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Thirty-Fourth Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

(This report covers the period from 10 October through 16 October 1973)

This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

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The Key Points

- Communist logistic activity remained at low levels in North and South Vietnam as heavy rains and high winds from seasonal typhoons have caused extensive disruptions. In Laos, road repair and construction continues.
- The large number of Communist storage areas in MR 1 constructed since the January ceasefire could serve both military and economic/political functions.
- Combat activity remained at low levels in both South Vietnam and Laos last week.

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The Details

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Laos

5. Communist units in the Laos Panhandle are still focusing primarily on road repair and construction. Only light vehicle activity was detected and 25X1

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was probably related to localized activity. Although Rear Service units should be capable of moving a high volume of supplies through this area within a few weeks, there have been no indications that such an upsurge is imminent.

South Vietnam

6. The impact of the typhoons apparently was even more severe in northern South Vietnam than in North Vietnam. In this area, truck traffic was at a virtual standstill, communications were disrupted, many roads and bridges were washed out, and cargo in storage was damaged by water. In the near future Rear Service units in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces probably will be concentrating on repairing recent flood damage and countering the effects of the expected new typhoon on the logistic system.

II. <u>Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South</u> Vietnam and Laos

A. South Vietnam

7. In South Vietnam, the total number of Communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January, 15 June, and for the last week (10-16 Oct) are shown below:

Military Region		Total Since 27 January Ceasefire		Total Since 15 June Ceasefire		Last Week (10-16 Oct)	
		Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
	MR 1	1,377	4,794	352	1,435	34	103
	MR 2	548	3,720	284	1,866	15	117
	mr 3	562	4,045	160	1,469	10	92
	MR 4	1,105	9,903	427	3,737	24	245
	Totals	3,592	22,462	1,223	8,507	83(80)	557(417) <u>1</u> /

 $\underline{1}$ Denotes totals of previous week.

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8. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the charts on the following pages, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion.

9. The most significant combat incident of the week occurred on 13 October when Communist forces overran the South Vietnamese mountaintop outpost at Dach Ma, southeast of Hue. ARVN forces may try to retake the position, but resistance would be expected since the Communists are now in an excellent position to observe and report any government activities in the coastal lowlands and along Route 1 that will threaten their forces in the hills and mountains to the west.

B. Laos

10. There was no significant military activity in Laos last week.

III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Capabilities in Indochina

Since the January ceasefire, the North 11. Vietnamese have constructed over 3,000 buildings, including 1,800 for general storage, along the highlands supply corridor, on Route 9 between Dong Ha and Khe Sanh, and in the Ba Long Valley. Some 240 buildings identified as suitable for ammunition and explosives storage can accommodate an estimated 70,000 short tons. The 1,800 general cargo storage buildings could house many times that amount. Obviously, many of the buildings could be used for purposes other than storage--such as vehicle and weapons repair and light industrial production activities. Such activities serve the North Vietnamese within the context of both their military and economic/ political options.

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