

Moorer's secret testimony tells of buildup by Hanoi

WASHINGTON — In secret testimony, Adm. Thomas Moorer, the joint chiefs chairman, has told how the North Vietnamese assassinated village leaders in the South,

Jack Anderson

deployed their forces and prepared for "military action" to exploit the cease-fire.

His testimony dealt with preparations in October when the North Vietnamese first anticipated a cease-fire. But he indicated tersely that similar preparations had been started before the final signing last month.

Testifying behind closed doors on the eve of the signing, he told the House Appropriations Committee: "We have indications that in some areas, they (Communist forces) have received instructions to go out with their maximum capability at the time a cease-fire is signed."

How Communists reacted

He described how the Communists had reacted in October. "Just prior to the October 31st proposed cease-fire," he said, "the enemy took actions to redispense their forces in such a way that they could exploit the cease-fire by such things as assassinating the leaders in the villages throughout the area so they could seize control of the local governments.

"At the same time, they proposed to retain the areas they had captured so far and hold their main force units in such a way that they could refit them and prepare them for further military action when the cease-fire was achieved. . .

"They renewed their logistic offensive. They took action to reconstitute in South Vietnam the forces which had been pretty well depleted during the previous action. They made no effort at all to withdraw any forces from South Vietnam."

Soviet, Chinese supplies

The nation's No. 1 military man added bluntly: "The heavy resupply of war materials was apparently from Soviet Russia as well as from China. They began to expand

their storage areas, step up their infiltration activities, and. . . they began to deploy about 120 tanks and a large amount of artillery and antiaircraft."

Later, Rep. Elford Cederberg, R-Mich., got back to the tanks. "You said there are 100 and some tanks in Laos, now is that correct?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," agreed Moorer.

"Are those tanks that were there before the closing of Haiphong (harbor)," asked Cederberg, "or did they come down through China?"

"I think," said the admiral, "they could probably have come down through China."

The flow of supplies

Then he gave more details about the flow of supplies from China. The North Vietnamese, he said, receive "very significant assistance from the Chinese. As a matter of fact, just north of the border at Ping Hsing just inside China they receive just mountains of supplies. . . Then they feed them across the border."

"What," demanded Rep. William Minshall, R-Ohio, "is the capability of the North Vietnamese now to conduct further warfare in South Vietnam?"

The stocky, graying admiral was less concerned about this in secret than he has been in public. "I would give a short answer to your question," he replied, "by saying I do not think that they, as of this moment, have the capability for what they call main force unit action.

"They are now conserving their resources, protecting main force units which comprise about 15 divisions and simply devoting most of their efforts to sabotage, harassment and actions of that kind. We find, for instance, that many of the battalions are at half strength, and the effects of the heavy ground fighting since the 30th of March has depleted their overall capability."

POW camp pictures

Moorer showed the congressmen classified pictures of the POW camps in North Vietnam to dispute reports that they had suffered any bomb damage from the B52 raids.