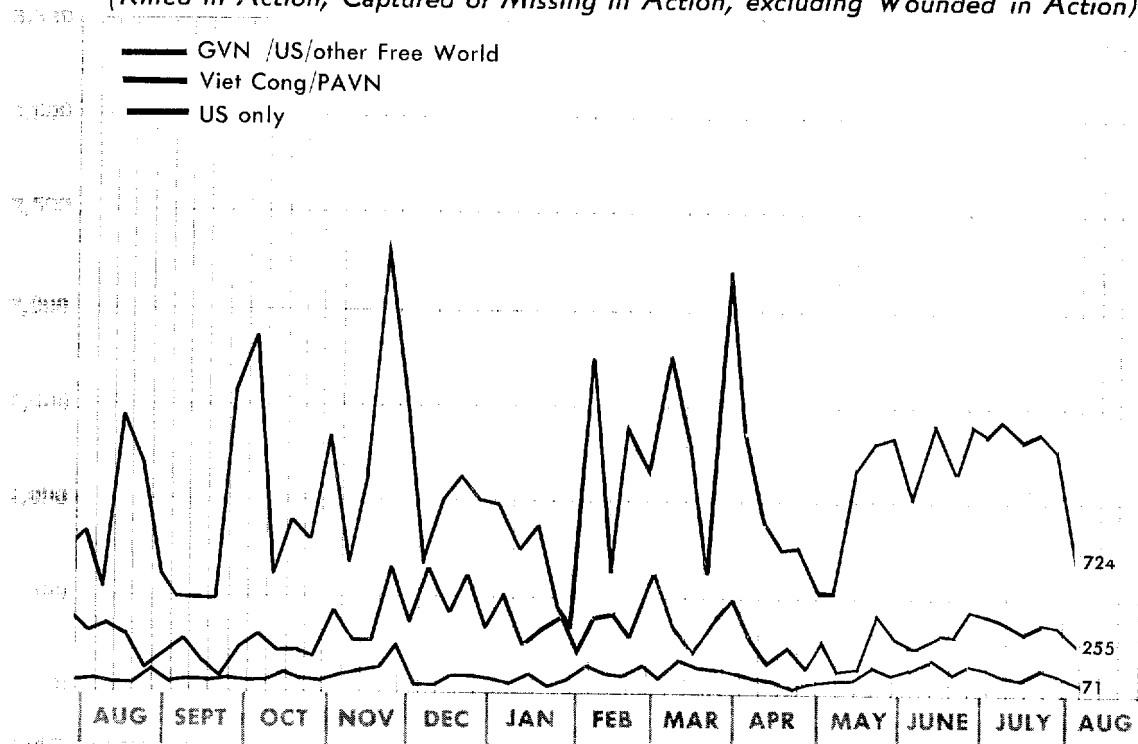
SOUTH VIETNAM BATTLE STATISTICS

REPORT 31 JULY - 6 AUGUST 1966

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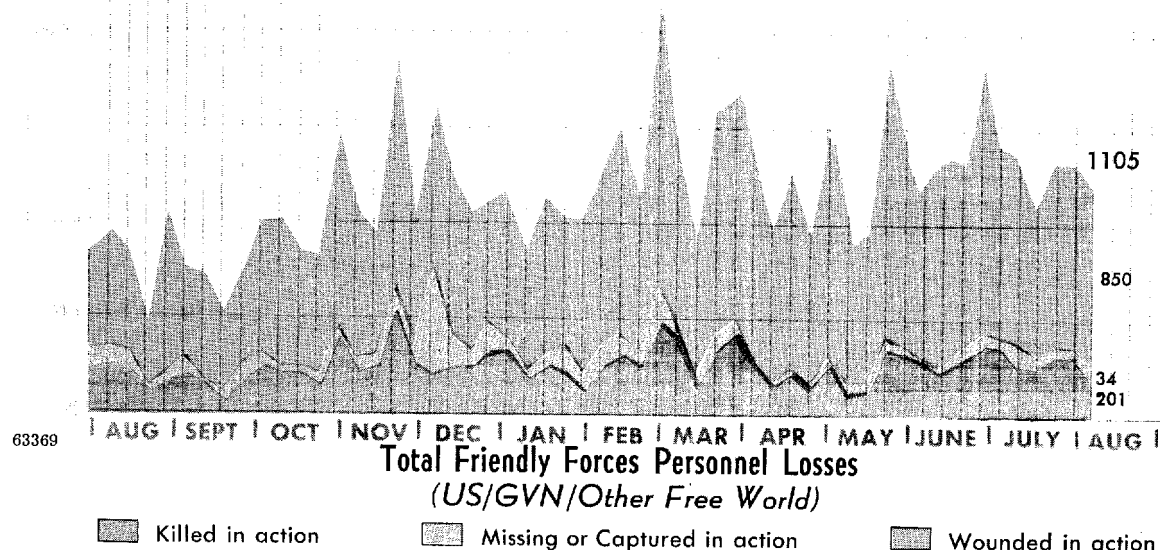
Total Personnel Losses

(Killed in Action, Captured or Missing in Action, excluding Wounded in Action)



US Combat Casualties in Vietnam (including North Vietnam)

	Fatalities	Non-fatal Wounds	Captured	Missing
Cumulative, 1961-1964	255	1524	10	12
Cumulative, 1965	1365	6110	15	136
Cumulative, 1966 to date	2990	17869	42	124
TOTAL	4610	25503	67	272



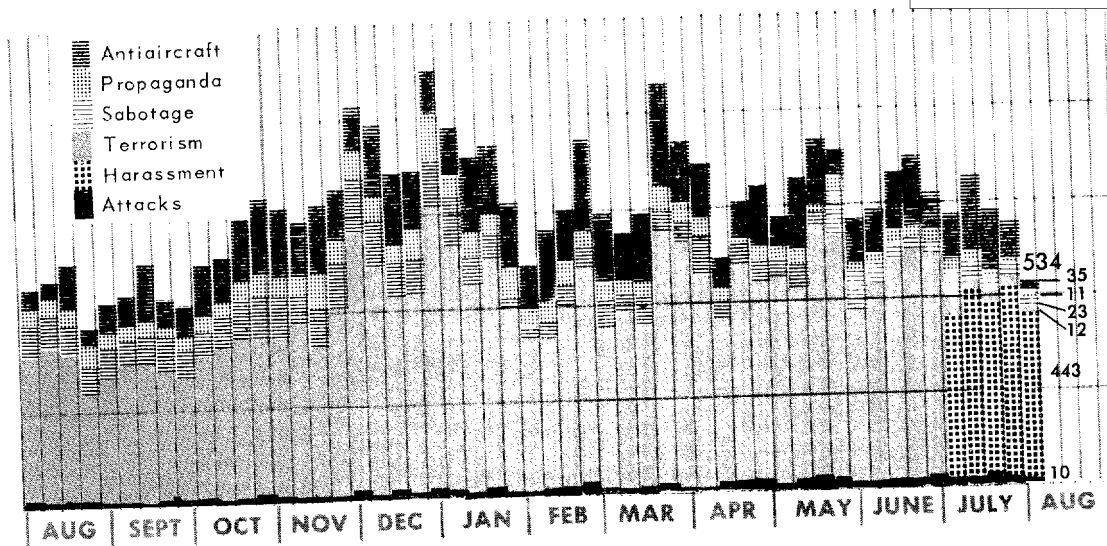
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SOUTH VIETNAM BATTLE STATISTICS

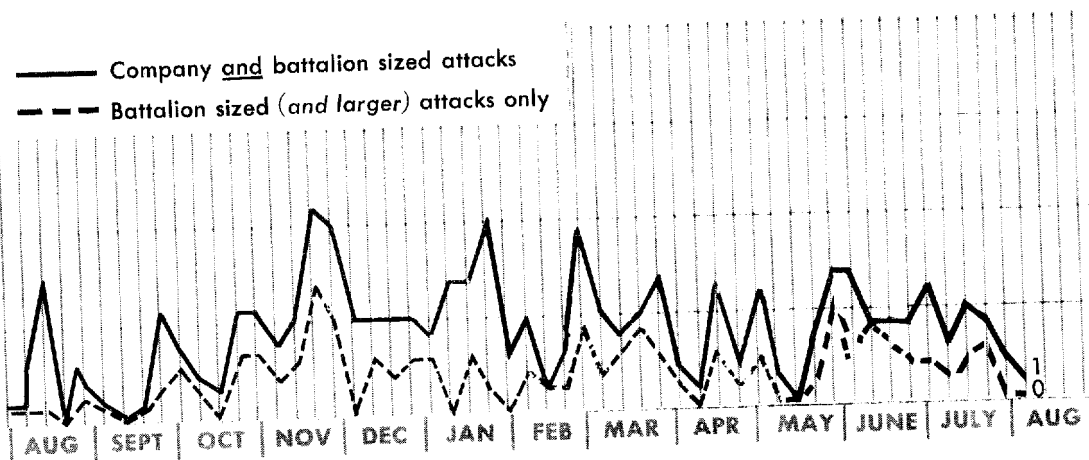
31 JULY - 6 AUGUST 1966

Viet Cong Incidents

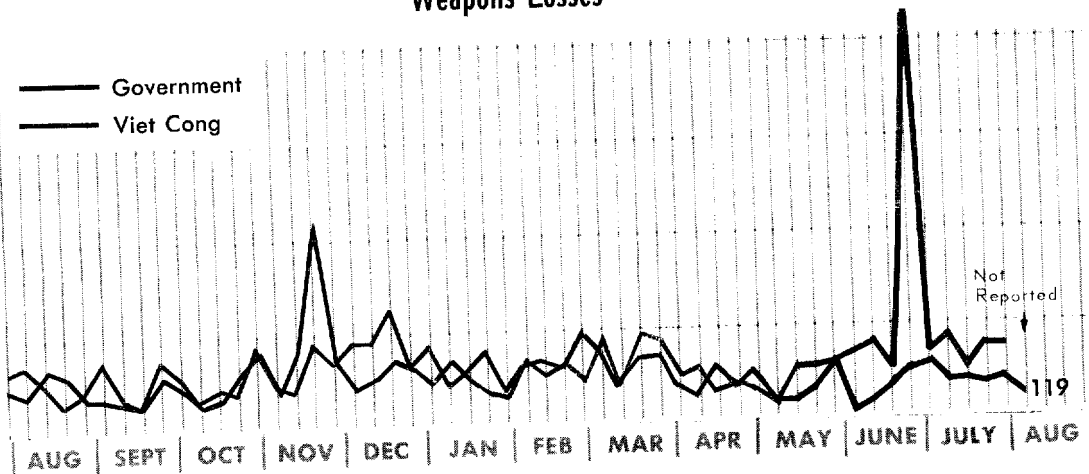
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Viet Cong Attacks



Weapons Losses



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