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EXTERNAL SUPPORT OF THE VIET CONG: AN ANALYSIS AND A PROPOSAL

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SUMMARY

(U) Revolutionary war has two aspects: the internal and the external. In order for the defender to defeat insurgency, he must execute an internal program substantially superior to that of the insurgents, and he must cope effectively with external support to the insurgents. Both actions are necessary.

(U) This is the case with the insurgency in South Vietnam, where Laos is the primary avenue of personnel infiltration from North Vietnam, most materiel comes by way of Cambodia and directly by sea, and both Laos and Cambodia provide sanctuaries for the Viet Cong.

(U) Although various alternatives have been considered for dealing with external support of the Viet Cong by North Vietnam, the commitment of substantial land forces to Southeast Asia has not been considered. This derives largely from U.S. experience in the past and from the official and public image of land warfare in Southeast Asia. U.S. experience in the Laos crisis of 1960-61 is illuminating in this regard.

(U) Modern technology (specifically, the improved tactical fighter, the modern STOL aircraft, and the turbine powered helicopter), together with Army and Air Force systems incorporating these and other items of equipment which have come available in quantity in the last four years, makes it possible to change the concept and the image of land-air action on the mainland of Southeast Asia. This, coupled with great increases in conventional strength since 1961, permits the consideration of proposals of a type which has not heretofore been considered. One such specific proposal for the use of land forces is outlined in this paper.

PREFACE

(U) This paper was undertaken out of the intuitive feeling that here were two "myths" that seemed to have seriously degraded United tates effectiveness in coping with the situation in South Vietnam nd Southeast Asia in the past four years. As the paper has been S" ritten, this intuition has hardened into conviction.

(U) The first of these myths is that it would be possible to defeat insurgency within South Vietnam without greatly restricting the amount of external support provided the Viet Cong by North Vietnam. By the end of 1964 this misconception had largely disappeared from policy making circles in Washington.

(U) The second myth is that the commitment of U.S. land forces to the mainland of Southeast Asia cannot be considered as an acceptable course of action for coping with such a problem as external support of the Viet Cong by North Vietnam. This fundamental misconception still seems to exist, and thereby deprives U.S. policy makers of the opportunity to consider a broader range of alternatives as they survey the situation in Southeast Asia.

(U) In preparing this paper, the author has had the opportunity to discuss its subject matter in whole or in part with a wide range of individuals at action officer level or higher within the Department of Defense and the Department of State. There will be no effort here to name these many helpful persons. Access has also been afforded to classified records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, for purposes of researching the Laos crisis of 1960-1961.

[redacted]

EXTERNAL SUPPORT OF THE VIET CONG

AN ANALYSIS AND A PROPOSAL

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Annex A: Evaluation of 14 Selected Counterinsurgencies

CHAPTER I

EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The Challenge of Revolutionary War

(U) There must be no mistake as to the scope and gravity of the challenge presented to the United States in the mid-20th century by revolutionary war.

(U) As President Kennedy stated in April 1961, "We dare not fail to see the insidious nature of this new and deeper struggle. We dare not fail to grasp the new concepts, the new tools, the new sense of urgency we will need to combat it."[1]

(U) Revolutionary war has two aspects: the internal and the external.

(U) In the internal aspect the revolutionary element within a country or territory systematically erodes the control of the established government and substitutes its own control.

(U) In 1930, Mao Tse-tung summarized the internal process as one of "establishing base areas; systematically setting up political power; deepening the agrarian revolution; expanding the people's armed forces by a comprehensive process of building up first the township Red Guards, then the district Red Guards, then the local Red Army troops, all the way up to the regular Red Army troops; spreading power by advancing in a series of waves; and so forth."[2]

(U) This internal process, systematically improved and tested for more than thirty years, is what the United States is laboriously, with great frustration but with some success, developing its counterinsurgency doctrines to combat.

(U) In the external aspect of revolutionary war, the revolutionary element within the country or territory is provided support and direction from beyond its borders.

(U) In 1949 the Chinese Communists turned seriously to the export of revolutionary war. In November 1949 Liu Shao-chi, a vice president in the new Mao government, announced in Peiping that "we bear a special responsibility to the colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia." He gave notice that China would assist all those countries which they regarded as under the heel of the "Anglo-American imperialists." This aid would take the form of encouraging the formation of revolutionary armies, and supplying them with funds and weapons.[3,4]

(U) The November 1960 Congress of 81 Communist parties confirmed this policy as the doctrine of Communist support of "wars of national liberation."[5]

(U) This external aspect is, today, the more frustrating for the United States to develop the means to combat. It is especially troublesome in South Vietnam.

Relationship of Internal and External Aspects of Insurgency

(U) Examination of past insurgencies reveals a general relationship between the internal and the external aspects of an insurgency.

(U) Consider, for example, the unsuccessful insurgency in Malaya (1948-1960).

(U) In this case, British internal measures included an excellent organization and concept, and the execution of coordinated military,

social, economic, intelligence, police, and other measures in a systematic plan. These were carried to a successful conclusion despite potentially difficult social and economic conditions and in the face of the well-organized Malayan Communist Party, which had considerable Chinese support.

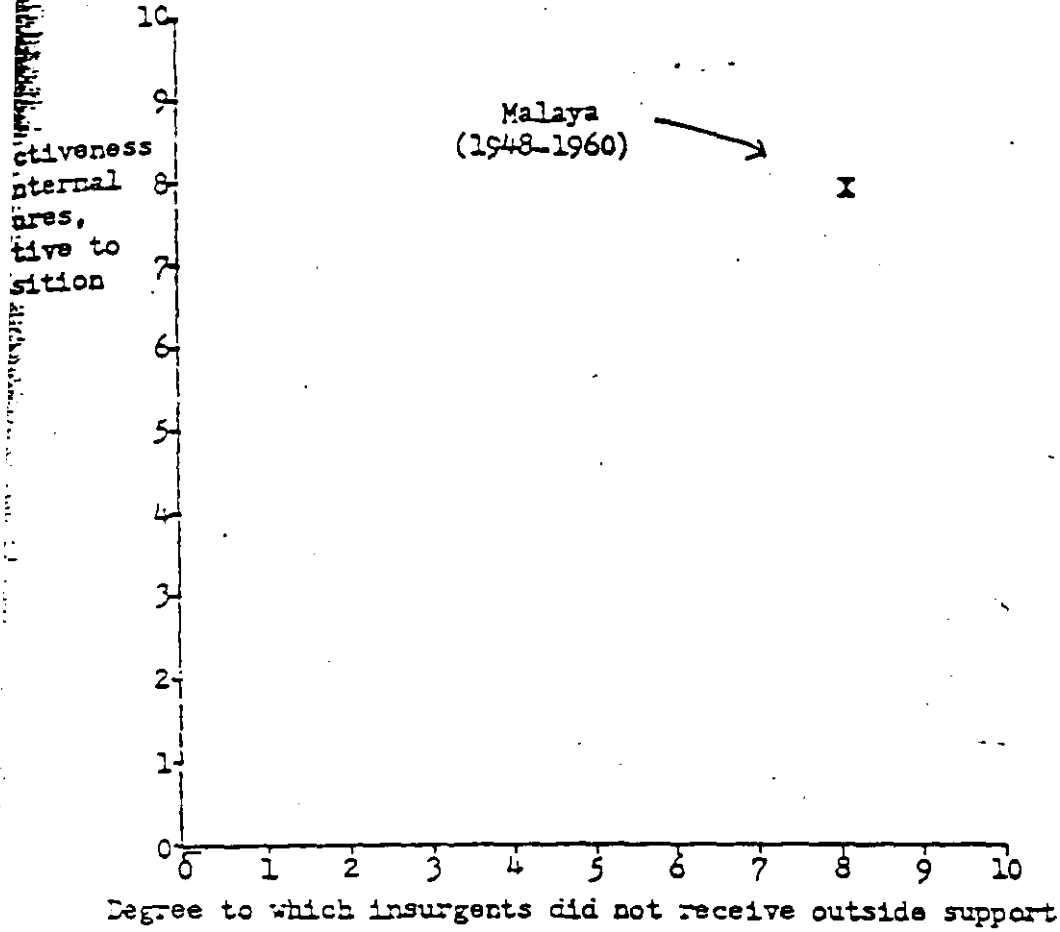
(U) The insurgents received little external support. Their use of the sanctuary across the Thailand-Malaya border was inhibited by long distances and difficult terrain and by the cooperative attitude of the Thai government. The British were assisted by a 1949 agreement with the Thais which allowed Malay Federation police to pursue Communist guerrillas as far as ten miles within the Thai border.

(U) If one considers that complete absence of external support would be rated as "10" and that uninhibited and fully flowing external support would be rated as "0", one could state that the "degree to which the insurgents did not receive external support" was, in the case of Malaya, "8".

(U) Similarly, if one considers that overwhelming superiority of the defender's counterinsurgency measures, relative to the effectiveness of the insurgent opposition, would be rated as "10", and that the complete inadequacy of the defender's program would be rated as "0", one could state that, in Malaya, the "effectiveness of internal measures, relative to the opposition" was, again, "8".

(U) These ratings can be placed on a graph. (See figure 1, p. 4) (attached as Annex A)

(U) In a separate study, this method of analysis has been applied to each of a selected sample of 14 insurgencies since World War II. (See Table 1, p. 5)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Malaya
(1948-1960)
X
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
Degree to which insurgents did not receive outside support

Figure 1

TABLE 1

A SELECTION OF INSURGENCIES SINCE WORLD WAR II

Counterinsurgency Successful

1. Burma (1948 - 1960)
2. Greece (1946 - 1949)
3. Hungary (1956)
4. Korea (1948 - 1954)
5. Malaya (1948 - 1960)
6. Philippines (1946 - 1954)
7. Tibet (1951 - 1960)

Insurgency Successful (or a draw)

a. Algeria (1954 - 1962) (draw)
b. China (1927 - 1949)
c. Cuba (1953 - 1959)
d. Indochina (1945 - 1954)
e. Indonesia (1946 - 1949)
f. Israel (1945 - 1948)
g. Laos (1959 - 1961)

(U) In seven of these, the counterinsurgency was successful. In the other seven, the counterinsurgency was unsuccessful, or resulted in a "draw" or stalemate, from which the insurgents achieved their goals.

(U) The ratings are summarized in Table 2 (p. 7) and are also plotted on a graph. (See Figure 2, p. 8)

(U) From these 14 cases, the following general principle is derived:

In order for a counterinsurgency to succeed, there must be both an internal effort substantially superior to that of the insurgents, and an effective restriction of (or an absence of) external support to the insurgents. Neither action alone is sufficient to success. Both are necessary.

(U) There may be exceptions to this general principle. However, examination of these 14 cases indicates that a defender against insurgency would disregard the general principle stated above only at very substantial risk to his eventual success.

(U) With this important principle in mind, we can now examine external support to the insurgents in South Vietnam by way of Laos and Cambodia.

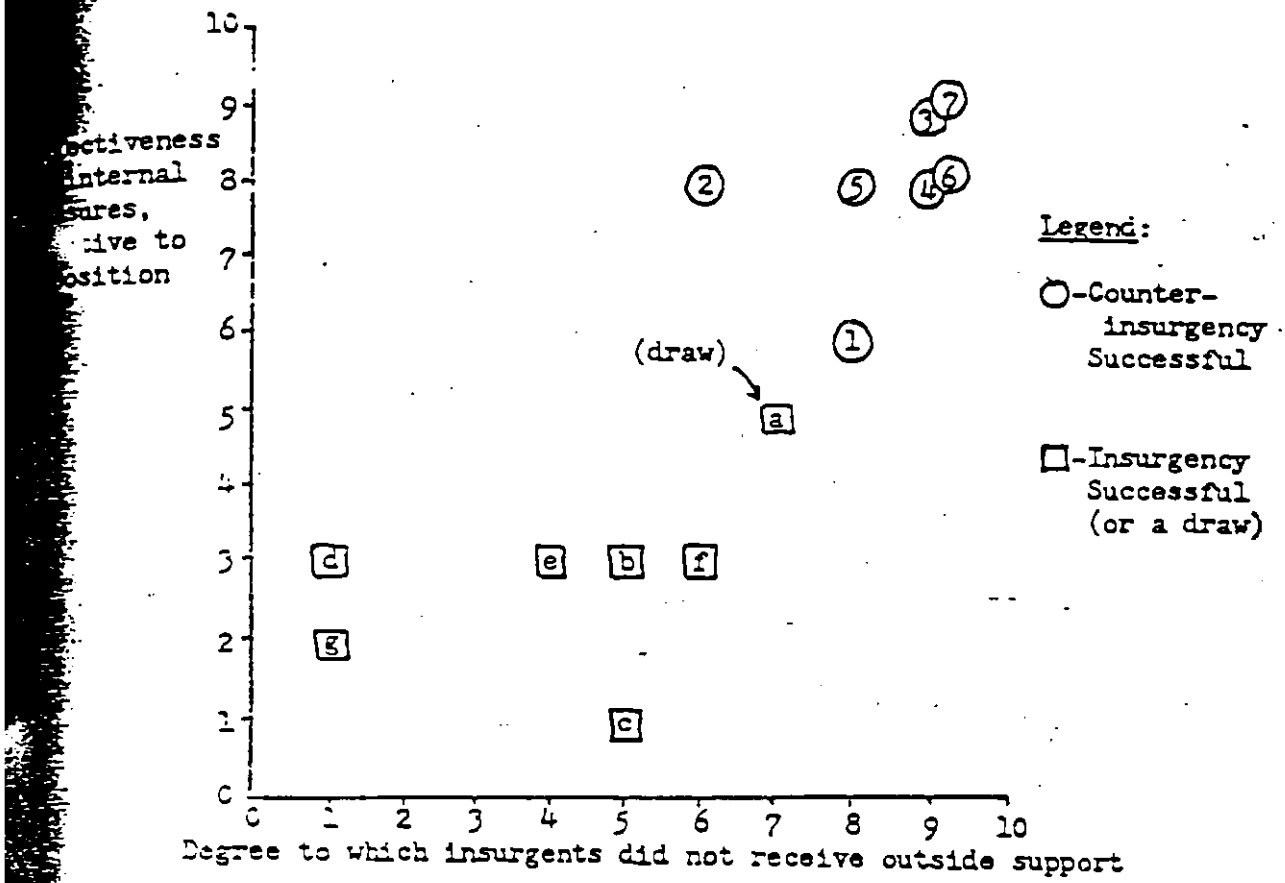
TABLE 2

COUNTERINSURGENCY SUCCESSFUL

Insurgency	Rating External	Rating Internal
1. Burma	8	6
2. Greece	6	8
3. Hungary	9	9
4. Korea	9	8
5. Malaya	8	8
6. Philippines	9	8
7. Tibet	9	9

INSURGENCY SUCCESSFUL (OR DRAW)

Insurgency	Rating External	Rating Internal
a. Algeria(draw)	7	5
b. China	5	3
c. Cuba	5	1
d. Indochina	1	3
e. Indonesia	4	3
f. Israel	6	3
g. Laos	1	2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0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Degree to which insurgents did not receive outside support
(draw)
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Legend:
-Counter-insurgency Successful
-Insurgency Successful (or a draw)

Figure 2

CHAPTER II

EXTERNAL SUPPORT OF INSURGENCY IN SOUTH VIETNAM

The Role of External Support

(U) The attitude of Ho Chi-minh's Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) is expressed in the DRV Constitution -- "our country is temporarily divided into two zones ... The cause of the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland will certainly be victorious."[6]

(U) The DRV has organized itself and its insurgent arm, the Liberation Front of South Vietnam (Viet Cong), to achieve that end. According to General Vo Nguyen Giap, DRV Minister of Defense, "The North has become a large rear echelon of our Army ... the North is the revolutionary base for the whole country."[7]

(U) Conditions are conducive to DRV support. The insurgents, who nominally withdrew their forces to the north after July 1954, left a well-established political and military structure in the south. In December 1954, Joseph Alsop described a three day visit to the Vietminh Committee of the South in its "mobile palm hut capital on the Ca Mau plain," with its army of 30,000 regular and regional troops. This insurgent authority had established its control in a "liberated area," with a permanent government, complete with financial, economic, health, propaganda, and police services. Currency was printed, taxes were levied and collected, and budgets were annually prepared.[8]

(U) Several thousand political agitators and activists and at least three experienced rifle battalions of the Vietminh structure in South

were left behind in 1955. This network within South Vietnam dormant until 1957 when it was reactivated and resumed its system- campaign of revolutionary war, directed and supported from Hanoi.[9]

(U) Geography favors infiltration. The 1200 miles of coastal of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), with their thousands of trans- junks and fishing vessels, provide innumerable opportunities and ries for infiltration by sea. The 900 mile land frontier, most of poorly marked, is mountainous and forested for 650 miles of its ngth, and the remainder is mostly paddy land flooded half the time. his land frontier also is essentially wide open to infiltration.

(U) Furthermore, there is the ethnic similarity of the north nd south Vietnamese, so different from Malaya, where the primarily Chinese insurgents could be distinguished from the Malay population.

(U) [redacted] In 1959, the DRV began to establish and use a well organized tructure for infiltration of personnel and materiel into South Viet- nam, both directly and through Laos and Cambodia. By late 1965, the magnitude of this external support through Laos and Cambodia had become massive.

The Role of Laos and Cambodia

(U) Within this framework of external support, the adjacent territories of Cambodia and Laos are of particular importance.

(U) [redacted] These territories present two different situations. The Communist-held strip in the Laos panhandle bordering South Vietnam

[redacted]

serves primarily as a complex of trails, footpaths, and supporting way stations collectively known as "the Main Corridor." (See Map 3, Appendix) Through this corridor infiltrators move from North Vietnam into South Vietnam. The Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) estimates that, during the period from 1959 to mid-1964, a probable total of 34,000--45,000 personnel - cadre, replacements, military units, and political, financial, and other specialists - entered South Vietnam through this route.[10] At end-1964, the influx was estimated at 500 per month. This area also serves to an unknown extent as a refuge for Viet Cong units operating in the RVN.

[redacted] Although a coolie portage service exists, movement of materiel (including documents) by this route is generally confined to that which the infiltrators can carry with them. Most of the tonnages for insurgents enter Vietnam by sea, either directly or transshipped through Cambodia.

[redacted] The mountainous area of northeastern Cambodia is an extension of the Laos panhandle infiltration routes. However, the paddy land of Cambodia from opposite Tay Ninh province of the RVN to the Gulf of Siam presents quite a different situation.

[redacted] This low-lying territory serves primarily as a sanctuary to which Viet Cong military units and high political cadres can retire when necessary and as a base for Viet Cong operations and materiel support. It is only secondarily a means by which new personnel are infiltrated into the RVN.

(U) Use of Cambodian territory by the Viet Cong has the tacit consent of Prince Sihanouk, the Cambodian chief of state, who has all but committed himself to the support of the Viet Cong. In December 1964, Sihanouk expressed his position as follows:

> To understand, you must realize that my little country is trapped between tremendous pressures ... There are the pressures exerted by Vietnam and Thailand, our historic enemies who throughout the years have grabbed much territory at our expense. More importantly, we are caught in the conflicting pressures exercised by (the United States and Communist China) ... In an increasingly deteriorating situation, I am faced with the need to preserve the territorial integrity of my country ...
>
> I am convinced that the Viet Cong will ultimately take over in South Vietnam. If I wait until the moment when the Americans are driven out in humiliation and the Viet Cong are powerful, the Communists will have no reason to offer me any guarantee of my country's territorial integrity ... If I bargain with them before all is lost by the Americans, I have something to offer them that is of value ...[11]

(U) Most of the materiel infiltrated into South Vietnam is first shipped to Cambodia by sea or via the Mekong River and then transhipped for introduction into the RVN. The RVN has recently tightened its control over the Mekong to halt shipment of contraband into Cambodia and materiel now increasingly moves to the Cambodian ports of Kep and Sihanoukville on the Gulf of Siam.

Evaluation

(U) By end-1964, it was generally agreed in U.S. policy making circles that external support to the Viet Cong was decisive. An accepted end-1964 summary evaluation would be that:[12]

(U) If external support to the Viet Cong is not substantially reduced, the insurgency within Vietnam cannot be defeated.

Laos and Cambodia are the primary avenues for materiel and personnel infiltration. The corridor in the Laos panhandle is the avenue for most infiltration of personnel. Cambodia is the avenue for most infiltration of materiel, although important amounts enter directly by sea.

If both Laos and Cambodia were effectively denied the Viet Cong as avenues for infiltration, the DRV would be forced to send all personnel and materiel directly to South Vietnam by sea. This would be possible, but more difficult, and could be effectively impeded by U.S. and RVN action.

Both Laos and Cambodia provide sanctuaries for insurgent units and individuals. The border is poorly marked, and neither Cambodia nor Laos can exercise sufficient control over its own territory to prevent its use in this manner. Reduction of these sanctuaries would require Laotian and Cambodian cooperation and access to the territory by RVN or other friendly forces.

If use of Laos and Cambodia territory were denied, the Viet Cong ability to wage revolutionary war and their confidence in eventual success would be reduced, and the RVN could begin to make progress. If this territory continues to be available to the insurgents, hopelessness will grow among the officials and the government of the RVN. The deterioration of morale, coupled with the reinforcement flowing to the Viet Cong through these avenues, would probably be fatal to the RVN, regardless of the extent of U.S. support.

(U) The counterinsurgency problem in South Vietnam can be plotted as in Figure 3. (See p. 15) To arrive at success it will be necessary both to increase greatly the effectiveness of denial of outside support, and essentially to double the effectiveness of the internal program relative to that of the Viet Cong. This paper deals only with the external problem.

Measures to Cope with DRV Support

(U) By end-1964, various measures had been suggested to block DRV external support to the Viet Cong, including: blocking the 900 mile RVN border with troops and barriers; bringing the United Nations' peacekeeping capability into play; interdicting the Laos infiltration routes with raids and air action; and a program of systematic air attack on DRV targets aimed at convincing the DRV that it would be in their best interests to cease support of revolutionary war in South Vietnam.

(U) Each of these proposals had its own likelihoods of risk and effectiveness.

(U) Significantly, by end-1964 one alternative means for dealing with external support had apparently been given little serious consideration - namely, the commitment of substantial U.S. land forces to Southeast Asia.

(U) In this regard, it is instructive to review the United States' experience in the Laos crisis of 1960-1961.

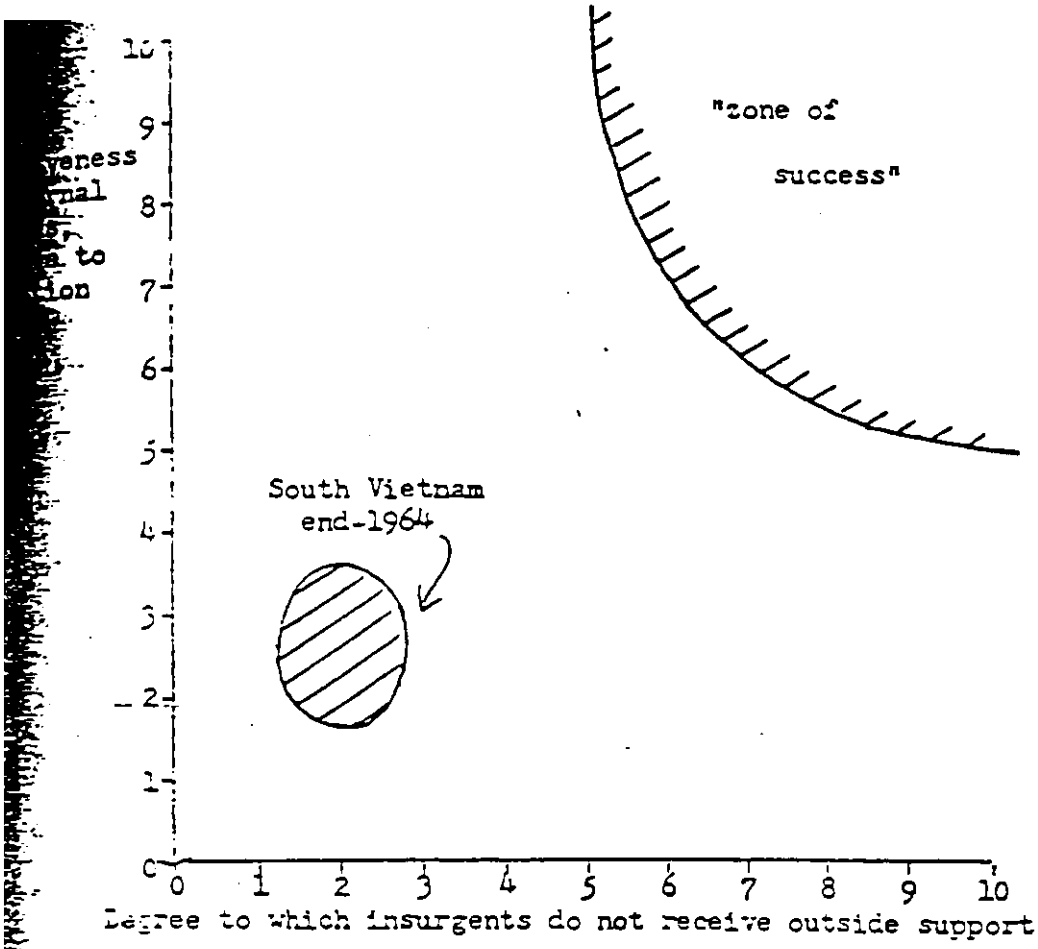

"zone of
success"
South Vietnam
end-1964
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Degree to which insurgents do not receive outside support

Figure 3

CHAPTER III

THE LAOS CRISIS OF 1960-1961

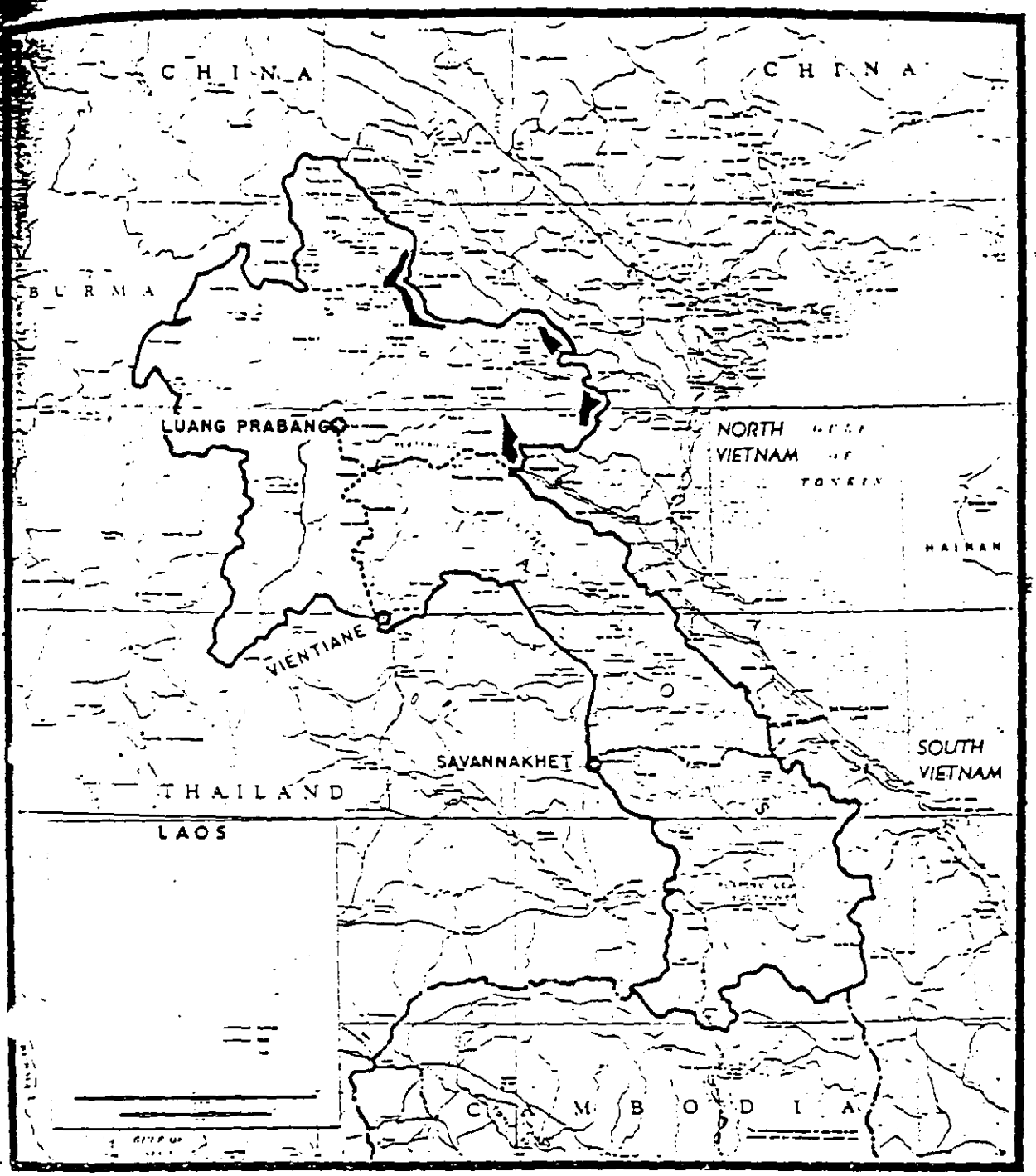
Summary of Events

(U) In late 1960, the Communist Pathet Lao, supported by the DRV, Communist China, and the USSR, resumed their campaign to gain control of the Kingdom of Laos.

(U) In August 1960, just prior to the revolt of the parachutist Captain Kong Le and the resulting establishment of the neutralist Souvanna Phouma government in Vientiane, the holdings of the Pathet Lao were limited to areas bordering North Vietnam in the northeastern-most provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua. (See Figure 4, p. 17)

(U) By mid-December 1960, after the U.S.-supported faction in Laos led by Phoumi Nosavan and Prince Boun Oum had ousted the Souvanna Phouma regime from Vientiane, the holdings of the Pathet Lao and the dissident Kong Le forces were as shown in Figure 5. (See p. 18) By this time, a Soviet airlift had started to the Kong Le forces and to the Pathet Lao on the Plaines des Jarres, and there was a full-scale crisis. SEATO representatives were meeting in Bangkok, the U.S. announced increased readiness for its forces in the Pacific, and the U.S. press was speaking of the "problems of jungle war" for U.S. troops.

(U) By mid-March 1961, the holdings of the Communist supported rebels had expanded to those shown on Figure 6, (p. 19) and a major crisis existed. President Kennedy held a televised press conference on 23 March, at which he displayed Figures 4, 5, and 6.



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4 COMMUNIST REBEL AREAS

7 AUGUST 1960

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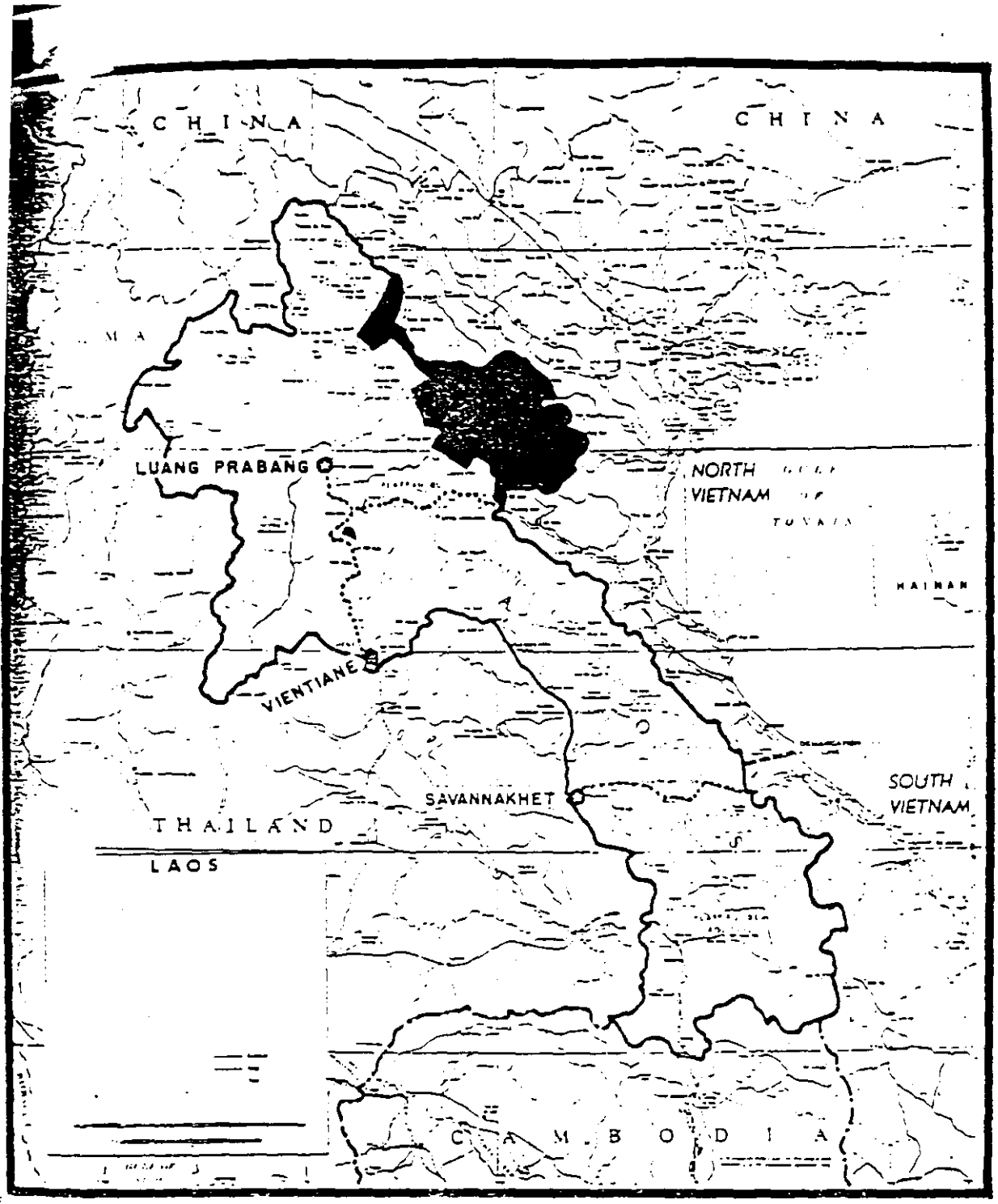

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(5) COMMUNIST REBEL AREAS

20 DECEMBER 1960

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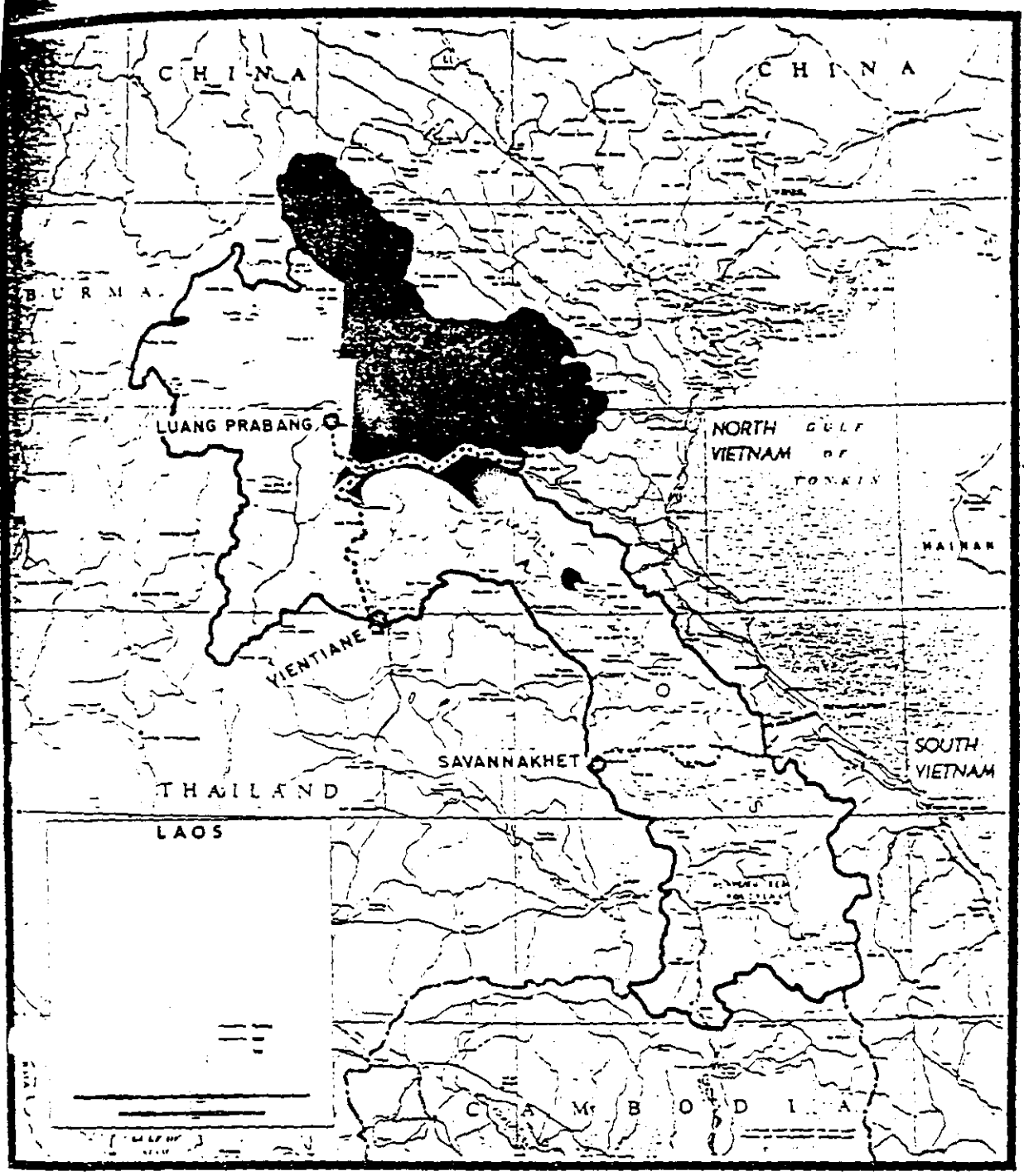

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6 COMMUNIST REBEL AREAS

22 MARCH 1961

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By this time, the President was well advanced on the "two track" solution to Laos which he had followed since his inauguration. The "military track" consisted of measures to strengthen the position of the pro-West Royal Laotian Government (RLG) with all possible covert and overt assistance short of actual U.S. intervention. The "political track" consisted of a search for a "formula" by which there could be achieved a "truly neutral and independent Laos."[13] As time went on, it had become evident that this formula would have to include a neutralist government under Souvanna Phouma.

(U) In his press conference, the President emphasized on one hand the U.S. commitment to a truly neutral and independent Laos, stating that if there had been some question on that point in the past, there should be none now. At the same time, saying "Let no one doubt our resolution," he implied that the United States was prepared to take strong action if the externally supported Communist attacks did not stop in Laos.

(U) Also on 23 March, the U.K., with U.S. support, proposed to the USSR that there be (1) a cease fire by all sides - Pathet Lao, neutralists, and RLG forces; (2) verification of the cease fire by the revived International Control Commission (ICC) of the 1954 Geneva accords, and (3) the convening of a 14 nation conference on Laos.

(U) This proposal was the basis of the eventual settlement. However, by the time it had been negotiated with the Soviets as agents for Communist China and the Pathet Lao, and by the time it was eventually accepted by all three factions in Laos, it was 3 May 1961, and the holdings of the Pathet Lao had expanded to those shown on Figure 7.[14]

(See p. 21)

(7) COMMUNIST REBEL AREAS

3 MAY 1961

[redacted]

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The Issue of Commitment of U.S. Troops

(U) Throughout this crisis, the President had been considering the introduction of U.S. combat forces to Laos.

(JCS papers not declassified. Ltr)

(U) Complicating the President's calculations was the fact that in early 1961 the strategic reserve of the U.S. Army was limited to

three combat ready divisions and there were corresponding shortages in conventional tactical air and in airlift. At that time, the U.S. faced crisis situations in Berlin, the Congo, and Cuba, each of which might require conventional forces.

[redacted] Throughout the crisis the President was inhibited by the fact that the prevailing public and official image of committing U.S. troops to Laos was that it was a first step to "bogging down in Asia," and raised the specter of repeating the Korean War ten years later in a worse environment.

[redacted] The State-Defense-CIA paper prepared for President Kennedy's first White House meeting on Laos on 23 January had stated that:

(Not declassified. Ntz)

(U) This was not a new U.S. attitude. In early 1954, as the French military position in Indochina became desperate, President Eisenhower had said in a press conference, "I cannot conceive of a greater tragedy for America than to get heavily involved now in an all-out war in any of those regions, particularly with large units.[18]

(U) The U.S. Army Chief of Staff reinforced President Eisenhower's position with his own professional appraisal of the difficulties. General Ridgway told the President that Southeast Asia:

[redacted]

Was practically devoid of those facilities which modern forces such as ours find essential to the waging of war ... Its telecommunications, highways, railways - all the things that make possible the operation of a modern combat force on land - were almost nonexistent ... We would have to go in with an Army that could not only stand the normal attrition of battle, but could absorb heavy casualties from the jungle heat, and the rots and fevers which afflict the white man in the tropics ... (and) at a cost that would have eventually been as great or greater than that we paid in Korea.[19]

(JCS paper by General Decker, C/S Army. not declassified. JHL)

(U) The image held by the Congressional leaders reflected the prevailing Army view, and this too was made clear to the President.

(U) As a further inhibiting factor, while the President was considering these aspects of U.S. intervention, he was also moving on the "political track" and negotiating with the Soviet Union toward a "truly neutral and independent Laos."

(U) Evidently aware of the U.S. dilemma, the Communist forces in Laos pressed on. Their challenge was ambiguous. No single advance was of itself judged sufficient to justify the great decision to commit U.S. forces. While the eventual expansion of Pathet Lao and DRV control may well have been disastrous, it took place a little at a time, and while talks were going on.

(U) On 24 April, negotiations had been completed. The U.K. and the USSR foreign ministers, as co-chairmen of the 1954 Geneva conference, appealed jointly to all factions in Laos for a cease fire, and at the same time issued a call to the 14 nation conference to convene on 12 May at Geneva. The RLG and Souvanna Phouma accepted the cease fire the next day. The Pathet Lao delayed their acceptance until they had completed their seizure of key terrain.

(U) The cease fire "went into effect" on 2 May. The areas controlled by the Pathet Lao on 3 May are shown on Figure 7. (See p. 21)

Effects

(U) These 1961 events in Laos had far reaching effects on the U.S. position in Southeast Asia. Aside from the reaction in Thailand, South Vietnam, and Cambodia to the U.S. response in the first few months of 1961 and to the later course of events in Geneva as the U.S. disengaged itself from Phoumi, whom it had previously supported, there was the direct effect on the war in South Vietnam.

(U) Even after the "cease fire" there was little to keep the Communist forces from continuing to advance. People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN)

battalions, reinforcing the Pathet Lao, fully secured the infiltration routes in Laos, which they had already held with lesser forces, and firmly established the DRV hold on the flank of the RVN.[22]

[redacted] In late April 1961, Lt. Gen. L. C. McGarr, Chief MAAG-Vietnam, had told the President's Vietnam Task Force, under Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric, that while the RVN could cope with the current Viet Cong strength, Communist control of Laos adjacent to the RVN "makes the situation extremely grave."[23] The 27 April version of the report of the Vietnam Task Force to the President stated that "the ultimate achievement of U.S. objectives in Vietnam will depend largely upon effectively blocking the land corridors in Laos through which much of the Communist support to the Viet Cong passes. U.S. positions in the negotiations on Laos should take this fact into account."[24]

[redacted] In the July 1962 Geneva accords, the DRV along with 13 other nations pledged among other things that it would not "use the territory of the Kingdom of Laos for interference in the internal affairs of other countries."[25] This pledge was meaningless. DRV infiltration through the Laos corridor had totaled 4,500 in the period 1959-1960 and had risen to 5,400 in 1961. In 1962 it climbed to 13,000. In 1963 it was 6,200. To August 1964 it was 4,700 of which 75% were estimated to have been young draftees of North Vietnamese origin.[26]

(U) The increase in Viet Cong strength and combat effectiveness through the Laos infiltration routes has contributed, perhaps decisively, to the 1963 deterioration of RVN control in the countryside, and to the grave effects which have flowed therefrom as the situation in South Vietnam further deteriorated in 1964.

[redacted] Going through the accounts of this crisis, one senses strongly the great frustration felt by the President as he searched in vain for ways to make U.S. power effective. He had pushed assistance, both covert and overt, to the Laos government about as far as he could. The next step was to bring U.S. military power directly to bear. The President was searching for a way to do this with some finesse - to use U.S. might effectively but with a precision and discrete application fitting to the occasion. At the same time he was very reluctant to take a step which ran a high risk of getting involved in a land war in Southeast Asia - a war which he visualized as either drawn out, logistically difficult, and debilitating - or nuclear.

[redacted] He did not find the kind of military instrument he was looking for. U.S. military power was consequently not employed, and the U.S. ended by seeking political solutions from a disadvantageous military position, and with unfavorable results.

[redacted]

CHAPTER IV

CONSIDERATIONS AFFECTING U.S. ACTION IN 1965

The Problem

(U) Today, as 1965 opens, the United States is again struggling with the problem of how to bring its military capabilities usefully to bear in Southeast Asia.

The situation in Laos at end-1964 is shown in Figures 8 and 9. (See pp. 29,30) There is a de facto partition of that country into Communist-held and RLG-held areas. The Pathet Lao faction has left the Souvanna Phouma government. Most of the neutralist forces, including Kong Le himself, have remained loyal. Souvanna has shown hostility to the Pathet Lao and has been willing to accept U.S. help.

In South Vietnam, the United States has since 1961 increased its assistance effort from 800 to 23,000 men, and from $234 to $489 million annually (exclusive of operational costs), and the investment is rising.[27] Results have not been commensurate with this investment. At year's end, the Viet Cong were stronger than ever, they controlled more of the countryside, there was unrest in the cities, and the RVN government was demonstrating increasing instability.

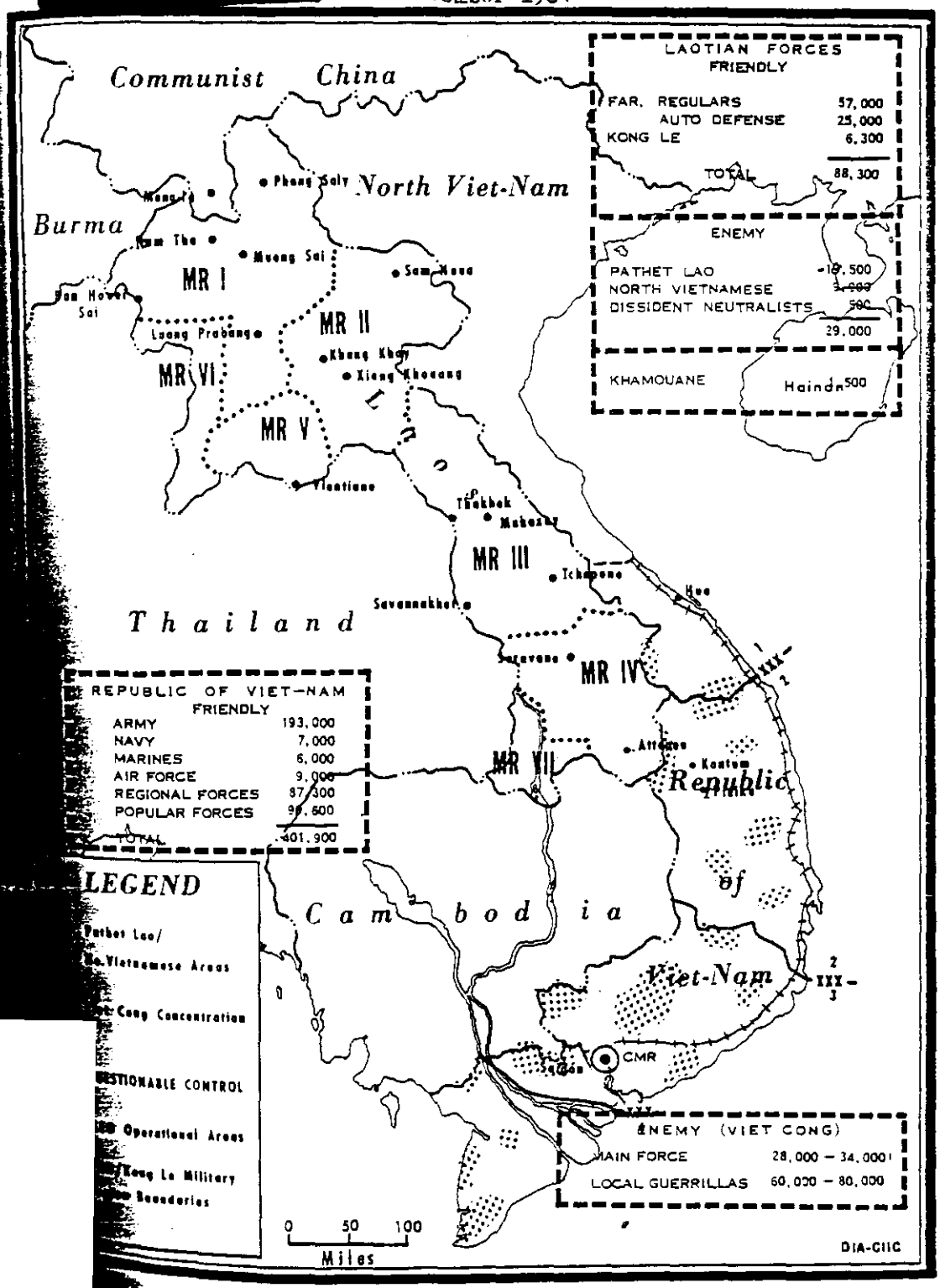
The basic problem confronting the United States in Southeast Asia in 1965 is the same as in 1961; to establish the limits of Communist Chinese southward expansion.

The pressing immediate problem is to bring a halt to the DRV support of revolutionary war inside the RVN. If this can be done, an

[redacted]

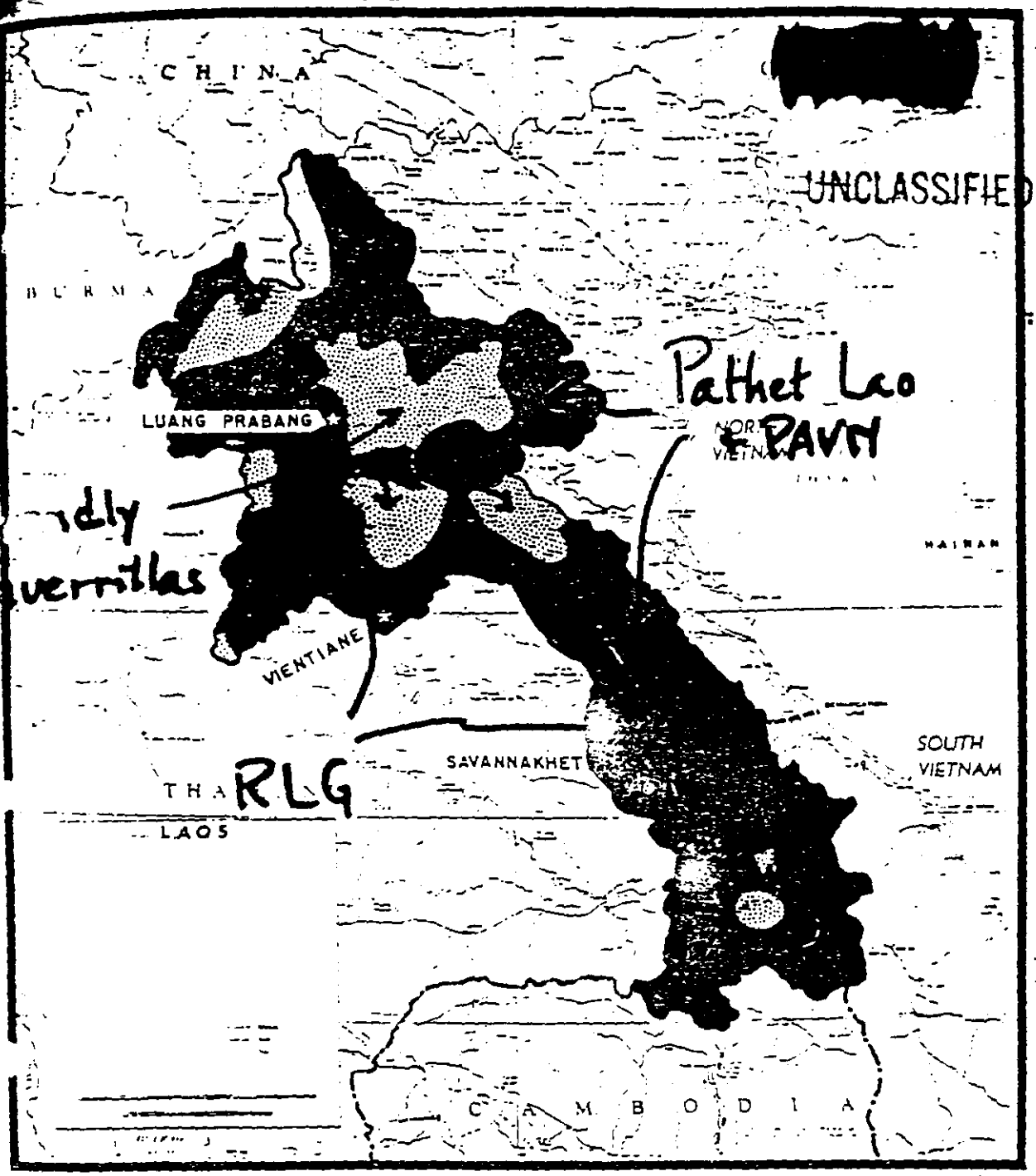
SOUTHEAST ASIA SITUATION

December 1964



29

figure 8



(9) COMMUNIST REBEL AREAS

15 OCTOBER 1964

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

TOP SECRET

RVN government even though shaky can be expected to generate enough strength and self-confidence to undertake a systematic internal program. Small, measurable success with this program can in turn add more strength and self-confidence to the government, and the slow process of recovery can begin.

(U) As the U.S. ponders the various military courses of action in Southeast Asia, the public and the President seem to carry in their minds virtually the same image of land action that prevailed in 1954 and again in 1961. In a campaign speech in September 1964, President Johnson said: "We don't want our American boys fighting Asian boys ... We don't want to get involved in a nation with 700 million people, and get tied down in a land war in Asia."[28]

Differences since 1961

(U) However, the factors bearing on the use of U.S. troops in Southeast Asia are quite different today from what they were in 1961.

[redacted] For one thing, the judgment of the Army's professional leadership is different today. The Army Chief of Staff, General H. K. Johnson, has said that "war is where you find it" and he has been willing to propose the commitment of U.S. troops in strength to Southeast Asia. This is a substantial change.

[redacted] The issue of nuclear escalation also presents a greatly different picture today. The nuclear question is complicated by possible possession by Communist China of a deliverable nuclear weapon. However, the Berlin crisis of 1961 and the Cuba crisis of 1962 increased both U.S. understanding of the nature of nuclear escalation and U.S. confidence in its ability to manage a serious crisis

situation. Moreover, the greatly increased conventional capability of the U.S. today makes it less necessary to visualize use of nuclear weapons in the early stages of escalation.

(U) This growth in U.S. conventional strength is another major factor. The growth has been very great indeed. To list a few elements: There is today essentially twice as much airlift capacity as in early 1961; more than twice as much tactical fighter capacity, not including the added bonus from improved conventional weapons; eight, rather than three combat ready Army divisions (nine, including the 11th Air Assault Division being tested) in the strategic reserve; sufficient stocks on had to support an extended non-nuclear war; forward stockpiles in key areas; improved reserve readiness; and improvements in the quantity, quality, and logistic readiness of Navy and Marine Corps forces.[29]

(U) In rough terms, the U.S. has today at least twice the conventional combat power available for reaction in Southeast Asia as it had four years ago.

(U) Finally, new kinds of means are now available which were not available in 1961. Technology has placed within the grasp of the U.S. new capabilities which will in turn make it possible to realize changes in concepts for land/air warfare in Southeast Asia. This could make the 1954 image of war in Southeast Asia obsolete today, and thereby permit the U.S. President, Congressional leaders, and public to consider such a war a more acceptable undertaking in 1965.

[redacted]

[redacted] The new capabilities depend largely on three specific items of equipment: (1) the modern turbine powered helicopter, (2) the modern STOL aircraft, and (3) the improved tactical fighter/reconnaissance aircraft. The first of these, with its excellent performance and maintainability, makes possible a new concept of sustained air-mobile land operations in difficult terrain; the second of these makes possible the all-air logistic support of such operations; and the third, with its greatly improved conventional ordnance, provides the air superiority, interdiction, and close air support integral to the new concept.

[redacted] These new items are on hand today in quantity. Since 1961, their stocks have grown dramatically:[30]

	On Hand End CY 1960	On Hand End CY 1964
Turbine Helicopters (Army)		
UH-1 Iroquois (all types)	139	1119
CH-47 Chinook	0	71
Modern STOL aircraft		
CV-2B Caribou (Army)	0	139
C-130 Hercules (AF) (all types)	264	682
USAF tactical fighters, total arm. capability, one representative sortie (approx)	3100 tons (1100 acft)	7000 tons (1500 acft)

[redacted] Corresponding Navy and Marine Corps capabilities have also grown. For example, at end-1960 the Navy had on hand three of the amphibious assault carriers used by Marine Corps landing forces. At end 1964, there were six.

These items of equipment, and others, have been incorporated into Army and Air Force systems suitable for use in Southeast Asia.

The USAF has examined the greatly increased potential of conventional tactical air and has concluded that in Southeast Asia in 1964, tactical air could impose very substantial delays

the

The JCS, less the Chief of Staff, Air Force, agreed with that part of the Air Force study which stated that "Tactical air has the capability ..

(a)

impose time delays, and inflict an attrition which will reduce the effectiveness of the enemy force, limit its ability to achieve major objectives, and reduce the number of friendly ground troops which must be committed to the defense of Southeast Asia." However, they took a cautious view as to the ability to reduce the ground forces called for in current war plans in the light of this tactical air capability. The CSAF held that proper use of air could reduce significantly the requirement for U.S. ground forces.[32]

From the Air Force study and JCS comments it seems reasonable to conclude that, while tactical air is not a panacea, it can now contribute greatly increased conventional capabilities toward air superiority and interdiction in Southeast Asia, and can thus permit very large scale and extended operations This is a significant change from the situation in 1961.[33]

[redacted] The basic new Army system is the airmobile division with its associated Army units. In this division, helicopter air mobility will replace vehicular mobility wherever feasible, and the division will thereby be able to operate essentially independent of terrain obstacles and road nets.

(U) Tests of these Army airmobile concepts began in 1962. In 1963 and 1964 tests were conducted by the experimental 11th Air Assault Division, including 10 weeks of division exercises in late 1964.

[redacted] The airmobile division proposed by the Army as a result of these tests and other analyses will have 434 aircraft (all but six of them helicopters), compared to 101 in the standard infantry division. It will have no vehicles which are not transportable by helicopter.

[redacted] According to the Army, the proposed airmobile division will be able to do the following better than other Army divisions:

move combat elements rapidly and directly to key objectives without regard to the difficulty of the terrain

maintain an exceedingly rapid tempo of operations both in time and intensity, in swift response to changing conditions

change direction and fight consecutive engagements at considerable distance from each other within a very short period of time - a concept described as "vertical recycling"

operate in enemy rear areas using only his vertical flank to get in and get out

conduct counter and anti-guerrilla operations with a marked advantage over non-airmobile units

[redacted]

disperse and assemble rapidly

exploit rapidly any opportunity presented or advantage gained by other forces

[redacted] The limitations of this division, as stated by the Army, are:

it has limited protection and defense against armor attack

it needs local air superiority and suppression of enemy air defense, greater than do other type divisions

it is somewhat sensitive to weather and visibility conditions, although less so than expected

[redacted] The Commander in Chief, U.S. Strike Command (CINCSTRIKE), after evaluating the Army's tests of the 11th Air Assault division, raised certain reservations as to its capabilities and the manner in which the division would operate in joint Army-Air Force operations. The Army has generally accepted the CINCSTRIKE reservations and considers that tests to date, together with modifications made as a result of tests, justify the immediate reorganization as an airmobile division of one of the eight divisions in the United States, after which the division organization and doctrine, including joint aspects, would be further tested and refined.[34]

[redacted] The air mobile division is ideal for employment in Southeast Asia. Here the air mobile infantryman would, as always, fight on the ground, where he would use the skills of the highly trained foot soldier to meet and defeat the jungle-wise enemy. But like the rest of the division he would greatly increase his effectiveness by air mobility, and this new kind of division, with its fully integrated airmobile fire, maneuver, logistic, and control/surveillance capabilities, would change the nature of land operations.

[redacted]

With attached helicopters, the standard infantry and airborne division can use many of the tactics of the air mobile division, albeit with less effect because the air mobile division is specifically tailored for air mobility.

Also during the past four years, both the Army and the Air Force have improved the air logistic support of land operations in general, using such means as short field operations and precision low altitude delivery and extraction techniques.

To a degree, the development of the Army's air mobile concepts and the complementing Air Force capabilities have taken place separately, although U.S. Strike Command has exercised a coordinating function. STRICOM has supervised joint Army-Air Force tests which have resulted in substantial improvement in Air Force and Army joint operations. Evidence is that it would not be difficult to weld the Army's and Air Force's newly developed capabilities into a closely coordinated and compatible joint system, although inter-service divergencies do exist.

Blending these new and largely field-tested concepts, it appears possible to set forth a new concept of war against North Vietnamese and Communist Chinese forces on the mainland of Southeast Asia, along these lines: Using conventional weapons and operating over North Vietnam and South China, tactical air gains air superiority and conducts an interdiction campaign. Local regular and para-military forces provide a general stability to the forward area. At the same time, air mobile forces, including the air mobile division, with air

reconnaissance, close air support, and air logistic support, greatly multiply their combat power through movement, make deep penetrations, punish the enemy, effectively deploy, engage, and disengage. All land forces, including local forces, are supported by air logistics. All land forces, including air mobile forces, fight on the ground.

[redacted] Using such a concept, and making full use of corresponding capabilities of naval and amphibious forces, the technological advantages of the United States can be brought to bear on the mainland of Southeast Asia, and operations in that area become quite different from those portrayed by General Ridgway in 1954 and General Decker in 1961. Instead of our being at a disadvantage on the ground, the enemy would be, and the opportunity now exists to change U.S. attitudes to war in Southeast Asia.

[redacted]

CHAPTER V

A PROPOSAL FOR ACTION

Elements of the Plan

(U) Combining all of the above, it would seem possible to formulate an alternative proposal for action in Southeast Asia.

[redacted] This proposed action would have two purposes: first, to deal with the external aspect of counterinsurgency in South Vietnam; and second, to establish the limits of expansion of Chinese Communist influence, this stabilizing the area. The concept would be to achieve these purposes by the limited actual commitment of U.S. forces to the SE Asia mainland, backed by full readiness to engage in a conventional mainland war against North Vietnam and Communist China if necessary.

[redacted] This proposal is based on two critical elements: first, the detailed development of the new concept for land-air action, coupled with a program of information designed to change the image at home and abroad of U.S. land warfare in SE Asia. The sought-after image is one in which the U.S. soldier is fully able to cope with the Communist guerrilla in his own habitat, and the technological superiority of the U.S. makes this infantryman even more effective in a new concept of air mobile and air supported operations.

Second, a fundamental judgement of the part of the United States that the commitment of U.S. troops to the mainland is acceptable,

if this is necessary to achieve U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia. This change of attitude is made possible by the increased U.S. conventional capabilities and the changed nature of operations.

What follows is an outline plan for one scenario in which U.S. power might be employed. In this particular scenario, E-day (for Execute) has been set in advance and detailed military and political planning has been conducted in the utmost secrecy. On the appointed day, strong conventional U.S. and allied forces are concentrated swiftly and by surprise in Southeast Asia, an allied command is set up, and at the same time a strong international force is used to cut the DRV infiltration lines in Laos.

This scenario has the advantage of strategic surprise and a consequent political initiative. Another scenario can be developed in which the forces are concentrated openly, before the overt action to cut the infiltration routes. Although more desirable in some respects, this would leave the U.S. open to political and military countermoves as the operation was being readied.

Sequence of Action

The proposal for action, in outline, is as follows:

Public attention is drawn to the Army's adoption of new air mobile tactics and organization, to the Air Force and CINCSTRIKE achievements in improving air-ground operations, and to similar developments in Navy/Marine Corps capabilities. It is made clear

that it is now possible to achieve a major breakthrough in concepts of land-air operations, especially in areas with poor road nets and bad terrain. It is stated that further tests will continue.

[redacted] It is later announced that a Joint Task Force will continue the tests of the Army's new air mobile division and associated Army and Air Force units. To achieve realism, to show U.S. interest in Southeast Asia, and to provide air mobility training for local armed forces, these tests will be conducted in Thailand.

[redacted] The JTF is moved to Thailand, and on E-day, after all political and military arrangements have been made, major forces are rapidly concentrated by surprise in Southeast Asia. The 173d Airborne Brigade is moved from Okinawa to Da Nang. The 101st Airborne Division is moved from the CONUS to the Philippines. The 25th Division is moved from Hawaii to Thailand. The 3d Marine Division and its associated air wing is moved into the South China Sea. Headquarters and supporting forces, and air and naval forces, are moved. These moves are initiated in secrecy, under a previously established cover plan of field exercises. Concurrently, a U.S. commander assumes command of Allied Forces, Southeast Asia. (It is visualized that CINCAFSA would also be the CINC of a new U.S. unified command directly under the JCS, and including USMACV. However, the proposal does not hinge on a particular command arrangement.)

[redacted] As these actions are taking place, an international force moves by surprise into position north of Route 9 in Laos. The first

deployment is a one division force built around the U.S. air mobile division, in which several allied battalions are brigaded with three or four U.S. battalions. This force would be built by E plus three days to two divisions. The mission of this international force would be to occupy and control a band of territory and thereby to cut the DRV infiltration routes in Laos.

Operations to Cut Infiltration Routes

(not declass.)

[redacted] Map 4, Appendix, shows the terrain and the 1 October 1964 enemy dispositions in the area.[35] The terrain is mountainous, cut by streams, sparsely populated, generally wooded, and crisscrossed by trails. In the immediate vicinity of the area of operations there are six Pathet Lao and 3 PAVN (Peoples Army of Vietnam) battalions. The nearest enemy battalion to the north is a Pathet Lao battalion about 50 miles northwest of Tchepone.

[redacted] The objective of the operation would be to occupy and establish control over a band of territory about 10-20 kilometers in depth and 100-110 kilometers wide astride the infiltration routes and north of Route 9 (shown in blue on the map). The eastern flank of this band would tie in with RVN forces controlling the area of South Vietnam south of the line of demarcation. The western flank would tie in with RLG forces controlling the Laos plain area west of the mountains.

[redacted] The international force would move by surprise into the area, occupying key terrain "where the enemy was not." Its first objective

would be to close all routes and halt infiltration. It would then reconnoiter and organize the area so as to be prepared to destroy by guerrilla tactics and other means any PAVN and Pathet Lao forces which might move into the area. After firm control has been established over the area, action could then be taken by the international force and other forces to operate against PAVN and Pathet Lao forces south of the cleared zone and gradually to remove the enemy presence in the southern Laos panhandle, thereby taking the enemy off the exposed flank of South Vietnam.

The basic element of this international force would be U.S. and allied infantry battalions employing guerrilla and counter-guerrilla tactics. These units would establish control over routes and other critical terrain by means of outposts, ambush positions, patrols, and defended localities, as appropriate. The infantry forces would be supported by air mobility, artillery, air reconnaissance, air fire support, air logistics, mines, demolitions, defoliation, and whatever other means were useful and available (mustard gas could be considered, for example). Drop zones, airstrips, and base camps as necessary would be prepared on high ground. As organization of the area proceeded, all civilians would be moved out, all movement would be prohibited, anything that moved would come under attack, and the control of infiltration would become increasingly effective. The PAVN and Pathet Lao forces to the south would find themselves progressively weaker. U.S. and allied air would dominate the skies over this and adjacent areas. If the DRV

chose to use air logistics to support the PAVN and Pathet Lao forces to the south, the aircraft could be intercepted, turned back, or shot down.

[redacted] Detailed analysis of typical trail networks in this mountainous area indicates that one infantry brigade of three battalions could occupy and adequately control 20-25 kilometers of this band of territory. On this basis, 4 or 5 brigades (or about 12 to 15 battalions) can establish adequate control over the full 100-110 kilometer band. If a reserve force of 3 to 5 battalions were also provided locally, the total force would amount to some 15 to 20 battalions. This is essentially a two division force. Of this force, it is suggested that 5 or 6 battalions would be U.S. and the remainder allied, from whatever source they could be obtained - Lao, RVN, Philippine, Australian, Thai, and other possible battalions.

Announcement of the Action

[redacted] The U.S. announcement of this action would make clear the U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia, would describe the recent history of Vietnam, including the DRV campaign to undermine the RVN, and U.S. assistance, and would build the case for the U.S. action by describing the events leading to the 1962 Geneva accords on Laos, the accords themselves, and the manner in which the DRV has for three years been systematically and deliberately violating these accords to undermine the RVN.

[redacted]

[redacted] The two division force could be called the "International Peace Keeping Force." The deployment of the international force to cut the infiltration routes would be described as an action of restraint in the use of force, taken with the cooperation of the government of Laos, with the sole purpose of ensuring compliance with the 1962 Geneva accords. It might be appropriate to quote directly from these accords, signed by the DRV and 13 other nations, in which each of the signatory nations:

> "Solemnly declare ... that they will recognize and will respect and observe in every way the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unit, and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos ...
>
> ... they will not commit or participate in any way in any act which might directly or indirectly impair the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity, or territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos ...
>
> ... they will refrain from all direct or indirect interference in the internal affairs of the Kingdom of Laos ...
>
> ... they will not introduce into the Kingdom of Laos foreign troops or military personnel in any form whatsoever ...
>
> ... they will not establish nor will they in any way facilitate or connive at the establishment in the Kingdom of Laos of any ... foreign military installation of any kind ...
>
> ... they will not use the territory of the Kingdom of Laos for interference in the internal affairs of other countries.[38]

[redacted] It would be emphasized that this force has no aggressive purpose and specifically that it does not threaten North Vietnam. It would be important, however, to warn that the DRV should not intervene with additional forces in Laos. For example, it could be stated that the DRV now has some 14 battalions in Laos - if these

are removed under international inspection, the "International Peace Keeping Force" will be removed under the same inspection; if these are reinforced by the DRV, North Vietnam cannot be considered a sanctuary.

(S) The object of the announcement of this action would be to portray a condition in which the United States, after displaying great patience, was finally in the interests of, and with the cooperation of, the free nations of Southeast Asia forced to act to put an end to the undermining of a friendly government from beyond its borders, that the only other choice was to allow this government to be slowly destroyed, and that the U.S. is standing by, strong, fully committed, and ready for developments. The U.S. strength in the area would be clear evidence that the U.S. is prepared for mainland war with the DRV and Communist China, which it would be in the best interests of Communist China and the DRV to avoid.

Feasibility

(U) Is this proposal militarily and politically feasible?

(S) The timely concentration of forces appears feasible provided E-day is set well in advance, the utmost secrecy is maintained, detailed plans are made, suitable cover and deception are used, advantage is taken of the pre-deployment of the JTF to Thailand, and light forces consistent with the new operational concept are introduced first.

(S) The operations of the two division force to cut the infiltration routes appear feasible provided DRV strength in the area is not greatly increased prior to E-day and the DRV does not intervene in

in the area with an additional division or more. If, despite the President's warning, the DRV does intervene, its territory would be attacked and the land-air operational concept for Southeast Asia would come into play as required for this level of escalation, which would be, in effect, a mainland war with the DRV, and which it would be important for the DRV to know would be disastrous to them.

(S) Feasibility of the proposed land-air operational concept involves two considerations: First, is the air mobile concept itself valid in a joint Army-Air Force framework; and second, using this concept and additional tactical air, can conventional action achieve U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia?

(S) Professional men will obviously differ on the first point. Answers to some important questions, such as the feasibility of air logistics and the vulnerability of aircraft to ground fire and enemy air, will never be "proven" except in combat. However, based on the Army's tests and the CINCSTRIKE comments, it seems probable that the concept is feasible. One way to give this new idea a chance would be to set up a JTF immediately in the CONUS, with the mission of developing the concepts in detail.

(S) As to the second point, a very high level of conventional war seems to be feasible today. Whether it would be adequate to deal with full DRV and Communist China intervention would depend on the objective beyond the war. This paper proposes that the U.S.

political objective in a war with Communist China would be limited - namely, after achieving full command of the air over Southeast Asia and South China, and after punishing Communist China and halting on the ground her military expansion, to establish, along the lines of the Korean settlement, a limit to the territory under Communist control behind which the free peoples of Southeast Asia could achieve stability and the development of free institutions. It appears that this limited objective can be achieved by conventional action of acceptable type and duration, using available forces. It is essential to the concept that, if Communist China enters the war on the ground, there is no sanctuary in South China, and, in fact, no target in China is ruled out.

[redacted] Politically, the proposal appears feasible. It should be possible to gain essential allied support in advance, and to present an adequate case to the rest of the world upon execution. The most troublesome problem would be to convince Souvanna Phouma that his best interests are served by this action.

[redacted] As a rationale for securing Souvanna Phouma acceptance, the U.S. could use the following: First, the U.S. is committed and prepared to go ahead; second, he can count on U.S. strength and prudence; third, the force is strong but the action itself is very limited; fourth, the Allied Forces, Southeast Asia, including U.S. forces if necessary, will assist Phouma in holding the present line in northern Laos; fifth, the DRV will be attacked if they add more

battalions to Laos; sixth, this action promises to return the southern panhandle of Laos to RLG control; and seventh, if the free nations of Southeast Asia stand firm, it is not likely that the Chinese will elect to raise the level of the conflict, especially in view of U.S. readiness and the character of the action being undertaken.

As to the possible Chinese reaction, the proposed action incorporates a number of measures which will combine to inhibit Chinese intervention. These include: great force concentrated swiftly in the immediate area; restraint in the use of this force; the actual commitment of U.S. forces on the ground at a great distance from Chinese territory; an evident capability and willingness to move very effectively to higher stages of escalation without using nuclear weapons; an obvious U.S. ability to destroy the Communist Chinese Air Force; a local and worldwide posture of readiness for nuclear war if this becomes necessary; evident U.S. commitment and determination to see the action through; a U.S. initiative gained through strategic surprise; the possibility of a later conciliatory move toward Communist China, in the United Nations and elsewhere; the maintenance of continuing private communications with the Chinese through third country or other channels; and a minimum outright challenge to Communist China's power and prestige. Experience with the Communist Chinese in other crises indicates that under these circumstances the likelihood is that they would take the longer view and would not choose to raise the ante at this time.

[redacted] Would this operation deal effectively with the Cambodian sanctuary and other possibilities of infiltration? As to Cambodia, one would expect that, if successful, this action would create a situation in which the "realist" Sihanouk would be very likely to reconsider his position. Measures might then become possible with respect to Cambodian territory which are not possible today - hot pursuit, for example. To assist Sihanouk in agreeing to such measures, the U.S. should consider providing some sort of guarantees that Cambodian boundaries with Vietnam would remain as they are when the RVN defeats the Viet Cong. As to coastal infiltration, improved measures would have to be taken to make this unprofitable to the DRV. It seems reasonable to conclude that, with this proposed action and complementary actions to deal with Cambodia and with coastal infiltration, the level of effectiveness of denial of outside support could be raised from its approximately "2" at present to something like "7" and that this aspect of counterinsurgency would be reaching the zone of "success." (See Figure 3, p. 15)

[redacted] Would this course of action, however, even if successful, save South Vietnam? It would meet only the external problem. The internal problem must also be solved. The RVN government must plan and put into effect a systematic and working program to gain control of its territory, root out the Viet Cong who are entrenched in the countryside, and provide security and good government to its people. While the proposed action would not of itself save Vietnam, it would make it possible for that country to be saved.

[redacted]

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

It is concluded that:

(U) To defend against revolutionary war as practiced today, the defender must cope effectively with both the internal and the external aspects. This is true in South Vietnam.

[redacted] External support to the Viet Cong is provided primarily by way of adjacent Laos and Cambodia. If this external support continues without marked reduction, there is little likelihood that the U.S. can achieve its objectives in South Vietnam.

[redacted] At end-1964, as the U.S. considered alternatives for coping with this situation, the commitment of significant U.S. troops had not been proposed as an alternative. This derived largely from U.S. experience in the past and from the current visualization of land warfare in Southeast asia.

[redacted] Modern technology makes it possible to visualize a new concept for land-air action on the mainland of Southeast Asia. This new concept, coupled with great increases in U.S. conventional strength since 1961, makes possible proposals for action in Southeast Asia of a type which has not previously been considered.

[redacted] There are many possible specific proposals. As one example, it appears that the proposal outlined in this paper would deal effectively with external support of the Viet Cong, would make

possible the achievement of U.S. objectives in South Vietnam, and would establish the forward limits of Communist expansion in Southeast Asia thereby achieving stability in that area.

While this specific proposal appears feasible, the larger proposition is the more important - namely, that it appears possible to take advantage of modern technology and forces on hand to fashion a military capability for land-air action on the Southeast Asia mainland which brings to bear the technological superiority of the United States, and which gives some promise of being acceptable to the people of the United States and usable by their President toward a satisfactory solution in Southeast Asia.

Recommendations

It is recommended that an agency or group be designated as proponents to examine the larger proposition stated just above and to develop one or more proposals for action based on this proposition; that the proposal(s) then be subjected to careful analysis and war gaming; that the proposal(s) with the analysis, be reviewed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and, if such action is considered justified, that they be forwarded as alternative courses of action in Southeast Asia.

FOOTNOTES - UNCLASSIFIED

1. New York Times, April 21, 1954, p.2.

2. Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1963), p.64.

3. New York Times, November 25, 1949, p. 18.

4. Robert Payne, "The Drives behind China's Communism," New York Times Magazine, December 17, 1950, p. 47.

5. Current Digest of the Soviet Press, February 22, 1961, pp. 8-9.

6. Bernard B. Fall, The Two Vietnams: A Political and Military Analysis, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), pp. 400-401.

7. Communist Plan to Conquer South Vietnam, (Bangkok: Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, 1962), p. 2.

8. Joseph Alsop, "With the Vietminh," Memphis Commercial Appeal, December 22, 1954.

9. See classified footnotes.

10. See classified footnotes.

11. Washington Evening Star, December 4, 1964, p. A-9.

12. See classified footnotes.

13. See classified footnotes.

14. Except for reference 13 cited above, source for description of Laos crisis is New York Times, August 1960 - May 1961.

15. See classified footnotes.

16. The author has found no specific documentary evidence of this key point. The judgement derives from review of available documents and interviews with responsible officials.

17. See classified footnotes.

18. Robert J. Donovan, Eisenhower: The Inside Story (New York: Harper, 1956), pp. 262-263.

19. General Matthew B. Ridgway, Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway, New York: Harper, 1956), pp. 276-277.

20. See classified footnotes.

21. See classified footnotes.

22. See classified footnotes.

23. See classified footnotes.

24. See classified footnotes.

25. Current Notes on International Affairs, July 1962, pp. 21-27.

26. See classified footnotes.

27. Interview in Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), 3 March 1965.

28. National Observer, October 5, 1964, p. 1.

29. Interviews with Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Systems Analysis), Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), December, 1964.

30. Interviews in Office of the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, December 1964.

31. See classified footnotes.

32. See classified footnotes.

33. See classified footnotes.

34. See classified footnotes.

35. See classified footnotes.

36. Current Notes on International Affairs, July 1962, pp. 21-27.

[redacted]

9. U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Infiltration Study, attachment to letter, subject: Viet Cong Infiltration (31 October 1964) p. 2. [redacted]

10. MACV, Infiltration Study, pp. 5-7. (Confidential)

12.

(4)

13. Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, subject: White House Meeting on Laos, January 23, with attachments, (23 January 1961) (Top Secret)

15. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, Memorandum for Secretary Gilpatric, subject: Briefs of CINCPAC OPLANS, CM-149-61, (23 March 1961). (Top Secret)

17. ASD(ISA), Memorandum ... attachment "Analysis," p. 5. (Top Secret)

20. Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, subject: Laos, (29 April 1961). (Top Secret)

21. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, Briefs of Agenda Items for SecDef/JCS Meeting of 3 April 1961, (undated). Top Secret)

22. MACV, Infiltration Study, pp. 1-2. (Confidential) Also compare order of battle in Laos in U.S. Pacific Command, Weekly Intelligence Digest, Number 21-61, pp. 6-7, with Number 18-62, pp. 6-7. (Secret)

23. Chief, MAAG-Vietnam, Outline, Chief MAAG-Vietnam, (undated), pp. 3-4. (Secret)

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31. Department of the Air Force, Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, subject: Final Report on Relationship of Tactical Air to Ground Forces Study, with attachments, (31 July 1964). (Top Secret)

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U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Viet Cong Infiltration. APO 143, San Francisco: Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, MACV. 20 April 1964 (Confidential)

A resume of Viet Cong infiltration during the period 1960 to April 1964.

U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Viet Cong Infiltration. APO 143, San Francisco: Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, MACV. 31 October 1964 (Confidential)

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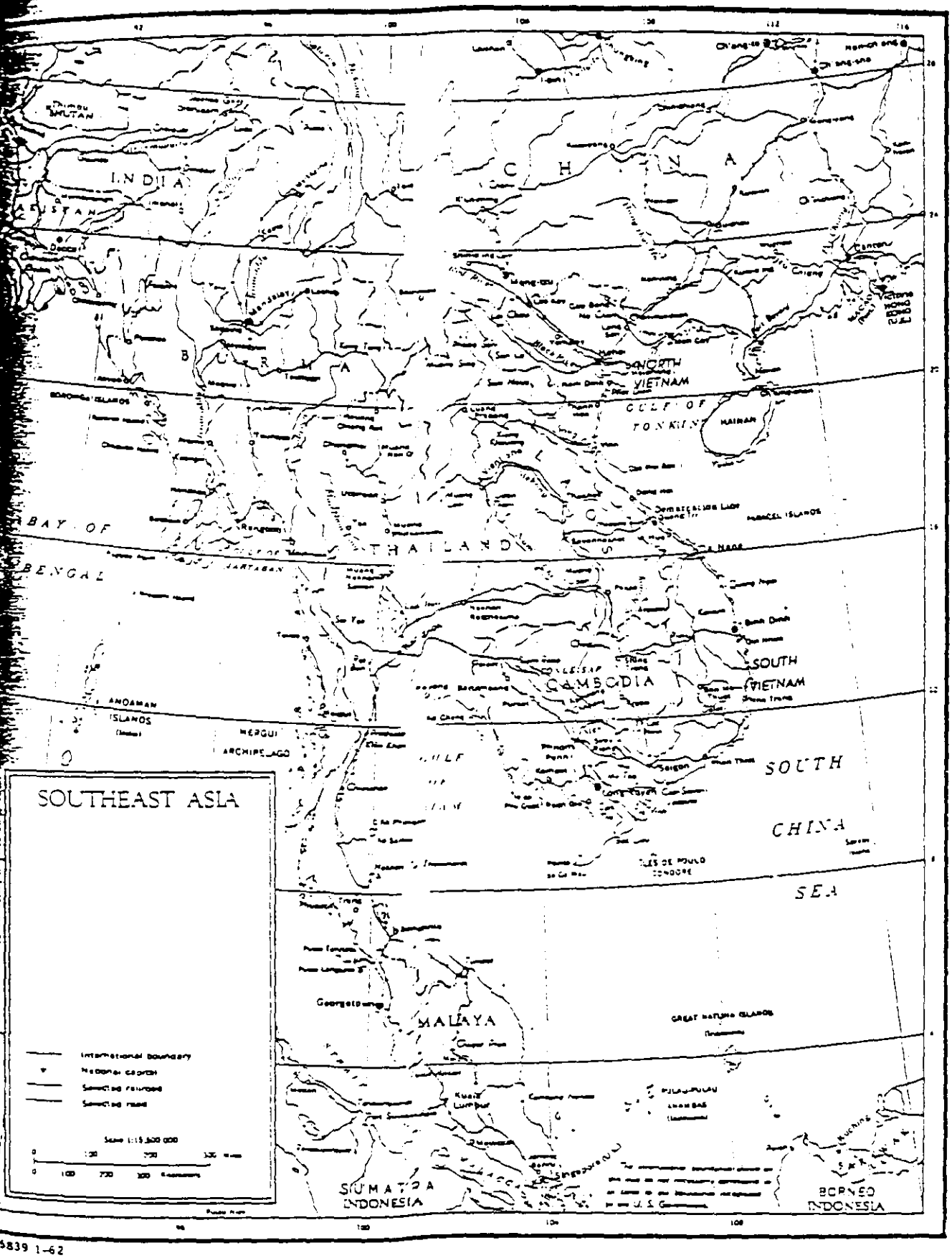
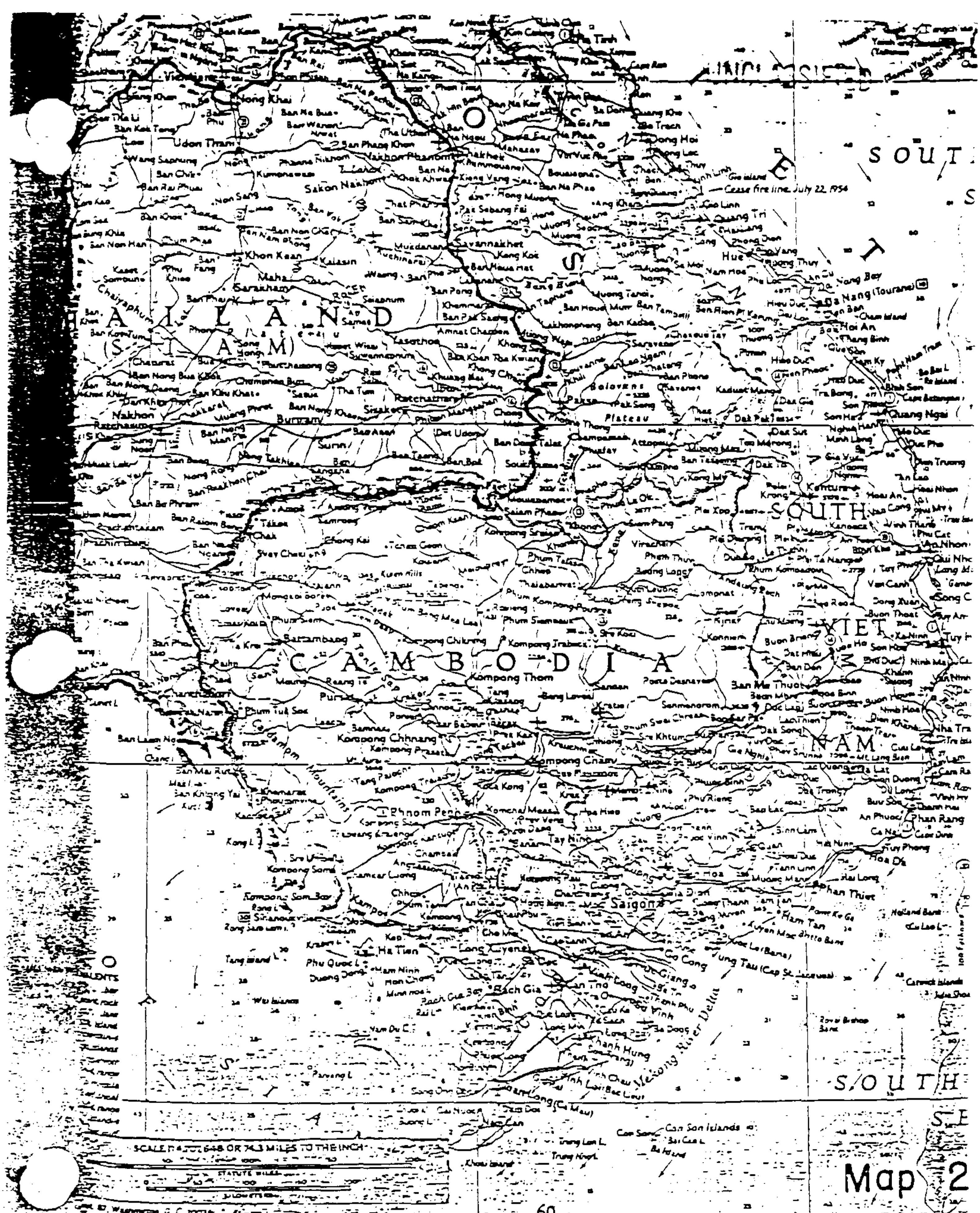


45839 1-62

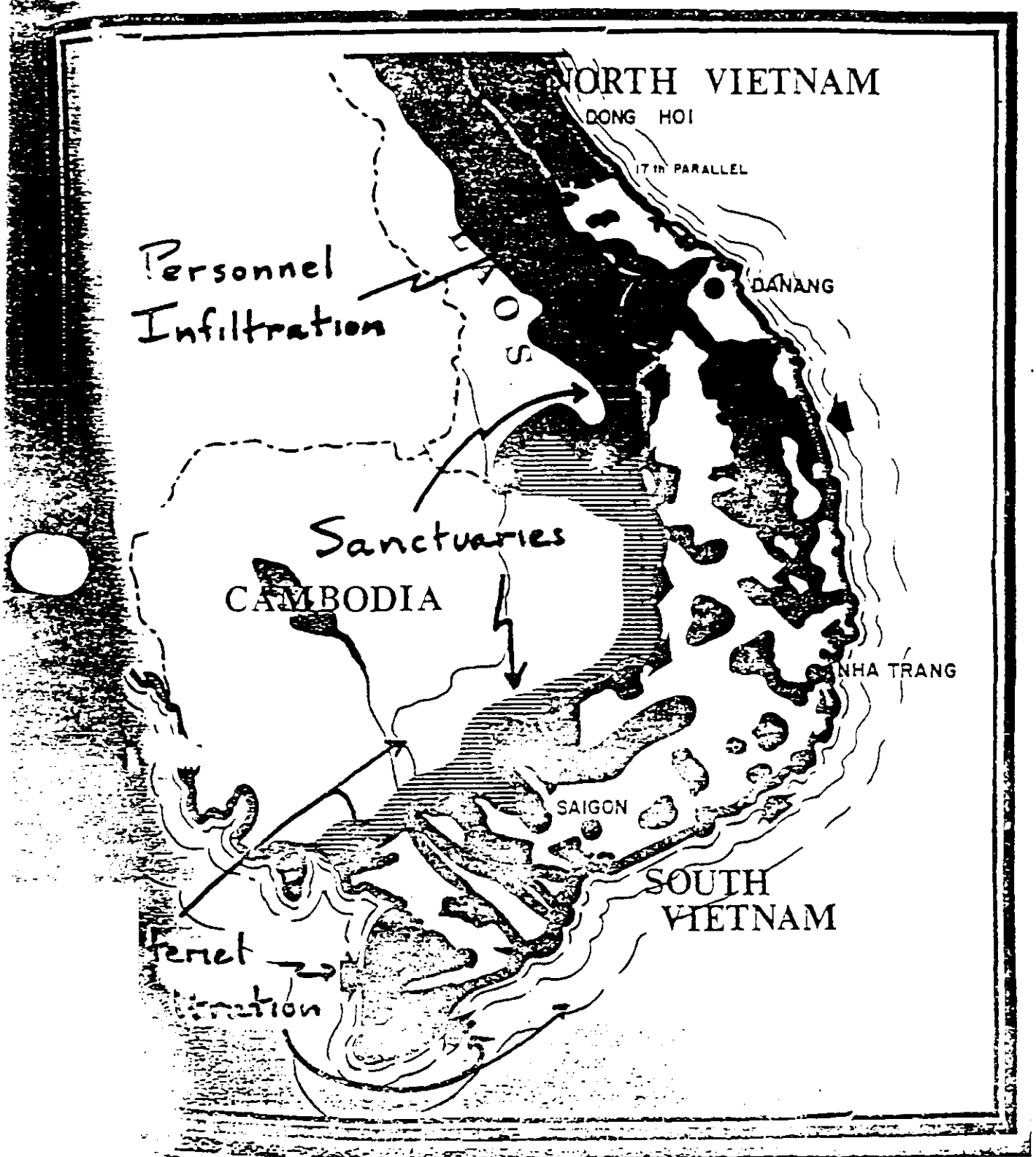
Map 1


THAILAND
(SIAM)
CAMBODIA
SOUTH VIET NAM
Cease fire line, July 22, 1954
Udon Thani
Nong Khai
Sakon Nakhon
Nakhon Phanom
Khon Kaen
Savannakhet
Pakse
Bolovens Plateau
Quang Tri
Hue
Da Nang (Tourane)
Hoi An
Quang Ngai
Kontum
Battambang
Kompong Thom
Kompong Chhnang
Kompong Cham
Phnom Penh
Tay Ninh
Saigon
Ha Tien
Rach Gia
Can Tho
Vung Tau (Cap St. Jacques)
Phan Thiet
Phan Rang
Nha Trang
Ban Me Thuot
Qui Nhon
Da Lat
Mekong River Delta
Cardamom Mountains
Con Son Islands
SCALE 1:4,707,648 OR 74.3 MILES TO THE INCH
STATUTE MILES

Map 2

VIETNAM

[redacted]



EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Map 3

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US Army (Ret)
91 Warwick Road
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Written while a student at Natl War Coll 1964-65

Annex 1

~~Appendix 1~~

EVALUATION OF 14 SELECTED COUNTERINSURGENCIES

This appendix is a brief evaluation of a selected sample of 14 counterinsurgencies since World War II (Table 1). In seven of these, the counterinsurgency was successful. In the other seven, the counterinsurgency was unsuccessful, or resulted in a "draw" or stalemate, from which the insurgents achieved their goals.

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine such general relationship as may exist between the internal and the external aspects of an insurgency and counterinsurgency.

In each of the 14 cases, the external and the internal aspects are given a separate subjective rating, indicating by a number on a scale 0-10 the degree to which the counterinsurgency was advanced in that particular aspect.

The external rating indicates the degree to which the insurgents did not receive external support.

The internal rating indicates the effectiveness of internal measures, relative to the insurgent opposition.

Obviously, each insurgency has its own distinct set of circumstances. Within these 14, for example, external support varied widely. In the Philippines and Tibet, for example, external support was not provided at all. In Indochina, external support was massive and flowed essentially without interference. Internal measures also varied widely. In Hungary, highly efficient and brutal repression crushed the 1956 uprising. In Cuba, Batista attempted police state measures and failed miserably. The effectiveness with which the defender combined military and non-military measures differed greatly among the 14 cases.

Algeria is a noteworthy case. Here, the French measures to cut external support were effective, and the French Army's military action gained a slight

upper hand internally, bringing about a stalemate. However, the necessary non-military content of counterinsurgency was not provided by the French, the stalemate persisted, and the insurgents eventually achieved their objectives.

The ratings are summarized in Table 2, and are also plotted on a graph (Figure 1).

From these 14 cases, the following general principle is derived:

> In order for a counterinsurgency to succeed, there must be both an internal effort substantially superior to that of the insurgents, and an effective restriction of (or an absence of) external support to the insurgents. Neither action alone is sufficient to success. Both are necessary.

Revolutionary war being a social, rather than a physical, phenomenon, there may be exceptions to this general principle. However, this brief examination of 14 cases indicates that a defender against insurgency would disregard the general principle stated above only at very substantial risk to his eventual success.

Table 1

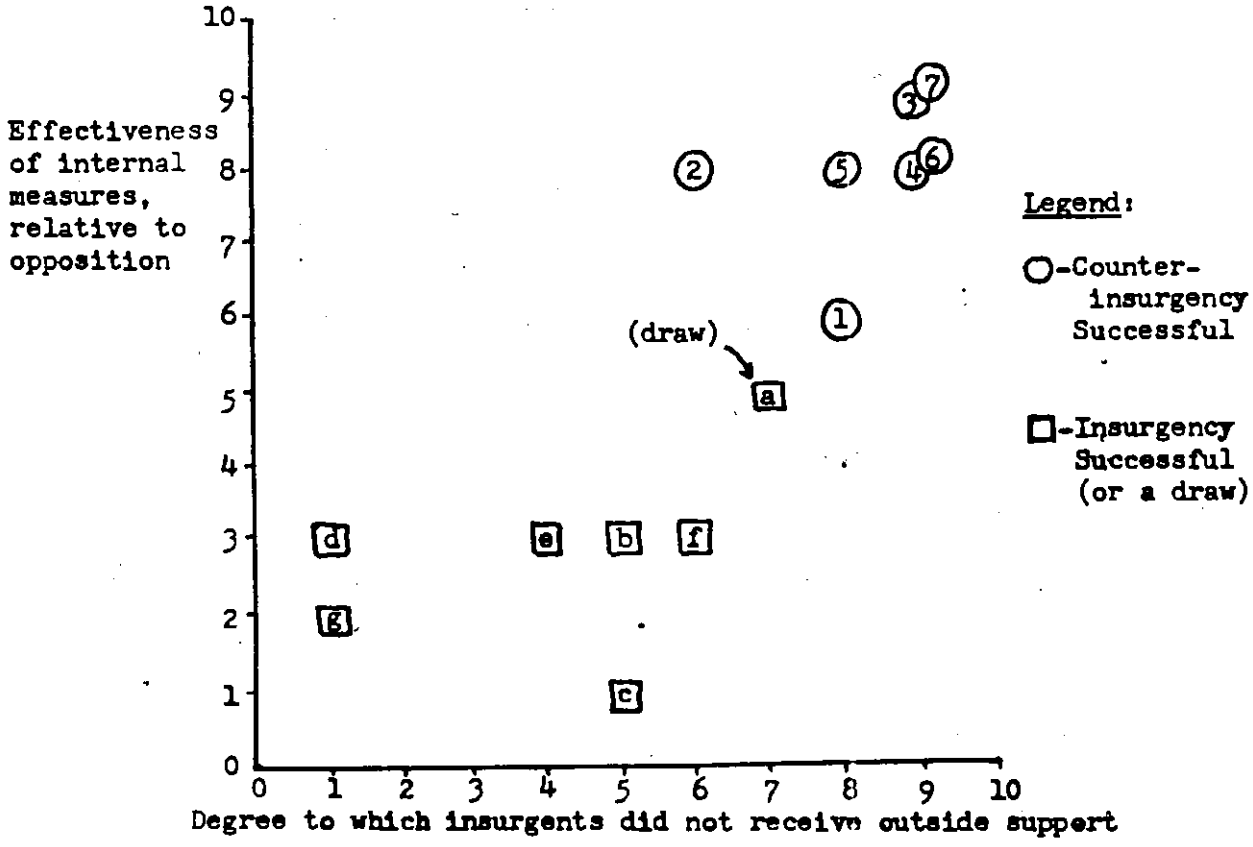
A Selection of Insurgencies since World War II

Counterinsurgency Successful	Insurgency Successful (or a draw)
1. Burma (1948-1960)	a. Algeria (1954-1962)
2. Greece (1946-1949)	b. China (1927-1949)
3. Hungary (1956)	c. Cuba (1953-1959)
4. Korea (1948-1954)	d. Indochina (1945-1954)
5. Malaya (1948-1960)	e. Indonesia (1946-1949)
6. Philippines (1946-1954)	f. Israel (1945-1948)
7. Tibet (1951-1960)	g. Laos (1959-1961)

Table 2

Counterinsurgency Successful			Insurgency Successful (or draw)		
	Rating			Rating	
Insurgency	External	Internal	Insurgency	External	Internal
1. Burma	8	6	a. Algeria	7	5
2. Greece	6	8	b. China	5	3
3. Hungary	9	9	c. Cuba	5	1
4. Korea	9	8	d. Indochina	1	3
5. Malaya	8	8	e. Indonesia	4	3
6. Philippines	9	8	f. Israel	6	3
7. Tibet	9	9	g. Laos	1	2

Figure 1



BURMA (1948-1960)

External Support.- Independent in 1948, Burma had been greatly damaged in World War II and its poorly organized new government faced a chaotic internal situation in which five separate and rival factions were, by mid-1948, in open revolt. These were the Red Flag and White Flag Communists, the pro-Communist Peoples Volunteer Organization, separatists of the ethnic Karen minority, and regular army mutineers - a total of 20,000 to 40,000 armed insurgents. At this time arms and ammunition of World War II Japanese origin could be easily obtained. The Burmese government feared possible Chinese and Soviet support of the insurgents. However, apart from advice from Peking and the acceptance of 50-100 Burmese for training in Communist China, there is no evidence of substantial aid to the insurgents from either China or the USSR. Rating: 8.

Internal Measures.- Between March 1948 and early 1950, the major counterinsurgency effort was military - aimed, first, at eliminating the threat to Rangoon and the government itself, and second, at breaking the hold of the insurgents over large sections of the countryside and transportation routes. This was largely successful, and by 1952, the government was able to move to economic and social development. Amnesty offers, psychological warfare, improvement of economic conditions, mass education, and similar measures were used with farily good effect. General Ne Win, after his bloodless coup of November 1958, stepped up both the military and psywar campaign, and pressed with the disarmament of civilians, including insurgents. By 1960, the country was sufficiently stable for elections to be held. (Insurgency in Burma, however, remains a problem to this date.) Rating: 6.

Source: Burma (1948-1960), Pre-publication working paper (Washington, Special Operations Research Office, 1965).

GREECE (1946-1949)

External Support.- The Greek Communist guerrillas (KKE) had the support of neighboring Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, which provided a sanctuary for retreat, recuperation, and training. Substantial arms and ammunition for the KKE also came across these borders. In July 1948, Tito broke with the Cominform, and Yugoslav aid began to taper off; by January supplies through Yugoslavia were reduced to a trickle. There is evidence that before the 1949 summer Greek/offensive, shortages in small arms and artillery ammunition were felt by the guerrillas. Since the Yugoslavs had taken the lead in support of the KKE, their defentionbroke down the mechanism of support, and creation of a new mechanism was difficult because of the key geographic position of Yugoslavia. Tito closed his border completely in July 1949./ However, the Albanian and Bulgarian borders remained open until almost the end of the insurgency. Rating: 6.

Internal Measures.- The KKE began operations with hit and run raids and terror. This tied down the Greek defenders, whose tactics were initially poor, but did not succeed in holding any large areas of the countryside. While the KKE had a narrow popular base and the KKE insurgency had little social content, the Greek government had broad popular support. In late 1948, the KKE mistakenly changed from guerrilla to more conventional tactics and organization. Meanwhile, in 1947 and 1948, the Greek Army improved in quality and strength, and retrained, and reshaped its strategy and tactics. By the end of 1948, the Greek Army had begun an effective gradual expansion of control from south to north, concentrating on selected areas one at a time. By August 1949 they had sealed the Albanian border, and by the end of 1949 organized KKE resistance had ceased. Rating: 8.

Sources: D.G. Kousoulas, "The Guerrilla War the Communists Lost," U.S. Naval Institute Proceddings, May, 1963, pp 66-73.
Col. J.C. Murray, "The Anti-Bandit War," Marine Corps Gazette, May, 1954, pp 52-58.

HUNGARY (1956)

External Support.- This revolution began 23 October. It was a great popular uprising - spontaneous, unplanned, and initially unorganized. Except for humanitarian supplies from charitable agencies in West Europe, the Hungarian "freedom fighters" received no outside aid. From the first, the Soviets were sensitive to the Austrian frontier. They quickly established control over the main road to Budapest, searching eastbound travelers and vehicles. Other Soviet forces reinforced the Hungarian border guards, who were unreliable during the revolution. On 31 October, when the Soviets moved back into Hungary in force, they moved quickly to seal the border completely, accomplishing this on 2-3 November. Rating: 9.

Internal Measures.- The revolution took the Hungarian and Soviet authorities by surprise. Inital measures were ineffective. Hungarian troops joined the insurgents, and even Soviet troops did not have their hearts in the suppressive action. By 28 October, the revolution had actually succeeded. On 30 October, the end of the Communist government was announced and the Nagy coalition government was established, pledging free elections. On 30 and 31 October Soviet troops left Budapest. However, on the evening of 31 October, Soviet tank formations began entering Hungary in great strength. On the night of 3-4 November the Soviets struck and, with an estimated 100,000 men and 2,500 tanks and armored vehicles, brutally crushed the revolution. Although Kadar replaced Nagy, as the Soviets crushed the revolt they executed all government functions directly. By 15 November all fighting had stopped, mass deportations had begun, and the revolution was ended. Rating: 9.

Source: Hungary (1956), Pre-publication working paper (Washington, Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

KOREA (1948-1954)

External Support. From August 1948 when the Republic of Korea was formed and insurgency began to June 1950 when the North Koreans attacked south, the Communist insurgents in their mountain base areas in South Korea were supported from the north by the infiltration of at least 1000, and possibly 2000, trained guerrillas, mostly southerners sent north for training. However, only a trickle of supplies, if that, came from the north. From September 1950 when the United Nations forces drove the North Koreans out of South Korea until 1954 when the insurgency was defeated, the infiltration of personnel and supplies from the north to the insurgents was negligible. Rating: 9

Internal measures. Local ROK countermeasures against the guerrillas were generally ineffective up to December 1948, when the ROK Army opened operations with three of the eight ROK divisions. This operation was not particularly effective, either; troops used conventional tactics, and there was only a rudimentary psychological warfare effort. By June 1950, there had been no decline in the 7,000 man guerrilla force. Beginning in December 1951 a vigorous counterinsurgency campaign was conducted. Two divisions of regular troops, plus one of security troops, pressed a coordinated and well-organized military campaign, killing 11,000 and capturing 5,700 guerrillas, including 50 major leaders. From March 1952 to November 1953, two division-sized operations were conducted, using security and police troops. By this time guerrilla strength had been reduced to about 1,000. From December 1953 to mid-1954, the final two-division operation took place, at the end of which there were only 200 guerrillas, scattered and leaderless, and the guerrilla threat was eliminated. Rating: 8

Source: Korea (1948-1954), Pre-publication working paper (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

MALAYA (1948-1957)

External Support.- After World War II, the Chinese of Malaya, about 40% of the population, were discriminated against and, with the continuing social and economic unrest, conditions were good for the insurgency which began in 1948. The Malayan Communist Party which directed the insurgency was small and 95% Chinese. About 20,000 guerrillas were supported by the Chinese mass civil organization Min Yuen. At first the guerrillas received an unknown amount of military goods via the Thai border and by sea, but countermeasures essentially shut off these sources of supply and there is no evidence of substantial external support, althought Communist China is thought to have provided doctrinal and moral support, plus possibly some infiltration. Use of Thailand by the insurgents was inhibited by distance and terrain and by the 1949 agreement by which the Thai government permitted Federation police to pursue guerrillas for 10 miles inside the Thai border. Rating: 8.

Internal Measures.- Guerrilla action initially consisted of raids, ambushes, murder, robbery, terroristic activity, and attacks on police stations and government forces. The guerrillas had some initial success. After 1951 the British took well conceived countermeasures, including: unified direction of civil and military forces; increasing and reorganizing the police force; formation of home guards; and very effective military tactics. The British built up a regular and paramilitary force of 360,000, cut the logistic support of the guerrillas through resettlement of 500,000 Chinese, pursued the guerrillas relentlessly, granted amnesty to those who surrendered, and operated with very good intelligence. By 1957, the British were successful enough for Malaya to become independent, and by 1960 the insurgency was over. Rating: 8.

Sources: "The Revolution in Malaya: 1948-1957," Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1962).

S.N. Bjelajac, "Malaya: Case History in Area Operations," Army, May, 1962, pp 30-40.

PHILIPPINES (1946-1954)

External Support.- The Communist guerrilla, or Huk, organization was formed in January 1942, fought the Japanese during the war, and by 1945 had a trained and experienced guerrilla army which eventually rose to 100,000 men. In 1945 and 1946, the Huks re-equipped themselves with stolen or misappropriated American arms. Huk sources of funds included gifts from wealthy Chinese supporters, taxes from areas under Huk control, and the proceeds from raids, holdups, and train robberies. Arms and ammunition were stolen or captured. Food and medical supplies were acquired through gift or confiscation. There is no evidence of external support. Rating: 9.

Internal Measures:- In 1945 the Huks controlled large rural areas and had a wealth of experience in organizing the population. From 1946 to 1950, Philippine government countermeasures were inadequate and the Huk movement gained strength. In September 1950, Ramon Magsaysay became Secretary of National Defense. In October 1950, most of the Communist Party leadership was seized in raids in Manila. Led by Magsaysay, the armed forces were reorganized and reformed; an effective and vigorous military action was undertaken; social and economic reforms were instituted to win the people to the government side; effective psychological warfare accompanied military action; honest elections were held; guerrilla strength was eroded by offers of amnesty and support to those whishing a new start; and hard core leaders and units were relentlessly pursued. In 1953, Magsaysay was elected president. In May 1954 theHuk forces were reduced to a handful and their chief leader surrendered. Rating: 8.

Source: Alvin H. Scaff, The Philippine Answer to Communism, (Stanford; Stanford University Press, 1955)

TIBET (1951-1960)

External Support.- The insurgency in Tibet after 1951 was directed against the occupation forces of the Chinese Communist regime, which contended that Tibet was an integral part of China and that its occupation by Chinese forces and the suppression of the resultant rebellion were purely internal matters. Despite the fact that from 1912 to 1950, China had exercised virtually no influence over Tibet's internal or external affairs, the Chinese point of view was tacitly accepted by India, Great Britain, the United States, and even the Chinese Nationalist government on Taiwan. Thus, there was essentially no outside aid available to the Tibetan insurgents, who were forced to rely upon limited and ancient arms and ammunition on hand, and on materiel captured from the Chinese Communists. Rating: 9.

Internal Measures.- From 1951 to 1956, Chinese Communists measures were relatively restrained and aimed primarily at preventing insurgency. However, Chinese occupation and repression led to armed Tibetan insurgency in 1957. Increased Chinese terror, desecration of religious institutions, and resettlement of Chinese in Tibetan territory intensified Tibetan resistance. The Chinese took even more drastic measures. From 25,000 in 1952, troop strength rose to 100,000 in late 1958 and finally to almost 200,000 in 1959. When the Dalai Lama escaped, forestalling Chinese plans to use him for their own purposes, very severe action was taken by the Chinese, including ruthless execution of suspected insurgents and mass reprisals against families and villages. By the end of 1960, the Chinese Communists, with their overwhelming numbers, brutal measures, superior weapons, and the mobility gained from their new roads, had ended the insurgency. Rating: 9.

Source: Tibet (1951-1960), Pre-publication working paper (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

ALGERIA (1954-1962)

External Support.- Beginning before 1954, but especially after 1956, the Algerian rebels (FLN) received very substantial outside support from other Arab countries, plus moral support from the Communist and Afro-Asian blocs and sympathizers elsewhere. In 1957 the FLN set up training and staging bases in Tunisia and Morocco. The French finally took strong measures to restrict external support. They interdicted arms shipments by sea and at great cost they built hundreds of miles of ~~physical~~ barriers along the Tunisian and Moroccan borders, with multiple barbed wire entangelents, electified and alarm fences, minefields, radar coverage, and roads for movement of reserves. These barriers effectively closed the border to significant infiltration of supplies and personnel. Rating: 7.

Internal Measures.- By mid-1956, through indiscrimate attack and other action the French had driven most of the rural population to the FLN. The French Army then began the use of quadrillage, a grid-type garrisoning of urban and rural areas, and assumed most of the functions of government in the countryside. Special control tactics were devised for Algiers andother cities. Army units for government and psychological warfare became active. Effective military action forced the FLN to operate in ever smaller units. Despite great effort, the French Army's political action measures did not "take" with the ~~Algerian~~ native population. No meaningful social or economic reforms were implemented. By mid-1958, with 500,000 troops, the French had through great effort achieved a slightly favorable military situation, but could gain no further advantage. In end-1957, the FLN shifted from general insurrection to maintenance ofthe stalemate and pressure on the French to negotiate and recognize Algerian independence. DeGaulle came to power in mid-1958, and the FLN objectives were achieved in 1962.

Source: Algeria (1954-1962), Pre-publication working paper (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

CHINA (1927-1949)

External Support.- The support which the Chinese Communists received from the USSR from 1927 to the end of World War II is not clear. Certainly there was doctrinal support and some training of cadres. Support was difficult early in this period because the Chinese Communists were isolated in remote rural areas. During the 1940-1945 war, the Chinese Communist expansion in Northwest China evidently received no significant Soviet materiel support. After 1945 the Chinese Communist received major indirect aid in the form of captured Japanese war materiel from the Soviet forces in Manchuria. This was of substantial help to the Communists and directly affected their strength in the final stages of the revolution. Rating: 5.

Internal Measures.- Beginning in 1931, Chiang was initially successful and forced the Communists on their "Long March" to Yenan in 1934. The Mao-Chiang truce of 1937 set up a joint war effort against the Japanese; however, Mao used the Japanese war to establish Communist control over great areas of the countryside and build his rural bases. With the Japanese defeat, the Nationalists moved north garrisoning the cities and towns but neglecting the countryside and making no efforts to create efficient local administration. The Nationalist effort was not well organized and suffered from U.S. attempts to unite the Nationalist and Communist armies. Nationalist troops, numerically superior in 1946 and 1947, overextended themselves in Manchuria, while the Communists conducted guerrilla warfare against their lines of communication and strengthed Communist control in the countryside. In mid-1947, the Communists began their north to south offensive and in two years their more disciplined, better led, and more effective forces defeated the Nationalists. Rating: 3.

Sources: "The Chinese Communist Revolution: 1927-1949," Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts, (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1962)

Col. S.B. Griffith, "Mao Tze Tung--Sun in the East," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, June 1951, pp 615-623.

CUBA (1953-1959)

External Support. In November 1956, Castro returned to Cuba from exile and after a near disastrous landing retreated to the Sierra Maestra with only 12 of his original party. During 1957, his movement gained publicity, attracted recruits, secured its mountain base, began guerrilla warfare, and became the foremost of the various revolutionary movements. Supplies were short, and many arms shipments were intercepted by Batista. Castro's leaders claimed that 85% of their arms and ammunition were captured from government forces. By the beginning of 1958, Castro began receiving substantial support from friends in the U.S. and Latin America. For example, arms shipments from Mexico and Costa Rica in mid-1958 permitted the formation of new guerrilla units. By this time, Batista's effectiveness was deteriorating and with it the effectiveness of his anti-smuggling efforts. Rating: 5.

Internal Measures. Batista used highly suppressive measures to stay in power. Despite some concessions, his regime was highly unpopular and open insurrection began in 1956. Batista countered with further repression, police state rule, and irrational terror. The morale and loyalty of the Cuban armed forces then deteriorated. Batista was ineffective against Castro, after Castro reached the Sierra Maestra. A 4,000 man infantry force was completely unsuccessful in early 1957. Containment operations in the rest of 1957 succeeded only in allowing Castro to build a secure base area in the mountains. In mid-1958 the Cuban Army launched a massive ground attack into the Sierra Maestra; this, too, was a failure. From this point, the military and political situation deteriorated sharply and by 1 January Batista was out and Castro was in control of Cuba. Rating: 1

Source: Cuba (1953-1959), Pre-publication working paper (Washington; Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

INDOCHINA (1946-1954)

External Support.- Before the insurgency began in 1946, the Viet Minh had gained control of villages along the China-Indochina border. In 1950, the Viet Minh destroyed the French border forts, eliminating further interference with support from Communist China. After the war, the Viet Minh had obtained substantial arms and equipment from Japanese, Chinese Nationalist, and even U.S. sources. In 1950, the Red Chinese assisted in training and equipping 26 Viet Minh battalions in China. Chinese logistic support grew each year: 10-20 tons per month in 1951; 250 tons per month by end 1952; 400-600 tons per month by 1953; and 1,500 to 4,000 tons per month between January and June 1954. Rating: 1.

Internal Measures.- Initial Viet Minh tactics were conventional and in early actions the French met with success. French military tactics fluctuated between the defensive establishment of forts, securing of routes, and control of towns to the offensive use of mobile forces. Some effective use was made of deep airborne thrusts. Air and inland naval forces played a major role. However, against increasingly effective guerrilla tactics and growing Viet Minh strength, the French, while causing heavy losses, were unable to make progress. Politically, they suffered because of late adoption of a policy of decolonization, the absense of respected indigenous leaders on their side, and a series of ineffective premiers under the inept leadership of the unpopular monarch Bao Dai. By 1949 the political struggle was in effect lost, and the various techniques the French used thereafter to win or control the population had little practical effect. Beginning in December 1953, the military situation deteriorated, culminating in the loss of Dien Bien Phu in May 1954. The cease fire was signed in July 1954. Rating: 3.

Source: Indochina (1946-1954), Pre-publication working paper (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

INDONESIA (1946-1949)

External Support.- World War II ended with the Netherlands East Indies in the hands of Indonesian nationalists who, with Japanese concurrence, proclaimed the independence of the Indonesian Republic in August 1945. The Dutch, with limited transport, were forced to re-enter Indonesia and wrest control from this nationalist movement. Indonesian armed forces although not well organized amounted to some 120,000 men and eventually grew to between 200,000 and 400,000 parmilitary and regular. They started with poor supplies and equipment, initially of Japanese and pre-war Dutch origin. The Indonesians were helped by foreign aid, including loans from the Philippines, Canada, Australia, and the Export-Import Bank, and food from Burma and India. ~~World opinion condemned~~ The Dutch ~~were~~ were generally unable to prevent outside aid from reaching Indonesian guerrilla forces. Rating: 4.

Internal Measures.- The Dutch eventually introduced more than 100,000 troops into Indonesia, of which about half were Indonesians with Dutch officers. The Dutch underestimated the nationalist strength and popularity and overestimated their own position. Through military action they gradually gained some control over the territory. In two "police actions" they attempted to reduce the control of the Republic of Indonesia and to establish a federation of states associated withthe Netherlands. Dutch military actions were fairly effective, but their political actions were not and their position became increasingly untenable. The prospect of prolonged guerrilla war against the effective Indonesian forces, plus worldwide adverse reaction to the Dutch campaign, finally led the Dutch to negotiate through the U.N. in 1949, and Indonesia eventually became fully independent. Rating: 3.

Source: Indonesia (1946-1949), Pre-publication working paper (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

ISRAEI (1946-1948)

External Support: Substantial stocks of weapons and ammunition had been collected in World War II and cached in the countryside by the Jewish insurgents before they began operations against Great Britain's mandate rule in Palestine in 1946. These stocks were augmented by some local production and by capturing and stealing from British forces. The insurgents were also supported by the world Zionist organization, which was able to purchase arms abroad and which was assisting the displaced Jews of Europe in migrating to Palestine. The British took strong measures to interdict external support. Through a naval blockade they were able to prevent large scale immigration. However, despite their measures, they were able neither to prevent the entry of individuals and small groups, not to prevent the clandestine entry of sizeable amounts of arms and ammunition. Rating: 6.

Internal Measures: From 1946 to 1948 the British committed between 80,000 and 90,000 troops against approximately 35,000 armed Jewish insurgents. The British tactics were good. However, they were faced by a very intelligent and dedicated opponent, who had the complete support of the highly cohesive Jewish community, who operated with near perfect intelligence, and who skillfully combined terror and propaganda with military action. The British were unable to make much progress. By late 1947, the Palestine problem had gone to the United Nations and the British were operating more as peacemakers between the Jews and the Arabs contesting for Palestine. The British withdrew in May 1948, the independence of Israel was proclaimed, and the fighting turned into the Arab-Israeli War. Rating: 3.

Source: Israel (1946-1948), Pre-publication working paper (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1965)

LAOS (1959-1961)

External Support.- The Communist Pathet Lao had from pre-1954 days been supported and even manipulated by the North Vietnamese under Ho Chi Minh. Beginning in July 1959, with North Vietnamese support, Pathet Lao military forces moved to expand their control in the northeastern provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua. For a year they combined military action with grass roots political activity to undermine Royal Laotian Government (RLG) control. From August 1960 to May 1961, the Pathet Lao expanded eventually to control about two-thirds of the territory of Laos, operating throughout with North Vietnamese units, advisors, and logistic support. Beginning in December 1960, the Pathet Lao received substantial Soviet airlift support, which brought in Communist bloc arms and equipment. There was no significant interference with external support throughout this two year insurgency. Rating: 1.

Internal Measures.- Effectiveness of the RLG counterinsurgency measures was severely hampered by poor organization, factionalism in the RLG, frequent changes in government, shifting U.S. policy and support, and the inability of the RLG to take effective political and other counterinsurgency action at the district and village level. RLG military action left much to be desired. By early 1961, the Pathet Lao had clearly gained the upper hand and were prevented from overrunning the entire country only by the restraining influence of the US-UK-USSR negotiations which led to the Geneva Conference and eventually to the neutralization of Laos under a coalition government. (Pathet Lao insurgency continues in Laos) Rating: 2.

Source: Arthur J. Dommen, Conflict in Laos: The Politics of Neutralization, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964)