

Saturday, September 23, 1967

*Pres file*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

We have gone back to the drawing board on your request for figures on U.S. fatalities in South Vietnam, and I believe the attached card gives the information you desired.

I understand that one of the problems we had was in making clear the Returned to Duty category; i. e., we do not want to give the impression that they all may have returned to combat duty. In other words, the 39,890 who required some period of hospitalization and returned to duty were placed in the productive manpower base but not necessarily in a combat role.

W. W. Rostow

U. S. Fatalities in Vietnam  
(January 1961 - September 16, 1967)

78-i

Killed in Action	11,022
Wounded in Action	84,743
Of these:	
Died of wounds	1,310
Hospitalized and not returned to duty	4,434
*Returned to duty	79,009

\*Note: 39,890 required some period of hospitalization  
before returning to duty.

Friday, Sept. 22, 1967  
7:00 p.m.

~~1. P. file~~  
2. P. file

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MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith another report on VC manpower  
problems, in what will be a continuing series.

W. W. R.

Attachment

Friday, September 22, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Viet Cong Manpower and Other Difficulties as Reflected in  
Intelligence Reports and Captured Documents

A. POLITICAL

An Xuyen Province (August)

The Chief of the Chieu Hoi Center stated that he attributed the lack of Viet Cong incidents in An Xuyen Province to the fact that the Viet Cong are changing from a military to a political struggle. He said that the Viet Cong are encouraging their families to return to Government of Vietnam--controlled areas to avoid allied air and artillery strikes and also to insure popular support for Viet Cong candidates in future elections.

B. MANPOWER

Phu Yen Province (August)

Since April 1967 the daily Viet Cong rice ration has ranged from one-half kilogram to as low or lower than one-fourth kilogram per cadre. The Revolutionary Development Program has effectively decreased the population in Viet Cong-controlled areas, thus adversely affecting agricultural production. The following quotation from a captured Viet Cong document graphically illustrates this problem -- "Previously we controlled 220,000 inhabitants in the Phu Yen liberated areas and 40,000 in areas of enemy control. This was a total of 260,000 out of the 360,000 inhabitants of the entire province. At present, because of enemy sweep operations and plans for resettling the people, we control only 20,000 inhabitants or one-tenth of the old figure. Because of this situation prompt action should be taken to smash the enemy's pacification plan and return the people to their former residences."

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4  
NLJ 94-401  
By CB, NARA, Date 9-19-95

### Kien Hoa Province (June)

Viet Cong District Committees have ordered party chapters to recruit young men to reinforce the District Companies and the Provincial Main Force Units. Each district was ordered to recruit at least 20 men to support the Viet Cong 516th Battalion, the majority of whom must be forcibly recruited.

Manpower is a continuing problem for the Viet Cong. In Kien Hoa, the Viet Cong control over half the land area and 40 per cent of the population, but the Viet Cong are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit personnel. Most recruits are forced into Viet Cong training and then into units. Regular units suffered heavily during the first three months of 1967 and the constant air strikes are taking their toll. Recently, however, main force units have not engaged in any large-scale attacks and are probably trying to bring their units up to strength. They can easily draw on guerrilla reserves, but this has a disadvantage in that guerrilla operate more effectively in terrain with which they are familiar.

### Ninh Thuan Province (June)

Lack of effective military operations and the need to move larger quantities of food and supplies to secret base areas highlighted Viet Cong problems during the month. The Viet Cong military summer offensive failed, and the fall-winter campaign, which began before the elections, does not appear to be any more successful. The Viet Cong were concerned that they maintain a strong support base in the Son Hai area. Apparently a large number of people have moved as a result of Government of Vietnam sweep operations in July. In one reported instance, the Viet Cong forcibly prevented some Son Hai families from moving to nearby My Nghia.

## C. MILITARY AND OTHER

### First Corps (1 August to 6 September)

A penetration agent reported on a study session in Quang Tri Province at which the Monsoon offensive plan was discussed. The plan stated that even if another 45,000 to 60,000 US troops were sent to Vietnam the allied forces would still not have enough strength to protect the First Corps tactical zone. The Monsoon Plan anticipated a casualty rate of 45 to 50 per cent of committed forces but estimated the Viet Cong would lose an equal amount if activities continued through a protracted period of two years or so.

### Quang Ngai Province (June)

Since April 1967, operations by allied forces in Southern Quang Ngai Province have caused heavy casualties among the Viet Cong Forces, especially Local Forces companies. The remnants of district guerrilla units have required augmentation by new recruits in order to continue effective operation.

It is the opinion of many of these newly liberated persons that the Viet Cong will require a long period of reenforcing their units before being able to mount a significant attack on allied forces in the South of the Province.

The casualty rate among Viet Cong Forces has increased during June, creating manpower shortages which have not been remedied.

### Gia Dinh Province (August)

The Viet Cong in Gia Dinh Province are reportedly having food supply problems, and from all indications they are not receiving the cooperation from the people necessary for any expansion of their programs.

### Kien Giang Province (August)

There have been several reports during the month, plus other indications, that a morale problem is developing among some Viet Cong organizations, .... Middle and high-ranking cadres are reportedly growing tired of the fighting, of evading air strikes and of being unable to support their families or gain any tangible benefits from working for the Viet Cong.

Arthur McCafferty