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PROSECUTOR TOKYO

MILITARY 1 (Norman/Deepe)

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~~SAIGON, December 7—The top top optimism of~~

(This is the first of a series on the two totally divergent views of the state of the military war in Vietnam. This article explains why General William C. Westmoreland's command is here is optimistic on the Allied side. The second article delineates why the Communist side is equally optimistic).

SAIGON, December 7—The ~~top top~~ optimism of General William C. Westmoreland and his top subordinates here on the progress of Vietnam's military war is based on simple arithmetic ~~an~~ arithmetic and a teensy bit of miracle-mongering.

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MILITARY 2 (Norman/Deepe)

This optimism, ~~unveiled~~ unveiled at length officially, is ~~relegated conventionally~~ almost exclusively to the so-called main-force war. This is largely the American sphere of the war versus the North Vietnamese "invasion" forces. This spectacular confrontations between American and North Vietnamese units--sometimes their divisions ~~syndicate~~ nose-to-nose--is increasingly assuming a conventionalized, ~~Korean~~ Korean-styled character; it excludes the volcanic armed military insurgency lying beneath the surface.

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MILITARY 3 (Normess/Deepe)

The mathematical exercises performed by the American officialdom here ^{HAVE} ~~has~~ been refined to a quasi-sophisticated science defined by scores of statisticians, human calculators and rather temperamental computers (which ~~function~~ are influenced by monsoon rains and saigon's erratic electricity).

The arithmetic of General Westmoreland's command runs something like this: a significant proportion of the North Vietnamese regular army is tied down in their home country by the threat of an American invasion and by their duties of keeping open the heavily-bombed & logistical lines of communication.

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MILITARY 4 (Normass/Deepe)

Add to this a sizeable chunk of the North's invasion forces which has been or will be "ground down" in the South Vietnam.

Subtract the sum of these two from the total North Vietnamese regular army strength. The remainder indicates that North Vietnam can funnel into the South the same quantity it has already committed there in the past three years.

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MILITARY 5 (Horness/Deepe)

In short, the allies have wiped out nearly half the North Vietnamese regular army not fied down in the North, and the second half yet to be committed the American command believes, can be eradicated within the next year or so. Then a phased subtraction of American combat troops can begin.

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MILITARY 6 (Normass/Deepe)

(To outsiders, this mathematical exercise appears to be an algebraic equation of unknown^s. But for the military command, the arithmetic ~~signs~~^{used} are known estimates. These estimates, which are overall North Vietnamese order of battle, are classified. In the early 1960s, however, the regular army strength of North Vietnam was officially listed as 400,000 men-roughly 2.5 percent two decimal five percent of its total population. Since the bombing of North Vietnam began in 1965, the Hanoi regime has called up its reserve units to augment its regulars. It has also dramatically increased its village militia.

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MILITARY 7 (Norman/Deepe)

(The American military command recently estimated the ~~100,000~~ main force Communist main forces in the South totalled more than half 118,000, of which ~~the main force~~ were of North Vietnamese origin. This estimate ~~reduction~~ of 118,000 regular forces is a reduction from the 127,000-man peak in September of last year).

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MILITARY 8 (Normass/Deepe)

The subtract-out of American combat troops, however, requires a complete transformation, if not a re-birth, of the ^{600,000 - men} Vietnamese armed forces to fill the resulting power vacuum. Knowledgeable sources, ~~among~~ both American and Vietnamese, regard this as ~~xxx~~ demanding something close to a mini-miracle. These sources believe the Vietnamese armed forces can still be re-organized, But having heard such inflated promises and seen such meagre performances in the past, they have adopted a cynical ~~wa-1~~ wait-and-see attitude.

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MILITARY 9 (Normass/Deepe)

Indeed, the tantalizing question here is not so much whether this transformation will occur, but whether the American troops will be phased-out even if it does not. This school of speculation, discussed by officials in hushed tones, suggests that the phase-out of American troops, having virtually defeated the Communist main forces, would be INC. 416 have garnered a rather glorious military victory, if the Saigon government was still unprepared for the phase-out, it would be left to INC. 416 its own if it meant the possibility of a Communist victory in the insurgency.

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MILITARY 10 (Norman/Deepe)

the optimum
American military sources said the Communists are implementing a "border strategy" by building three big-unit concentrations hugging the ~~la~~ frontiers of South Vietnam. These sources believe the pattern of the main-force war has bounced, like a hectic pinball machine, from one of these ~~area~~ pivot areas to the next—and that the American forces have masterfully won each of these campaigns. They believe the ~~main-~~ big-unit war will continue in the coming months to gyrate between these three key areas: the ~~demilitarized~~ demilitarized zone on the north, the ~~three-border~~ frontier where Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam join and the Communists' war-zone complexes running ~~eastward to~~ *arching* ~~North from~~ Tay Ninh province and the Cambodian border.

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MILITARY 12 (Norman/Deepe)

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"These three main pressure concentrations will continue to be ~~important~~ in the future," one ~~senior~~ American military officer explained. "The Communists are going to try to keep their main-forces alive, to keep using them as a threat, but close enough to ~~his~~ *their* border ~~sancu~~ sanctuaries where ~~he~~ *they* can pump them up, re-equip and feed them. ~~He~~ They will ~~fight~~ fight from these border concentrations, but they'll try to reduce their casualties."

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MILITARY 12 (Normass/Deepe)

Begin with the
A rundown on these three ~~primary~~ critical hotspots follows:

~~The~~ DMZ. This is still the Communists' most significant and serious military threat in the eyes of American military officials. The Communists now maintain two divisions in and around the demilitarized ~~from Con Thien to Laos~~ zone and has roads into the area over which he readily moved, despite ~~round-the-clock~~ American ~~air~~ bombing, a wide array of artillery and rockets. The DMZ campaign, recently quiet as the battle grounds ~~have~~ pivoted to Loc Ninh and Dak To, is now beginning to flare up again. Recent reports indicate Con Thien is receiving more than 100 rounds of artillery and rocket-fire daily. This is still far below the peak during September when 600 to 1000 rounds daily was sprayed along the Con Thien ^N area. The Americans countered then with 6000 rounds of heavy artillery, ^{daily} more than eighty per cent of the B-52 strategic airstrikes ^{during the period} and more than one h o 100 ~~main~~ fighter-bomber tactical airstrikes daily.

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MILITARY 13 (Norman/Deepe)

This heavy firepower, plus unseasonably bad flooding along Communist supply lines, quieted the area in October until December, but evidence now suggests the Communist forces are again building up their units and ammunition stockpiles. This is one of the pivotal reasons American military sources are so adamantly and publically against an extended bombing pause during the upcoming holiday season.

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MILITARY 14 (Norman/Doepe)

American sources said the Communists have suffered up to an estimated 10,000 killed along the demilitarized zone during the past year, giving the American Marines a kill-ratio of better than six to one. American military officials are particul particularly optimistic about the results of DMZ campaign, ~~which began in July, 1966,~~ and are confident that the Marines, who have remained in position along the line, will succeed again should the Communists venture down through the DMZ again. ~~Beginning in July, 1966,~~ the ~~DMZ~~ on-again, off-again ~~DMZ~~ actions have constituted the longest, bloodiest campaign of the war to date.

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MILITARY 15 (Normans/Deapo)

"If the Communists come back down ~~amazingly~~ through the demilitarized zone, there will be heavy fighting once again," one military source explained. "The Marines have retained their posture along the line to keep them out, and that will continue to be our strategy. We have stayed south of the Ben Hai river in the past and that also will continue to be our strategy."

The Ben Hai river is considered the dividing ~~linen~~ natural dividing feature between the northern and southern half of the six-mile wide demilitarized zone.

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MILITARY 16 (Norman/Deepe)

and most immediately explosive /
American officials consider the second area of
Communist threat to center in the Communist base areas running
through portions of Phuoc Long, Phuoc Thanh and Tay Ninh provinces,
a large jungled concentration containing ~~an~~ decades-old secret
bases called War Zone C, War Zone D and Duong Minh Chau. ~~American forces are quickly reinforcing this area.~~ The
recent battle of Loc Ninh, the most ~~successful~~ clean-out ~~America~~
Allied victory of the war, occurred in this zone. Despite the
~~misconception~~ that Communist defeat, American sources believe
they still maintain a maximum of three divisions in that power-pocket.
[Unlike the ~~mainstream~~ predominate predominantly North
Vietnamese composition of the divisions along the DMZ, the
Communist units in the complex north of Saigon are mixed North
Vietnamese and indigenous ~~V~~ Southern recruits. Some of these
Communist units are totally Vietna North Vietnamese, but Northerners
are also sprinkled through some of the predominantly Viet Cong units.

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MILITARY 17 (Norman/Deepe)

Also, significantly, the Communists have amassed this concentration by sucking back their regular units from the populated coastal areas, which may weaken their guerrilla and political structures left behind. In the other ^{B.G. UNIT} two ~~coastal~~ concentrations, fresh troops from North Vietnam have been introduced, which forced American ^{coastal} commanders to reluctantly shift from the populated areas while the Communist main force divisions have remained there. ^{R. OPPOSITE} To influence the

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MILITARY 18 (Normans/Deepe)

The third ~~ammunition~~ concentration is called the B-3 area—~~this~~ where the borders of South Vietnam, ~~Loa~~ Laos and Cambodia join. Despite losing an estimated 1600 troops in ~~three-week-long~~ ^{still} the bat recent battle of Dak To, the Communists have organized and maintained two divisions in the area. Unlike the DMZ, this area is not known to have roads leading into it and hence the Communists have more difficulty in ~~re~~ replacing combat losses and replenishing supplies.

^(the enemy) "American forces are still posed in that area for him," one source explained. "While the battle zone is quiet now, we'll have to keep our eyes on it."

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MILITARY 19 (Norman/Deepe)

Aside from these three ^{powerful} potent border concentrations, a string of inland pockets of less formidable Communist ~~main~~ main force strength unravels from the DMZ southwards half the length of the country. These inland blotches, of up to a division in strength, lie in the Piedmont area between the populated, ~~the rice-rich~~ rice-rich coastal plains and the eastern rises of the Annamite chain.

The Communists maintain these ~~regimental~~ divisions--but weak divisions--to sustain and support their guerrilla network and political infrastructure as they attempt to wreck the government's pacification program. ~~At present~~ West of the old imperial capital of Hue, the northernmost pocket of several regiments forms a base in the rear of the American Marine bases stretching along the DMZ. During the summer months, American Marines were engaged in several sharp, company-sized engagements with these Communist units, but lately the pocket has been quiescent.

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MILITARY 20 (Norman/Deepe)

Another pocket lies south of Danang where the Second North Vietnamese division has been countered by a composite American Marine-Army division equivalent. Since the Communist division arrived in April, American forces have killed more than 5000 of them, in one of the continuous, nonstop sweeping operations that has been overshadowed by the dramatic DMZ campaign.

Another pocket lies in northern Binh Dinh province, where the U. S. Army 1st Air Cavalry Division has been ~~targeted~~ pitched against the Third North Vietnamese Division in a series of ~~off~~ sporadic, but un-spectacular firefights. Military sources ~~announced that another pocket lies further down~~ the seacoast in the province of Tuy Hoa where the Fifth North Vietnamese Division, a rather weak one, has occasionally harassed the Korean forces with a peculiar kind of village fight fighting. ~~Many American officials believe these~~ inland divisions, predominantly North Vietnamese, are having difficulty getting supplies and personnel replacements.

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MILITARY 21 (Normess/Deepe)

Here
Headquarters
American civilian officials agree with General Westmoreland's command that "the Communists are taking a beating," but some question of whether the beating is hard enough to be decisive. Some critics of the American military command here believe that it has at times exaggerated Communist battlefield ~~casualties~~ fatalities so as to undercut the political impact of heavy American losses.

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MILITARY 22 (Normans/Deepe)

However optimistic ~~And~~ American officials appraise the status of the war, the Communists are also confident of their own victory. To comprehend the different viewpoints, one's frame of reference ~~has~~ must shift from the conventionalized main force war to the "people's war," in which the Communists have added local populations as a new dimension and critical ingredient to ~~war~~ military warfare. In short, if General Westmoreland's optimism is partially based on arithmetic, the Communists' optimism is based on ~~trig~~ trigonometry. trigonometry. (Tomorrow: The Communists 3-D War).

End Router