

45

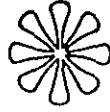
~~TOP SECRET~~

ITEMS SPECIFIED IN THE SPECIAL APPENDIX
FILED ON JUNE 21, 1971 WITH THE
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

- I. Portions of Exhibits 7 and 7A the disclosure of which would present increased risks to the safety of U.S. forces

VOL IV, C. 6, page 52 - Provides CENCPAC and NIE 14.3-66 assessment of enemy force structure in SVN in 1966, and would allow enemy to assess accuracy of US estimates at that time and draw conclusions on the extent to which he was capable of avoiding detection in combat situations.

Section I, Item 2



UNITED STATES - VIETNAM RELATIONS

1945 - 1967

IV.c.6. (a)

U.S. GROUND STRATEGY
AND FORCE DEPLOYMENTS
1965--1967

VOLUME I

A. Planning Begins for CY 67

1. CINCPAC's 18 June Request

However, even before the Secretary of Defense published Program No. 3, CINCPAC had submitted his Calendar Year 1966 adjusted requirements and Calendar Year 1967 requirements. 1/

CINCPAC's requirements were based on a new concept for Vietnam. The four basic objectives remained as they had been set forth in CINCPAC's February concept. A new item in the June concept was that US/PWMAF and RVNAF general reserves and ARVN corps reserve forces would conduct sustained and coordinated operations with increased effort in the Highlands and along the western ARVN border. This was in line with the generally increased emphasis given in the concept to restricting NVA/VC forces' access to the coastal and land borders of ARVN through effective land, sea, and air interdiction operations.

During this time, two slightly different estimates of enemy strength were available. The figures used by CINCPAC in their 18 June submission were 125 confirmed, 7 probable, and 18 possible battalions in South Vietnam. It was estimated that the enemy was capable of infiltrating up to 15 battalion equivalents (9,000 personnel) per month into South Vietnam unless denied capability to do so. It was also estimated that the enemy could train 7 VC battalion equivalents (3,500 personnel) per month under the current existing situation. However, the best estimate of his intentions was that he would attempt to reinforce at the rate of 18.5 battalion equivalents (11.5 NVA, and 7 VC) per month, which would give him a maximum build-up total of 180 battalion equivalents by March 1967, at which time losses would exceed inputs and total VC strength would begin to decline.

The estimate of VC strength given in NIE 14.3-66, 2/ was as follows: The total Communist force in South Vietnam was estimated to be between 260,000 and 280,000. The major combat elements included some 38,000 North Vietnamese troops, approximately 63,000 regular main and local forces and from 100 - 200,000 guerrillas. The North was estimated to have a capability to infiltrate from 75,000 to 100,000 individual replacements, but present evidence suggested that the probable infiltration would be between 55,000 and 75,000. The estimate of VC recruiting in the South was from 7,000 to 10,000 a month. A projection of strength for end of 1966 was 125,000 in the Communist regular forces, but this could grow by the end of 1967 to over 150,000. The estimated strength for 1 January 1967, in terms of battalions, was between 170 and 190.