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Good Questions, Wrong Answers



Other works of Thomas L. Ahern, Jr. published by the Center for the Study of Intelligence include:
CIA and the Generals: Covert Support to Military Government in South Vietnam (1999,
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Good Questions, Wrong Answers

CIA Estimates of Arms Traffic Through Sihanoukville, Cambodia, During the Vietnam War

Thomas L. Ahern, Jr.

An Intelligence Monograph



Center for the Study of Intelligence Washington, DC February 2004

To the Memory of

Thomas Joseph Brennan, C.S.C.,

Who taught me whatever I know about thinking about thinking

Foreword	1000	- - -			
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human impulse bring order out	e. Clarity, certitu	de, or just escap minate uncertair	e from the disc	omfort of not kn	data is a fundamental nowing—the urge is to s effort discovers—or
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an arms traffic however, it em- and improving failure to modif	that did not exis erged only after in source authe y conventional v	t for a full two year the bulk of the centicity, began co	ars after the firs empirical evide ontradicting Age nan assigning re	t claims for it. A nce, gradually i ency estimates.	some of them alleging is an analytical failure, ncreasing in volume Understanding a not seeing the pattern
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Introduction

The neutralist government of Prince Norodom Sihanouk fell to a cabal of Cambodian army officers on 18 March 1970. Driven by a combination of anticommunism and traditional Cambodian antipathy for the Vietnamese, the new junta acted at once to cut the flow of Chinese munitions that, since late 1966, had flowed through the port of Sihanoukville to communist forces in South Vietnam. One of the group soon gave CIA the documentation that detailed the Sihanoukville deliveries and the onward shipment of war materiel by road into the southern provinces

The documents supplied by Lt. Col. Les Kosem, an ethnic Cham officer in the Cambodian Army,
contradicted CIA's estimates of the volume of the Sihanoukville traffic
t turned out that an Agency analytical process—substantially more sophisticated thar —had had the perverse effect of obscuring the extent of Chinese arms deliveries through Cambodia
The resulting embarrassment produced more than loss of face. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger told President Nixon that this "failure of the intelligence community" resulted from "deficiencies in both intelligence collection and analysis." Kissinger went on to specify CIA's prime responsibility, noting that he was working with DCI Richard Helms on "appropriate personnel changes in the Agency." Nixon penned an angry note: "give me a report on these changes—I want a real shakeup in CIA, not just symbolism." 1
Helms managed to avoid the purge demanded of him, but thereafter, when CIA disagreed with the
Pentagon, the White House would ask him, "What about Sihanoukville?"
There were more immediately practical consequences of the failure to identify and monitor the munitions supply line to lower South Vietnam. A comprehensive, reasonably up-to-date picture of the Sihanoukville traffic would, for example, have afforded a much better understanding of enemy capabilities in the months leading up to the 1968 Tet offensive. More generally, the US campaign to interdict munitions supplies could hardly succeed so long as it ignored the nearly exclusive source for the most populous half of South Vietnam.
As already suggested, Agency analysts displayed more rigorous technique, both in the conceptual models they employed and in their judgment of all-source raw reporting Periodic internal reviews challenged the methodologies and conclusions of previous analyses, but the gradual increase in credible reporting of a Sihanoukville
models they employed and in their judgment of all-source raw reporting Periodic internal reviews challenged the methodologies and
models they employed and in their judgment of all-source raw reporting Periodic internal reviews challenged the methodologies and



traffic	nduced only incremental changes in the CIA
	1970, after the Phnom Penh Station acquired encyclopedic
	clung to the view that what it called the "primary route" for the supply of rerland, down the Ho Chi Minh Trail.
lower South Vietham ran o	renand, down the no Chi with Irail.
An Analytical Conundrum	
The clarity of hindsight can	deceive even while it illuminates. This applies especially when
7	nore comprehensive later record, conclusions drawn from fragmentary
	curacy. It is easy, after the fact, to see flaws in a line of reasoning that
enjoyed the support of com	pelling circumstantial argument
	f judging assumptions. To begin any argument, some things have to be
	ally look, at the time, like common-sense, even self-evident,
	t in which the available empirical evidence is to be evaluated. Seeing ined assumptions have turned out to be false, the historian may be
	own, namely, that with proper care they can be entirely avoided. One
	an analytical failure—or of any failure—is thus the difficulty simply of
	the inevitable influence on his actors' judgments of a host of
	he must do so without sinking into a pallid determinism that simply
credits them with having do	ne the best they could according to their lights, and in effect denies the
possibility of their having m	ade other choices.
	oductive middle course by adopting a chronological approach. It
	noth the information base and the debate over the meaning of the
	that, it assesses the Agency's position on the arms traffic through ective within the historical context. To the extent that this succeeds, it
	he standards of the better-informed present, and the episode's
instructive value is allowed	
mondality is and to another	

Part One:
The Deductive vs. the Empirical

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			the first of a from casual sources and uncorroborated, of conve eastward from the port to May 1965 CIA report or described convoys of 40 "at intervals of two or thr months prior to 20 April. himself, observed crates unusual number of freight trucks with Chinese mar freighters flew the Sovie	bys moving by night oward Phnom Penh. A ginating in Saigon to 50 trucks moving ee days for three On that date source, being loaded from an intersonto
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This last statement reflected the decay of Saigon's position during a year and a half of military rule. By the end of 1964, collapse had looked imminent, and the first American combat units arrived in March 1965 to bolster the South Vietnamese. ⁹ Two months later, Prince Sihanouk, still persuaded of American complicity with alleged subversion by his Thai and South Vietnamese neighbors, cut diplomatic relations with Washington.		
With US Troops on the Ground By mid-1965, US troops were committed to offensive ground operations against the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army. As they fought to gain at least the tactical initiative, the question of communist sources of supply acquired new urgency. The Agency addressed the issue in a paper for the United States Intelligence Board and concluded that most of the communists' logistic requirements were being met inside South Vietnam. Some		
requirements, for weapons, ammunition, medical supplies, and certain technical gear, had to be met by outside sources, but these were being satisfied primarily via the "principal route," the Ho Chi Minh Trail. ¹¹ The extent of communist exploitation of Cambodian territory remained indeterminate.	with local Cambodian collusion.	
"Some supplies" had entered South Vietnam, either through uncontrolled border areas or		
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A Deficit of Evidence
A Deficit of Evidence Agent reporting, at this time, was obscuring the issue as much as illuminating it.

to look for munitions shipments. The DO saw "no reason to doubt the accuracy" of information from this infrequent reporter that,	
on this occasion, concerned March 1966 visits by two freighters. One Soviet and the other Chinese, they delivered "military goods" the agent did not—presumably could not—describe.	
describe.	



	It would later become clear that the Kompong Speu depot served to store Chinese munitions until their dispatch to communist base areas along the South Vietnamese border. At the time, however, the reporting at hand had established no recognizable pattern. One report described a consensus among senior Lao and South Vietnamese military commanders about the growing importance of Sihanoukville, but did not specify the evidence for their conclusion.
In this conceptual climate, a trickle of DO reports in the first half of 1967—just two have been found—plausibly described surreptitious shipments of munitions to the Vietnamese communists in eastern and northeastern Cambodia. The trucks of one convoy had been loaded at the Kompong Speu depot of the Cambodian Army (known by its French acronym as FARK), just off the main road from	Whatever the skepticism in Washington, the CIA Station in Saigon concurred in an Embassy report in late July 1967 of a "sharp increase in reliable information on arms and ammunition shipments to Cambodia.
Sihanoukville to Phnom Penh. ²⁴	

			·
An Unpersuasive Case			
The modest flow of well-sourced, plausible information tended to be obscured by a flood of less credible material.			
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	collective significance of these reports, individually inconclusive, may have been obscured by a US effort, at just that point, to test Sihanouk's vehement public denials of any communist use of Cambodian territory. Washington sent him intelligence information intended to demonstrate that use,
	Sihanouk also complained in the press about Viet Cong transgressions and asked for an ICC investigation. He later withdrew that request, but in early 1968 Washington still thought him genuinely outraged by indications of Vietnamese support to indigenous communist rebels—the Khmer Rouge—in northeastern Cambodia. The net effect was to encourage those observers who saw him as consistently acting on his vested interest in neutrality. ³³
	Whatever the effect of Sihanouk's behavior on OER's deliberations, most analysts found in the reporting of the period no sufficient basis even to qualify, let alone reverse, their position on the role of Sihanoukville. The size of the rice shipments exceeded both Cambodian capabilities and communist requirements, as these were then understood.
This substantial but still fragmentary reporting was supplemented in late November. A DO source claimed that Sihanouk had privately acknowledged allowing an arms traffic from Sihanoukville to South Vietnam, "despite the	

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	Chinese freighter You YI at Sihanoukville, date unknown
Nevertheless, the CIA's consistent position no longer represented, if it ever had, consensus among Agency observers. The had been a Cambodia-watcher since 1964 and	for Sihanouk-endorsed transhipment and defended the circumstantial case against it. ³⁶
had, at first, accepted the conventional wisdom about Sihanouk's vital equity in preserving a neutral stance. But the gradual increase in credible DO agent reporting eventually convinced him that a government-sanctioned traffic was, in fact, taking place. ³⁵	
No one could quantify that traffic, but the mere fact of it, in view, erased any Cambodian claim to neutrality. Once neutrality had been abandoned, the communists had no reason not to exploit a maritime route for all it was worth. This perception launched a running argument between and OER's top analyst on the problem, who was	
named deputy director of the office in August 1967.	
36 Ibid. In the recollection of his running debate w	

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	Kosem's Cham tribal entourage came on line in June with a detailed description of the transfer depot at Kompong Speu and of the mechanics of both the arms traffic and the rice shipments into South Vietnam. In July 1968,
	The memorandum credited Sihanouk with moving to restrict smuggling to the Viet Cong and found "no convincing evidence that officials at the highest levels of government are involved" in the traffic. Two and a half years later, "we now know" of Sihanouk's intention to control, not eliminate, the traffic. But a clandestine report of 1 April 1968 had already attributed to Sihanouk exactly such an intention. Not
	enough by itself to establish this as a fact, the dissemination did, at least, invite attention to it as a possibility. ⁴¹ While the analysts continued to hold their position, allegations of a munitions traffic through Sihanoukville to the VC/NVA
Meanwhile, the bulk of such reporting as the DO could provide continued to allege	But in mid-October, a French port adviser told a clandestine source that 20,000 tons of munitions had transited Sihanoukville since
Cambodian complicity. A new source in Les	early July.

		· .
Meanwhile, controlled CIA sources in the capital were reporting similar convoys. 42		
	OER briefing notes of 13 Oct	ober 1968 reflect
	the struggle to reconcile the overland transport with a boot that, however substantial, still smoking gun the analysts we "That important quantities of ammunition" go from Camboo in lower South Vietnam "is no question." But their origin was	argument for dy of evidence Il lacked the ere demanding. arms and dia to the VC/NVA to longer in

This thesis had to contend with new information that suggested, even if it did not prove. the contrary	In the uncertainty about both the reliability and the significance of clandestine reporting concerning Chinese arms transiting Cambodia, at least one analyst found his skepticism reinforced by his own disdain for the DO product. had served in Saigor in the mid-1960s, where he recalled encountering a case officer who took seriously an agent's claim that the VC were tunneling under Bien Hoa Airbase with a machine provided by the Soviets. What were they doing with the massive quantity of soil being removed? No satisfactory answer. Back at Headquarters, analyzing dealt with agent reporting in the conviction that "you had to look at it very hard." judgment of the evidence on Sihanoukville was shaped also by his own "working hypothesis" that the Cambodians would be deterred by the risk of US bombing from letting their country be used as a supply channel for munitions destined for the VC/NVA The overland route, furthermore, avoided the need for Cambodian authorization.
	these two points, seems to have represented the dominant analytical perspective.48
44 45 46 He Ibid	

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Chapter Two: CIA on the Defensive		
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a preparatory meeting devoted to reviewing e available reporting, Far East Division desk ficer noticed how little interest		
ER seemed to take in agent reports. cordingly, he assembled all the relevant DO aterial and took it to Jim Graham. Graham		
ad it, and said he agreed that it merited more	Back in Washington, Graham produced a	
thought OER was still unimpressed by hything	report that modified the position he had taken in the study done in late October. The team now accepted "the involvement of	
	elements of the Cambodian Army in something more than 'small-scale' smuggling of arms to the communists." Graham cautiously added	
	that, "it is suggested that Sihanouk himself is probably aware of this arms traffic." But the	
	team still saw major differences on issues such as quantities going through Sihanoukville, the relationship between these and FARK needs,	
	and the extent to which interdiction and weather had reduced the overland traffic.5	

Graham acknowledged the absence of "positive proof" that any one route was carrying "the required arms and ammunition to IV, III, and southern II Corps." Nevertheless, all things considered, "we believe that the overland route is the basic channel" for munitions supply to III Corps and all of II Corps. "The communists will almost certainly continue to make every effort to maintain and increase its capacity."	organization and activities of a Phnom Penh trucking company called Hak Ly. This entity was reported—though not yet proved—to be an instrumentality of Hanoi, used to organize the transport of munitions from Sihanoukville.
The weakness of this conclusion lay in the paucity of positive evidence of a munitions traffic running southward from the tri-border area joining Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam. That a trail network there served to infiltrate personnel was generally accepted, but there had been few, if any, reports of weapons or ammunition. One team member, ONE's saw more—if still inconclusive—direct evidence for Sihanoukville than for the Ho Chi Minh Trail: "where there's smoke there's fire." He urged both Jim Graham and to treat the question as simply open until improved collection settled it. But neither was moved. Accordingly, dissented from the team's	In late 1968, the first reporting of two new sources did as much to confuse the issue as to clarify it. A Phnom Penh trucking company employee known as began describing the size and cargo of truck convoys leaving Sihanoukville. This reporting was supplemented by apparently authentic shipping documents from an agent in Phnom Penh, a "purchasing agent" for the Cambodian Army. Well into 1969, their figures were often mutually inconsistent, for neither of them had, or claimed to have, access to all relevant information.
In a statement disseminated on 2 November, a tested CIA source had described a "covert Cambodian committee," with Vietnamese communist representation, charged with directing the munitions traffic through Sihanoukville. In one of several other agent reports, the Saigon Station detailed the	In addition to documentation and personal observation, both these two agents and other, occasional, reporters were offering information, often from untested subsources, that tended to confirm the movement of ordnance through Cambodia to the VC/NVA. But these reports were fragmentary and, on occasion, clearly wrong. Moreover, several credible, if unconfirmed, agent reports suggested that the Phnom Penh government was positively hostile to communist smuggling

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across its borders.	
What remained at issue were the quantities being transported over both the Sihanoukville and overland routes. 10 Uncertain Facts and Unprovable Theories	
One circumstance that argued for the Ho Chi Minh Trail as the principal supply route was the volume of materiel it was carrying to southern Laos. According to CIA estimates, this greatly exceeded the external requirements of communist forces in lower South Vietnam. There was also the scale of roadbuilding in southern Laos. The network there had been essentially out of service during the rainy season, but, at the end of	Chinese freighter Li Ming at Sihanoukville, January 1969.
1968, the communists were restoring it "at an unprecedented rate." Traffic was moving all the way to the Cambodian border, an activity that sharply contrasted with late 1967, when southward movement ended at Tchepone, over 200 kilometers to the north.	affirmed Sihanouk's endorsement of the traffic, and agents described another Chinese delivery—altogether, the ninth—in April. A 16-page report from the young Chinese in early May detailed the arrival of 4,500 tons of munitions in April. He claimed a total of 9,300
At the same time, DO reporting—some from agents and some from deserters and prisoners—fleshed out to some degree the functioning of the Sihanoukville supply mechanism. detailed a	tons discharged during the January and April port calls. This quantity that, contrasted sharply with the version supplied by the purchasing agent, who reported only about half that volume. The lower figure, while not accepted as definitive, had the merit of consistency with circumstantial factors

Nevertheless, reporting from whose access was, by then, well established, was not dismissed out of hand.	Reportedly both a founder of the Hak Ly company and a major smuggler to the VC/NVA, was expelled from Cambodia in 1967, probably after a tiff with Cambodian officials over the size of the bribes that bought their cooperation. He settled in Hong Kong and acquired a shipping company, which itself became the subject of reports of transporting Chinese arms to Sihanoukville. 16
These discoveries preserved the possibility that the new reporting was authentic, but the analysts saw other factors that still urged some reserve about both and the purchasing agent. For one thing, reporting about a Hak Ly branch office in the northern town of Stung Treng "seemed to contradict the allegation of exclusive VC orientation." And no positive evidence had yet confirmed allegations that munitions did, in fact, comprise the reported cargoes.	From one perspective,looked like the answer to an analyst's prayer. Even the best of the reporting, up to the spring of 1969, was low level and incomplete. If Lon Nol—later the instigator of the coup against Sihanouk—was as deeply involved in the traffic as often alleged, andwas his partner and confidantshould be a rich source, at least on its historical background.
Problems with the reporting of and the purchasing agent were multiplied in the case of and self-professed business partner of Cambodian Gen. Lon Nol.	The coercive aspect of the recruitment meant that good faith could never be taken for granted. FE Division desk officer thought him an "enigma," and saw no basis for urging the analysts to accept his bona fides. Like other sources furnished plausible information but also made claims that the analysts found implausible—indeed, in his case, simply "preposterous." And like the observations of reports regarding the size of the traffic could

not be reconciled with estimated enemy logistic needs. He insisted that, between late 1966 and spring 1969, Beijing had delivered between 26,000 and 28,000 tons of munitions through Sihanoukville.	munitions deliveries were—perhaps deliberately, perhaps inadvertently—wrong. ²⁰ An Equivocal Report to Kissinger Whatever the factors inhibiting its acceptance,
The "preposterous" claims included assertion in July 1969 that an incipient rice shortage in Cambodia had led him to propose importing 80,000 tons of Burmese rice. Cambodia was a traditional exporter and, according to the analysts, "had just harvested its best crop in years." account of the money being made by a Phnom Penh casino seemed almost as improbable, for he claimed that the government's cut amounted to fully 10 percent of its total revenues. These tales made it hard to credit his inherently more plausible descriptions of his dealings with Lon Nol on the arms traffic. Then, in October, three months after his report, Cambodia found itself compelled to import rice. Some months later, new information also confirmed account of casino activity. Meanwhile, however, doubts about his bona fides persisted. 19 Contending with these doubts was information from the prince of the property of the prop	credible reporting on arms shipments through Sihanoukville greatly exceeded, by late spring 1969, coverage of overland transport—if there was any—southward from the triborder area.
from on his smuggling activity with Lon Nol and Les Kosem that accorded with reporting going as far back as 1966. And it was clear that he still had high-level access in Phnom Penh, for he was aware of Lon Nol's May 1969 suspension of distribution to the Vietnamese from the depot at Kompong Speu. But even if the policy information was authentic, the question remained whether numbers on	The Agency maintained its equivocal stance in a memorandum for National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger in mid-June 1969. After describing the contending positions on the two supply routes, it concluded only and CIA believe that the overland route through Laos plays a much more important role in

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enemy resupply activities than in As far as CIA was concerned, the flow over either of the two routes "cannot be quantified." The now-standard conclusion, that the overland route remained "primary," rested on an implicit redefinition of that term.	The criterion was no longer the quantities actually carried—whether observed or only estimated—but rather what the Agency believed to be "Hanoi's view" of the route's importance. ²²
	<u> </u>



OER recognized that, whatever the circumstantial argument for use of the overland route, there existed, in mid-1969, far more empirical evidence of shipments through Sihanoukville.	Against this background, the purchasing agent began in July to supply additional cargo manifests for earlier deliveries, which he supplemented with information elicited from Cambodian officials in the Ministry of Defense. The analysts, accepting the fact of these shipments, worked to extrapolate totals from the documents now at hand. No firm estimates emerged from this
information at hand indicated substantial enemy troop concentrations on the segment bordering South Vietnamese II Corps, and the use of the trail for large-scale infiltration of personnel. True, there was no reporting of any concomitant supply operation running from the triborder area into lower South Vietnam.	These uncertainties had earlier produced an unusual convergence—though not a meeting—of CIA estimates of
Nevertheless, it seemed to the analysts that a route used for personnel could reasonably be inferred also to carry supplies. ²³ The Board of National Estimates summarized	deliveries to Sihanoukville between December 1966 and August 1968 the CIA figure was 9,654 But the gap soon widened.
the Agency's position in Special National Intelligence Estimate 14.3-69 of 17 July 1969. It "went as far as any communitywide intelligence" product had gone when it stipulated FARK management of a significant flow of munitions to the communists that had grown over the previous two years. Precise	In July 1969 but the Agency's number declined even farther, to 6,159 tons.
quantities could not be estimated; indeed, the SNIE explicitly acknowledged that neither route could be proved to carry more ordnance than the other. Like the OER memorandum a month earlier, it rested its claim for the primacy of the overland route on its perceived	No one expected that exchanges of numbers would settle the issue, and in early September 1969 developed an elaborate new analytical model based on estimated tonnages delivered both to
importance to Hanoi as a route firmly under communist control and, therefore, not subject to the vagaries of Sihanouk's political balancing act. ²⁴	Sihanoukville (using figure of 21,000 tons) and down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to the triborder area. He compared quantities delivered with estimated requirements in the two sectors

Having factored in the numerous variables—estimated consumption and losses en route through Laos, etc.—analysis found a major discrepancy, between north and south, in the ratio of availability to requirement. Between 2.6 and 3.5 to one in the "North," supply was only 1.5 times the total requirement in the "South." assumed that the enemy would maintain the same ratio for all of South Vietnam. If that were the case, a substantial portion of the South's requirements—between 30 and 43 percent—was being met via the overland route. 28	With the issue still far from resolution in late September 1969, OER undertook a comprehensive review, not only of the evidence but also of its own analytical methodology. Proceeding from primary reporting, the new effort would ignore all published analyses. Its objectivity would be assured by having it conducted by an officer without previous exposure to Cambodian analysis. Meanwhile a second team would analyze Cambodian imports from China" as a test of the new shipping estimate;
Analyst praised what he called a "truly sophisticated analysis," but took issue with careful conclusion. It was not just the uncertainty of the global figures on supply and demand, he argued, that dictated caution about accepting the Laotian corridor as an important source of supplies for the South. For one thing, there were indeed indications of stockpiling on a "squirrel-like" basis that defied rational analysis. More importantly, there just wasn't any positive intelligence on use of the corridor to supply the South.	Charged with making the new shipping estimate was
On the contrary, what little information had come to hand suggested the reverse, that "enemy forces in the South get very little via the overland route through Laos." 29	

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revealed a	·
close correlation with the quantities reported	described the history of the
by the purchasing agent. Accordingly, the new	Chinese arms traffic to which, he said, Prince
study confirmed the arrival, through the spring	Sihanouk had agreed in principle during a visit
of 1969, of 5,700 tons of ordnance. An	to Beijing in November 1965. The quantity—
additional 4,100 tons of military supplies was	20,000 tons—was specified in an agreement
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	•
classified as probable, with both total quantity	with Zhou Enlai in mid-1966. As usual, the
and composition—munitions or nonlethal	impact ofreporting was dampened by
items—undetermined. The report did not	more of his habitual revisions, when it came to
address the argument over route primacy, for it	quantities delivered, and his continuing failure
was designed only, in the words of the post-	to provide any documentation.38
mortem, to "establish a benchmark for one	·
input into a model of the communist logistical	True, latest numbers generally accorded
system in Cambodia." In effect, however, it	with those of But that
reinforced the argument for overland supply,	agent's figures diverged sharply, as we have
accepting less than half of the 21,000 tons	seen, from those of the purchasing agent.
assumed in the study to have come	
through Sihanoukville. ³⁸	
And, in fact, estimates were accorded	
considerably more than the authority of	
something actually regarded as merely "one	
input." Less than a year later, the post-mortem	
saw OER as having "accepted the	
unloading rate where[ever] there was	
conflicting evidence. It was the basic factor	
underlying the substantially low estimates of	
Chinese deliveries of military cargo to	Escape from reliance on shipping estimates
Sihanoukville." 37	might have been offered by comprehensive
	reporting on the truck convoys leaving
The exercise was intended to	Sihanoukville for the South Vietnamese
compensate for the gaps and inconsistencies	border. Information on some of these did come
in the positive reporting. Despite the recent	from a variety of sources, in addition to the
spurt of clandestine coverage, these still	three principals, but such data were far from
aggravated the analytical problem when he	complete. And the analysts still lacked
began work on the new shipping estimates	definitive information on other factors that
	would help determine the quantities actually
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"Team B" and the Burden of Proof While worked on the new shipping estimates, gave the revisionist school an opportunity to make its case. He mandated a kind of "Team B" exercise, inviting skeptics of the overland thesis to rebut it. On 16 October, these analysts concluded that "since 1967, munitions delivered to Sihanoukville had satisfied the bulk of the requirements for communist forces in [the South]." The skeptics offered no new facts, only a reinterpretation that, however plausible as an exercise in deduction, did not, in the view of refute the overland thesis. 41 With the burden of proof on the dissenters, the impact of their effort was further diluted by the simultaneous appearance of an early draft of the discharge numbers, which acknowledged only insignificant deliveries well into 1968. In implicit contrast to both the circumstantial arguments and the positive evidence for Sihanoukville as the main supplier	to the South, these "were thought [presumably by OER management] to have a high order of reliability." 42 Accepted in the study of covert reporting as "perhaps [the] most important [clandestine] source" on Sihanoukville, nevertheless continued to provoke questions that sometimes took on an adversarial tone. Analysts objected that no vessel carried the name Hang Chow, as reportedly given by and they denied the authenticity he had given for Rebutting these objections, pointed out the existence of the freighter Hang Zhou—the same name in the new romanization—and noted that the analysts had "had to retract" also in the case of for which precedent was soon found. These exchanges consumed weeks, during which bona fides and accuracy remained, as always, at issue. 43

OER used two methods to estimate the share transferred to the communists. One of these was based on shipments to Sihanoukville, on a recent, clandestinely acquired FARK inventory, and on estimated FARK consumption. Subtraction of consumption and new inventory from deliveries yielded a figure of 4,500 tons available for delivery to the communists since October 1968. The other formula simply added up the numbers obtained from clandestine reporting of deliveries to the border caches; at about 2,000 tons, they nearly matched estimated total communist requirements. OER
acknowledged that agent reporting on the reduced amounts of communist ordnance held by FARK after the May 1969 suspension suggested additional transfers making for a "substantially" greater total quantity, but there was no direct evidence of these movements. In the absence of such information, estimates of enemy requirements made the 2,000-ton figure more plausible to the analysts. 48 OER concluded that, if no more than 2,000 tons had actually been put in the hands of the communists, the July 1969 SNIE had overstated the volume of supplies moved through Laos by only about ten percent. Given the "large number of uncertainties and variables," this was "hardly sufficient to change the general validity of the 1969 estimates." The update for ONE, therefore, also left unchallenged shipping estimates done in December 1969. 49

With the estimative process on hold, the DO scrambled to set up a new station in Phnom Penh. Meanwhile, the Saigon Station did its best to contact Lt. Col. Kosem and an associate named Ourn Savouth, who had personally supervised many of the convoys to the border. After an indirect overture from Kosem through tribal contacts in South Vietnam, Saigon had earlier tried to orchestrate a clandestine meeting with him in Singapore. Now, the pressures on him as a key aide to Lon Nol prevented even the short trib to Saigon Also overtaken by events was a final national intelligence estimate. It would, apparently, have broken no new ground, as OER's contribution to a draft in mid-March accepted the study of port capacity. CIA had not yet established actual deliveries to the front that exceeded 2,000 tons; known military shipments to Sihanoukville since 1965 totaled 6,800 tons, with 4,100 tons more considered probable. With so little new to offer, and with the prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. 51 With the estimative process on hold, the DO scrambled to set up a new station in Phnom Penh. Meanwhile, the Saigon Station did its best to contact Lt. Col. Kosem and a associate named Ourn Savouth, who had personally supervised many of the convoys to the border. After an indirect overture from Kosem through tribal contacts in South Vietnam, Saigon had earlier tried to orchestrate a clandestine meeting with him in Singapore. Now, the pressures on him as a key aide to Lon Nol prevented even the short trib to Saigon OER's upper estimate, calculated in late February, of 13,400 tons. But it left open what and how much had actually made its way to the communists, and how much of that still reposed in cache sites on Cambodian soil. President Nixon had just launched the US ground incursion into Cambodia in search of VC/NVA base areas, and the White House was pressing for estimates on the "impact of current operations on enemy capabilities and intentions." Si	scrambled to set up a new station in Phnom Penh. Meanwhile, the Saigon Station did its best to contact Lt. Col. Kosem and an associate named Ourn Savouth, who had personally supervised many of the convoys to the border. After an indirect overture from Kosem through tribal contacts in South Vietnam, Saigon had earlier tried to orchestrate a clandestine meeting with him in Singapore. Now, the pressures on him as a key aide to Lon Nol prevented even the short trib to Saigon Also overtaken by events was a final national intelligence estimate. It would, apparently, have broken no new ground, as OER's contribution to a draft in mid-March accepted the study of port capacity. CIA had not yet established actual deliveries to the front that exceeded 2,000 tons; known military shipments to Sihanouk/ille since 1965 totaled 6,800 tons, with 4,100 tons more considered probable. With so little new to offer, and with the prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrow of Sihanouk, ONE gave up further work on the estimate. The prospect of an intelligence windfall after the overthrough tribal contacts in South Vietnam, Saigon had earlier tried to orchestrate a clandestine entired to orchestrate a clandestine meeting with him in Singapore. Now, the pressures on him as a key aide to Lon Nol prevented even the short trio to orchestrate a c	An End to the Argument
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Lon Nol's brother, Maj. Lon Non. It raised the total tonnage from	
	rogress accompanied the maneuvering, and, in late July, dealing with ended to an exhaustive list of stions.
An FE Division cable spoke for OER when it advised that, if the higher figure were "dissemed and accepted without qualification by readers, [numerous] important and critical intelligence judgments would be called into question." These included the effectiveness of	

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The absence of any further record suggests that Helms succeeded in calming the waters, at least for the moment. Meanwhile, in early August, ONE's Indochina expert, and arrived in Phnom Penh. They toured Sihanoukville (now once again Kompong Som) with the portmaster and reported back to Jim Graham and	documents stored in Kosem's home. Kosem, treating this hoard like a "small boy with [a] prized collection [of] bubble gum cards," acceded to the Station's argument about their historical value and agreed to let them be shipped to Headquarters for safekeeping; after a quick trip to Algeria and the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), he would visit Washington for a thorough debriefing. 61
But this, approximating the maximum rate already described	night, reported that about half the Kosem files were now on film. They anticipated little more photography before the Station shipped the files to Headquarters, but thought the most interesting material already done. There were still unanswered questions: had the Chinese
was only 25 percent more than allowed by his model. Questions, therefore, still	made 12 deliveries, or only nine? Also, cache sites were not precisely specified
remained. ⁵⁹	ches trate hat presidely appearing
During the rest of August, continued to debrief Lt. Col. Kosem on requirements. In addition to more historical background, he got details of the	expressed some doubt that even the files not yet photographed would clarify all these points; in any case, it appeared that further study could await their shipment to Headquarters. 82
	The two analysts and the Station all underestimated the sense of urgency driving the effort at Headquarters reported that, having copied all he had done only a sample of there was "nothing to be gained" by doing them all. Headquarters disagreed: "Our need [to] obtain copies [of] all documents cannot be over
OER wanted more than summaries, and on 6 September,	stressed." The analysts needed in order to conduct a thorough study of the entire question and having photographs now
spent 12 hours photographing 11,000	was more important than getting the source
frames of the	documents later.63

Despite the evidence adduced by agent we were advocates of the 'McNamara position,' reporting and by Phnom Penh station's whatever that was." The President ordered an summaries of the Kosem documents, OER inquiry by his Foreign Intelligence Advisory found the scale of the Chinese shipments Board, none of whose members "seemed to difficult to credit. It still doubted the capacity of find our account convincing." Sihanoukville to handle the reported volume, and one analyst suggested that the records be Perhaps they expected us to apologize treated "with reserve." A total of 26,000 tons of and confess. We did neither. We had supplies, just over 21,000 tons of it ordnance, made the best judgment we could with so far exceeded earlier estimates that the the evidence we had at the time. When uggested better evidence came along, we looking for other deliveries that had gone immediately accepted it. No intelligence "undetected by the Intelligence Community."64 service can be asked to do more.66 Surveying the Wreckage No such deliveries were found. The known visits by Beijing-chartered freighters had indeed brought munitions in an amount "much higher than the one we held. Worse," as then-DDI Jack Smith put it, "it was almost the same snatched-from-thin-air figure." Smith reported this humbling fact at the DCI's regular morning meeting. There, "cool as usual," Helms took the news "without flinching." He reproached no one for the failure, instead what had gone wrong.65 The White House, less forgiving, "interpreted the mistake as further evidence of CIA bias," and Jack Smith was hearing it "murmured that

An official North Victnamese Army history says that, "between 1966 and 1969, we shipped 21,400 tons of supplies through the port of Sihanoukville and paid the government more than 50 million US dollars in port fees and transportation charges." Gen. Doan Khue, et al., Review of the Resistance War Against the Americans to Save the Nation: Victories and Lessons (Hanoi: National Political Publishing House, 1995), p. 221.

65 R. Jack Smith, The Unknown CIA: My Three Decades with the Agency, (Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, Inc., 1989), p. 210

66 Ibid., p. 211.

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Part Two : A Rationalizing Animal

Chapter Three: The Ambiguity of It All	

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	and the other dissenters had at least a common understanding of the terminology. But as used in OER publications, the "primary" or "basic" classification had another weakness,	understanding of the team's charter reflected the prevailing mentality in OER, it may be said that bureaucratic pressure affected the objectivity of the process.4
	its mushy semantics. It might refer to actual quantities carried, or to the relative security of the two routes, or even, as we have seen, to a subjective judgment of the relative importance assigned to them by the North Vietnamese. As emerges in testimony, the term "primary" or "basic" could be and was redefined to suit the requirements of the overland thesis. As the quantity issue became increasingly contentious, the reliance on notions like security, control, and importance grew proportionately.	Another analytical crutch took the form of a prevailing assumption that, even at the time, begged to be challenged. Applying the rational-actor model, OER continually asserted that, by opening a route through Sihanoukville, the North Vietnamese would subject the security of their logistics to the whims of a mercurial Sihanouk. But the argument was invalid on its face. Security would not be abdicated, for Hanoi could, at any time, revert to full reliance on the overland route that OER
	This semantic carelessness abetted what may well have been an entirely unconscious response to demands—both self-imposed and from management—for a categorical answer to a question that, in fact, defied such an answer. Having taken refuge in the imprecision	had always maintained could supply all of South Vietnam. And this is what the North Vietnamese promptly did, when Lon Nol cut their access to Sihanoukville in early 1970: they compensated by sending everything down the trail in preparation for the Easter offensive of 1972.
	of "basic" and "primary," the overland school avoided engaging the argument of the skeptics, who were always concerned solely with quantities.	Still another procedural flaw is to be found in the consistent failure to recognize the double standard applied to the empirical evidence for each of the competing interpretations. Even
	A reluctance, rooted in professional pride, to admit that the evidence allowed more than one interpretation may account in part for OER's rigidity. But managerial expectations, whether real or perceived, also played a role in OER's insistence, if not on the overland interpretation itself, at least on having a thesis to defend. More than 30 years later, the representative on the Graham mission,	the best agent reporting on quantities of munitions through Sihanoukville had inconsistencies and gaps that the orthodox school invoked to justify skepticism about the maritime route. Whatever the validity of what called this "purism"—it was certainly appropriate well into 1967—the same rigor was never applied to quantities asserted to be coming south from the triborder area,
Į	still thought it "weaselly" of	about which there was little, if any, reporting.5
	to have abstained from taking a position, even in categorical dissent. view, the purpose of the mission was to come up with a definitive answer, and ambivalence seemed to indulge his perceived "loner" proclivities at the expense of contributing a judgment. To the extent that	By late 1968, dissenting analysts were building a countercase for Sihanoukville. They based it both on clandestine reporting and on circumstantial arguments like "infor-a-dime-in-for-a-dollar" insight about
	I t	

Sihanouk's abdication of neutrality. In this new situation, a more rigorous analytical process, one more open to self-questioning, would have acknowledged the significance of the sparse evidence for overland shipment below the triborder area. ⁶	
Compromised Objectivity	
Several participants in the debate later came to see individual and institutional bias as encouraging resistance to serious consideration of Sihanoukville as a major transit point for arms. Delieved that service in Cambodia tended to generate sympathy for Sihanouk's position, as the Prince struggled to save his country with a neutralist balancing act. remembered his own stance as open to Sihanouk's complicity in the arms traffic, but he agreed that pro-Sihanouk feeling was commor But the phenomenon existed also at CIA. remembered having absorbed the sentiment in OCI in the mid-1960s. He also recalled a visit to DDI Ray Cline's office, sometime in 1964, where Cline advised him to "take it easy on the Cambodians." interpreted this cryptic guidance as suggesting he "cut Sihanouk some slack" when interpreting allegations of collusion with the VC/NVA that were already circulating.8	
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was "too skeptical, too long" of the clandestine reporting on Sihanoukville. 11 Analyst	OER analysts indulged a similar, if less emotionally charged, bias against clandestine reporting from the CIA's Directorate of Operations. To some extent, it probably resulted from a tendency to lump DO reporting But as we have seen, one analyst, acknowledged the enduring bias generated by experience with a credulous DO case officer in Saigon. The DO's perennial failure to achieve a major penetration of the VC reinforced this skepticism. The result for was that he	overland thesis. In doing so, he asserted, he was driven by conviction, not by pressure from above. 13 started with the belief—he thought other civilian observers shared it—that the US military's perceived lust to attack Cambodia stemmed more from frustration with inconclusive combat in South Vietnam than from any rigorous cost-benefit analysis of a broadened war
Analyst recalled an atmosphere of "general skepticism" of DO reporting, an atmosphere that derived only partly from the fact that some of it was demonstrably junk. In his view, only those analysts more attuned to the political dimension paid serious attention to human reporting. These included and were more attuned to the potential as well as the pitfalls of agent reporting. 12 Policy Preference as the Engine of Analysis The intellectual biases that helped distort CIA's logistical estimates were reinforced by the intrusion of policy preferences. One participant in the Graham mission made it explicit that he saw his role on the 1968 accepted as fact Hanoi's reliance on the overland route, and he believed that Sihanouk was too cagey to jump into bed with Hanoi. With this mindset, perceived desire to expand the conflict looked politically and militarily ill-founded, a recipe for disaster. 14 Pregarded himself as having a "mandate" to help support the overland position Repair the political dimension paid serious attention to human reporting. These included is and militarily ill-founded, a recipe for disaster. 14 Pregarded himself totally free to consider new evidence and received no guidance or instructions or indications as to what he would conclude. At the same time, he assumed that his superiors knew what he would conclude. But he saw no inconsistency here, as he fully shared—indeed, had helped form consensus. The fact remains that he did not consider the new information acquired during the visit to South Vietnam to be worth including in the subsequent report. Whether or not, by objective criteria, it merited such consideration, it does appear objectivity was compromised to some material		
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degree by his commitment to a policy outcome. And it is unlikely that he was the only observer whose judgment was affected in this way. 15 The evidence for the impact of a similar policy commitment at CIA is less direct, but goes to the highest level of the Agency's analytical activity on the arms issue. Over a period of time, ONE's acquired the impression that attachment to the overland thesis derived, at least in part, from a "subliminal reluctance" to see the war expand into Cambodia. emphasized the	At the center of this issue is Had he been only a working-level analyst, he would have had to compete on an equal basis with other interpretations and other personalities. Even then, working in something more like a free market of ideas, his expertise and force of personality would likely have materially influenced the Agency's position on Sihanoukville. As it was, his position combined with his professional reputation and acknowledged mastery of the "numbers," came to dominate the debate in a way that stacked the deck
"subliminal" aspect: he did not see as	against dissent.
having consciously sought to have the intelligence product serve this view, but as having been influenced by it. To the extent that this was the case, joined and possibly others in the same distortion of the analytical process of which many of them had long accused MACV: they too used analysis—ir case quite consciously—to advance a policy agenda. 16	On Sihanoukville, turned out to be simply wrong. But, as pointed out, he had served with real distinction as a leader in Indochina analysis. He would speak truth to power, as in his insistence on the futility of bombing the North in order to break Hanoi's will. Unfortunately for the discussion of the arms traffic, the aura of authority created by this record of accomplishment and the force of his record of accomplishment and the force of
The Perils of Argument From Authority	his conviction on the subject only made it harder to get a hearing for a revisionist point of
No one concerned with ensuring the integrity of an analytical process would support argument from authority as a legitimate instrument of persuasion. Indeed, it appears that the managers involved in CIA's Sihanoukville analysis recognized the importance of intellectual independence and, in periodic reviews of the evidence, actively tried to guarantee it. Nevertheless, it also appears that individual reputations for expertise, buttressed by hierarchical relationships, frequently operated to undermine it.	Having set the CIA position, apparently took for granted his analysts' adherence to it. In late 1968, as we have seen challenged him to accept the burden of proof for the overland thesis reaction was to commission a piece to "support our contention" about the overland route. This formulation—perhaps by if not by implied a unanimity of view that thought owed something to bureaucratic pressure. As recalled it, he had not been urging acceptance of any specific volume of traffic, only that well-sourced clandestine reporting be recognized as a credible

him along to the both left Soviet analysis. 18 By 1968 believed that confirmation of deliveries at any level destroyed two arguments: 1) that Sihanouk intended to preserve his neutrality; and 2) that there was reason to doubt that the communists would fully exploit any access through Cambodia. And OER now accepted that some weapons were, indeed, transiting the country. But continued to "bulldoze his idea" past dissent. 19 Somebody's view had to prevail, and the heterodox were as subject to error as their adversaries. But it seems that, by 1968, subjective considerations had acquired an unhealthy force. described	on the Graham mission. At the end, listening to the discussion of the draft report, he found himself sympathizing with dissent from the overland thesis. But had regarded himself, on the trip, more as DO "watchdog" than as substantive participant, and he hesitated even to participate in the discussion. Disclaiming any unique expertise, he decided to cast his layman's vote with the preeminent—and supremely confident—authority on the subject, Accordingly, he signed the report, and remained the only dissenting voice. 22 Compartmentation and its Discontents DO participation in the Graham team—even if intended as no more than a matter of bureaucratic turf protection at overseas
adversaries. But it seems that, by 1968, subjective considerations had acquired an	intended as no more than a matter of
numbers about ships and cargoes. ²⁰	about the analytical model being used in the DI and learned to help OER levy precise requirements. Similar regrets were to be found also on the analytical side: at least, later deplored the lack of communication with the DO that prevailed during the Sihanoukville debate. ²³

It does seem that better communication would		
have encouraged a more sophisticated		
interpretation of significant aspects of the		
problem. Upon joining the team,		
noted that analysts were still using		
as guides		
He saw this as an		
example of academic isolation from real-world		
practice—in this case the Southeast Asian		
habit of ignoring official load limits—that the		
application of operational experience would		
have mitigated. ²⁴		
· ·		
thought that the operational perspective		
would have helped the analysts to avoid an		
assumption that partially justified rejecting Hak		
Ly as a North Vietnamese instrumentality.		
Contrary to the OER interpretation, the		
existence of a branch office at Stung Treng		
might have represented nothing more than a	Wassa But Battaral	
cover, designed to give Hak Ly the appearance	Wrong But Rational	
of a legitimate commercial concern. Ignoring	The record thus reveals substantial flaws in	
that possibility served the prevailing skepticism		
about reported truck convoys carrying munitions to the border with lower South	CIA analysis of the Cambodian arms	
Vietnam. ²⁵	controversy. However, it does not establish that, even in early 1970, the DI should have	
vietnam.	assigned to Sihanoukville—and with the same	
who replaced on the DO	degree of confidence—the importance that it	
desk, had a similar perspective on	had earlier attributed to the overland route.	
collaboration between analysts and operators.	There were, after all, powerful circumstantial	
By late 1968, as he recalled it, he and other	arguments against it. And if agent reporting	
desk officers saw Sihanouk as having	had now proved a substantial flow of arms	
abandoned neutrality by his wholesale	through Sihanoukville, exact quantification still	
accommodation of the VC/NVA, including the	eluded the analysts.	
military hospital at Kompong Cham. This		
perspective was never conveyed to OER,		
	· _	
	Party's Central Office for South Vietnam set up Rear Services Group	
	ame "Hac [sic] Ly Company," it "established purchasing offices in a	
rumber of different areas in Cambodia." Nguyen Duy Tuong, Chief Trail, (Hanoi, People's Army Publishing House, 1994), p. 139. Tra	Editor, History of the Annamite Mountain Troops of the Ho Chi Minh	
Trans, (Mailot, 1 copie s Army 1 aprishing frouse, 1994), p. 139. Ha	10 may cu	
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Given the persuasiveness of the circumstantial and accurate. Indeed, as we have seen, their case, it was certainly reasonable to require a skepticism led to rejection of what turned out to substantial body of reliable evidence to be the most authoritative coverage. But no establish a competing interpretation, and this such rigor was applied to interpreting the nearwas a long time coming. Fanciful early total absence of reporting, from any source, on allegations of deliveries through Sihanoukville overland deliveries. Factors such as the inevitably and, to a point, legitimately paucity of human sources below the tri-border discredited agent reporting. When area certainly allowed, up to a point, continuing knowledgeable CIA sources began producing faith in the overland thesis. But faith is what it better information, some of it as early as 1967, was. When the overland intelligence vacuum it was at first fragmentary and always subject persisted as the evidence for Sihanoukville to inconsistencies and even contradictions. grew, faith required rationalization in order to survive. More generally, at least two of the participants later concluded that there was what one of them called too little "bottom up," inductive From a procedural point of view, the problem thinking and too much from the top down. arose primarily in the treatment of evidence for said he meant by that a propensity, and against the opposing arguments. Had which he shared, to begin with a conclusion equal rigor been applied to both, attachment to rather than to build one from factual evidence. the overland route would have given way Like other proponents of the overland theory, sooner to a more balanced interpretation. Two he began with the conventional wisdom about examples illustrate this. First, the skepticism Sihanouk's equities, the Ho Chi Minh Trail that always, and often properly, greeted agent logistic flow and capacity. reporting was not applied to information from other sources. Thus, OER analysis consistently questioned the authenticity of the larger deliveries described by Thus. "proceeded down the ladder to look at the evidence, I was met by [OER] intelligence and analysis coming up from the bottom which fit my prejudices perfectly."28 made essentially the same point in even more categorical terms. Reflecting on the Sihanoukville failure, he thought it pointed to the necessity, in any conflict between empirical fact and an a priori analytical model, for the analyst to rely on the reporting. Impossible to apply in an absolute The treatment of empirical evidence is equally sense-individual points of fact acquire asymmetrical in the second example. meaning only when integrated into a Regarding Sihanoukville, the analysts wanted hypothesis, however tentative—this assurance that agent reporting was authentic

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prescription does, nevertheless, encapsulate the weakness of the Sihanoukville analysis.²⁹

A Modicum of Objectivity

No one with any self-knowledge thinks of perfect objectivity as an achievable goal. The most that can be done is to try to question assumptions in hopes of identifying beliefs and values that may interfere with disinterested judgment. Such influences being more visible in others than in oneself, it follows that a vigorous adversarial process is essential to identifying bias.

Even then, subjective factors may persist. If the Sihanoukville episode teaches anything, it is that the assumptions and biases most strongly held are those most in need of examination. Accepting as a general principle the danger of unexamined premises may open the analyst, if not always to proactive self-criticism, at least to respectful attention to divergent views. Absent that openness, the universal human desire for the comfort of certitude may overwhelm the spirit of neutral inquiry that remains the ideal of professional analysis.



Source Note

The author is indebted to Richards J. Heuer, Jr.'s, discussion of analytical strategies in <i>Psychology</i> of <i>Intelligence Analysis</i> (Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999). Merle Pribbenow's translations of official North Vietnamese Army histories give Hanoi's version of Hak Ly and the size of the Sihanoukville traffic.		
Source material for this study has come almost exclusively from the official record and from the recollections of what is hoped is a representative sample of surviving participants in the Sihanoukville controversy. The small amount of open literature on the subject is restricted even further by its overlapping authorship. It is written from the perspective of senior management, whose role in the Sihanoukville analysis was limited largely to interpreting to the working level the terms and sense of urgency with which the policymakers were pressing for a resolution. The way in which this guidance actually influenced the analysts ultimately depended, of course, on the latter's understanding of what management wanted. Accordingly, this study relies on working documents and participant recollections to establish the psychological climate in which the debate		
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Hathaway, Robert M., and Russell Jack Smith, <i>Richard Helms as Director of Central Intelligence</i> , 1966-1973 (Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1993). Smith's portion of this survey of the Helms		
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process usen, and the reasons for its failure on sinahoukville, get only pendictory treatment.		
Helms, Richard, A Look over My Shoulder: A Life in the Central Intelligence Agency (New York: Random House, April 2003). Helms gives an account of the political context similar to the one provided by Jack Smith for the DCI's biography. The account of the collection effort that ultimately		



led to the shipping documents is was inserted into the convoy sys shortcomings, the analytical prod	tem for Chin	ese arms. Be			
Smith, Russell Jack, The Unknown Pergamon-Brassey's International some of the material for the Helm between CIA and the Nixon White OER when he recounts an undat him with embarrassment the "sho conclusions were right, he acknown in the second seco	al Defense Pr ns memoir. It e House. Reg ed episode, p oddy, low-gra	ublishers, Inc. differs in empl parding the and perhaps in 190 de reports" on	, 1989). Smith's au nasis in its preoccu alytical controversy 68, in which MACV which they were_re	tobiography p pation with co itself, Smith o analysts adn	rovides ollisions defends nitted to
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