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# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

~~SECRET~~

2

Origin

*SS*

Info

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON 1840 IMMEDIATE  
RPT INFO: CINCPAC PRIORITY Unin

FEB 26 11 52 PM '65

EXDIS

002

Subject to consultations described below, it has been decided to proceed to land at once MEB command and control element, surface BLT, and one helicopter squadron, and thereafter build up by air and surface movement Marine force by adding second BLT, all in Da Nang area, under terms of reference as indicated in MACV recommendation, with primary mission of providing security for Da Nang airfield. Execute order will await following consultations.

You should consult urgently with Quat, describing proposed deployment and its purposes, and seek his approval and ascertain whether he sees any serious problem. If Quat approves, believe we should also have full understanding and acceptance of Minister of Defense, Chief of Staff, and perhaps most important Thi as Corps commander. All should clearly understand mission, and arrangements with military and particularly Thi should clearly provide for cooperation with local military, leaving them in no doubt this is deployment for a limited purpose and that

Drafted by:

FE:WBundy:ic 2/23/65

Telegraphic transcription and

classification approved by:

The Secretary

Clearance:

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

State 10/2/75

By: *MIE*

NARS, Date 4/19/78

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

GVN must continue have full responsibility in pacification program.

Since, assuming GVN concurrence all levels, this will be first US ground deployment of such a unit, ~~SEMI~~ request your recommendation as to <sup>timing</sup> ~~timing~~ of deployment and form of announcement. Reference to general security duties seems to us best approach, since we do not wish on one hand to give impression pacification mission or on other hand to indicate we alarmed over DaNang security.

We are considering further recommendations for Composite Marine Air Group, third BLT, and remaining elements of tailored MEB, but are deferring decision on these for present.

END

GP-1

RUSK

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~~TOP SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER  
MESSAGE CENTER

292

4 3 3 6 7

A640/27/JCS216

PHP040MAH887  
PP RUEKDA  
DE RUMSMA 3623 B 27/0235Z  
P 270215Z  
FM COMUSMACV  
TO RUHKA/CINCPAC  
INFO RUEKDA/CJCS  
ZEN/AMEMB SAIGON  
BT

CALL 53337  
FOR NMCC/MC  
SERVICE

227 07 20Z

JCS EXCLUSIVE

~~TOP SECRET~~ MAC JOO 6127  
SUBJECT: USE OF U.S. AIR POWER  
PERSONAL FOR ADM SHARP AND GEN WHEELER FROM WESTMORELAND  
A. MACJ324 5481, DTG 211210Z FEB.  
B. MACJOO 2473, DTG 260532Z JAN.  
C. JCS 004213, DTG 272333Z JAN.  
D. CINCPAC DTG 281916Z JAN.  
E. CINCPAC DTG 071743Z FEB

1. THE STRENGTH, ARMAMENT, PROFESSIONALISM AND ACTIVITY OF THE VC HAVE INCREASED TO THE POINT WHERE WE CAN ILL AFFORD ANY LONGER TO WITHHOLD AVAILABLE MILITARY MEANS TO SUPPORT THE GVN COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN. TO DATE, U. S. POLICY HAS CURTAILED OR DENIED THE USE OF CERTAIN HIGHLY EFFECTIVE U.S. WEAPON SYSTEMS. ALTHOUGH SOME RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN RELAXED DURING THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, FURTHER RELEASE AND DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IS ESSENTIAL, AS RE-EQUIPPED AND REINFORCED VC STEP UP WAR.
2. THERE ARE TWO GENERAL AREAS WHERE U.S. COMBAT SUPPORT RESOURCES CAN BE OF SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE AS FIGHT AGAINST

ACT.....J3-6(1-6)

INFO....CJCS-2(7-8) DJS-3(9-11) J5-2(12-13) SACSA-4(14-17) WHITE HOUSE-3  
(18-20) STATE-1(21) SECDEF-5(22-26) ISA-1(27) CSA-6(28-33)  
CSAF-6(34-39) CNO-6(40-45) CMC-6(46-51) FILE-1(52) (52)TWC/CL

DECLASSIFIED

Authority OSD 11-1-78 letter  
By [Signature], NARS, Date 3-26-79

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CE. 4  
MESSAGE CENTER

THE VC INTENSIFIES. FIRST IS USE OF U.S. AIR POWER BASED IN SOUTH VIETNAM OR AFLOAT. SECOND IS THE USE OF SURFACE SEA POWER. LATTER IS UNDER STUDY BY MACV, REPORTED BY REFERENCE A. FORMER IS ADDRESSED SPECIFICALLY IN FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS.

3. REFERENCE B REQUESTS AUTHORITY TO USE U.S. AIR STRIKES IN SOUTH VIETNAM AGAINST VC WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT CONTROLS STIPULATED IN REFERENCES C AND D WILL APPLY. TO DATE, WE HAVE LIVED WITH THESE CONTROLS; BUT I CAN FORESEE, BASED ON LIMITED EXPERIENCE, THAT THEY CAN BECOME OVERLY RESTRICTIVE AND NULLIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO DEFEAT VC UNITS. WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT FEW JET STRIKES IN SVN THUS FAR DELIVERED HAVE HAD A SALUTARY MORALE EFFECT ON GVN FORCES AND PROBABLY OPPOSITE ON VC MORALE. WHILE IMPACT ON VC IS DIFFICULT TO MEASURE AT THIS EARLY STAGE, DAMAGE COULD BE SUBSTANTIAL. I RECOMMEND THAT AUTHORITY NOW BE DELEGATED TO ME TO USE U.S. AIRCRAFT TO REINFORCE VNAF OR TO SUPPORT VIETNAMESE FORCES AS I JUDGE PRUDENT. NEEDLESS TO SAY, I WILL EXERCISE APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS TO INSURE DISCRIMINATE USE OF ALL U.S. MILITARY MEANS AND TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE CONTROL MEASURES DESIGNED TO ENHANCE ACCURACY AND REDUCE RISK TO FRIENDLY ELEMENTS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, I WILL TAKE STEPS TO AVOID THE IMPRESSION BY FRIENDS AND ENEMIES THAT U.S. HAS TAKEN OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR WAR FROM THE VIETNAMESE.

4. THE IN-COUNTRY USE OF U.S. AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED BY ME WITH GENERALS MINH AND THIEU. THEY BOTH AGREE THAT,

IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, THIS CAPABILITY IS A DESIRABLE EXTENSION OF FARGATE AND THEREFORE CONCUR WITH THE PROPOSAL OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 3 ABOVE.

5. THIS MATTER HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH AMBASSADOR TAYLOR WHO WILL COMMENT SEPARATELY. GP-3  
BT

5481 IS IN 36438  
2473 IS IN 92948  
281916Z NOT IDENTIFIED  
071743Z IS IN 17366  
ADV CY TO NMCC, CJS

PAGE 2 OF 2

~~TOP SECRET~~

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

30a

002

41  
Action

~~SECRET~~

F  
9

55  
Info

NNNNZCZCMJA102VZCZCJIA315  
PP RUEHCR  
DE RUMJIR 1587A 28/0955Z  
P R 280945Z ZEA  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC  
STATE GRNC  
BT

24195

1965 FEB 28 AM 8 26

~~SECRET~~

ACTION PRIORITY DEPT 2789 INFO CINCPAC 1694 FROM SAIGON FEB 28, 5PM

E X D I S

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: A. DEPTTEL 1840; B. OSD 272351Z

AFTER DISCUSSION OF REF A WITH JOHNSON AND THROCKMORTON,  
(WESTMORELAND WAS TEMPORARILY UNAVAILABLE), WE HAVE DECIDED  
TO PROCEED AS FOLLOWING.

I SHALL SEEK AN APPOINTMENT WITH QUAT AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY  
CFN 2789 1694 28 5PM 1840 OSD 272351Z A QUAT

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 1587A ~~SECRET~~  
(PROBABLY TOMORROW MARCH 1) AND RAISE THE MATTER OF OUR CONCERN  
(BUT NOT ALARM) OVER THE SECURITY OF THE DA NANG AIRFIELD AND  
ENVIRONS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES. IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MILITARY  
INSTALLATION IN THE COUNTRY WHICH IS INDISPENSABLE IN AIR DEFENSE  
AND IN SUPPORT OF AIR AND SEA OPERATIONS AGAINST THE DRV. IT  
MUST BE AT OR NEAR THE TOP OF THE TARGET LIST WHICH THE VC/DRV  
WISH TO DESTROY. I VISITED DA NANG ON FEBRUARY 27 FOR THE FIRST  
TIME IN SEVERAL MONTHS AND AM DEEPLY IMPRESSED WITH THE INCREASING  
MAGNITUDE OF THE SECURITY PROBLEM AS ARE GENERAL WESTMORELAND  
AND HIS PRINCIPAL MILITARY COLLEAGUES.

EXCEPT FOR THE CHRONIC SHORTAGE OF GVN FORCES IN I CORPS, WE  
WOULD BE INCLINED TO URGE GVN TO ALLOCATE SEVERAL ADDITIONAL  
BATTALIONS TO THE DA NANG AREA. BUT WE KNOW THAT SUCH FORCES  
COULD NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE EXCEPT AT PROHIBITIVE COST TO THE  
SECURITY OF OTHER AREAS IN SVN. FOR THESE REASONS, WE ARE  
DRIVEN TO CONSIDER A SOLUTION WHICH WE HAVE ALWAYS REJECTED IN

~~SECRET~~

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Authority State 10/2/75  
By MIE, NARS, Date 4/19/78



~~SECRET~~

-2- 2789, FEBRUARY 28, 5 PM, FROM SAIGON

THE PAST, THE INTRODUCTION OF US GROUND COMBAT FORCES TO REINFORCE THE DEFENSE OF DAN NANG UNTIL GVN FORCES BECOME AVAILABLE FOR THE PURPOSE. IN SPIKE OF MANY COGENT REASONS AGAINST THIS SOLUTION. GENERAL WESTMORELAND AND I ARE NOW RELUCANTLY PREPARED TO  
CFN 1 DRV VC/DRV 27 GVN 1 GVN SVN US GVN

PAGE THREE RUMJIR 1587A ~~SECRET~~  
RECOMMEND IT TO WASHINGTON IF THE FM SO DESIRES AND REQUESTS.

QUAT MAY AGREE AT ONCE BUT IS LIKELY TO WANT TO TAKE TIME TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THIEU AND MINH. EVEN IF HE SHOULD ACQUIESCE, I WOULD SUGGEST ANOTHER MEETING ON THE SUBJECT WITH QUAT, THIEU, MINH AND THI AT WHICH WESTMORELAND AND I WOULD EMPHASIZE THE LIMITED MISSION OF THE MARINES AND THEIR NON-INVOLVEMENT IN PACIFICATION.

IF ALL GOES WELL AND CONCURRENCE IS RECEIVED, THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM ABOUT A PRESS RELEASE. WE WOULD ENVISION THIS TO BE A SHORT, JOINT GVN/US STATEMENT ISSUED AT ONE TO THE EFFECT THAT, AT THE REQUEST OF GVN, THE USG IS LANDING TWO BATTALIONS OF MARINES TO STRENGTHEN THE SECURITY OF THE DA NANG AREA UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THEY CAN BE RELIEVED BY GVN FORCES. THE FIRST BLT COULD THEN LAND AT ONCE AND THE SECOND ON CALL FROM MACV.

I STRONGLY URGE A DEFERMENT OF DECISION ON LANDING THE REMAINDER OF MEB UNTIL THE FIRST TWO BLT'S ARE ASHORE AND IN PLACE. BY THAT TIME WE WILL HAVE AROUND 7300 US MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE DA NANG AREA AND I DOUBT ABILITY TO ABSORB OR USEFULLY EMPLOY THE REST OF THE MEB. WE CAN TELL BETTER AFTER THE TWO BLT'S ARE SHAKEN DOWN.

TAYLOR

BT

CFN FM QUAT THIEU MINH QUAT THIEU MINH THI GVN/US GW USG  
BLT MEB BLT'S 7300 US MEB BLT'S

NOTE: ADVANCE DELIVERY TO S/S-O, at 8:23 AM, 2/28/65

PASSED: WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, AT 8:55 AM, 2/28/65

~~SECRET~~

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# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

✓ 15648

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

31a

82

Origin  
SS  
Info:

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON Immediate 1848

Info: CINCPAC Priority

Feb 20 5 32 PM '65

EXDIS

Embtel 2792

Weather reports again force postponement Rolling Thunder V from March 1 to March 2. In this connection, possible second boat incident may give us added useful peg, and any further info on it would be useful. You may clear with Quat ~~XXXXXXXX~~ if desired.

High level meeting Feb 26 produced no decisions other than Marine deployment already conveyed to you Deptel 1840. Understand military channel message conveys flavor of discussion including high level desire find further measures we can take within SVN. This under urgent review here and we will be sending our ideas earliest in week.

END

RUSK

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority NLS 85-221  
By mg, NARS, Date 1-28-86

|  |  |                                       |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Drafted by:<br>FE - Mr. Bundy:ew 2/28/65 | Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:<br>FE - Mr. Bundy | <del>XXXXXXXXXXXX</del> The Secretary |
| Clearances:<br>S/S - Mr. Moose           |  | FE - Mr. Bundy                        |

~~TOP SECRET~~

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00936

# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

32a

✓ Bundy

Origin ACTION: AmEmbassy WELLINGTON

PRIORITY 699

MAR 2 4 54 PM '65

Info INFO: AmEmbassy CANBERRA  
AmEmbassy SAIGON  
CINCPAC

PRIORITY 698  
PRIORITY 1858  
PRIORITY

NODIS

Following up invitation to GOA to participate in contingency planning at CINCPAC on possible introduction ground forces into northern SVN (Deptel 649) and GOA affirmative response, we last week put same inviting tation to GNZ through Ambassador here. After first ~~responding~~ <sup>responding</sup> that GNZ would prefer not rpt not to participate even without commitment, Amb Laking informed us last night GNZ had changed view and now desired participate.

Wellington should therefore contact McIntosh and say next step should be military channel message to CINCPAC presumably from Thornton. Understand talks delayed by Mountbatten visit Australia and perhaps also for ANZAM staff talks and that GOA rep will be Scherger. Would appreciate CINCPAC estimate on timing.

For Wellington: We have handled this matter here because we had laid background in over-all discussion following December decisions.

Bundy will fill you in fully at Baguio. Gp-1. END

|                                       |  |      |
|---------------------------------------|--|------|
| Drafted by:<br>FE: WPBundy/bmm 3/2/65 | Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:<br>FE - W. P. Bundy | RUSK |
|---------------------------------------|--|------|

DoD/ISA - Mr. McNaughton (informed)  
DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 13526, Sec. 3.4 / 10592-506  
NARA, Date 4-8-14  
By [Signature]  
FORM 8-63 DS-322

~~TOP SECRET~~

S/S - Mr. Haffacker  
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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

33a  
J  
WH  
2 of 8  
Burdy

~~SECRET~~

Action

CONTROL : 1709  
RECEIVED : MARCH 2, 1965, 2:06 PM

Info

FROM : MOSCOW  
ACTION : SECSTATE 2569  
DATE : MARCH 2, 8 PM

~~SECRET~~

N O D I S

WE HAVE CAREFULLY PONDERED KOSYGIN'S REMARKS TO INDIAN AMBASSADOR (EMBTEL 2512) AND LAPIN'S COMMENTS TO ME (EMBTEL 2468), AS WELL AS KOSYGIN'S TV REPORT AND OTHER RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS, IN EFFORT TO ARRIVE AT ASSESSMENT OF HARD CORE SOV POSITION ON VIETNAM. DEPT MAY WANT TO WEIGH FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS WITH EVIDENCE AVAILABLE OTHER SOURCES:

1. SOVIETS WILL MAKE NOISES BUT NOT TAKE DECISIVE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC RETALIATORY STRIKES IN SOUTHERN AREAS DRV, PROBABLY INCLUDING -- AFTER PUBLICATION "WHITE PAPER" -- STRIKE AGAINST DRV SEALIFT CAPABILITIES IN THIS AREA. INDEED, SOVS LIKELY TO READ OUR FAILURE TO CONTINUE CARRY OUT SUCH STRIKES AS CONFIRMATION THEIR ESTIMATES RE WEAKNESS OUR BASIC POSITION IN SVN.
2. SOV MILITARY AID PROGRAM IN DRV IS PROBABLY DEFENSIVE IN NATURE AND SOVS WOULD WISH TO KEEP IT THAT WAY. HOWEVER, IF ATTACKS ON DRV BECOME GENERAL, PARTICULARLY IF THEY ARE EXTENDED TO INDUSTRIAL OR URBAN TARGETS AND AREAS BEYOND BORDER ZONE, SOVS WILL REASSESS OUR INTENT AS WELL AS BASIC POLITICO-MILITARY SITUATION. IF REASSESSMENT LEADS THEM TO SEE US AIM AS ENDING EXISTENCE OF DRV AS SOCIALIST STATE, SOVS WILL NOT ONLY STEP UP DEFENSIVE AID BUT SUPPLY MEANS OF COUNTERATTACK, E.G. AIRCRAFT FOR RAIDS ON SVN CITIES AND HEAVY GROUND EQUIPMENT. WHILE AWARE OF RISK THAT THIS MIGHT BRING PEIPING ACTIVITY INTO PICTURE, SOVS WILL NOT HOLD BACK IF EXISTENCE OF DRV SEEMS THREATENED.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 13526, Sec. 3.4

By *spw/ly* NARA, Date 4-8-14

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~~SECRET~~

-2- 2569, March 2, 8 p.m. from Moscow

3. THERE SEEMS NO POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IN PRESENT HARD SOV POSTURE AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER MARCH 1 CP MEETING AND ITS AFTERMATH OR UNTIL THEY SOMEHOW CONVINCED OF REAL DANGER OF MAJOR ESCALATION AND DIRECT CONFRONTATION.

4. MAJOR FACTOR UNDERLYING SOV POSITION IS CONVICTION THAT IN VIETNAM SITUATION, UNLIKE CUBAN CRISIS, WE ARE ALMOST ALONE AMONG ALLIES AND EVEN US PUBLIC OPINION SERIOUSLY DIVIDED; ANY REAL AND PUBLICIZED IMPROVEMENT IN THIS PICTURE WOULD CORRESPONDINGLY INFLUENCE SOV POLICY.

5. APART <sup>from</sup> THEIR ESTIMATE AS TO OUR RELATIVE ISOLATION, <sup>the</sup> SOVIET FAILURE <sup>to</sup> MOVE TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS ON ANY BASIS CONCEIVABLY ACCEPTABLE TO USG ALSO REFLECTS DRV AND CPR POSTURE AND MOSCOW'S UNWILLINGNESS OR INABILITY TO IMPEL DRV TO CALL OFF ACTIVITIES IN SVN OR YIELD CONTROL OF TERRITORY THEY NOW HOLD. TO EXTENT SOVS CAN INFLUENCE COMMUNIST ATTITUDE TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS, THEY MIGHT IN FACE OF INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS SITUATION DECIDE TO WORK TOWARD SETTLEMENT BASED ON COALITION GOVT IN SVN, CONVINCING OWN ALLIES THAT THIS ONLY TEMPORARY SITUATION. <sup>etc</sup>

6. MAJOR SOVIET DILEMMA - IMPERATIVES OF COMMITMENT AND POSITION IN COMMUNIST WORLD VS. INTEREST IN DEVELOPING RELATIONS WITH US AND WEST - WILL PERSIST DURING VIETNAM CRISIS. IF THEY CONSIDER NECESSARY TO PROTECT POSITION IN OWN CAMP, SOVIETS ARE PROBABLY PREPARED TO SEE RELATIONS WITH US SUFFER FOR INDEFINITE PERIOD.

GP-1.

CFN 2512 2468 1 2 3 1 4 5 6 GP-1

KOHLER

HJH

~~SECRET~~



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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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~~TOP SECRET~~

Action

CONTROL: 1954  
RECD: MARCH 2, 1965, 9:50 PM

Info

FROM: SAIGON  
ACTION: SECSTATE 2820 FLASH  
DATE: MARCH 3, 10 AM

*Burdy*

~~TOP SECRET~~

N O D I S

DEPARTMENT PASS AS FLASH INFO TO CINCPAC 1710 FROM SAIGON

REF. A. OSD 021719Z.  
B. DEPTTEL 1840.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND IS COMMENTING SEPARATELY ON THE MANY MILITARY ADVANTAGES IN ADHERING TO PLAN FOR INTRODUCING MARINE UNITS INTO DANANG RATHER THAN THE ALTERNATE INDICATED IN REFTEL. PUTTING ON MY OLD MILITARY HAT, I AGREE WITH HIM.

ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, THERE IS LITTLE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN MARINES VERSUS AIRBORNE TROOPS. ANY SCHEDULE OF ARRIVAL BASED ON MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS CAN BE HANDLED POLITICALLY. HOWEVER, WESTMORELAND'S AND MY OVERTURES BASED ON REFERENCE B HAVE CREATED IN GVN AN EXPECTANCY FOR EARLY ACTION; HENCE, I REQUEST GUIDANCE AS TO FINAL DECISION SOONEST.

CFN OSD 021719Z DEPTTEL 1840 DANANG REFTEL B GVN

TAYLOR

PASSED CINCPAC 3/2/65 10 PM

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority STATE letter JUN 26 1979  
By *if*, NARS, Date 2-1-80

~~TOP SECRET~~

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

35a ✓ 2

CONTROL : 2014 ~~TOP SECRET~~  
Action RECEIVED : MARCH 3, 1965, 1:57 AM  
FROM : SAIGON  
Info ACTION : SECSTATE 2821  
DATE : MARCH 3, 1 PM

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority STATE letter JUN 26 1979  
By *ip*, NARS, Date 2-1-80

~~TOP SECRET~~

N O D I S

DEPARTMENT PASS AS INFO TO CINCPAC 1711 FROM SAIGON  
DEPTEL 1859 (FOR CINCPAC REF IS TO DEPT'S 653 TO CANBERRA)

I AM CONCERNED THAT IF WE INTEND TO MOVE AHEAD WITH PLANS FOR SOME SORT OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMBAT FORCE IN NORTHERN SVN WE KEEP THE GVN IN STEP WITH US. IN PARTICULAR IT WOULD NOT BE GOOD IF GVN FIRST LEARNS OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS FROM PRESS OR FROM OTHERS.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT GVN ATTITUDE ON THIS SUBJECT MIGHT BE. AS YOU KNOW THERE WAS NO GREAT ENTHUSIASM ON PART OF GVN, ESPECIALLY MILITARY, FOR KOREAN UNIT. WHILE I AM SATISFIED THIS ATTITUDE WILL CHANGE AS KOREANS DEMONSTRATE THEIR WORTH, MANY VIETNAMESE WILL BE HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO CRITICISM THAT THE COUNTRY IS BEING "TAKEN OVER," AND THE MILITARY WILL BE VERY SENSITIVE TO INEVITABLE PROBLEM OF COMMAND AND CONTROL THAT WILL ARISE FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF COMBAT UNITS, PARTICULARLY IF MULTINATIONAL IN CHARACTER. WHILE COMMAND PROBLEMS ARE MINIMAL FOR US FORCE ENGAGED IN ESSENTIALLY STATIC DEFENSE OF DANANG BASE, THEY WILL BE VERY COMPLEX FOR ANY FORCE, ESPECIALLY MULTINATIONAL, WITH SECURITY MISSION IN NORTHERN SVN. THIS IS NOT TO ARGUE AGAINST FORCE IF IT OTHERWISE SEEMS DESIRABLE BUT SIMPLY TO POINT OUT IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING GVN INTO OUR THINKING AT EARLY STAGE.

WESTMORELAND IS ALSO CONCERNED WITH INADEQUACY OF PRESENT LOGISTICS SYSTEM TO ACCOMMODATE A SUBSTANTIAL INTERNATIONAL FORCE. IF WE INTEND TO MOVE AHEAD, I WOULD THEREFORE HOPE THAT I COULD SHORTLY HAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO EXPLORE MATTER ON VERY RESTRICTED AND TENTATIVE BASIS WITH GVN.

TAYLOR

~~TOP SECRET~~

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(NOT RELAYED TO CINCPAC BY OC/T)

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~~TOP SECRET~~

Copy of cable from Ambassador Taylor, March 3 (Saigon 2822)

In a meeting with Prime Minister Quat this morning, I first congratulated him on the success of his airmen yesterday and then raised the less pleasant subject of the premature announcement of the strike by Radio Saigon. Quat agreed that this latter event was most disturbing and plainly suspects that General Ky is responsible. He said that he directed an investigation last night and has not yet heard the results. I told him that I would be most interested to know the outcome of the investigation as this incident could have serious consequences for our joint military planning and operations.

I then adverted to our discussions of March 1 with regard to strengthening the security of Danang by the introduction of U. S. ground forces. I told him that the discussions yesterday between his officers and General Westmoreland had been quite satisfactory and had produced no obstacles. I had now filed my recommendations to Washington and was awaiting a decision which might take a little time. I mentioned the impending visit of General Johnson and Mr. Rowan and suggested the possibility that a decision on Danang might await their visit. Quat seemed quite satisfied with this explanation.

Quat then passed to the subject of rumors of which there is never a dearth in Saigon. He commented on the continued tale of the report that the Americans were behind the February 19 coup. He added that the most recent rumor is that a new coup is scheduled for March 12, allegedly for the purpose of achieving greater governmental stability. He concedes that the use of a coup to achieve greater stability is hard to understand but suggests that French agents may be behind some of these reports. He seems to take the sinister French influence as a real and serious thing.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority STATE letter JUN 26 1979  
By if, NARS, Date 2-1-80

~~TOP SECRET~~

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37a 01742

# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

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✓ 5

Origin ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON IMMEDIATE 1876

Mar 3 5 02 PM '65

Info INFO: CINCPAC PRIORITY

NODIS.

Embtel 2821.

Idea of international combat force in northern SVN is entirely in contingency planning stage and so understood by GOA and GVN. We have stressed to both that talks should be in low key and without publicity, and we believe this should be entirely possible in view frequent routine consultations in past.

We agree introduction such force would raise problems you state and will doubtless need further evaluations from you and MACV if project becomes imminent possibility. Logistics problem would be one particular aspect for discussion in talks. Since we have made no decision proceed with any such project at this time, at least pending talks, believe it premature mention possibility to GVN even on tentative basis. All we are trying to do is get difficulties explored and project lined up and also take advantage favorable GOA sentiment and indeed some pressure from them for project.

RUSK

GP-1.

End.

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Drafted by:<br>FE:WPBundy:mk 3/3/65 | Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:<br>FE - William P. Bundy |
|-------------------------------------|---|

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority 86-62  
By [Signature], NARA, Date 4-8-14

S/S - Mr. Hilliker

~~TOP SECRET~~

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OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

~~SECRET~~  
Classification

02108

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FOR OC/T USE ONLY

MAR 3 8 23 PM '65

Origin

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON IMMEDIATE 1881

Info:

NODIS.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 11-7-78, NSC 7-30-79

FOR AMBASSADOR.

By ing, NARS, Date 8-31-79

Highest authority continues to be gravely concerned by speed and completeness of discussion of operational details of military missions in Laos and North Viet-Nam. Latest example is reporting of number of planes in most recent Barrel Roll operation, apparently based on Da Nang observation. All such numbers and quantities redouble international pressure against these operations and serve no useful purpose. In the case of Laos, they also complicate Souvanna's problem. It is therefore requested that renewed and stringent measures be taken under your personal guidance to prevent disclosure from any US Government source in any service on these matters.

We recognize that there are Vietnamese as well as US sources for much of this information. We also recognize that Da Nang and perhaps other air bases are open for observation, but we believe that if US sources sternly refused details, few reporters will seek out accurate facts by themselves. Should they persist, we believe you should consider placing the environs of

Prepared by Mr. McGeorge Bundy,  
White House - 5/5/69

Telegraphic transmission and  
classification approved by: FE - William P. Bundy

DOD/ISA - Mr. McNaughton

S/S - Mr. Rattray

P--Mr. [Signature]

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Classification

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*Classification*

of airfields including even city of Da Nang off limits to unauthorized US citizens. These are military operations and their size and shape should be kept firmly classified.

Similar instructions are being issued to affected departments here. We recognize that there is a problem in Washington as well as in Saigon. McNaughton will be prepared to discuss. Perhaps local censorship which we have reason

~~XXXX~~. believe wire services would accept, would be preferable. Any  
GP-3      comments?      End.

RUSK

~~SECRET~~

39

99

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~  
Classification

39a  
02306

FOR OC/T USE ONLY

Origin  
Info

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON PRIORITY 1885

MAR 11 2 25 PM '65

WB  
✓ Bundy

NODIS

Embtel 2835

Apparent discrepancy in definition of mission was taken up with Minister Renouf today. We explained that what we had in mind as mission for international force included both security in northern part of South Viet-Nam as well as pre-emptive deployment as envisaged in Phase II. Both aspects would necessarily be involved and we would not try to say at least at this stage which would be primary or secondary missions.

Renouf said this would seem to square with his record of the Bundy-Waller conversation where Bundy said that the force's mission would be QUOTE security plus UNQUOTE.

GP-1.

END

Drshed by:

FE:MGreen:hst 3-4-65

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:

FE - William P. Bundy

Clearances:

S/S -- Mr. Hoffacker

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NLS 86-62  
By [signature], NARA, Date 4-8-14

~~TOP SECRET~~

Classification

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FORM 8-63 DS-322

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~

March 6, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 86-230By iq, NARA, Date 3-16-87

Dean Rusk, Bob McNamara, and I spent 2 1/2 hours together last night on Vietnam. The following general conclusions emerged:

1. On the evidence so far our air actions in North Vietnam and Laos have caused somewhat less international reaction than we expected. The propaganda and the demonstrations are inevitable, and so are the reactions of the would-be negotiators, here and abroad. Your own effective work has brought the American reaction under control, at least for the present. We got an inadvertent assist from U Thant on this because his outrageous comments solidified a lot of Congressional opinion. We have not driven the Chinese and the Soviets together, as the <sup>Moscow</sup> demonstrations and Chinese complaints show. We have certainly not persuaded Hanoi to leave its neighbors alone, but we may have made a beginning. Most important of all, we may be moving, with less friction than we anticipated, toward a situation in which international opinion may regard our actions against the North as a natural reply against Viet Cong operations in the South. If this can be done by continuing our measured and fitting actions over the coming weeks, it will be a new and important change; it will be most helpful to us against guerrilla infiltration over the long run, whatever the eventual result in Vietnam.

My own view is that if this result is achieved -- and Dean says that Ambassador Thompson, who has been skeptical, is now quite hopeful about it -- it will be your personal achievement. You alone -- against your noisiest advisers -- made the basic decision to present these actions within the framework of a continuing policy and a continuing purpose and not as major new departures. The best and simplest documentary evidence of this is in the amendments which you made to the speech which was never given. I am holding that document for your memoirs.

2. Two of the three of us think that the chances of a turn-around in South Vietnam remain less than even; the brutal fact is that we have

PERSONAL-SENSITIVE-SECRET

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- 2 -

PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE

been losing ground at an increasing rate in the countryside in January and February. The air actions have lifted morale, but it is not clear now much, and there is no evidence yet that the new government has the necessary will, skill and human resources which a turn-around will require.

Moreover, our own basic framework for the support of the pacification program leaves a great deal to be desired. (Last night Bob McNamara said for the first time what many others have thought for a long time -- that the Pentagon and the military have been going at this thing the wrong way round from the very beginning: they have been concentrating on military results against guerrillas in the field, when they should have been concentrating on intense police control from the individual villager on up. This is a point which Lodge will make in a report which is to be delivered to you Monday afternoon before your meeting with him on Tuesday.)

We all nevertheless agree that whatever the odds and whatever the difficulties, we must continue to make every conceivable effort in the pacification area. This is the purpose of the Johnson mission, and the results of that mission should be available for discussion with you early next week.

3. There is one particularly tough issue on which we will get comment next week, both from the Johnson mission and the Lodge report. That is the question of the organization and management of the U. S. team in Saigon. McNamara and I, if the decision were ours to make, would bring Taylor back and put Alex Johnson in charge, with a younger man (conceivably John McNaughton) as Chief of Staff. Rusk, McNamara, and I have all learned from separate channels that within the country team it is in fact Alexis who is looked to for leadership and for coordination. Max has been gallant, determined, and honorable to a fault, but he has also been rigid, remote and sometimes abrupt. We all recognize that Taylor has served an enormously important purpose in keeping American opinion from division and criticism, but our inclination would be to bring him back not later than the first of June for a final round of consultation and discussion, and release from his duties at the end of the year for which he originally contracted. (He took the oath on July 2.)

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- 3 -

PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE

4. We talked also about our international political position. We all agree that so far we have followed the right course, but we continue to believe that it is important to defend and to insist on our policy in every forum. That is why Dean has agreed with enthusiasm to your proposal for briefings of Ambassadors, and that is also why he has taken on this heavy schedule of public appearances in the immediate future.

5. There remains a real question in our minds as to how much we should open the door to a readiness for "talks." This is a point on which both Dean, and Bob especially, are quite concerned. They both feel, for somewhat different reasons, that it is important to show that we are ready to talk about Vietnam -- always on our own terms -- in all appropriate international channels. They point out that in one sense that is exactly what we are doing now in our briefings of Ambassadors, and in our tough talk with Dobrynin, and in public statements which constitute diplomatic actions. But Bob goes a lot further. He believes that we should find a way to have real talks in an international meeting. (I think his motivation is that we will need a conference table if things go worse, as he expects.) Dean and Bob both feel that to hold some of our allies we may need to be a little less rigid about "talks" than we have in the last ten days. The particular pressure which is visible today is from the British, who have been made nervous by one sub-Cabinet resignation and a lot of yammering from their own Churches and McGoverns. What the British want is to make some explorations toward the possibility of talks, and to say that they have been in consultation with us. This is not an urgent matter over the week end, if only because Wilson is safely in Bonn. It will be up for judgment early next week.

My own opinion on the general diplomatic front is that we can always get to the conference table when we need to, and that there is no great hurry about it right now. (Dean Rusk agrees, though he wants to keep the British just happy enough to hold them aboard.) I think there is a lot to be said for detailed and careful study of the bargaining problem in all the various forms which it may develop. But for the moment it seems to me that we are exactly right to stick on the line which you have set. The one thing we might add is that of course we are willing to talk about ending the North Vietnamese aggression and that talks on that subject in any forum would always be welcome. Dean's backgrounder yesterday went a little way in this direction, and I think we would all be helped by knowing your own reaction to the resulting stories by Roberts, Frankel, et al.

PERSONAL-SECRET-SENSITIVE

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- 4 -

PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE

6. Bob and I pressed upon Dean our own feelings that it is important to have contingency planning on what we should do if in spite of our best efforts there is either escalation by the enemy or continued sharp deterioration in South Vietnam. The military planning for reactions to escalation is mostly done, but we do not feel confident that we know just what our actual decisions should be and would be if there were North Vietnamese ground movements over the demarcation line or large movements of Chinese forces into North Vietnam, or both. We estimate both of these as unlikely for the moment, but we have to be ready for them. The crucial question is, in a sense, whether and when you would authorize landings of a number of U. S. divisions in South Vietnam.

A closely related question on escalation is whether it would be useful right now to get a substantial allied ground force in place in the central and northern part of Vietnam. Max Taylor is doubtful about this, but in the heat of discussion last night Rusk, McNamara and I all thought it worth serious further exploration. A force which had Australians, Filipinos, Thais, Koreans and conceivably even Pakistanis would give real international color to the defense of South Vietnam and would also have a substantial braking effect on any possible Communist escalation. We will be asking for your thoughts on this one too.

7. Finally, on the subject of contingency thinking for sharp deterioration, we agreed, in spite of Dean Rusk's reservations, that such thinking should be done -- but very, very privately. Rusk points out that when men even look as if they were planning for defeat, they make defeat more likely, and he is right. So our current plan is that there should be no paper work on this subject at all, but simply some intensive discussion limited completely to the three of us and one subordinate each. There will be no papers, and this mission will not exist anywhere except in this memorandum.

8. I need not tell you how helpful it will be to have your reactions to this discussion. There is nothing in it that makes it urgent for you to respond today or tomorrow, but I will be right here if you want to comment.

*McG. B.*  
McG. B.

PERSONAL- SENSITIVE -SECRET

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

JCSM-153-65

6 - MAR 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Operation Plan 34A - Additional Actions (U)

1. Reference is made to CM-258-64, dated 14 November 1964, subject as above, in which the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that air strikes by aircraft of the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) be initiated against selected targets in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV).

2. During the recent coordinated US/Government of Vietnam air strikes against the DRV, the VNAF has demonstrated the capability to strike targets effectively. As an additional means of maintaining pressure on the DRV, small-scale strikes could be an effective adjunct to the current program.

3. In view of the current situation in Southeast Asia, the Joint Chiefs of Staff request reconsideration of the reference.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:  
SIGNED

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Authority JCS 9-19-79; State 7-6-79  
By isp, NARS, Date 10-24-79

EARLE G. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301  
DECLASSIFIED

42a

Authority E.O. 11652 SEC. 5(A) and (D)  
By isg, NARS, Date 3-31-78

JCSM-161-65  
6 - MAR 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Elimination of Restrictions on Use of US Aircraft (U)

1. Until 27 January 1965, CINCPAC was not authorized to employ US jet aircraft for air strikes against Viet Cong forces and installations within the RVN. Subsequently, authority was granted to employ US jet aircraft in a strike role in the RVN in emergency situations with certain specific restrictions.

2. On 26 February 1965, CINCPAC stated that "the single most important thing that we can do to improve the security situation in South Vietnam is to make full use of our air power" and that action should be taken to lift restrictions on use of US aircraft.

3. In providing his views on the use of US air power in RVN operations, COMUSMACV on 27 February 1965 stated that:

a. The capability of the Viet Cong has increased to the point where we can ill afford any longer to withhold available military means to support the RVN counterinsurgency campaign.

b. Authority should be granted to him to use US aircraft to reinforce the VNAF or to support the RVN Armed Forces.

4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff concur with CINCPAC and COMUSMACV that there is a military requirement for use of US aircraft in RVN combat operations and that such use will improve the security situation.

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Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the attached draft message, which delegates authority to CINCPAC to use PACOM aircraft to reinforce the VNAF and/or to support RVN Armed Forces combat operations, be approved.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SIGNED

EARLE G. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment

~~TOP SECRET~~

43

103



INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

0002

~~SECRET~~

43a

Action

CONTROL: 6254  
RECEIVED: MARCH 8, 1965, 1:26 A.M.

Info

FROM: SAIGON  
ACTION: SECSTATE 2889 PRIORITY  
DATE: MARCH 8, 1 P.M.

~~SECRET~~

NODIS

DEPTEL 1925

DECLASSIFIED

Authority STATE letter NOV 7 1978

By ing, NARS, Date 6-28-79

I AM CONCERNED FROM STANDPOINT OUR OVERALL POSTURE VIS-A-VIS HANOI AND COMMUNIST BLOC THAT CURRENT FEVERISH DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY PARTICULARLY BY FRENCH AND BRITISH TENDS TO UNDERCUT OUR ABILITY TO CONVEY ANY MEANINGFULL SIGNAL TO HANOI OF USG DETERMINATION TO STICK IT OUT HERE AND PROGRESSIVELY TURN THE SCREWS ON DRVWG\* SEABORN'S ESTIMATE OF MOOD OF CONFIDENCE CHARACTERIZING DRV LEADERSHIP DESPITE OUR JOINT AIR STRIKES TO DATE (EMBTTEL 2880) ALMOST IDENTICAL OUR ESTIMATE CONTAINED EMBTEL 2861. IT APPEARS TO ME EVIDENT THAT TO DATE DRV LEADERS BELIEVE AIR STRIKES AT PRESENT LEVELS ON THEIR TERRITORY ARE MEANINGLESS AND THAT WE ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE FOR NEGOTIATIONS THAN ARE THEY. THEIR ESTIMATE MAY BE BASED IN PART ON ACTIVITIES OF "OUR FRIENDS" TO WHICH WE SEEM TO BE ACTIVE PARTY.

IN MY VIEW CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT WE FOLLOW SIMULTANEOUSLY TWO COURSES OF ACTION: (1) ATTEMPT TO APPLY BRAKES TO BRITISH AND OTHERS IN THEIR HEADLONG DASH TO CONFERENCE TABLE AND LEAVE NO DOUBT IN THEIR MINDS THAT WE DO NOT INTEND TO GO TO CONFERENCE TABLE UNTIL THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE HANOI (AND PEKING) PREPARED TO LEAVE NEIGHBORS ALONE; AND (2) STEP UP (#) OUR AIR STRIKES IN SOUTHERN PART OF DRV IN ORDER CONVINCING HANOI AUTHORITIES THEY FACE PROSPECT OF PROGRESSIVELY SEVERE PUNISHMENT. I FEAR THAT TO DATE ROLLING THUNDER IN THEIR EYES HAS BEEN MERELY A FEW ISOLATED THUNDER CLAPS.

THE SAME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLY RE OUR URGING BRITISH TO UNDERTAKE FURTHER EARLY SOUNDINGS RE ARTICLE 19 LAOS

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~~SECRET~~

-2- 2889, MARCH 8, 1 P.M., FROM SAIGON

ACCORDS AS AMBASSADOR MARTIN SO COGENTLY STATES IN HIS EXDIS 2178 TO DEPT. MANY OF PROBLEMS WHICH WORRY HIM ARE ALSO APPLICABLE TO VIETNAMESE HERE AND I SHARE HIS REASONING AND CONCERN.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE MAY BE IN FOR A TOUGH PERIOD AHEAD BUT I WOULD HOPE WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO WHATEVER IS REQUIRED AND THAT WE TRY TO KEEP FUNDAMENTAL (#) VIS-A-VIS HANOI CLEAR AND SIMPLE. MY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING INCREASING TEMPO AND INTENSITY OF OUR AIR STRIKES AGAINST DRV FOLLOWS BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM.

CFN 1925 DRV DRV 2880 2861 DRV (1) NO NOT (2) DRV 19 2178 DRV

TAYLOR

RNL/AG

\* AS RECEIVED, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.  
(#) OMISSION, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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44

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

44a

0002

~~TOP SECRET~~

*retype for President*

Action CONTROL: 6256  
RECEIVED: MARCH 8, 1965, 1:41 A.M.

Info FROM: SAIGON  
ACTION: SECSTATE 2888 PRIORITY  
DATE: MARCH 8, 1 P.M.

~~TOP SECRET~~

NODIS  
DEPT PASS CINCPAC PRIORITY 1743  
REF: A. DEPTTEL 1718. B. EMBTEL 2880.

WE HAVE A SENSE OF URGENT NEED FOR AN AGREED PROGRAM FOR THE MEASURED AND LIMITED AIR ACTION AGAINST MILITARY TARGETS IN DRV ANNOUNCED IN REF A. THE RATE OF ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK FOR ATTACKS INVOLVING TWO OR THREE TARGETS ON EACH DAY AS PROPOSED IN REF A APPEARS TO US REASONABLE AS TO FREQUENCY, AND LEAVES OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF INCREASING THE EFFECT ON HANOI BY ADDING TO THE WEIGHT OF THE STRIKES (IN TYPES OR ORDNANCE AND SORTIES PER TARGET) AND BY MOVING NORTHWARD UP THE TARGET SYSTEM. WHAT SEEMS TO BE LACKING IS AN AGREED PROGRAM COVERING SEVERAL WEEKS WHICH WILL COMBINE THE FACTORS, FREQUENCY, WEIGHT AND LOCATION OF ATTACK INTO A RATIONAL PATTERN WHICH WILL CONVINCHE THE LEADERS IN HANOI THAT WE ARE ON A DYNAMIC SCHEDULE WHICH WILL NOT REMAIN STATIC IN A NARROW ZONE FAR REMOVED FROM THEM AND THE SOURCES OF THEIR POWER BUT WHICH IS A MOVING GROWING THREAT WHICH CANNOT BE IGNORED.

I HAVE SEEN THE JCS PROPOSED EIGHT-WEEK PROGRAM WHICH HAS MUCH TO RECOMMEND IT BUT, I BELIEVE, REMAINS TOO LONG SOUTH OF THE 19TH PARALLEL. REFERENCE B REPORTS SEABORN'S OPINION THAT HANOI HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT OUR AIR STRIKES ARE A LIMITED ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE OUR BARGAINING POSITION AND HENCE ARE NO GREAT CASUE FOR IMMEDIATE CONCERN. OUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO INDUCE IN DRV LEADERSHIP AN ATTITUDE FAVORABLE TO US OBJECTIVES IN AS SHORT A TIME AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER OT AVOID A BUILD-UP ON INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES TO NEGOTIATE BUT OUR EFFORTS TO DATE

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Authority *State letter 6-26-79*  
By *ip/af* NARA, Date *4-8-14*

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~~TOP SECRET~~

-2- 2888, MARCH 8, 1 P.M., FROM SAIGON

ARE FALLING FAR SHORT OF ACHIEVING THE NECESSARY IMPACT. IN FORMULATING A MORE EFFECTIVE PROGRAM OF FUTURE ATTACKS, I WOULD BE INCLINED TO KEEP THE RATE AS INDICATED IN REF A, MAINTAIN THE WEIGHT ON TARGET AS FOR RECENT STRIKES BUT BEGIN AT ONCE A PROGRESSION OF US STRIKES NORTH OF 19TH PARALLEL IN A SLOW BUT STEADILY ASCENDING MOVEMENT. THE TARGETS IN THE AREA SOUTH THEREOF COULD BE RESERVED LARGELY FOR VNAF AND FARMGATE. IT IS TRUE THAT THE MIG THREAT WILL GROW AS WE MOVE NORTH BUT WE HAVE THE MEANS TO TAKE CARE OF IT. IF WE TARRY TOO LONG IN THE SOUTH, WE WILL GIVE HANOI A WEAK AND MISLEADING SIGNAL WHICH WILL WORK AGAINST OUR ULTIMATE PRUPOSE.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND CONCURS.

CFN 1743 A 1718 B 2880 DRV A A NOT JCS 19TH B SEABORN DRV  
A 19TH VNAF FARMGATE MIG

TAYLOR

RNL/AG

NOTE: PASSED CINCPAC AS SAIGON'S 1743, 3/8/65, 2:30 A.M.

~~TOP SECRET~~

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105

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

45a

~~TOP SECRET~~

March 9, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BUNDY

SUBJECT: Military Issues, Vietnam and Laos

1. Two decisions regarding the use of U. S. aircraft are up for immediate decision,

OK a. Restrictions on the Use of U. S. Aircraft. The JCS have requested that all restrictions be lifted on the use of U. S. aircraft in South Vietnam. At the present time they can be used only in emergency situations by special requests. CINCPAC and MACV have strongly recommended this action. If implemented, it should permit the development of tactics which could greatly assist in defeating Viet Cong hit and run operations.

OK b. Restrictions on FARMGATE Aircraft. FARMGATE aircraft are AlH models which are used by U. S. pilots for training Vietnamese pilots. They are marked with Vietnamese insignia and can only be used if a Vietnamese pilot or observer is on board. The JCS recommend that markings on these aircraft be changed to U. S. insignia, and MACV reports the Vietnamese would prefer this. The JCS would also relax the requirement for VNAF personnel on these aircraft. Training of the RVNAF would remain the primary mission, however. FARMGATE restrictions seem academic in the light of the present situation.

2. The Barrel Roll problem we discussed this morning has been resolved. DOD has agreed to State's restrictions on the frequency of flights (no more than one every four days) and the number and type of aircraft. I believe this will suit Sullivan and Souvanna.

3. Several issues are still pending, and you should be aware of them.

a. Rules of Engagement, SEA. The JCS have requested

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Authority FRS 64-68, vol. 2, #192

By jc, NARA, Date 3-15-01

authorization for immediate pursuit into Communist China in response to any ChiCom attack on U.S. forces. This issue broke into print this weekend as the result of an ISA press interview. The individual concerned was trying not to release anything, but the reporter came up with an article stating that our rules of engagement would not permit the sort of sanctuary for Chinese aircraft that was available in the Korean war. ISA is pushing hard for this policy, but State has delayed approval.

b. Use of Napalm. The JCS have requested authority to use napalm against targets in North Vietnam, and have provided the attached paper which shows the increased effectiveness possible and reduced loss rate to be expected as a result of the low level attack pattern. Loss rate might be further reduced as a result of greater effectiveness in flak suppression. It is difficult to damage anti-aircraft weapons with high explosives, and the crews of the gun position under attack are able to take cover while adjacent guns continue firing. Napalm attacks would leave anti-aircraft guns in poor condition, and would follow the gun crews into their foxholes. A new strike proposal which should be coming over soon will probably call for use of napalm. While this seems desirable, it may be useful to append a note of caution such as "great care should be taken to confine napalm patterns to military areas".

c. 34A - Air Strikes Against North Vietnam. The JCS propose to begin small scale VNAF air strikes against the DRV under 34A operations. This issue should receive very serious thought. If the North Vietnamese were subject to surprise air attack around the clock, they would be placed under much the same sort of harassment as our troops in South Vietnam. This should sap their zeal for the war by building anxiety and eliminating the world-wide publicity that follows a large scale attack. In this program we could use single ship or two ship sorties working at low level, thus guaranteeing surprise and few losses. They should use sophisticated armament such as the AGM12B guided bomb in order to assure high effectiveness. They should also take great care to avoid any damage to civilians. To achieve this sort of effectiveness and control, however, it might be better to use U.S. aircraft instead of the VNAF.



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- 3 -

d. Hot Pursuit into Cambodia. In the case of Viet Cong forces employing hit and run tactics operating across the Cambodian border, the JCS recommend authorization for (1) return fire, (2) hot pursuit to recover prisoners, and (3) hot pursuit while actively engaged. Military factors strongly support this recommendation, but, of course, the political effects will be a critical consideration.

Chester L. Cooper

~~TOP SECRET~~

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46a

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Mac  
a preliminary  
shot at an outline.  
John McH  
3/10/65

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SENSITIVE~~

McNaughton - 3/10/65

978

ACTION FOR SOUTH VIETNAM



1. US aims: 70% - To avoid a humiliating US defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor).  
20% - To keep SVN (and then adjacent) territory from Chinese hands.  
10% - To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.  
ALSO - To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used.  
NOT - To "help a friend," although it would be hard to stay if asked out.
2. Deteriorating situation: (a) Politically, 50% chance of coup within 3 weeks.  
(b) Militarily, SVN has been cut in two with GVN control in north reduced to enclaves.
3. Prognosis: (a) GVN officials will adjust their behavior to an eventual VC take-over.  
(b) Defections of significant military forces will take place.  
(c) Whole integrated regions of the country will be totally denied to GVN.  
(d) Neutral and/or left-wing elements will enter the government.  
(e) A popular-front regime will emerge which will invite the US out.  
(f) Fundamental concessions will be made to the VC.  
(g) Accommodations to the DRV will put SVN behind the Curtain.
4. Inside South Vietnam: Progress inside SVN is important, but it depends more on GVN efforts and luck than on added US efforts. Nevertheless, whatever other actions might be taken, great efforts should be made within South Vietnam: (a) To help the ARVN defeat the VC, by giving advice and training, obtaining intelligence, providing air lift and strike support, and hampering VC infiltration; (b) to strengthen the government, its bureaucracy, and its civil-military coordination and planning; (c) to dampen ethnic, religious, urban and civil-military strife by a broad and positive program designed to enlist the support or dampen the opposition of important groups; and (d) to press the pacification program where conditions permit.
5. Courses of action: (6) Progressively squeeze North Vietnam;  
and/or (7) add massive US ground effort in South Vietnam;  
and/or (8) downgrade the apparent stakes.
6. Program of progressive military pressure on North Vietnam.
  - a. Purposes: (1) To reduce DRV/VC activities (reduction can be tacit).  
(2) To improve US/GVN bargaining position.  
(3) To show world lengths to which US will go to fulfill commitments.
  - b. Primary program: Each week, two 100-plane high-damage strike days with two important targets each day -- 1 for US, 1 for VNAF -- moving slowly northward.
  - c. Other actions: (1) 34A MAROPS.  
(2) DeSOTO patrols in Gulf of Tonkin.  
(3) Recce flights over LAOS and DRV.  
(4) T-38/BARREL ROLL armed-recce and choke-point strikes in Laos.  
(5) US/VNAF strikes against VC operations and bases in SVN.
  - d. Stated terms: (1) We do not seek to destroy DRV or to acquire a base,  
(2) We will arrange rice-barter deal between DRV and SVN, and  
(3) We will stop squeeze on DRV (not withdraw from SVN),  
but (4) DRV must stop training and sending personnel to SVN/Laos,  
(5) DRV must stop sending arms and supplies into SVN/Laos,  
(6) DRV must stop directing military actions in SVN/Laos,  
(7) DRV must order the VC/PL to stop their insurgencies,  
(8) DRV must stop propaganda broadcasts to South Vietnam, and  
(9) DRV must remove VM forces and cadres from SVN and Laos.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority OCD 1A 11/16/76

By MJE, NARS, Date 4/19/78

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~~SENSITIVE~~

- e. Major risks:
- (1) Strikes north of 20° are likely to attract MIGs out of Phuc Ye (Hanoi). (Unless MIG hazard becomes great, striking MIG base can be postponed until it fits our pressure schedule.)
  - (2) China may introduce MIGs from Hainan, raising question of hot pursuit into China and of taking out Chinese air bases.
  - (3) DRV (Chinese?) air may strike SVN bases or cities.
  - (4) Increased VC activities (take city, kill top leaders).
  - (5) DRV (China?) may launch ground forces into Laos and/or SVN.
  - (6) South Vietnamese may panic if threatened by land or air.
  - (7) GVN may disintegrate out from under us.
  - (8) World-wide revulsion against killing Vietnamese may develop.
- f. Other Red moves:
- (1) China/USSR may stir Laos, Thailand, Korea, Berlin, etc.
  - (2) More jets to NVN with NVN or Chicom pilots.
  - (3) AAA and radar gear to NVN.
  - (4) Increased air and ground forces in South China.
  - (5) Cause major military or civilian defections in SVN.
  - (6) PL land grabs in Laos.
  - (7) Other "defensive" DRV retaliation (shoot down U-2?),
  - (8) Political drive for "neutralization" of Indo-China.
  - (9) PL declaration of new government in Laos.
- g. "Circuit-breakers." To avoid undesirable escalation, US has option to "plateau" US strikes against DRV and to shunt added action from more serious air strikes to the following:
- (1) Massive increase in US presence south of 17° (minimum of 25,000 additional "combat support" personnel in SVN; maximum of 150,000 combat troops across Laos and in SVN).
  - (2) Aerial mining of DRV harbors and naval blockade of DRV.
  - (3) Division of US troops (from Korea?) into Thailand and perhaps with Thais into Mekong towns in Laos.
  - (4) Diplomatic negotiating offensive (via UK or GVN).
- h. Important miscellany:
- (1) Program should appear to be relentless (i.e., possibility of employing "circuit-breakers" should be secret).
  - (2) Enemy should be kept aware of our limited objectives.
  - (3) US should not appear to press for negotiations.
  - (4) Allies should be kept on board.
  - (5) USSR should be kept in passive role.
  - (6) Information program should preserve US public support.

7. Program of massive US ground effort in SVN & SEA:

- a. Purposes:
- (1) To defeat the VC on the ground.
  - (2) To improve US/GVN bargaining position.
  - (3) To show world lengths to which US will go to fulfil commitments.
- b. Program:
- (1) Continue a "plateau" of air strikes against DRV.
  - (2) Add Westmoreland's 25,000 additional US "combat support" personnel.
  - (3) Deploy 3-5 US divisions (with or without "international" elements) across Laos-SVN infiltration routes and at key SVN population centers.
  - (4) Deploy 1 division (from Korea?) with Thai in Lao Mekong towns.
- c. Risks:
- (1) China will move troops into DRV; DRV/China will deploy into Laos.
  - (2) US troops will be bogged down and attrited by VC.
  - (3) US will become "French colonialists" even to South Vietnamese.
  - (4) US public will not support the US moves.
- d. "Circuit-breakers:" There are none. Once US troops are in, it will be impossible to withdraw them or to move them, say, to Thailand without admitting defeat.

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8. Downgrade the apparent stakes. If/when it is estimated that even the best US/GVN efforts mean failure (undesirable escalation or defeat), it will be important to act to minimize the damage to US effectiveness and image thereafter by steps such as these:
- (a) Deliver ultimatum to coup-prone generals to "shape up or we ship out," and when they patently fail to shape up, we ship out.
  - (b) Publicize uniqueness and congenital impossibility of SVN case (e.g., Viet Minh held much of SVN in 1954, long uncontrollable borders, unfavorable terrain, absence of national tradition or administrators, mess left by French, competing factions, Communist LOC advantage, late US start, etc).
  - (c) Create diversionary "offensives" elsewhere in the world (e.g., to shore up Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, India, Australia; to launch an "anti-poverty" program for underdeveloped areas.
  - (d) Enter multi-nation negotiations calculated to shift opinions and values.
  - (e) Shift to Saigon focus of decision and of discussion.
9. Concurrent negotiating track. The realistic objective is not a DRV/VC backdown nor necessarily an explicit agreement. Would we settle for a tacit piecemeal live-and-let-live Vietnamese deal including a "writing off" of indefensible portions of SVN? The US should:
- (a) Maintain present posture of refusing formal negotiations.
  - (b) Maintain position that we ask only that DRV leave SVN alone.
  - (c) Keep quiet channels (via UK? France?!) open for hopeful signs.
  - (d) Keep eye on South Vietnamese, who may be dealing under the table.
  - (e) Be ready to shift to formal negotiations as a "circuit-breaker" (para 6g) or to help "downgrade the apparent stakes" (para 8d).
10. Evaluation: It is essential -- however badly SEA may go over the next 2-4 years -- that US emerge as a "good doctor." We must have kept promises, been tough, taken risks, gotten bloodied, and hurt the enemy very badly. We must avoid harmful appearances which will affect judgments by, and provide pretexts to, other nations regarding how the US will behave in future cases of particular interest to those nations -- regarding US policy, power, resolve and competence to deal with their problems. The US should:
- (a) Progressively squeeze North Vietnam (per para 6), without high confidence that it will improve the situation in SVN, with some confidence that it will improve the US/GVN bargaining position, and with confidence that it will demonstrate lengths to which US will go to fulfil commitments.
  - (b) Be prepared to shunt to "circuit-breakers" (per para 6g), either to deploy large numbers of US forces in South Vietnam or to Thailand and Laos.
  - (c) Pursue the negotiating track (per para 9).
  - (d) Have a contingency plan to downgrade the apparent stakes (per para 8) to be initiated when/if necessary to confuse the issue and diffuse the blame.

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March 3, 1965

MAR. 13.

F

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Possible questions and answers on Vietnam, for Press Conference  
Saturday, March 13.

1. Q. Why is the US Government unwilling to support negotiations for a settlement in Vietnam?

A. No one wants a peaceful settlement in Vietnam more than the United States Government. What is blocking such a settlement is aggression directed from the North. Those who are urging negotiation should address themselves to the governments whose support of aggression is the root of the problem. If the aggressors will leave their neighbors alone, there will be no difficulty in getting a peaceful settlement.

2. Q. What is the explanation of the change in US policy toward Vietnam in the last month?

A. Our policy today is just as it was last month and just as it has been for months, and even years, before. Here is what I said on February 17"

"As I have said so many, many times, and other Presidents ahead of me have said, our purpose, our objective there is clear. That purpose and that objective is to join in the defense and protection of freedom of a brave people who are under attack that is controlled and that is directed from outside their country."

"We have no ambition there for ourselves. We seek no dominion. We seek no conquest. We seek no wider war. But we must all understand that we will persist in the defense of freedom, and our continuing actions will be those which are justified and those that are made necessary by the continuing aggression of others.

"These actions will be measured and fitting and adequate. Our stamina and the stamina of the American people is equal to the task."

3. Q. Doesn't the bombing of North Vietnam and the landing of Marines mean a change of policy?

A. No. The particular actions we take are "those which are justified and those that are made necessary by the continuing aggression of others."



4. Q. Is the U. S. planning further bombings or further landings of troops?

A. It would be wrong for me to announce our military plans to the enemy before they are carried out. And I do not think it is useful to circulate rumors and speculations. If they are false, they clearly do no good, and if they are correct they can endanger our soldiers and assist our enemies.

5. Q. What is the position of the U. S. toward offers of negotiation from U Thant? Britain? France?

A. Our position on these matters has been made very clear to the Secretary General and to the British and French Governments. I repeat that what is needed in Vietnam is that the aggressors should decide to leave their neighbors alone.

6. Q. Do you see promise in the Franco/Soviet proposal for a Geneva conference?

A. Once more -- what is needed is an end of aggression. At this stage I see no point in speculation on the way by which a peaceful settlement may eventually be worked out. I will say this much, however:

The important parties to any settlement will be those who have real interests and influence in Southeast Asia. It will be important that the aggressors agree to stop their aggression. It will be important that the interests of those who have helped to defend freedom be fully considered. There may well be a role also for those who have special responsibilities as Co-Chairmen of international conferences or as members of the International Control Commission. I am not sure that there is an important role for others with an unhappy record in the area and a present firm determination to accept no responsibility there (this is an indirect way of pointing out the irrelevance of France, and both Dean Rusk and I think it would be worth saying at some stage; on the other hand, it will outrage Walter Lippmann.)

Somewhat less <sup>likely</sup> ~~likely~~ specific questions and answers are attached at Tab A.

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I. ASSESSMENT. Situation "has deteriorated rapidly and extensively in the past several months . . . . Time is running out swiftly in Vietnam and temporizing or expedient measures will not suffice. . . . The United States possesses capabilities which, if applied with speed, vigor and imagination, can redress the present military imbalance without excessive risk of widening the conflict."

II. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS.

A. Measures to arrest the deterioration. To strengthen the RVNAF, to dampen infiltration, to improve hamlet security, and to improve appeal of the pacification program.

1. Provide 3 additional Army helicopter companies to increase mobility of forces.
2. Provide more O-1 aircraft to create a saturation surveillance capability.
3. Establish a Joint (US-RVNAF) Target Research and Analysis Center.
4. Evaluate payoff from MACV's use of jets in SVN. (Decide later if more needed.)
5. Increase the scope and tempo of US air strikes against the DRV.
6. Remove restrictions on strikes against DRV (e.g., US-VNAF concurrency, denial of alternate targets, ban on classified ammos, narrow geographical limits, requirement to get Washington approval before striking alternates when weather bad).
7. Increase tempo and scope of SOG activities against the DRV. (This 34A operations.)
8. Increase air and naval reconnaissance and harrassing operations against the DRV.
9. Re-orient BARREL ROLL to increase military effectiveness against infiltration.
10. Use 7th Fleet to coastal patrol and to augment in-country recon and strike ability.
11. Give cash awards for capture of DRV junks.
12. Streamline procedures to give MACV quick release authority for construction funds.
13. Create a MACV-controlled stockpile of nearby construction materials and equipment.
14. Get Australia and New Zealand to run training-center phase of Reg. Forces' training.
15. Create US-GVN psychological operations organization.
16. Position the remaining subsector advisory teams to improve the Pop. & Reg. Forces.
17. Provide cash contingency fund to each subsector advisory group (\$50-100 monthly limit at first) to be distributed thru District Chief to civilians and Pop. Force soldiers as a reward for exceptional performance or small civic action projects.
18. Permit subsector advisory groups to draw on USOM food and building stocks.
19. Dredge DaNang, QuiNhon and NhaTrang to permit berthing of ocean-going ships.
20. Provide 4 LSTs and 6 LSUs for logistic support missions.
21. Accelerate program for more jet-capable airfields and runways programmed by MACV.

B. Measures to free some ARVN forces for offensive operations. "[T]he GVN effort is now stretched to the limit . . . the time has come to decide how much the United States is willing to commit to the security of South Vietnam within South Vietnam."

- either 1. Deploy US combat units (amounting to a tailored division force) to assume responsibility for the security of Bien Hoa/Tan Son Nhut, Nha Trang, Qui Non and Pleiku. This would free 6 ARVN combat battalions and 25 existing Regional Force companies.
- or 2. Deploy US combat units (amounting to a tailored division force) to assume responsibility for defense of the provinces of Kontum, Pleiku and Darlac in Corps II. This would free 11 ARVN combat battalions for Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Phu Bon.

C. Measures to contain infiltration by land. Deploy a 4-division ground force (US or international under the SEATO treaty) south of the 17th Parallel across northern Quang Tri province and the panhandle of Laos to the Mekong.

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49a

~~TOP SECRET~~

(Cy of Saigon 3003, March 16, 65)

General Westmoreland has just sought my concurrence in his recommendation for the landing of the third batallion of the 9th Marine Embarked Battalion at Phu Bai for the purpose of protecting the 8th Radio Relay Unit and the air strip there. He intends to move helicopters from Danang to the strip and thereby reduce field congestion at Danang.

Because of the military advantages of thus rounding out the Marine Embarked Battalion, I have no reluctance in agreeing to the merit of his recommendation which, of course, should receive the concurrence of the Government of Vietnam after that of Washington.

This proposal for introducing the Battalion is a reminder of the strong likelihood of additional requests for increases in US Ground Combat Forces in South Vietnam. Such requests may come from the US side, from the Vietnam side, or from both. All of us here are keenly aware of the Government of Vietnam trained military manpower shortage which will exist throughout 1965 and which probably can be rectified only in part by an accelerated mobilization. We will soon have to decide whether to try to get by with inadequate indigenous forces or to supplement them with third country troops, largely if not exclusively US. This matter was discussed with General Johnson during his recent visit who no doubt has raised it following his return to Washington. This message examines the pros and cons of such an action--specifically defined as the introduction of a US division (appropriately modified) into South Vietnam.

The purpose of introducing a division would be primarily to relieve the present shortage of the Army of Vietnam units either by replacing the Army of Vietnam in the defense of key installations or by engaging in active operations against the Viet Cong in conjunction with the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Such a reinforcement would allow a strengthening of military efforts in the I and II Corps areas where the situation is deteriorating and would give a boost to the Government of Vietnam morale, military and civilian. Likewise, it should end any talk of a possible US withdrawal and convince Hanoi of the depth of our resolve to see this thing through to a successful conclusion.

This statement of the purpose of introducing a US division is, in effect, a tabulation of the arguments in favor of so doing. However, there are counter-arguments on the other side of the case. The introduction of a US division obviously increases US involvement in the counterinsurgency,

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Authority OSD 11-1-78 letter  
By if, NARS, Date 3-26-79

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exposes greater forces and invites greater losses. It will raise sensitive command questions with our Government of Vietnam allies and may encourage them to an attitude of "let the United States do it." It will increase our vulnerability to Communist propaganda and third country criticism as we appear to assume the old French role of alien colonizer and conquerer. Finally, there is considerable doubt that the number of Government of Vietnam forces which our action would relieve would have any great significance in reducing the manpower gap.

It is impossible to reach a conclusion with regard to the overall merit of this action without first examining in some detail the possible missions which could be assigned a US Division. There are two obvious possibilities; the first, the assignment of the division to one or more of the Provinces of the high plateau where the climate is good, the terrain relatively open, and the Montagnard population more readily distinguishable from the alien Viet Cong. Here, our forces could utilize their mobility and firepower effectively and make an important contribution in cutting off the growing infiltration into and through this area. For the most part, the Montagnards are friendly to the US and our forces would thus be operating in a relatively friendly environment.

On the other hand, such a mission in the highlands would place our forces in an area with highly exposed lines of communication leading to the coast. Their location in this area would create serious logistic problems because of the difficulty of the movement of land transport through areas infested by the Viet Cong. There would be problems both of reinforcement and of withdrawal because of this precariousness of land communications. Finally, the Government of Vietnam may question the introduction of sizeable US forces into the Montagnard area where we have often been accused of favoring the Montagnards over the Vietnamese and of encouraging Montagnard separatism.

The other role which has been suggested for US Ground Forces is the occupation of defense of key enclaves along the coast such as Quang Ngai, Qui Nhon, Tuy Hoa and Nha Trang. Such a disposition would have the advantage of placing our forces in areas of easy access and egress with minimum logistic problems associated with supply and maintenance. The presence of our troops would assure the defense of these important key areas and would relieve some Government of Vietnam forces for employment elsewhere. The troops would not be called upon to engage in counterinsurgency operations except in their own local defense and hence would be exposed to minimum losses.

On the other hand, they would be engaged in a rather inglorious static defensive mission unappealing to them and unimpressive in the eyes of the Vietnamese. Operating in major population areas would maximize the points of contact with the Vietnamese and hence maximize the possible points of friction. The Division would be badly fragmented to the extent that its command, control and supervision would be awkward.

The foregoing analysis leads me to the following tentative conclusions. First, it is not desirable to introduce a US division into South Vietnam unless there are clear and tangible advantages outweighing the numerous disadvantages, many of which have been noted above. One must make a definite determination of the numbers and types of Government of Vietnam forces relieved by the introduction of the US unit and thus the effect of the increased US presence in closing the manpower gap of 1965. Obviously, our division would make some contribution but it remains to be proved that it will be sufficient to reverse the downward trend and give such a lift to the Government of Vietnam forces that they would perform better by the stimulation of the US presence rather than worse in a mood of relaxation at passing the Viet Cong burden to the US.

If the evidence of the probable effectiveness of this US contribution is convincing, then the matter of mission becomes the primary question. The inland mission in the highlands is clearly the more ambitious and, if well done, will make a greater contribution during the present critical period; on the other hand, it is the more exposed and even permits one to entertain the possibility of a kind of Dien Bien Phu if the coastal provinces should collapse and our forces were cut off from the coast except by air.

The coastal enclave Mission is safer, simpler, but less impressive and less productive than the inland Mission. The contrast of the pros and cons of the two suggests the desirability of reexamining the question to see whether the advantages of the inland disposition could not be combined in some way with the retention of a base coastal area, linked with a position inland. In any case, considerable additional study is required before we are prepared to make a recommendation either for the introduction of a division or for the assignment of its mission. In the meantime, we should be giving much thought both in South Vietnam and in Washington as to the right course of action if and when this issue becomes pressing--as it shortly will.

#####

70 President

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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~~TOP SECRET~~

VV MJA737JIAS65L  
PP RUEHCR RUEKDA  
DE RUMJIR 894A/1 18/0230Z  
P 180145Z ZEA  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO RUHKA/CINCPAC  
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Authority State 7-17-78, DSD 10-4-78 Reference  
By inf; NARS, Date 1-25-80

~~TOP SECRET~~

SEONE OCTWO ACTION PRIORITY DEPT (3003) INFO PRIORITY CINCPAC  
1809 CITE 180230Z DOD 493 FROM SAIGON MARCH 18, 10AM

E X D I S

MACV'S 8250.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND HAS JUST SOUGHT MY CONCURRENCE IN HIS  
RECOMMENDATION FOR THE LANDING OF THE THIRD BLT OF THE 9TH  
MEB AT PHU BAI FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING THE 8TH RRU AND THE  
AIR STRIP THERE. HE INTENDS TO MOVE HELICOPTERS FROM DANANG  
TO THE STRIP AND THEREBY REDUCE FIELD CONGESTION AT DANANG.  
CFN 3003 1809 180230Z 493 8250 BLT 9TH MEB PHU BAI 8TH RRU

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 894A/1 ~~TOP SECRET~~  
BECAUSE OF THE MILITARY ADVANTAGES OF THUS ROUNDING OUT THE MEB,  
I HAVE NO RELUCTANCE IN AGREEING TO THE MERIT OF HIS RECOMMENDATION  
WHICH, OF COURSE, SHOULD RECEIVE THE CONCURRENCE OF THE GVN  
AFTER THAT OF WASHINGTON.

THIS PROPOSAL FOR INTRODUCING THE BLT IS A REMINDER OF THE STRONG  
LIKELIHOOD OF ADDITIONAL REQUESTS FOR INCREASES IN U.S. GROUND  
COMBAT FORCES IN SVN. SUCH REQUESTS MAY COME FROM THE U.S.  
SIDE, FROM THE GVN SIDE OR FROM BOTH. ALL OF US HERE ARE  
KEENLY AWARE OF THE GVN TRAINED MILITARY MANPOWER SHORTAGE WHICH  
WILL EXIST THROUGHOUT 1965 AND WHICH PROBABLY CAN BE RECTIFIED  
ONLY IN PART BY AN ACCELERATED MOBILIZATION. WE WILL SOON HAVE  
TO DECIDE WHETHER TO TRY TO GET BY WITH INADEQUATE INDIGENOUS  
FORCES OR TO SUPPLEMENT THEM WITH THIRD COUNTRY TROOPS,  
LARGELY IF NOT EXCLUSIVELY U.S. THIS MATTER WAS DISCUSSED WITH  
GENERAL JOHNSON DURING HIS RECENT VISIT WHO NO DOUBT HAS RAISED  
IT FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON. THIS MESSAGE EXAMINES  
THE PROS AND CONS OF SUCH AN ACTION--SPECIFICALLY DEFINED AS THE

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~~TOP SECRET~~

-2- 3003, MARCH 18, 10 A.M. FROM SAIGON

INTRODUCTION OF A U.S. DIVISION (APPROPRIATELY MODIFIED)  
INTO SVN.

CFN BLT U.S. SVN U.S. GVN GVN 1963 NOT U.S. NO PROS CONS  
U.S. SVN

PAGE THREE RUMJIR 894A/1 ~~TOP SECRET~~

THE PURPOSE OF INTRODUCING OF A DIVISION WOULD BE PRIMARILY TO RELIEVE THE PRESENT SHORTAGE OF ARVN UNITS EITHER BY REPLACING ARVN IN THE DEFENSE OF KEY INSTALLATIONS OR BY ENGAGING IN ACTIVE OPERATIONS AGAINST THE VC IN CONJUNCTION WITH ARVN. SUCH A REINFORCEMENT WOULD ALLOW A STRENGTHENING OF MILITARY EFFORTS IN THE I AND II CORPS AREAS WHERE THE SITUATION IS DETERIORATING AND WOULD GIVE A BOOST TO GVN MORALE, MILITARY AND CIVILIAN. LIKEWISE, IT SHOULD END ANY TALK OF A POSSIBLE U.S. WITHDRAWAL AND CONVINCE HANOI OF THE DEPTH OF OUR RESOLVE TO SEE THIS THING THROUGH TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION.

THIS STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE OF INTRODUCING A U.S. DIVISION IS, IN EFFECT, A TABULATION OF THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF SO DOING. HOWEVER, THERE ARE COUNTER ARGUMENTS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CASE. THE INTRODUCTION OF A U.S. DIVISION OBVIOUSLY INCREASES U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY; EXPOSES GREATER FORCES AND INVITES GREATER LOSSES. IT WILL RAISE SENSITIVE COMMAND QUESTIONS WITH OUR GVN ALLIES AND MAY ENCOURAGE THEM TO AN ATTITUDE OF "LET THE UNITED STATES DO IT". IT WILL INCREASE OUR VULNERABILITY TO COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA AND THIRD COUNTRY CRITICISM AS WE APPEAR TO ASSUME THE OLD FRENCH ROLE OF ALIEN COLONIZER AND CONQUEROR. FINALLY, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DOUBT THAT THE NUMBER OF GVN FORCES WHICH OUR ACTION WOULD RELIEVE WOULD HAVE ANY GREAT SIGNIFICANCE IN REDUCING THE MANPOWER GAP.  
CFN ARVN ARVN VC ARVN I AND II CORPS GVN U.S. U.S. U.S.  
U.S. GVN GVN

PAGE FOUR RUMJIR 894A/1 ~~TOP SECRET~~

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH A CONCLUSION WITH REGARD TO THE OVERALL MERIT OF THIS ACTION WITHOUT FIRST EXAMINING IN SOME DETAIL THE POSSIBLE MISSIONS WHICH COULD BE ASSIGNED A U.S. DIVISION. THERE ARE TWO OBVIOUS POSSIBILITIES; THE FIRST, THE ASSIGNMENT OF THE DIVISION TO ONE OR MORE OF THE PROVINCES OF THE HIGH PLATEAU WHERE THE CLIMATE IS GOOD, THE TERRAIN RELATIVELY OPEN, AND THE MONTAGNARD POPULATION MORE READILY DISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE ALIEN VIET CONG. HERE, OUR FORCES COULD UTILIZE THEIR MOBILITY AND FIREPOWER EFFECTIVELY AND MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION IN CUTTING OFF THE GROWING INFILTRATION INTO AND THROUGH THIS AREA. FOR THE MOST PART, THE MONTAGNARDS ARE FRIENDLY

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-3- 3003, MARCH 18, 10 A.M. FROM SAIGON

TO THE U.S. AND OUR FORCES WOULD THUS BE OPERATING IN A RELATIVELY FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT.

ON THE OTHER HAND, SUCH A MISSION IN THE HIGHLANDS WOULD PLACE OUR FORCES IN AN AREA WITH HIGHLY EXPOSED LINES OF COMMUNICATION LEADING TO THE COAST. THEIR LOCATION IN THIS AREA WOULD CREATE SERIOUS LOGISTIC PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY OF THE MOVEMENT OF LAND TRANSPORT THROUGH AREAS INFESTED BY THE VIET CONG. THERE WOULD BE PROBLEMS BOTH OF REINFORCEMENT AND OF WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE OF THIS PRECARIOUSNESS OF LAND COMMUNICATIONS. FINALLY, THE GVN MAY QUESTION THE INTRODUCTION OF SIZEABLE U.S. FORCES INTO THE MONTAGNARD AREA WHERE WE HAVE OFTEN BEEN ACCUSED OF FAVORING THE MONTAGNARDS OVER THE VIETNAMESE AND OF ENCOURAGING MONTAGNARD SEPARATISM.  
CFN U.S. U.S. GVN U.S.

PAGE FIVE RUMJIR 894A/1 ~~TOP SECRET~~

THE OTHER ROLE WHICH HAS BEEN SUGGESTED FOR U.S. GROUND FORCES IS THE OCCUPATION AND DEFENSE OF KEY ENCLAVES ALONG THE COAST SUCH AS QUANG NGAI, QUI NHON, TUY HOA AND NHA TRANG. SUCH A DISPOSITION WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF PLACING OUR FORCES IN AREAS OF EASY ACCESS AND EGRESS WITH MINIMUM LOGISTIC PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE. THE PRESENCE OF OUR TROOPS WOULD ASSURE THE DEFENSE OF THESE IMPORTANT KEY AREAS AND WOULD RELIEVE SOME GVN FORCES FOR EMPLOYMENT ELSEWHERE. THE TROOPS WOULD NOT BE CALLED UPON TO ENGAGE IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS EXCEPT IN THEIR OWN LOCAL DEFENSE AND HENCE WOULD BE EXPOSED TO MINIMUM LOSSES.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY WOULD BE ENGAGED IN A RATHER INGLORIOUS STATIC DEFENSIVE MISSION UNAPPEALING TO THEM AND INIMPRESSIVE IN THE EYES OF THE VIETNAMESE. OPERATING IN MAJOR POPULATION AREAS WOULD MAXIMIZE THE POINTS OF CONTACT WITH VIETNAMESE AND HENCE MAXIMIZE THE POSSIBLE POINTS OF FRICTION. THE DIVISION WOULD BE BADLY FRAGMENTED TO THE EXTENT THAT ITS COMMAND, CONTROL AND SUPERVISION WOULD BE AWKWARD.

TAYLOR

BT

CFN U.S. QUANG NGAI QUI NHON TUY HOA NHA TRANG GVN NOT

ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O, 3/17/65, 10:00 P.M.

NOTE: PASSED WHITE HOUSE, CIA, 3/17/65, 10:40 P.M.

~~TOP SECRET~~

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

~~TOP SECRET~~

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1965 MAR 17 PM 10 06

W MJA740JIAS07UDL  
PP RUEHCR RUEKDA  
DE RUMJIR 894A/2 18/0230Z  
P 180145Z ZEA  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO RUHKA/CINCPAC  
RUEKDA/DOD WASHDC  
STATE GRNC  
BT

~~TOP SECRET~~

SETWO OF TWO ACTION PRIORITY DEPT 3003 INFO PRIORITY CINCPAC  
1809 CITE 180230Z DOD 493 FROM SAIGON MARCH 18, 10AM

EXDIS

MACV'S 8250.

THE FOREGOING ANALYSIS LEADS ME TO THE FOLLOWING TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS. FIRST, IT IS NOT DESIRABLE TO INTRODUCE A U.S. DIVISION INTO SOUTH VIET NAM UNLESS THERE ARE CLEAR AND TANGIBLE ADVANTAGES OUTWEIGHING THE NUMEROUS DISADVANTAGES, MANY OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTED ABOVE. ONE MUST MAKE A DEFINITE CFN U.S.

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 894A/2 ~~TOP SECRET~~  
DETERMINATION OF THE NUMBERS AND TYPES OF GVN FORCES RELIEVED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF THE U.S. UNIT AND THUS THE EFFECT OF THE INCREASED U.S. PRESENCE IN CLOSING THE MANPOWER GAP OF 1965. OBVIOUSLY, OUR DIVISION WOULD MAKE SOME CONTRIBUTION BUT IT REMAINS TO BE PROVED THAT IT WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO REVERSE THE DOWNWARD TREND AND GIVE SUCH A LIFT TO THE GVN FORCES THAT THEY WOULD PERFORM BETTER BY THE STIMULATION OF THE U.S. PRESENCE RATHER THAN WORSE IN A MOOD OF RELAXATION AT PASSING THE VIET CONG BURDEN TO THE U.S.

IF THE EVIDENCE OF THE PROBABLE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS U.S. CONTRIBUTION IS CONVINCING, THEN THE MATTER OF MISSION BECOMES THE PRIMARY QUESTION. THE INLAND MISSION IN THE HIGHLANDS IS CLEARLY THE MORE AMBITIOUS AND, IF WELL DONE, WILL MAKE A GREATER CONTRIBUTION DURING THE PRESENT CRITICAL PERIOD. ON THE OTHER

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~~TOP SECRET~~

-2- 3003, March 18, 10 a.m., (SECTION 2 OF 2), from Saigon

HAND, IT IS THE MORE EXPOSED AND EVEN PERMITS ONE TO ENTERTAIN THE POSSIBILITY OF A KIND OF DIEN BIEN PHU IF THE COASTAL PROVINCES SHOULD COLLAPSE AND OUR FORCES WERE CUT OFF FROM THE COAST EXCEPT BY AIR.

CFN GVN U.S. U.S. 1965 GVN U.S. U.S. U.S. DIEN BIEN PHU

PAGE THREE RUMJIR 894A/2 ~~TOP SECRET~~  
THE COASTAL ENCLAVE MISSION IS SAFER, SIMPLER BUT LESS IMPRESSIVE AND LESS PRODUCTIVE THAN THE INLAND MISSION. THE CONTRAST OF THE PROS AND CONS OF THE TWO SUGGESTS THE DESIRABILITY OF REEXAMINING THE QUESTION TO SEE WHETHER THE ADVANTAGES OF THE INLAND DISPOSITION COULD NOT BE COMBINED IN SOME WAY WITH THE RETENTION OF A BASE COASTAL AREA, LINKED WITH A POSITION INLAND. IN ANY CASE, CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONAL STUDY IS REQUIRED BEFORE WE ARE PREPARED TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION EITHER FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A DIVISION OR FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF ITS MISSION. IN THE MEANTIME, WE SHOULD BE GIVING MUCH THOUGHT BOTH IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND IN WASHINGTON AS TO THE RIGHT COURSE OF ACTION IF AND WHEN THIS ISSUE BECOMES PRESSING--AS IT SHORTLY WILL.

TAYLOR

BT

CFN PROS AND CONS NOT

ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-0 3/17/65, 10:15 p.m.

NOTE: PASSED WHITE HOUSE, CIA, 3/17/65, 10:50 p.m.

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

49c

~~TOP SECRET - SENSITIVE~~

March 16, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR DISCUSSION, TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 1:00 PM

Policy in Vietnam

a. Military actions

1. ROLLING THUNDER. DOD will present a proposed four-week program designed to increase the effectiveness and visibility of air strikes. Essential changes in this program are its increased flexibility to avoid weather delays and its delegation of operational control on a week-by-week basis to the field (CINCPAC and MACV).

2. BARREL ROLL. State and DOD are coordinating closely on a program which again is intended to be more effective and more visible (at least to Hanoi). This program will imply daily route reconnaissance and 3 or 4 operations for attacking or reseeding choke points each week.

3. 21-step Johnson program is being reviewed and general approval is expected.

4. Major ground force deployment. Defense and State are both reviewing this question and recommendation should be available for discussion next week. Preliminary analysis suggests that such deployment may soon be necessary for both military and political reasons.

b. Political and civil action in South Vietnam

At the President's direction, State, AID, and USIA, with the White House Staff, are framing a program designed to match and even outmatch the military efforts outlined above. This program will be designed to present additional actions in such categories as the following (the list is illustrative and not exhaustive): close control of the population; new programs to encourage Viet Cong defection; land reform operations; new information and propaganda programs; new incentives to university students; new programs of guerrilla action in Viet Cong-controlled areas; intensified housing and agricultural programs; progressive U. S. political announcements; increased contact at all levels with political and religious groups; greatly increased decentralization of all U. S. efforts in the light of weakness and instability of central government.

DECLASSIFIED

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE~~

Authority OSD 11-30-76; NSC 4-28-77

By ljg, NARS, Date 1-25-80

3/16/65

c. U. S. leadership in Saigon. General Taylor's return at the end of the month has been announced, and the question of the timing of his replacement and the name of that replacement is increasingly urgent. There should be preliminary discussion today, and a full slate of candidates should be available for discussion next week.

d. The political and diplomatic position. We have largely accomplished the immediate purpose of getting our new level of military action into operation without yielding to clamor for "negotiations." We now need to examine both our public and our private view of the conditions for a settlement.

1. Public position. There is a strong argument for a more detailed exposition of our conditions for peace, and our view of the future in Southeast Asia. It may be wise to have a draft prepared for consideration over the weekend and review on Tuesday, with no commitment as to the level at which such a statement might be put out..

2. Our private assessment of the bargaining problem. The existing situation in South Vietnam is bad, and the basic condition of any political negotiation is that it should allow us to continue to take actions which will in fact improve the anti-Communist position in South Vietnam. ~~This means~~ that this can only be done by successful pacification, and therefore our object must be to trade off our own trumps in return for enemy actions which will give us advantage in the South. This will not be easy.

In essence, there appear to be three things that Hanoi can do: it can stop its infiltration; it can withdraw forces and supplies under its control from the South; it can order its people not to use force against the government in the South. None of these is likely at present, and it is questionable whether any of them will be ordered under the pressure of our air operations alone.

Nevertheless, we can and should consider at what point we would reduce our air operations against the North in return for actions of this sort by Hanoi.

Preliminary analysis suggests that we might well wish to indicate privately that the weight and locus of air attacks will be raised and lowered in direct relation to the amount of Viet Cong force and/or infiltration we observe.

3/16/65

Of course it is not essential from our standpoint that we stop hitting the North before serious bargaining begins. But it may be necessary that we have a public price for doing so, if only to make it clear that our position remains careful, reasonable, and measured.

e. The shape of an eventual settlement. Only the broadest outline of this question can be stated now, but there appear to be three general possibilities.

The first would be effective pacification of a wholly non-Communist South Vietnam. This is desirable but hardly possible today. If this is our real target, it is doubtful that we want an early settlement.

The second is a somewhat Laotian solution, in which a government of national unity would have some members from the liberation front and in which de facto VC control in large parts of the countryside would be accepted. This is what the French and the Lippmanns have in mind, and our current estimate is that this solution would be acceptable only if some significant U. S. presence remained, to sustain de facto non-Communist control in substantial areas of the country, including especially Saigon and its surroundings.

The third is an explicit partition of SVN, leaving the clearly non-Communist government in control of as large a territory as possible. This solution might permit a reasonably quick reduction of U. S. forces if real pacification were achieved in the non-Communist territories and if the ground given to the VC were sufficiently limited. But it is also probable that continuing VC ambition would quickly lead to a situation in which we would have to return.

It does not appear necessary today to decide among these three alternatives. What does appear quite likely is that our eventual bargaining position with respect to all three possibilities will be improved and not weakened if the United States presence on the ground increases in coming weeks. This U. S. ground presence is likely to reinforce both pacification efforts and Southern morale, while discouraging the VC from their current expectation of early victory.

*McG. B.*  
McG. B.

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

XI  
K

JCSM 197-65

17 MAR 1965

50a

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Report of Survey of Military Situation in  
the RVN (U)

1. The attached message to CINCPAC, approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has been developed in accordance with the decisions taken and guidance issued during your meeting with them on 15 March 1965. It is forwarded for your approval and appropriate coordination.
2. Without attachment, this memorandum is UNCLASSIFIED.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SIGNED

EARLE G. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment

Copy 8 of 9 Copies each  
of 7 pages series "A"  
Reproduction of this document in whole  
or in part is prohibited except with  
permission of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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DRAFT

APPENDIX

PRIORITY  
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Distribution

FROM: JCS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| SEC DEF | 2 |
| CJCS    | 1 |
| DJS     | 1 |
| J-3     | 2 |
| J-1     | 1 |
| J-4     | 1 |
| J-5     | 1 |
| J-6     | 1 |
| DIA     | 2 |
| CSA     | 2 |
| CNO     | 2 |
| CSAF    | 2 |
| CMC     | 2 |
| NMCC    | 1 |
| SACSA   | 2 |

TO: CINCPAC

INFO: COMUSMACV

WHITE HOUSE

STATE DEPARTMENT

TOP SECRET LIMDIS JCS

JCS Send

Subj: Report of Survey of the Military

Situation in RVN (U)

DECLASSIFIED

AID 4/12/78  
state 1/6/77

Authority JCS 11/23/76, USIA 12/14/76

By MFE NARS, Date 7/10/79

1. The recommendations of the C/S, Army as a result of his trip to Vietnam 5 - 12 Mar were reviewed at the highest levels on 15 Mar 1965. A resume of the specific recommendations of the report and the action taken on each follows:

a. "1. Provide increased mobility for existing forces by introducing three additional Army helicopter companies to help offset the shortage of tactical units."

Action: Approved. Preliminary planning indicates three companies will close RVN in approximately 30 days.

b. "2. Deploy additional O-1 type aircraft to provide a saturation surveillance capability as a means of improving the intelligence effort in order to exploit mobility and employ forces economically."

Action: Three companies (USA) and three squadrons (USAF) totalling 186 aircraft are approved in addition to 68 now programmed and en route under MAP (28 from 8th Army and 40 from CONUS). If additional

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JCSM-197-65

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aircraft are required, inform the JCS. Preliminary 1  
planning indicates the following schedule of departure from 2  
CONUS after necessary rework and modification of aircraft: 3  
    35 aircraft in 60 days 4  
    35 aircraft in 80 days 5  
    36 aircraft in 95 days 6  
    Remainder in 120 days. 7  
    c. "3. Establish a Joint (US-RVNAF) Target Research 8  
and Analysis Center to utilize the increased information 9  
effectively." 10  
    Action: Approved in principle for implementation 11  
at once. It is requested that manpower requirements be 12  
identified by skill, grade and service together with any 13  
other applicable requirements and be forwarded. 14  
    d. "4. Evaluate effects of COMUSMACVs unrestricted 15  
employment of US fighter-bombers within South Vietnam as 16  
a means of increasing responsive heavy firepower. Any 17  
decision to employ more US fighter-bombers in South 18  
Vietnam should be deferred until MACVs experience in 19  
applying the new authority and in operating the new 20  
Joint Target Research and Analysis Center can be assessed." 21

Action: Keep the JCS advised concerning the employ- 22  
ment of US land and carrier-based aircraft. Inform the 23  
JCS if additional assets are required. 24

e. "5. Increase the scope and tempo of US air strikes 25  
against the DRV. This action could tend to broaden and 26  
escalate the war. However, it could accomplish the US 27  
objective of causing the DRV to cease its support and 28  
direction of the Viet Cong aggression. To date, the 29  
tempo of punitive air strikes has been inadequate to 30  
convey a clear sense of US purpose to the DRV." 31

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TOP SECRET - SENSITIVE

- "6. Remove self-imposed restrictions on the  
conduct of air strikes against North Vietnam which  
have severely reduced their effectiveness and made  
it impossible to approach the goal of 4 missions  
per week. Restrictions which should be lifted are:
- "a. Requirement that a US strike be conducted  
concurrently with a VNAF strike.
  - "b. Requirement that US aircraft strike the  
primary target only.
  - "c. Ban on use of classified munitions.
  - "d. Narrow geographical limitations imposed  
on target selection.
  - "e. Requirement to obtain specific approval  
from Washington before striking alternate targets  
when required by adverse weather conditions or  
other local conditions."
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Action (paras 5 & 6): The scope and tempo of air 17  
strikes against NVN is being increased in current plans. 18  
Depots, LOCs, and air defense ground environment facilities 19  
will be stressed in operations in the near future. The 20  
requirement for concurrent US-VNAF strikes has been 21  
removed. Only prime targets will be designated as primary 22  
or alternates for US aircraft, thus lifting restriction 23  
in 6 b above. Greater timing flexibility will be 24  
provided for weather and other delays. Tactical recon- 25  
naissance has been authorized at medium level for 26  
targets south of the 20th parallel to support the 27

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expanded program. Specific recommendations on 1  
paragraph 6 c, quoted above, are requested. 2  
Restrictions in 6 d and e, quoted above, have 3  
been lifted in ROLLING THUNDER SEVEN and will 4  
so remain in subsequent programs. 5  
f. "7. Increase the tempo and scope of SOG 6  
activities against the DRV." 7  
Action: Approved. Request your proposal to 8  
increase the tempo and scope of OPLAN 34A operations. 9  
Use of C-130 aircraft vice C-123s may be included in 10  
the proposal. Schedule of C-130 availability will 11  
depend on configuration required. 12  
g. "8. Increase air and naval reconnaissance and 13  
harassing operations against the DRV - e.g., Naval 14  
patrols and naval gunfire against Viet Cong coastal 15  
staging areas in South Vietnam." 16

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <u>Action:</u> Approved. For your information, DESOTO  | 17 |
| Patrols were considered and rejected under currently   | 18 |
| existing circumstances.                                | 19 |
| h. "9. Re-orient BARREL ROLL to increase its           | 20 |
| military effectiveness against infiltration routes     | 21 |
| into South Vietnam. This will require a program of     | 22 |
| strikes separate from those conducted against          | 23 |
| PL-PAVN forces in Laos."                               | 24 |
| <u>Action:</u> JCS will welcome recommendations to     | 25 |
| increase military effectiveness of BARREL ROLL,        | 26 |
| including measures to increase its responsiveness      | 27 |
| to the tactical situation. JCS support continuous      | 28 |
| and comprehensive interdiction program of air          | 29 |
| strikes against both the PL/Viet Minh and Viet         | 30 |
| Cong LOCs and associated installations, plus attack    | 31 |
| of military targets beyond the capability of the RLAF. | 32 |

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i. "10. Commit elements of the Seventh Fleet to  
air and surface patrol of coastal areas and to augment  
in-country air reconnaissance and strike resources.  
Existing plans of the Seventh Fleet provide a useful  
starting point but may need expansion after operating  
experience is available."

Action: Approved.

j. "11. Develop a program of cash awards for  
capture of DRV junks as an incentive to thwarting  
infiltration by sea."

Action: Approved. Request CINCPAC initiate this  
in the over-all program which includes capture of  
Viet Cong military and political leaders and indicate  
funding requirements. Advise JCS if any assistance  
required.

k. "12. Establish special, streamlined procedures  
to provide MACV with quick release of authority and  
funds for construction projects in Vietnam to permit  
meeting tight deadlines and to reduce the scope of  
activities which would otherwise require extensive  
military construction effort."

"13. Establish a MACV-controlled stockpile of 21  
construction materials and equipment within 3-4 sailing 22  
days of Vietnam to assure timely availability of 23  
essential supplies and equipment. Replenishment of 24  
withdrawals from the stockpile would be accomplished 25  
through normal requisitioning procedure." 26

Action (paras 12 & 13): These two recommendations are 27  
endorsed by the JCS and are being acted upon here on an 28  
urgent basis. You will be kept advised. 29

1. "14. Seek the agreement of Australia and New 30  
Zealand to take full responsibility for the training 31  
center phase of Regional Forces' training as a means 32

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Appendix

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of broadening the international character of the 1  
anti-communist effort in Southeast Asia." 2

Action: Department of State is undertaking action. 3

m. "15. Set up an integrated US-GVN psychological 4  
operations organization at the national level with a 5  
permanent staff and the capability to plan, direct and 6  
support an effective psychological warfare effort on a 7  
vertical basis down to the province level. Specific 8  
proposals to accomplish this reorganization are being 9  
developed by the Director, U.S. Information Agency 10  
and supported by the Department of Defense." 11

Action: Director, U.S. Information Agency is pursuing 12  
this recommendation. The Department of Defense will 13  
support fully. 14

n. "16. Accelerate the positioning of remaining 15  
sub-sector advisory teams, as determined by COMUSMACV, 16  
to intensify the improvement of Popular and Regional 17  
Forces." 18

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| <u>Action</u> : Approved. Request CINCPAC recommendation | 19 |
| on desired timetable and requirements.                   | 20 |
| o. "17. Provide a cash contingency fund to each          | 21 |
| sub-sector advisory group to be distributed through      | 22 |
| the District Chief to Vietnamese civilians and Popular   | 23 |
| Force soldiers as a reward for exceptional performance   | 24 |
| and for small scale civic action projects. A monthly     | 25 |
| sum of 50 - 100 dollars is suggested for trial over a    | 26 |
| minimum period of three months."                         | 27 |
| "18. Establish a procedure whereby sub-sector            | 28 |
| advisory groups can draw on USOM stocks of foodstuffs    | 29 |
| and building materials at the province level for         | 30 |
| immediate action projects within the district. A         | 31 |
| moderate ceiling should be placed on this authority      | 32 |

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to avoid the possibility of individual abuse of authority." 1  
2

Action (pars 17 & 18): JCS endorse both proposals. 3  
They are being pushed by State. COMUSMACV views should 4  
be provided locally. 5

p. "19. Initiate dredging projects at Da Nang, Qui 6  
Nhon and Nha Trang to permit berthing of ocean-going 7  
ships and acceleration of the supply and re-supply 8  
effort. This will re-orient the supply flow from the 9  
long north-south axis to the shorter east-west axis 10  
and increase the reliability of the supply system. 11  
It will also reduce vulnerability resulting from 12  
reliance on the single port of Saigon. USOM in Saigon 13  
has stated that such a project will be proposed to 14  
AID in Washington." 15

Action: Approved. 16

q. "20. Provide 4 LSTs and 6 LCUs for logistic 17  
support missions along the east-west axis of supply." 18

Action: Approved. If additional capability is 19  
required, inform the JCS. 20

r. "21. Accelerate the program for additional jet- 21  
capable airfields and additional runways now programmed 22  
by COMUSMACV." 23

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <u>Action:</u> Jet airfield projects at Da Nang and Chu  | 24 |
| Lai are approved by SECDEF for emergency construction.   | 25 |
| SECDEF has designated the Department of the Navy to      | 26 |
| sponsor immediate authorization under Section 203,       | 27 |
| Military Construction Authorization Act FY 65, with      | 28 |
| funds estimated to be available, per your construction   | 29 |
| schedule.  | 30 |
| 2. Advise any additional requirements for construction.  | 31 |
| Construction capability in CONUS available as needed.    | 32 |
| 3. Other proposals presented by CSA will be a matter for | 33 |
| urgent consideration by the JCS, considering your views. | 34 |

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Appendix

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FM COMUSMACV  
TO RUHKA/CINCPAC  
INFO RUEPCR/WHITE HOUSE  
RUEHC/STATE  
RUEPIA/CIA  
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DECLASSIFIED

Authority OSD 11-1-78 letter

By ip, NARS, Date 3-26-79

~~TOP SECRET~~ MAC JOO 5153

SUBJECT: VISIT WITH GEN KHANH  
WESTMORELAND SENDS

A. MACJ-5 4997, DTG 171530Z FEB.

1. YESTERDAY PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM BINH DINH, KHANH CALLED ME ABOUT A REPRISAL STRIKE AGAINST THREE TARGETS (REF A) SELECTED BY HIS PLANNERS AND OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO HIM. I HAVE JUST CALLED ON KHANH AT HIS QUARTERS.

2. KHANH MADE TWO POINTS OF INTEREST. FIRST, HE FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE ADDITIONAL JOINT STRIKES IN DRV SOON SINCE

PAGE 2 RUMSMA 2521B ~~TOP SECRET~~

HE FEARED ANOTHER INCIDENT AGAINST AMERICANS WOULD PROVOKE ANOTHER REPRISAL AND GIVE THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE THE IMPRESSION THAT STRIKES WERE STAGED ONLY FOR VC ACTS AGAINST AMERICANS. HE FELT STRONGLY THAT ACTIONS AGAINST VIETNAMESE SHOULD ALSO JUSTIFY REPRISAL STRIKES. SECONDLY, HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM BINH DINH AND WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN THAT 140,000 PEOPLE HAD RECENTLY BEEN LOST TO THE VC, AND IN THE TWO NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF THE PROVINCE NUMEROUS BRIDGES HAD BEEN DESTROYED AND SECTIONS OF ROADS DAMAGED. HE FELT THAT THIS LARGE-SCALE VC INITIATIVE JUSTIFIED REPRISAL ACTION AND RECOMMENDED THAT IN RETALIATION WE PLAN ON DESTROYING AS MANY BRIDGES IN DRV AS POSSIBLE. KHANH EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT BARRACKS WERE NO LONGER A PROFITABLE TARGET IN THE DAYTIME SINCE THE TROOPS HAD PROBABLY MOVED OUT.

3. I EXPLAINED TO KHANH THAT WE MUST PLAN OUR STRIKES SO AS TO MAXIMIZE THE PROSPECT OF SUCCESS. IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE AMPLE PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE BRIEFING OF PILOTS AND TO AVOID THE BOMBING OF CIVILIANS. THE TARGETS SUGGESTED BY HIM HAD BEEN INCLUDED IN THE TARGET LIST FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE FUTURE BUT WE DID NOT NOW HAVE ADEQUATE PHOTOGRAPHY. THE DESTRUCTION OF BRIDGES AND ROADS WAS DIFFICULT FROM THE AIR

PAGE 3 RUMSMA 2521B ~~TOP SECRET~~

AND WE COULD NOT EXPECT TO BE SUCCESSFUL WITHOUT CAREFULLY PREPARED PLANS.

4. KHANH SHOWED BE A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE SUNKEN BOAT OFF THE COAST OF PHU YEN PROVINCE NEAR CAPE VARELLA. HE STATED THAT THE PRESENCE OF THIS VC BOAT OFF THE GVN COAST WAS JUSTIFICATION FOR REPRISAL ACTION AGAINST THE DRV NAVY. HE EXPLAINED AN OPERATION DESIGNED TO SECURE THE BOAT AND THE SHORE NEAR BY SO THAT A SALVAGING OPERATION, POSSIBLY WITH THE HELP OF THE US NAVY, COULD RAISE THE BOAT AND HOPEFULLY TOW IT TO SAIGON FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY. IN THE MEANWHILE HE WAS ASKING HIS GOVERNMENT TO COMPLAIN TO THE ICC ABOUT THE INTRUSION OF THIS VC VESSEL.

GP-3

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DTG: 192317Z

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1965 MAR 20 00 02

FROM ISR THE WHITE HOUSE  
TO WATSON FOR THE PRESUS  
INFO REEDY AUSTIN  
CITE WH50055

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

MESSAGE FOR WATSON TO BE RETYPED FOR THE PRESIDENT  
COPY TO REEDY IN AUSTIN

DRAFT STATEMENT ON VIETNAM FOR PRESS CONFERENCE FROM BUNDY  
IN RESUMPTION OF HIS PERIODIC VISITS TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS  
ON THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM, AMBASSADOR TAYLOR WILL RETURN TO  
WASHINGTON ON MARCH 23 AND WILL REMAIN APPROXIMATELY A WEEK.  
THIS VISIT WILL BE LIKE OTHER VISITS FROM AMBASSADOR TAYLOR, AND  
OTHER VISITS WHICH WASHINGTON OFFICIALS HAVE MADE TO SAIGON,  
IT WILL BE FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING OUR CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION  
ON OUR WORK IN VIETNAM. IN EVERY MEETING WE SEEK TO MAKE SURE THAT  
OUR EFFORT THERE IS AS EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE AS POSSIBLE, AND  
THIS MEETING WILL BE NO EXCEPTION. THERE ARE NO IMMEDIATE ISSUES  
WHICH MAKE THE MEETING URGENT. IT IS, AS I SAY, A REGULAR PERIODIC  
CONSULTATION.

FOR OUR POLICY IN VIETNAM REMAINS JUST AS IT HAS BEEN FOR TEN YEARS.  
"FOR TEN YEARS, UNDER THREE PRESIDENTS, THIS NATION HAS BEEN  
DETERMINED TO HELP A BRAVE PEOPLE TO RESIST AGGRESSION AND  
TERROR. IT IS AND WILL REMAIN THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES TO  
FURNISH ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO SOUTH VIETNAM FOR AS LONG AS  
IT IS REQUIRED TO BRING COMMUNIST AGGRESSION AND TERRORISM UNDER  
CONTROL." (MARCH 17, 1964).

"WE HAVE ONE SINGLE CENTRAL PURPOSE IN ALL THAT WE DO IN SOUTHEAST  
ASIA, AND THAT IS TO HELP BUILD A STABLE PEACE. IT IS OTHERS  
AND NOT WE WHO HAVE BROUGHT TERROR TO SMALL COUNTRIES AND PEACEFUL  
PEASANTS. IT IS OTHERS, NOT WE, WHO HAVE PREACHED AND PRACTICED  
THE USE OF FORCE TO ESTABLISH DICTATORIAL CONTROL OVER THEIR  
NEIGHBORS. IT IS OTHERS, NOT WE, WHO HAVE REFUSED TO HONOR  
INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS THAT AIM AT REASONABLE SETTLEMENT OF  
DEEP-SEATED DIFFERENCES. THE UNITED STATES CANNOT FAIL TO DO ITS  
FULL SHARE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE WHICH IS POSED BY THOSE WHO  
DISTURB THE PEACE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT THE PURPOSE OF AMERICANS  
WILL NOT CHANGE. WE STAND FOR PEACE." (JUNE 2, 1964).

" IF THOSE WHO PRACTICE TERROR AND AMBUSH AND MURDER WILL SIMPLY HONOR THEIR EXISTING AGREEMENTS, THERE CAN EASILY BE PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IMMEDIATELY BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE IN A CONFERENCE CALLED TO RATIFY TERROR. SO OUR POLICY IS UNCHANGED. (JULY 24, 1964). ALL T

ALL THAT I HAVE JUST BEEN SAYING TO YOU IS WHAT I HAVE SAID BEFORE, AND I HAVE SAID IT BEFORE IN THESE VERY SAME WORDS. UNDER THIS POLICY, CHANGES IN THE SITUATION MAY REQUIRE CHANGES IN TACTICS. AS I SAID LAST MONTH, THE CONTINUING ACTIONS WE TAKE WILL BE THOSE THAT ARE JUSTIFIED AND MADE NECESSARY BY THE CONTINUING AGGRESSION OF OTHERS. THESE AGGRESSORS SERVE NO PEACEFUL INTEREST, NOT EVEN THEIR OWN. NO ONE THREATENS THEIR REGIME. THERE IS NO INTENT OR DESIRE TO CONQUER THEM OR OCCUPY THEIR LAND. WHAT IS WANTED IS SIMPLY THAT THEY ALLOW THEIR NEIGHBORS TO LIVE IN PEACE AND INDEPENDENCE.

THE REAL GOAL OF ALL OF US IN SOUTHEAST ASIA MUST BE THE PEACEFUL PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLES OF THE AREA. THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE SIDE BY SIDE IN PEACE AND INDEPENDENCE.

THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO THE COOPERATIVE HELP OF RICHER NATIONS IN DEVELOPING THEIR OWN RESOURCES, FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT. THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO AN END OF TERROR. THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO BUILD A NEW SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG THEMSELVES. THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO JOIN, WITH HELP FROM OTHERS, IN THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREAT RESOURCES OF THE MIGHTY MEKONG RIVER. THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO LIVE TOGETHER WITHOUT FEAR OF OPPRESSION OR DOMINATION FROM ANY QUARTER OF THE GLOBE. THIS IS THE PEACE FOR WHICH WE WORK. THIS IS THE PEACE WHICH AGGRESSION FROM THE NORTH TODAY PREVENTS. THIS IS THE PEACE WHICH WILL REMAIN OUR STEADFAST GOAL.

DTG: 19/2317Z MAR 65

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OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

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Origin

ACTION: AmEmbassy SAIGION 2052 IMMEDIATE

Info

NODIS EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR TAYLOR FROM SECRETARY

MAR 22 8:40 PM '65

Press here reports alleged interview by you including statement that "there is no limit to our escalation." Context puts this more into focus, but statement has been picked up in isolation and is being used; for example, in cable by large group from Labor Party to Foreign Secy Stewart here referring to "threat by USAmbassador of unlimited extension of war."

We have been most anxious here avoid speculation how far or at what pace we may go with operations, and have been sticking to guidelines of President's Feb. 17 statement that our measures would be "measured and fitting and adequate" and would be those "made necessary by continuing aggression."

We will be taking this line if questions arise tomorrow. Would appreciate further information on your interview and whether quotation carried here was correct.

DECLASSIFIED

STATE letter NOV 7 1978

Authority

By ing

NARS, Date 6-28-79

Drafted by

FE: WPBundy/omm 3/22

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ S/S-Blaine fueler

Approved by Secretary as per  
McGeorge Bundy/White House

WJCH

~~SECRET~~

Classification

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Mec -

I asked Allen (the CIA analyst attached to De Silva's operation) to write up his views. Altho the attached paper says pretty much what he told you last week, you might find it useful. Obviously, Allen does not want to be identified with the paper since he was speaking personally.

C

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Authority RAC 32817  
By RS/ry, NARA, Date 4-4-14

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54b

Page 4

22 March 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Chester Cooper

SUBJECT : Courses of Action in South Vietnam

1. The situation in South Vietnam has deteriorated to such an extent that our political-military position has become precarious. Unless the deterioration is soon checked, we may run out of time in the South before our actions against the North have their desired effect. There are three major problem areas which are of overriding importance in the precariousness of our position. These are: (a) the growing lack of confidence among the GVN leadership -- political and military -- and the populace in the ultimate success of the counterinsurgency; (b) the relative military equilibrium achieved by the Viet Cong which finds the GVN forces incapable of countering effectively the threat posed by the Viet Cong main force battalions and regiments; and (c) the lack of a political base for the GVN of sufficient strength to counter Viet Cong political and psychological superiorities.

2. These factors interrelate to the extent that action taken to resolve any one of them cannot be fully effective without appropriate action to resolve the others. The lack of confidence in ultimate defeat of the Viet Cong is a direct result of the apparent superiority of the Viet Cong in the military, political, and psychological fields. It is an outgrowth in part of the traditional apathy of the peasantry, compounded by a growing war-weariness which is evidenced not only in rural areas but also among the urban populace. The U.S. punitive actions against North Vietnam, unaccompanied by adequate psychological actions in the South, have not provided the morale boost necessary to offset this lack of confidence, nor has the limited deployment of U.S. ground forces to provide security for rear installations.

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Authority NZJ018-040-2-1  
By fy, NARA, Date 4-4-14

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3. Offensive action by Viet Cong main force regiments and battalions has brought the pacification effort to a virtual halt in most areas, and has even rolled it back in many sectors. ARVN regular units are currently too thinly spread and too deeply committed to alter this condition. Unless ARVN mobile reserve capabilities are substantially reinforced in the near future, the initiative will be left with the Viet Cong and continued deterioration -- possibly at an accelerating rate -- is likely. This reinforcement can be achieved by either of two methods: (a) abandoning wide areas of ground and regrouping forces thus freed from security missions to form additional mobile reserves; or (b) introducing additional forces from outside South Vietnam. The first alternative would require considerable time, and would have a serious adverse impact on morale. Introduction of additional outside forces could be accomplished more quickly, and if done on a sufficiently large scale would have substantial favorable impact on the military situation and on morale in South Vietnam, would adversely affect morale of the Viet Cong, and would clearly demonstrate to Hanoi and Peking the extent of the U.S. determination and will to end Communist aggression in South Vietnam. Preferably, ground forces from Asian countries -- Thailand, the Philippines, and South Korea -- would be deployed along with U.S. ground forces in order to offset Communist propaganda charges of neo-colonialism. The total forces introduced should be on the order of magnitude of about three divisions to have the necessary impact on the military situation in Vietnam, and they should be employed essentially in offensive and counteroffensive operations against major Viet Cong troop concentrations rather than in security or pacification missions.

4. To achieve the desired results -- checking the deterioration in the countryside, restoring confidence in victory, and countering Viet Cong political and psychological capabilities -- the introduction of foreign ground forces must be accompanied by substantial political and psychological action programs. These aspects of the counterinsurgency effort have long been underemphasized, and with the slowing down of the pacification effort to concentrate on countering the growing Viet Cong military capabilities, there is a serious danger that they may be increasingly ignored. There has been a traditional reluctance for the U.S. to "interfere"

- 2 -

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in the internal politics of any country; however, recent political history in South Vietnam amply demonstrates the fact that the Vietnamese themselves are incapable, without substantial pressure, advice and guidance, of developing the political unity of purpose and cohesion necessary to meet the Viet Cong threat. There has also been a tendency on our part to consider that it is necessary to provide security to the rural populace before undertaking political action to enlist the peasantry in the counterinsurgency effort. Although a secure peasantry is essential to full mobilization of the populace in support of the government, security and political action must go hand-in-hand -- the one complements the other, and in some cases political action can precede, and contribute to, the attainment of security. Viet Cong success can be attributed to the effectiveness with which they coordinate political and military action; their doctrine, in fact, discloses that the development of their military capabilities has the prime purpose of preventing the GVN military and paramilitary forces from countering Communist political subversion in the countryside -- of covering the extension of their political apparatus from hamlet to hamlet.

5. Political action must be aimed at undergirding the counterinsurgency effort by developing a political base for the GVN and its programs. An effort of the scope undertaken by the U.S. in support of the Diem government in 1954-55 is needed today in South Vietnam. Means of attempting this could range from an effort to develop a single, monolithic national front organization -- comparable to Diem's National Revolutionary Movement -- to a less dramatic effort to develop a consensus among the major political and religious groups to utilize their assets and resources toward a common objective of supporting the government's objectives and programs. In either event, substantial U.S. assistance would be needed in planning, coordinating, and supervising the political action effort -- from behind the scenes -- both at the national level and in the field, and in training and motivating action cadres for the various political factions.

- 3 -

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6. Psychological operations would of necessity be closely related to the political action effort. They would be needed in two major areas of activity: (a) motivating the government administration, military forces, and populace in support of the government; and (b) eroding the political and psychological base of the Viet Cong. Most U.S. psychological activity to date has been in the use of mass media, and designed essentially to project a favorable image of the GVN. Actions needed go far beyond these aims, and must be based essentially on face-to-face operations with the populace. They must be more closely coordinated with military, civic action, and economic aid activities, and must be focussed on identifying the people with the counterinsurgency effort, physically as well as psychologically. Psychological cadres must be motivated to the extent that they develop a real missionary zeal comparable to that of the Viet Cong; a willingness to endure hardship, and a full personal commitment to the government's programs. U.S. assistance will be needed in training and motivating cadres required for such a program; all government functionaries -- particularly those employed in the countryside -- should receive such training.

7. If these measures -- military reinforcement, political action and psychological action -- are effectively implemented and fully coordinated, there is a reasonable chance of checking the deterioration in South Vietnam, consolidating currently pacified areas and gaining time to prepare for a resumption of the pacification program in selected, priority areas. If these measures are not undertaken, there is little likelihood that these aims can be achieved. The Vietnamese themselves are unlikely to be able to implement such measures -- they will require extensive U.S. help in planning and supervising their implementation, and a closer inter-relationship at the working levels than has existed in South Vietnam for the past eight years. A greater commitment of U.S. resources will be required in all three fields -- military, political and psychological.

8. The introduction of U.S. military forces would carry with it the possibility of becoming bogged down in an "endless war on the land mass of Asia". However, if appropriate and adequate political and psychological measures are undertaken, ✓

- 4 -

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the likelihood of such an eventuality would be greatly reduced. Our position would not be comparable to that of the French, whose colonial objectives were contrary to the ambitions of the Vietnamese populace, thereby precluding the development by the French of psychologically appealing political objectives. The skillful coordination of our military, political and psychological actions in South Vietnam, supplemented by an appropriate military and psychological posture with respect to Hanoi and Peking, could permit the development of conditions for checking Communist aggression in Southeast Asia through a negotiated settlement on terms other than those of the Communists.

- 5 -

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
FE

1192

✓ Bundy

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

March 23, 1965

55a

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Secretary of Defense  
 Special Assistant to the President for National Security ✓  
 Director, CIA  
 Director, USIA  
 Under Secretary of State  
 Administrator, AID  
 Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs  
 Ambassador-at-Large Harriman  
 G - Mr. Thompson  
 DOD/ISA - Mr. McNaughton  
 Chairman, JCS - General Wheeler (via Mr. McNaughton)  
 AID - Mr. Gaud  
 AID - Mr. Poats  
 White House - Mr. Cooper  
 USIA - Mr. Bunce  
 CIA - Mr. Colby

FROM: FE - William P. Bundy *WTTB*

SUBJECT: Highlight Conclusions of the Far East Mission Chiefs' Conference

Attached, for your personal use and for information only, are the highlight conclusions of the Far East Mission Chiefs' Conference which took place at Baguio in the Philippines, March 9-11, 1965. These conclusions were discussed in draft with the Mission Chiefs, but no effort was made to go over them line by line. They thus reflect the consensus of a group of responsible individuals, and do not attempt to form a comprehensive or fully authoritative statement of policy.

Attachment: Top Secret -- Highlight Conclusions of Conference.

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GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

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Authority RAC 23326

By ms/ly, NARA, Date 4-4-14

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FAR EAST MISSION CHIEFS' CONFERENCE  
BAGUIO, MARCH 9-11, 1965

HIGHLIGHT CONCLUSIONS

General

1. The basic elements of our current Far Eastern policy are sound.
2. U.S. conduct in the Viet-Nam conflict is not only crucial in itself, but is regarded as a touchstone of the U.S. commitment in the rest of the area. Initiation of air action against North Viet-Nam has been generally regarded as demonstrating a previously questionable U.S. determination. Many countries believe, however, that the pace of U.S. actions must be further stepped up and our goals further spelled out if our policy is to be clearly understood by both our enemies and our friends.
3. While clear evidence of U.S. determination and power is perhaps the foremost current need, there is an almost equal need to make clear that the U.S. is acting in support of the interests and desires of the countries of the area themselves. Asian nationalism is growing and often intemperate, and there are as yet scattered indications of anti-Americanism and of a tendency to think of American actions in "imperialist" or, in a few countries, in racial terms. To meet these factors, the U.S. must on every occasion identify its actions with the interests of the local governments and must weigh the effectiveness of specific U.S. action, particularly in the military field, against any possible appearance that the U.S. is acting solely for its own interest and is taking over the situation beyond the desires of the local Asian government. \*
4. There is a dangerous shortfall in military assistance funds for the Far East, producing seriously adverse effects in both the security and political fields. Viet-Nam needs must be met without regard to cost, but the policy of doing this, on the military assistance side, out of existing MAP totals has produced serious and continuing inadequacy in military assistance funds particularly for Korea and Thailand, and to a

lesser

\* While this paragraph was generally endorsed, it was considered to apply with extra force to reactions in Indonesia and Cambodia, but conversely to reflect a concern not significantly felt in Thailand and Malaysia. The force of the attitudes stated clearly varies substantially within the area.

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GROUP 1

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lesser extent for the GRC. Military assistance for these countries should be funded at a level which will maintain the effectiveness of their forces, particularly now that the threat from Communist China is increasing. The additional appropriations required for this purpose are very small compared with the perhaps \$15 billion used to support our own forces in the Far East.

5. No major changes in the alliance structure for the area now appear desirable. A knitting together of the bilateral security arrangements with Japan, Korea and the GRC into a Northern Security framework is not now feasible. Although SEATO is not operative as such, except for purposes of military planning, it is still useful politically. Further consideration should be given to possible expansion of ANZUS as a consultative mechanism or (perhaps alternatively) to whether SEATO might be tightened by the withdrawal of France and/or Pakistan.

6. On the economic side, the Asian Development Bank should be supported. A U.S. initiative for a Southeast Asian development organization would serve a highly useful purpose in defining "peace aims" for the area, but there are a number of difficulties that must be faced before this is advanced beyond the point of a very general statement.

7. If the Viet-Nam situation should go badly, major additional actions would be required at high cost. Thailand would be the first focal point, but there would be a need for substantial strengthening action, both for practical and psychological effect, in many other nations. This would specifically include MAP and might include a new and hard look at revisions of the alliance structure.

#### SPECIFIC COUNTRIES AND AREAS

##### Southeast Asia

1. Third-country assistance to Viet-Nam continues to be important both in showing widespread international support for the South Viet-Nam Government in its struggle and in sharing the burden being carried by the U.S. However, the Philippine political situation is so confused it is doubtful we can get much help from them.

2. Thailand deserves a priority second only to Viet-Nam. Major increases in U.S. personnel, or military deployments, are not now indicated, but there should be no financial limit to useful counterinsurgency effort, to the support of Thai units earmarked in Thai-American plans, and to facilities related to U.S. unilateral contingency requirements.

3. As to Laos we should try to hold the situation roughly as it is.

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4. There is little we can do but hang on in Cambodia and attempt to retain the best position we can in Burma. Sihanouk's anti-American policy can be expected to return to a truer neutralism if our efforts in Viet-Nam bear fruit.

#### East Asia

1. An ROK-Japan settlement is more nearly in sight than ever and needs every U.S. support we can usefully give.

2. Japan's external role both in economics and in defense will be a crucial factor as it evolves over the next 3-5 years. We should encourage Japan to move forward to a full alliance with the United States. This major objective should be given full consideration in our statements and actions concerning the rest of the Far East, in our economic relations with Japan, and in our handling of the Ryukyuan problem.

3. The Korean situation is marked by an underlying lack of self-confidence and particularly requires the assurance, and the fact, of adequate military assistance levels. This is not the time to consider any reduction of U.S. forces except for the gravest reasons of use elsewhere in the area.

4. In the GRC, there is a significant problem of confidence in the outcome of the situation in Southeast Asia as well as in the future of its own international position. On ChiRep in the UN, any U.S. shift to a two-Chinas position would require careful handling with the GRC, but the latter might now accept such a position if it were clear that this would in fact mean its continued presence in the UN and the exclusion of Peiping. It is not likely that Chiang will forfeit his claim for eventual control of Mainland China. GRC combat forces should not be considered for Viet-Nam, but additional military technicians might be acceptable without serious Chinese Communist reaction.

#### Communist China

1. Present U.S. policies are generally sound, although we should continue to look at such possibilities as trade in medicines and broadened travel regulations, with the expectation that Communist China would reject these measures and thus expose its own basic hostility.

2. Recognition

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2. Recognition of Outer Mongolia might have advantages, including the tendency to widen the Sino-Soviet split. However, the GRC would have to be carefully handled to avoid a sharp impact on its presently shaky confidence.

Southwest Pacific

1. We should try to keep a presence in Indonesia to the extent Indonesian actions permit. We must play for the long term even though our present influence will be extremely limited. We should remain alert and retain the utmost flexibility in our capacity to respond to sudden changes in this fast-moving situation.

2. Our present policies in Malaysia and the Philippines are generally sound, leaving Malaysia largely to the British. In handling the stagnant Philippine situation, we should try to minimize friction points and perhaps pursue some limited initiatives in terms of assisting in the restructuring of the Philippine defense posture and also in Food for Peace and other programs in rural development.

3. Our relations with Australia and New Zealand are sound, but will require continuing very close consultation, as well as efforts to find mutually acceptable formulae on the meat, wool and dairy products trade. We should continue to further the increasingly responsible policy of both countries toward the area as a whole, stressing particularly our growing defense relationships.

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Action CONTROL : 20185  
RECD : MARCH 23, 1965, 8:14 AM

*Bundy*

Info FROM : SAIGON  
ACTION : SECSTATE 3066 IMMEDIATE

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DATE : MARCH 23, 9 PM

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Authority STATE letter NOV 7 1978

N O D I S

By *ing*, NARS, Date 6-28-79

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

URTEL 2052.

1. AS YOU NOTED, STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO ME BY LA STAMPA CORRESPONDENT IGOR MAN AS QUOTED IN REFTEL WAS LIFTED OUT OF CONTEXT OF EXTENDED INTERVIEW. I SAID NOTHING ABOUT "OUR ESCALATION". ENTIRE ANSWER TO QUESTION REGARDING ESCALATING THE WAR WAS "THERE ARE NO LIMITS SET TO ESCALATION. THE PRESSURE STOPS AT THE POINT WHEN THE ENEMY GIVES IN--THE ACTION OF THE ENEMY ESTABLISHES THE REQUIREMENT FOR OUR RESPONSE. I BELIEVE THAT THE FULL CONTEXT OF MY REMARKS CLEARLY ESTABLISHED WHAT I MEANT: NOT THAT WE ARE THREATENING TO GO "ALL THE WAY" OR INDEED THREATENING ANY PARTICULAR ACTION, BUT THAT WE REFUSE TO LEAD THE ENEMY TO THINKING THAT WE ARE OPERATING UNDER CERTAIN SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS.

2. THUS, INTERVIEW INCLUDES ANSWER TO QUESTION ABOUT "GOING ALL THE WAY": "I THINK IT IS AN OVER-SIMPLIFICATION TO TALK ABOUT GETTING ALL THE WAY IN OR ALL THE WAY OUT OF THE WAR . . . WE AMERICANS ARE CERTAINLY NOT GETTING OUT, AND WE DON'T INTEND TO GET INTO WORLD WAR III. THERE ARE COURSES AND CHOICES IN BETWEEN . . . I SUSPECT IT WILL BE ONE OF THE INTERMEDIATE COURSES WHICH WILL BE FOLLOWED."

3. IN SHORT THERE IS NO GROUND FOR REFERRING TO A QUOTE THREAT OF U.S. AMBASSADOR OF UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF WAR UNQUOTE.

CFN 2052 1. LA STAMPA IGOR MAN NO NOT 2. NOT III 3. NO U.S.

TAYLOR

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Action

CONTROL: 20804

Info

REC'D: MARCH 23, 1965 6:16 PM

FROM: MOSCOW

ACTION: SECSTATE 2781 IMMEDIATE

DATE: MARCH 23, 11 PM

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NODIS RPT NODIS

EMBTEL 2569

TODAY'S BREZHNEV SPEECH, IT SEEMS TO ME, IS OPENING GUN IN POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO UNDERMINE US RPT US POSITION IN VIETNAM BEFORE WORLD, TO ALARM WORLD OPINION AS TO IMMINENT ESCALATION OF HOSTILITIES UNLESS US MODERATES ITS POLICY, AND THUS TO PERSUADE WORLD THAT ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO SERIOUS DETERIORATION OF SITUATION IS CONFERENCE ON SOVIET TERMS.

FOLLOWING ARE POINTS WHICH I BELIEVE SUPPORT THIS THESIS:

1. FESTIVITIES ARRANGED OSTENSIBLY FOR COSMONAUTS HAVE BEEN EXPLOITED MAINLY AS WORLDWIDE PUBLIC SOUNDING-BOARD TO HIT US RPT US PARTICULARLY HARD ON VIETNAM ISSUE.

2. IT SEEMS EVIDENT THAT SPEECH WAS CENTRAL, BUT NOT RPT NOT ONLY, INSTRUMENT IN MAJOR ORCHESTRATION OF THIS THEME. IT NOT ACCIDENTAL THAT SOVIETS TODAY HANDED JAPANESE AMBASSADOR MEMO CALLING ON JAPAN TO BLOCK US RPT US USE OF ITS TERRITORY FOR SUPPORT OF VIETNAM ACTION, NOR RPT NOR THAT DRV RPT DRV SENT NOTE TO CO-CHAIRMEN WHICH FOLLOWS CLOSELY SOVIET DRAFT ON VIETNAM HANDED BRITISH LAST WEEK. BEYOND THIS, TODAY'S SOVIET NOTE ON BERLIN BUNDESTAG SESSION, WHICH UNLIKE LAST YEAR'S NOTE ON SUBJECT THREATENS ACTION, FITS BREZHNEV'S REMARKS ON FRG AND NATO.

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Authority NLSJ002R-46-6-8  
By [Signature], NARA, Date 4-8-14

~~S E C R E T~~

-2- 2781 March 23, 11 pm, FROM Moscow

3. WHILE SOVIET OFFICIALS HAVE DOUBTLESS NOTED PRESIDENT'S MARCH 20 PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT DISCLAIMING ANY US RPT US DESIGNS ON DRV BEYOND STOPPING AGGRESSION, BREZHNEV AND OTHER SPEAKERS TODAY IGNORED IT, NOR HAVE SOVIET MEDIA MADE ANY MENTION OF IT.

4. BREZHNEV'S REFERENCE TO VOLUNTEERS FOR VIETNAM--SOVIETS HAVING EARLIER IGNORED SIMILAR REMARK MARCH 6 BY DRV AMB-- MAY BE DESIGNED AS FIRST STEP TOWARD CREATING COVER FOR SOVIET DECISION TO DESPATCH SOVIET PERSONNEL IN GUISE OF VOLUNTEERS TO MAN SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY NOW RPT NOW IN DRV PIPELINE.

WE BELIEVE ANALYSIS REFTEL REMAINS SUBSTANTIALLY VALID. MEANWHILE, WE BELIEVE SOVS HAVE BEEN FURTHER ENCOURAGED BY CONTINUED ABSENCE OF DEMONSTRATION SUPPORT FOR US RPT US BY ALLIES, AND ARE LED TO THINK THAT MAJOR, CONCERTED POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA PRESSURE CAMPAIGN MAY INDEED FORCE US TO CONFERENCE TABLE ON TERMS OF DRAFT LETTER TO BRITISH AND DRV NOTE--NAME: CESSATION OF ACTION AGAINST DRV AND WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES FROM SVN RPT SVN. WE CAN ANTICIPATE AS NEXT STEP VOCIFEROUS CAMPAIGN TO DISTORT AND EXPLOIT TO FULL CURRENT STORIES RE USE OF NAPALM AND "POISON GAS."

BREZHNEV SPEECH HAS GIVEN NEW AND DISTURBING COMPLEXION TO SOV OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM AND REFLECT DEEPENING OF SOVIET COMMITMENT WHICH, WHATEVER THEIR AIMS MAY BE, HEIGHTENS POSSIBILITY EARLY US RPT US-SOVIET CONFRONTATION.

I THINK WE MUST TAKE NOTICE THIS FURTHER SHIFT IN SOVIET POSTURE AND WOULD SUGGEST SECRETARY SUMMON DOBRYIN FOR FRANK TALK IN LIGHT BREZHNEV SPEECH, TAKING FIRM EXCEPTION TO INSULTING TONE AND REQUESTING EXPLANATION OF THREATENING IMPLICATIONS. SECRETARY ALSO MAY WISH TO CAUTION SOVIETS THAT PERSISTENCE IN CURRENT COURSE RISKS US RPT US-SOVIET MILITARY CONFRONTATION WHICH WE BELIEVE NEITHER SIDE WISHES AND CERTAINLY COULD ONLY BENEFIT PARTY WHICH NOW RPT NOW DISPLAYING AS HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD MOSCOW AS TOWARD US.

CFN NODIS 2569 BREZHNEV US 1. 2. FRG NATO 3. 4. MARCH 6 DRV  
DRV SVN

KOHLER

~~S E C R E T~~

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Authority STATE letter NOV 7 1978 #4

By WJ, NARS, Date 6-28-79

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE:  collect  
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Classification

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MAR 23 8 47 PM '65

Origin  
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ACTION: AmEmbassy SAIGON 2067 IMMEDIATE

NODIS

EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY.

Deptel 2052 and Embtel 3066.

Appreciate that context throws somewhat different light on your sentence about limits to escalation. Nonetheless you should be aware statement has already been picked up in damaging fashion by Communist propaganda and that Wilson has been hit hard on it in UK. Our whole feeling here is that our actions should speak for themselves and that we should not be seeking to change our signal in any way through verbal statements or speculation. President's Feb 17 statement remains basic and we believe all of us should decline to <sup>go</sup> beyond it.

In connection same problem, I note your background briefing reported Embtel 3060, especially remark that industry targets "not ruled out", statement that study has been made of cutting supply routes between China and DRV and last two paras concerning negotiation and "carrots".

For example, <sup>your</sup> ~~this~~ statement that we are prepared to talk "if DRV ceases

Drafted by:

FE; WPBundy/bmm 3/23

Clearances:

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:

AK  
The Secretary

S/S - MM  
Mrs. Merriam

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Classification

Saigon

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infiltration" and we have clear evidence all this might be open to interpretation we would not go further and insist on major reduction VC activity. This is most difficult issue which we are currently considering and will discuss during your visit. "Carrots" are also a touchy subject, although we have nothing firm in our minds at this time.

I do not wish to be critical of your backgrounder but fact is that any remarks in these areas may emerge in unfavorable form in stories either from Saigon or from home offices here, perhaps with allegedly authoritative stamps as in case of Kleiman article. For this reason, I continue to think it would be better if all of us refrained from speculation on future military or diplomatic possibilities beyond the limits of the President's statement and my own press conference of Feb 25, plus whatever future utterances we may work out here with the President.

GP-3.

END

RISK