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7 MARCH 1968

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)



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## INTELLIGENCE SUPPLEMENT

ARMOR, ARTILLERY, AND AIRBORNE THREAT  
AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAM

**ATTENTION:**

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

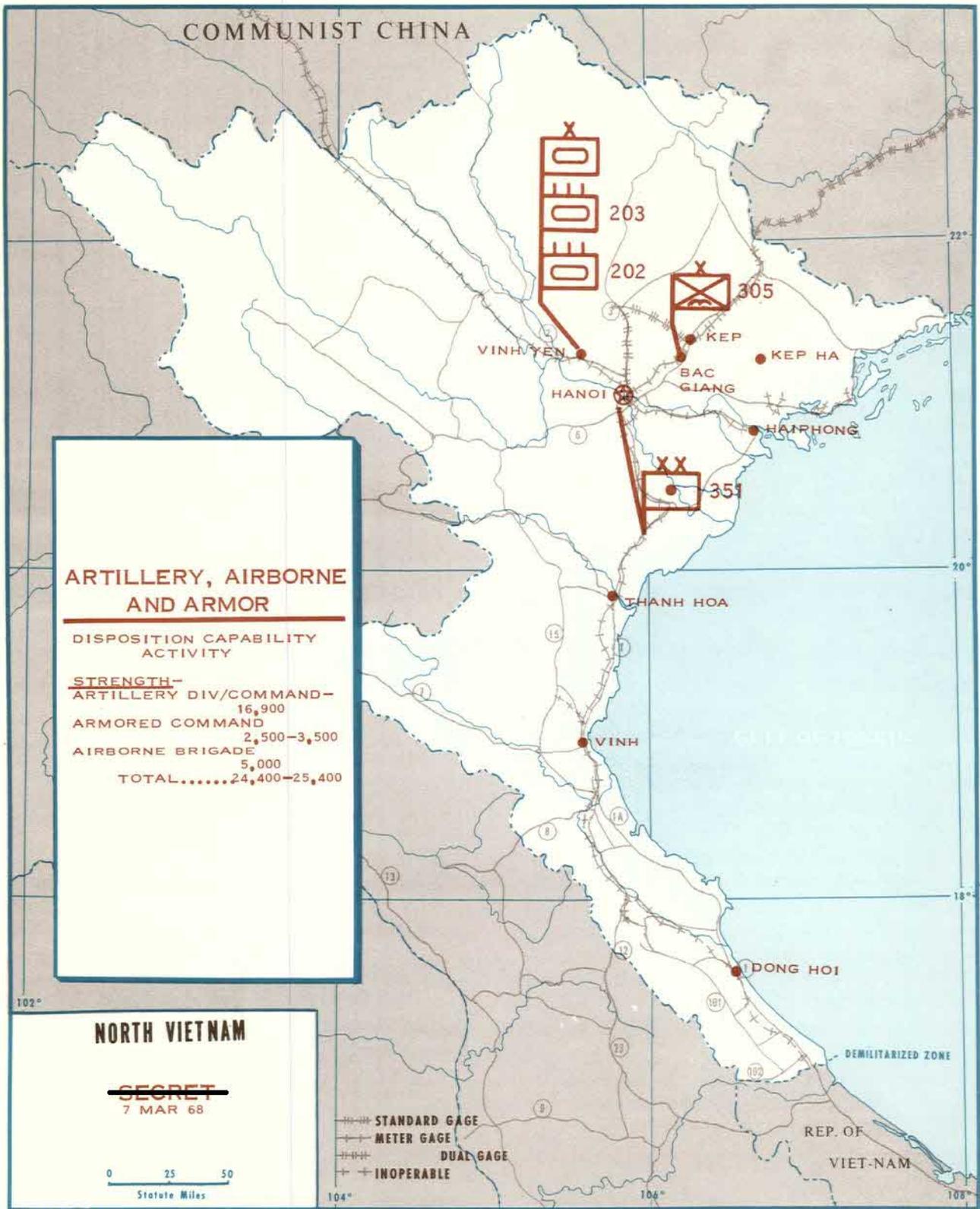
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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)

ARMOR, ARTILLERY, AND AIRBORNE THREAT  
AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAM

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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ARMOR, ARTILLERY, AND AIRBORNE THREAT  
AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAM

North Vietnamese armor, artillery, and airborne elements constitute a latent threat to South Vietnam. These forces could be employed in a variety of means. The armored command consists of two subordinate regiments at Vinh Yen, the airborne brigade is believed to be based at Bac Giang, and the artillery command has its headquarters in the Hanoi and Son Tay areas. These forces have an estimated combined strength of about 25,000 out of the total in-country army of some 345,000 men.

There are few indicators at present that major elements of these units may be moving with the possible exception of some artillery units. Moreover, it is not certain that we would get timely information on the ground deployment of major elements of these forces. In the case of the airborne brigade, however, there would probably be an indication of their movement through non-routine transport activity. No such large-scale activity has been noted.

Artillery

The North Vietnamese artillery command, which is probably an outgrowth of the 351st Artillery Division, controls 12 artillery regiments deployed throughout the country. This does not include the artillery regiments organic to each of the North Vietnamese infantry divisions.

Each regiment is believed to be equipped with 36 artillery pieces, including 75-, 105-, 122-, and 152-mm howitzers, 130-mm field guns, as well as rockets and mortars. Most of the North Vietnamese artillery units that have infiltrated south have not carried tube artillery but have been equipped primarily with rockets and mortars. Of the four infantry divisions in the DMZ/Khe Sanh area only one -- the 304th -- is believed to have its organic artillery unit. There are some COMINT indications, however, that the 325C Division also has its artillery unit. These two units could have as many as 72 artillery pieces.

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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PARATROOP LIFT CAPABILITY HANOI-DMZ

TYPE	NO. TROOPS	NO. ACFT	RANGE (NM)	SPEED	ROUND TRIP DIST.	TRIP TIME	REFUEL FOR 2ND TRIP	TROOPS PER NUMBER OF TRIPS	
								1	2
AN-24	50	3	1,550	255	500 NM	2+ HRS	NO	150	300
IL-14	30	13	1,200	165	—	3+	NO	390	780
LI-2	25	24	1,200	130	—	4	NO	600	1,200
AN-2	13	22	900	100	—	5+	YES	286	572
MI-6 (HELO)	65	4	400	135	—	5+	YES	260	520
TOTAL								1,686*	3,372*
								990**	1,980**

\* 100 PER CENT AIRCRAFT IN COMMISSION

\*\* 60 PER CENT AIRCRAFT IN COMMISSION

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7 MAR 68

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Four artillery regiments in the DMZ area have been identified (b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424:3.3(h)(2). At least three are in the immediate DMZ area and one is unlocated in Quang Binh Province north of the DMZ.

These units are equipped with artillery weapons -- including 152-mm field guns -- as well as rockets and mortars; they are probably controlled by a forward artillery headquarters.

The recent movement of four NVA artillery battalions to the Vinh area has been noted (b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424. The movement was to have been completed by 5 March and may be associated with the current artillery buildup in the DMZ area.

Airborne

The 305th Airborne Infantry Brigade is believed to be the only airborne unit in the North Vietnamese armed forces. There is no indication that elements of the 305th are deploying. It has five combat battalions -- of which three or four are infantry -- and an estimated strength of 5,000. Its precise location in the Bac Giang area is not known but one subordinate unit may be near Kep Airfield. Elements of the brigade were previously located in the vicinity of Kep Ha Airfield and the Trai Thon military barracks near Bac Giang.

A North Vietnamese rallier, who claims to have been a member of the 305th, said that he received jump training in the Soviet Union and that the 305th began jumping in 1961. (b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424:3.3(h)(2)

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424:3.3(h)(2)  
(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424:3.3(h)(2)

The 305th has been noted using LI-2 and AN-2 light transports and MI-4 helicopters; the AN-24 and IL-14 transports and the MI-6 helicopter could also be used.

Armor

The North Vietnamese armor command consists of a headquarters and two armor regiments -- the

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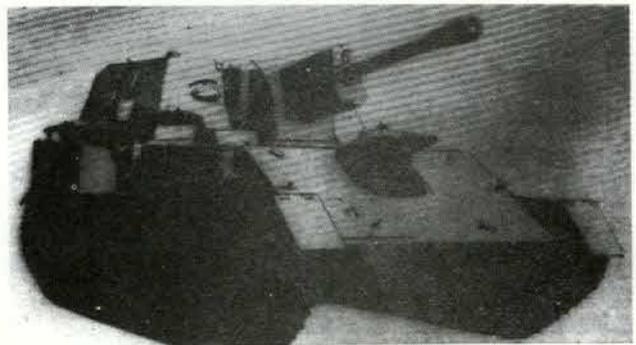
**230**  
**T-34/54**  
**MEDIUM TANKS**



**80**  
**PT-76**  
**LIGHT AMPHIBIOUS TANKS**



**50**  
**SU-76**  
**ASSAULT GUNS**



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7 MAR 68

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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424:3.3(h)(2)

202d and 203d with a strength or from 2,500 to 3,500 men. Both regiments are believed to be based in the Vinh Yen area north of Hanoi where photographs have revealed extensive armor training areas. This area has been struck twice, the last time in May.

The estimated armor inventory is 360 tanks and assault guns and 80-160 APCs of several types. It is based primarily on a T/O strength of about 36 tanks per battalion, with each regiment having four battalions. All of the tanks are believed to have been supplied by the Soviets. The last delivery probably occurred in October when photographs of the Pinghsiang rail transshipment point on the Sino/Vietnamese border disclosed a number of flat cars carrying eight canvas-covered probable T-34 tanks, some 30 canvas-covered tanks/assault guns, and a number of other unidentified tracked vehicles.

The North Vietnamese have used armor in the Lang Vei and Khe Sanh areas. Tanks have also been reported in the Con Thien area -- most recently on 5 March when two tracked vehicles were sighted by an aerial observer and destroyed by artillery fire. Photographs on 28 February showed two possible tanks some 15 miles west of Hue. (b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S. (b)(3) 1 tanks as well as artillery would be deployed to the A Shau valley where a road toward Hue is currently being constructed.

Moreover, 3 March photographs of an area in the Laos Panhandle 34 kilometers west of Khe Sanh disclosed the BTR-40 APC, known to be in both the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao inventory. In this case, the BTR-40 appeared to have twin-mounted 14.5-mm machine guns.

Southbound armor and artillery could have followed any of the established routes. The most likely would have been through the Mu Gia or Ban Karai Passes and then southward on any of a number of roads in the Lao Panhandle. Air observers have seen some armored vehicles in the Mu Gia Pass area, but road watch teams on Route 15 have not reported any such movements. The PT-76 tanks that took part

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# JSU-122-MM (D-25S) ASSAULT GUN



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7 MAR 68

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;  
(b)(3) 10.U.S.C  
424;3.3(h)(2)

in the Lang Vei attack apparently used the newly constructed road to the south of Khe Sanh. Although the terrain in this area is unsuitable for effective armor employment, the roads are apparently able to support the movement of armored vehicles. Tanks and other equipment have been sighted from the DMZ/Khe Sanh area to southern South Vietnam, and some have been attacked.

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2) at least 27 PT-76 tanks, heavy JSU-122 assault guns, and 240-mm rocket launches on AT-S medium-tracked artillery tractors. He also saw 16 ten-wheeled trucks and several armored cars. After the first part of the convoy had passed his position, which was probably on either Route 92 or 912, he stated that he crawled further away from the road to maintain concealment. He then heard 147 more tracked heavy weapons move past, which he assumed were of the same type that he had observed. He did not attempt to count the remaining vehicles in the convoy because they traveled too close to each other. If the convoy's ratio remained constant after the sighting, it could have contained 174 tracked heavy weapons and 124 trucks and armored cars. The officer reported that he did not see soldiers riding on any of the vehicles or walking. The report mentioned two significant new weapons not previously known to be in North Vietnam -- the heavy assault gun and the 240-mm rocket launcher.

It is not possible to determine the destination of the vehicles. The sighting may have taken place just north of the junction with the newly constructed road that runs into the Khe Sanh area southwest of the combat base. It is possible that the convoy's destination was the A Shau valley. (b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 42

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

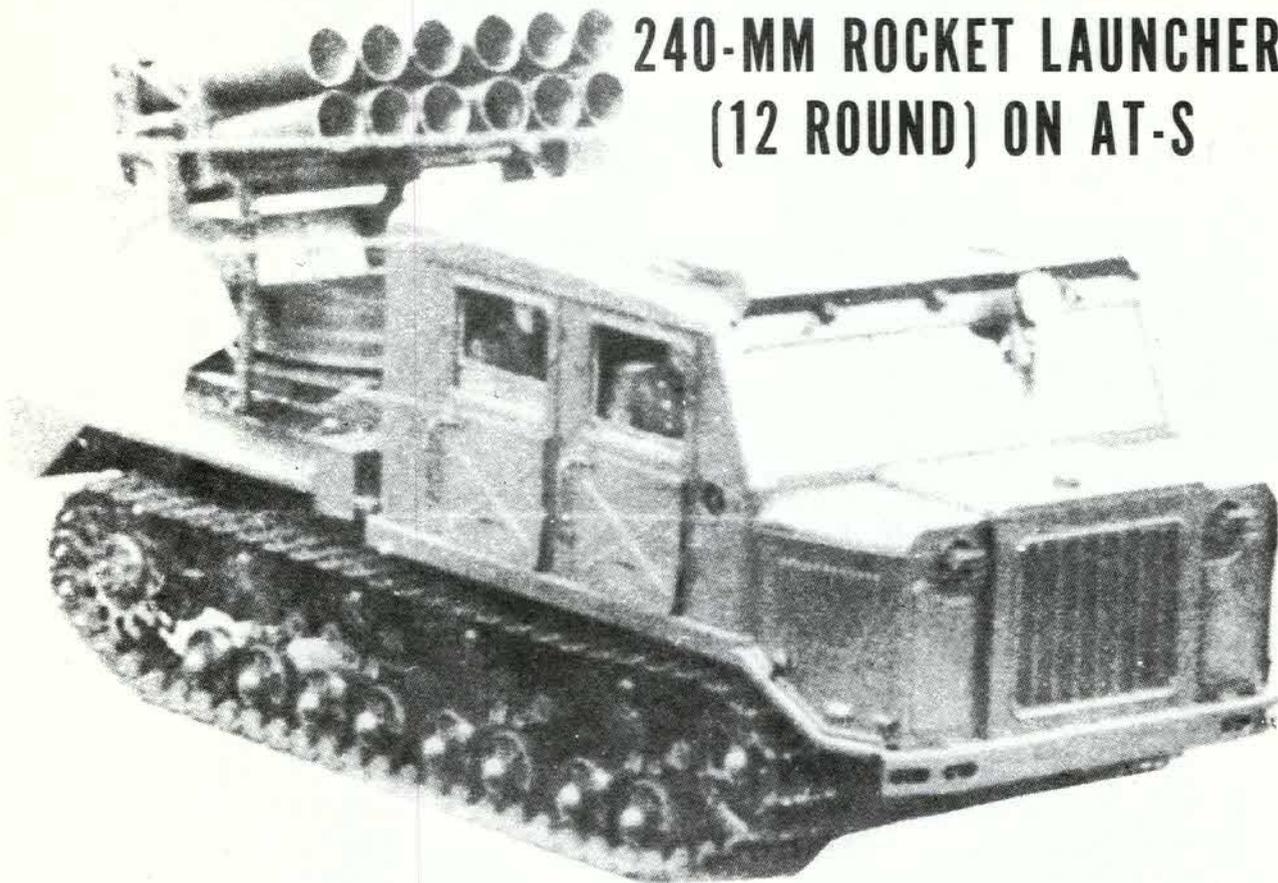
(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) No other evidence exists that would support the presence of these weapons in the Lao Panhandle or Vietnam.

It is estimated that at least one, and possibly two, armor battalions are in the DMZ/Khe Sanh area.

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**240-MM ROCKET LAUNCHER  
(12 ROUND) ON AT-S**



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7 MAR 68

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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(h)(2)

These units could have as many as 72 tanks, most of which are probably the amphibious PT-76 model.

Viet Cong Armor

There have been a number of recent reports of tanks or armored vehicles in at least four South Vietnamese provinces in 2d and 3d Corps. In Kontum Province, for example, friendly elements conducting a reconnaissance on 25 February some 50 kilometers northwest of Kontum City reported the recent enemy use of tracked vehicles in the area. There is no reliable information on the number and type of vehicles.

Recently captured enemy documents have referred to a 2d VC Armor Battalion and to the training of personnel to capture and operate mechanized vehicles. Some 160 personnel from the 202d Armored Regiment infiltrated south in November to form the nucleus of the B-16 mechanized unit. Its missions are to infiltrate Allied bases and steal vehicles.

There are no estimates on the number of armored vehicles that the Viet Cong have in 2d and 3d Corps. Most of its inventory probably consists of captured or salvaged Allied equipment.

Pathet Lao Armor

Pathet Lao forces are believed to have about 25 PT-76 tanks and some 35 armored cars of various types organized into six battalions. The largest concentration -- some 23 PT-76 tanks and 22 armored cars -- is probably in the Plaine des Jarres area. The Communists have reportedly been very active there in recent weeks shelling Royal Lao Army positions. Another Pathet Lao armored unit in the Lao Panhandle -- equipped only with armored cars -- is believed to be in the Tchepone area and may have participated in the recent attack on the Royal Lao outpost at Ban Houei Sane on the Vietnam-Lao border.

The recent introduction of armor, artillery, and other new, heavy weapons into South Vietnam is but one of a number of indicators that point to intense Communist interest in the two northern provinces.

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SPECIAL

7 Mar 68

DIA Intelligence Supplement

Page 5

(b)(3) 10 U.S.C.  
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**NVN TROOP  
CARRIERS**

**AN-24  
50 TROOPERS**

**MI-6  
65 TROOPERS**



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7 MAR 68

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Other indications are:

1. Continued large-scale infiltration of men.
2. Increased logistic activity, road construction and landline construction, particularly in the A Shau Valley.
3. Buildup and harassment at Khe Sanh.
4. Renewed threat to Hue, Quang Tri City and coastal lowlands.
5. Formation of "provisional administration" in Thua Thien, the only place in South Vietnam where the Communists have chosen to do this.
6. North Vietnamese air activity directed toward the area.

These activities also suggest an intention to mount sustained and possibly more conventional operations. They may intend to create a situation wherein their military initiative and their control of the populace would reduce allied capability to static defenses and limited sweep operations. Success in these efforts would, for example, enable the enemy to use their position in these provinces as a lever to gain concessions during any negotiations. They also probably hope that their actions would cause Allied forces to divert additional resources from areas farther south. (~~TOP SECRET~~)

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(b)(3) 10 U.S.C. 424;(b)(3) 10.U.S.C 424;3.3(h)(2)

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