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quality 1 (normass/deepe)

DANANG, SOUTH VIETNAM, JULY 2—Allied intelligence sources in the ~~northern~~
northern provinces around the demilitarized zone believe the quality of Communist
fighters has ^Ddiminished dramatically in recent months—but, in return, the Communist
high command has won time in funneling increasing ^{quantities} quantities of men into battlefield
~~positions.~~ positions.

"It looks as though the enemy's making his maximum effort now," one Allied
intelligence source ~~explains~~ ~~officer~~ explained. "He's speeded up his training ~~schedules~~
schedules of men—so he's getting a poorer quality fighter. He's tenacious to
maintain contact and to keep pressure on Allied units. This gives the impression
in Vietnam he's in charge, but in fact, he doesn't have the overall military strength
to back up his position. But, the political aspects ~~(of)~~ (of the Vietnam ~~war~~ war)
are such his military ~~weaknesses~~ weaknesses might not matter."

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quality 2 (normass/deepe)

Even cautious Allied intelligence sources—not known for voicing officially optimistic viewpoints to Western journa journalists—are surprised at the drop in the quality of quality of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong soldiers. Allied units are capturing more prisoners—some of them small-unit surrenders, which is unusual. More and more top-quality Viet Cong and North Vietnamese officers—including some at battalion and regimental command levels—are voluntarily defecting to the Allied side.

For example, on April 22, an American officer recalled that four North Vietnamese soldiers who have just infiltrated with a 600-man unit into South Vietnam near Khe Sanh flaged down an American helcoi helicopter and defe voluntarily defectd to the Allied side. They were not repeat not teenagers—as is often found among the Southern-born Viet Cong ranks—but were all four in their twenties. They had decided to desert while they were still in North Vietnam because they believed their military recruitment had deprived them of schooling and chances for individn individual betterment. They had never heard of the Vietnam government's Chieu Hoi—or Open Arms—program in which Communist soldiers and cadre are given full citiz citizenship rights for ~~surrendering~~ laying down their arms and switching sides.

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quality 3 (normass/deepe)

"The enemy forces are not repeat not as well trained and disciplined as earlier," an informed source explained. "This is a change. But ~~it is it~~ a significant change? I ~~don't~~ don't know. We are getting more and more prisoners and this indicates either the enemy is being hurt, or else he has less control of his troops." He added half-jokingly, "Or maybe there's just more enemy, so ~~there's~~ there's more prisoners."

He continued, "Maybe ~~thix~~ maintaining discipline is not repeat not so important to the Communist high command as is keeping his replacements coming in. If the enemy shortens his training programs from three months to one month, for example, he can keep his battalions filled up, despite heavy battlefield losses. And this is what he's now doing. He's got a good replacement program working and it is based on his anticipated losses. The enemy can get his replacements in fast. I suspect the enemy knows his discipline isn't as good as it used to be—and he has sacrificed this for gaining time."

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quality 4 (normass/deepe)

Another ~~a~~ ^{Allied} sour informed source explained:

"More enemy are surrendering now and leaving weapons behind on the battlefield than ever before. In April, when the Allied broke the siege around Khe Sanh, the North Vietnamese left more weapons on position than I'd ever have dreamed of.... Now, the enemy's battlefield policy is atrocious. It's even worse than the Americans. The American troops never worry about losing weapons and battlefield ~~gear~~ gear because they're from a rich nation and there's more to replace losses. Now, the Communist attitude is the same.—if we leave our weapons behind, there's more where these came from. More than 2000 Communist rifles were captured around ~~the bat~~ the bat on the battlefield around Khe Sanh when the siege was lifted and this is unheard of."

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quality 5 (normass/deepe)

But these battlefield trends provide only flickers of optimism for Allied field commanders; in this region of heavy sustained, sometimes heavy fighting. The rapidity in which Communist battlefield losses are replaced is considered a frustrating experience for Allied officers, especially in the northern provinces where the Communists maintain their shortest ^{FIELD} supply lines and infiltration routes to the South.

"In other wars, the ~~damage~~ ^{WHICH} damage the Allies do to these North Vietnamese battalions would be enough to cause it to disintegrate as a ^{FROM} for fighting force," one Allied ^{INFORMED} ~~informed~~ source explained. "These battalions would be ineffective for a long period of time. But, in this ~~war~~ war, that kind of damage ~~here~~ doesn't mean much. Within thirty days, these battalions are back up to ^{LIVE SEEN} strenght strength and fighting like they never lost a man. I saw it happen so many times here. We've wiped out ~~a~~ ^{CASE} one battalion of a regiment, and then it's back fighting us again.

"I'll never forget ~~instantaneous~~ ^{ONE} one battle. Our unit killed three hundred North Vietnam; we ^D litt literally wiped out a battalion of that regiment. We thought that regiment was really hurting. The ~~regimen~~ ^H remainder of that regiment evaded us—and ten days later we got into a three-day battle. It was the ^{FROM THAT REG} same guys we thought we had destroyed and it turned out that regiment had picked up replacements as he evaded and had begun ^{IS STRONG} reconst reconstituting that regiment before the battle was even ended."

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quality 6 (normass/deepe)

(Hank: Have returned returned from Bangkok and ~~fell~~ feel wonderful. Thanks for the time off. Either Wednesday or Friday, I'll attempt to file a long piece on the Saigon military situation. Otherwise will probably be just shorties. The so-called ~~third~~ ~~w~~ ~~third~~ wave ~~is~~ does not appear imminent, Americans here say, but, I'll do a wrapup sort of to keep us covered--~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ What is John Hughes' plan[?] ~~?~~ Regards Bev).

--end reuter