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~~TOP SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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CALL 53337
FOR NMCC/MC
SERVICE

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IMMEDIATE

Q074/12/CS013/R2/
PHP342VV KAF676
OO RUEKDA
DE RUHKA 1221 11/2226Z
O P 112210Z

READD: WHITE HOUSE/STATE

FM CINCPAC
TO RUEKDA/JCS
INFO RUMSMA/COMUSMACV
RUHPB/CINCPACFLT
RKUHKR/CINCUSARPAC
RUHLKM/CINCPACAF
RUHPG/CG FMFPAC

BT

~~TOP SECRET~~

CONCEPT OF COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN SOUTH
VIETNAM (S)

A. CINCPAC 072325Z

B. COMUSMACV JQOQQIXPUPEETZ

1. IN REF AJN CINCPAC COMMENTED UPON COMUSMACV'S PROPOSED
U.S. AND THIRD COUNTRY COMBAT FORCE DEPLOYMENTS OUTLINED IN REF B.
REF A EXPRESSED CONTINUED APPREHENSION AS TO DEPLOYMENT OF THE AIR
MOBILE DIVISION TO THE HIGHLANDS AREA AND FURTHER RECOMMENDED THAT THE
ROK MARINE RCT BE DEPLOYED TO QUANG NGAI. THE PURPOSE OF THIS
MESSAGE IS TO ELABORATE UPON CINCPAC'S RATIONALE FOR THE POSITIONS
TAKEN IN REF A.

2. THE AREAS OF HEAVIEST POPULATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM ARE ALONG THE
COAST IN THE I AND II CORPS ZONES AND IN THE MEKONG DELTA REGION. THESE
AREAS ALSO PRODUCE NEARLY ALL THE RICE IN RVNJM SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL
FISHING AREAS ARE ALSO CLOSE TO THE COAST IN THESE AREAS. THE PRINCIPAL

ACT: J3-8 (1-8)

INFO: CJCS-1(9) DJS-3(10-12) SJCS-3(13-15) J1-1(16) J4-2(17-18) J5-1(19)
SACSA-5(20-24) NMCC-1(25) SECDEF-5(26-30) ASD/ISA-5(31-35) DIA-4(36-39)
WHOUSE-3(40-42) CSA-2(43-44) CNO-2(45-46) CSAF-2(47-48) CMC-5(49-53)
FILE-1 (54) D/D

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- BUNDY-SMITH
- BATOR
- BOWLER
- BOYD
- CHASE
- COOPER
- HAYNES
- JESSUP
- JOHNSON
- KEENEY
- KLEIN
- KOMER
- MOODY
- REEDY
- SAUNDERS
- THOMSON

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Authority OSD 12 2/24/77
By MPE, NARS, Date 4/12/78

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NORTH-SOUTH LINES OF COMMUNICATION ARE ALONG THE COAST AND BY COASTAL JUNK TRAFFIC.

3. IF THE AREAS MENTIONED ABOVE ARE MADE REASONABLY SECURE, THE VIET CONG WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE MOUNTAIN AREAS WHERE THERE IS LITTLE FOOD AND FEW PEOPLE. THE EXTENSIVE COASTAL PERIPHERY PERMITS THE APPLICATION OF U.S. POWER AT POINTS OF OUR CHOOSING. THE MANY BAYS AND BEACHES PROVIDE NUMEROUS POINTS OF INGRESS INLAND. CONTROL OF AREAS IN THE COASTAL PLAIN AND IN THE MEKONG DELTA WILL MEAN CONTROLLING THE INSURGENCY IN KEY AREAS OF SOUTH VIETNAM. CONTROL OF THE SPARSELY POPULATED HIGHLAND AND MOUNTAIN AREAS INLAND IS A LESS DECISIVE, ALBEIT COMPLEMENTARY SUPPORTING ACTION WHICH SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN SUBSEQUENTLY IF ALL OF SOUTH VIETNAM IS TO BE UNDER A FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT EVENTUALLY..

4. PLANNED AND FOREKESEEABLE U.S. K FORCE COMMITMENTS TO SOUTH VIETNAM FOR COUNTERINSURGENCY GROUND OPERATIONS ARE NOT OF MAGNITUDES WHICH PERMIT SIMULTANEOUS MAJOR EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH POSITIVE CONTROL OF COASTAL, HIGHLAND AND MOUNTAIN AREAS. ARVN FORCES ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN COPING WITH INCREASED VIET CONG ACTIONS. WE HAVE ARRIVED AT A SITUATION WHERE PRUDENCE DICTATES THAT OUR GROUND FORCE COMMITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM CENTER ON ACHIEVING RESULTS BY THE IMMEDIATE APPLICATION OF MILITARY POWER IN THOSE AREAS WHERE MOST IS TO BE GAINED BY REESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING CONTROL. THESE AREAS ARE THOSE ON THE NORHTERN AND CENTRAL COAST AND IN THE DELTA. THEY SHOULD BE THE FOCUS OF OUR MAJOR CONTUERINSURGENCY COMBAT EFFORTS. K OUR COMMITMENTS TO SOUTH VIETNAM SINCE FEBRUARY ARE IN CONSONANCE WITH THIS STRATEGY AND ACTIONS NOW UNDERWAY ARE IN EXTENSION OF IT. IMPLEMENTATION COMMENCED WITH LANDINGS AND OCCUPATION OF AREAS ON THE NORTHERN COAST AT DANANG AND HUE PHU BAI, AND WAS CONTINUED WITH LANDINGS AT VUNG TAU, BIEN HOA AND CHU LAI. COMBAT FORCE LANDINGS ARE IMMINENT AT QUI NHO AND THA TRANG. A FURTHER LANDING AT QUANG NGAI HAS DEEN PLANNED AND RECOMMENDED BY THE JCS TO SECDEF FOR APPROVAL.

5. THE U.SJM MILITARY POSTURE IN SOUTH VIETNAM ATTAINED BY PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS CONCEPT HAS PLACED OUR FORCES IN POSITION TO MOVE AGGRESSIVELY AGAINST THE VIET CONG AND TO DO SO FROM SECURE BASE LOCALITIES WHICH THE ENEMY CANNOT ISOLATE OR SURROUND. AS THE LEVEL AND INTENSITY OF OUR OPERATIONS INCREASE, VIET CONG MOBILITY, (MORALE AND ABILITY TO MOUNT OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS IN THE LOWLANDS WILL DECREASE; THE VIET CONG WILL BE FORCEKD ON THE DEFENSIVE; AND VIT CONG

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ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS IN THESE AREAS WILL DECREASE. THE PERIMETERS OF THE AREAS WILL BE ENLARGED AND ULTIMATELY ONE AREA COULD BE CONNECTED BY A CLEARED ZONE WITH ANOTHER. LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS NET AND CROP-PRODUCING AREAS IN THE VITAL COASTAL AREAS WILL BE FREE. THE VIET CONG'S REMAINING SANCTUARY WILL BE THE SPARSELY POPULATED, SPOTILY CULTIVATED INLAND HIGHLAND AND MOUNTAIN AREAS.

6. A SINGLE FLEXIBLE MILITARY STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS GEARED TO IT WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT AS OUR FORCE BUILD-UP CONTINUES AND ADDITIONAL MAJOR COMBAT FORCE DEPLOYMENTS ARE MADE. FORCE REQUIREMENTS, CAPABILITIES, DEPLOYMENTS, PHASING AND COMMITMENT WILL BECOME INTER-LOCKED. ALL SHOULD BE PLANNED AND EXECUTED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A SINGLE STRATEGY. THIS STRATEGY SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON CONTROL OF THE ECONOMICALLY, POLITICALLY AND MILITARILY IMPORTANT COASTAL AREAS OF CENTRAL AND NORTH VIETNAM AND THE MEKONG DELTA. THE THRUST OF THE STRATEGY SHOULD AIM AT DECREASING VIET CONG MOBILITY, MORALE AND ABILITY TO MOUNT OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS; FORCING THE VIET CONG ON THE DEFENSIVE IN OR NEAR KEY COASTAL AREAS; ENLARGING THE SIZE OF FRIENDLY-HELD AREAS BY PROGRESSIVELY INCREASING THE SIZE OF TACTICAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND CONNECTING ONE FRIENDLY-HELD AREA TO ANOTHER BY MEANS OF CLEARED ZONES.

7. IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY OUTLINED ABOVE, I RECOMMEND THAT THE AIR MOBILE DIVISION OPERATE FROM THE QUI NHON BASE, CLEARING THE HEAVILY POPULATED AND VALUABLE AREAS IN BINH DINH PROVINCE UNTIL THE AREA FROM SOUTH OF QUI NHON TO QUANG NGAI IS REASONABLY SECURE. THE AIR MOBILE DIVISION IS IDEALLY SUITED FOR THIS TYPE OF OPERATION. UNDER THIS CONCEPT THE KOREAN MARINE RCT SHOULD BE USED IN THE QUANG NGAI AREA. THE KOREAN ARMY DIVISION WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE NEEDED AT QUI NHON AND MIGHT, THEREFORE, BE DEPLOYED IN THE COASTAL AREA FROM NHA TRANG SOUTH, OR AT SOME PLACE IN THE DELTA. GPK-3.

BT

ADV CY TO SECDEF/DIA/NMCC

REF A IS JCS 93177 OTHER REF NOT IDENTIFIED

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JCS IN 99259

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority E.O. 11652 SEC. 5(A) and (D)
By *ip*, NARS, Date *4-6-78*

A325 12 JCS364 R1 R2

CPHP423V MAH819
OO RUEKDA
DE RUMSMA 1703F 12 0845Z
O 120838Z
FM COMUSMACV
TO RUHLHQ CINCPAC
INFO RUEKDA JCS
RUEHC STATE DEPARTMENT
BT

READD WH

**IMMEDIATE
LIMDIS**

~~SECRET~~ 19912 FROM MACJ3
SUBJ: TACTICAL EMPLOYMENT OF US ALLIED GROUND FORCES IN
SUPPORT OF RVN

REF -. MACV 080700Z MAY
K1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFERENCE A
MACV HAS ISSUED LETTERS OF INSTRUCTION TO THE III
MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE AND TO THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE AFTER
FULL REPEAT FULL COKORDINATION WITH THE GVN WHICH STES FORTH
THREE STAGES THROUGH WHICH US FORCES WOULD PROGRESS.
STAGE 1 WAS RELATED TO THE SECURITY OF THE BASE AREA AND INCLUDED

INFO.....CJCS-1 DJS-3 SJCS-1 J3-8 J5-2 SACSA-4 SECDEF-5 W/HOUSE-3
FILE-1 (28)KLH/CL

Handwritten marks

HANDLE LIMDIS PER NMCC/MC

- ~~DUNN SMITH~~
- ~~BATOR~~
- ~~BOWLER~~
- ~~BOWMAN~~
- ~~CHASE~~
- ~~COOPER~~
- ~~HAYNES~~
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- ~~JOHNSON~~
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- ~~KLEIN~~
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- ~~SMITH~~

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ACTIVE PATROLLING. STAGE 2 INCLUDED DEEP PATROLLING AND OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS. INITIAL OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS WERE TO BE UNILATERAL AND THEN COMBINED IN ORDER TO IRON OUT COORDINATION PROCEDURES WITH THE RVNAF. THE III MAF HAS ALREADY CONDUCTED SOME SUCH COMBINED OPERATIONS. THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE WAS SCHEDULED TO CONDUCT ITS COMBINED OPERATION ON 11 JUNE. HOWEVER, THIS OPERATION WAS POSTONED OWING TO THE COMMITMENT OF HELICOPTERS AND III CORPS TROOPS TO THE RELIEF OF DONG OAI. STAGE 3 INVOLVES COMMITMENT OF US FORCES IN RESERVE REACTION OPERATIONS IN CONJUNCTION WITH RVNAF AS NECESSARY AND ALSO INCLUDES OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OR SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN COORDINATION WITH RVNAF.

2. IN FULL COORDINATION WITH RVNAF HEADQUARTERS, BOTH THE 173D AND III MAF WERE TO ENTER STAGE 3 ABOUT 15 JUNE. INSTRUCTIONS TO THIS EFFECT HAVE ALREADY BEEN ISSUED BY THE RVNAF JOINT GENERAL STAFF TO THEIR CORPS COMMANDERS. IN VIEW OF THE STATEMENTS MADE IN WASHINGTON BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND AT THE WHITE HOUSE, WE HAVE, OF COURSE, DEFERRED THE MOVEMENT FROM STAGE 2 TO STAGE 3 AND, IN ADDITION, WE HAVE RESTRICTED US COMBAT TROOPS TO THEIR TACTICAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY WHICH ARE ASSOCIATED DIRECTLY WITH THE DEFENSE OF THE INSTALLATIONS NEAR WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED.

3. THE FACT IS, WE HAVE MOVED SOME DISTANCE DOWN THE ROAD TOWARD THE ACTIVE COMMITMENT OF US COMBAT FORCES AND WE HAVE DONE SO HAND-IN-HAND WITH OUR VIETNAMESE ALLY. THEY NOW EXPECT AND ANTICIPATE THIS KIND OF PARTICIPATION. THEY AND WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE TIME HAS COME WHEN SUCH SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SURVIVAL OF ANY GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE RVNAF.

4. THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND THAT THE CONCEPT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND THE LETTERS OF INSTRUCTION BE MODIFIED AS FOLLOWS AND APPROVED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY:

A. THE TACTICAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AROUND AIRBASES AND BASE AREAS WHERE US TROOPS ARE LOCATED WILL BE EXTENDED OR EXPANDED INTO ALL ADJACENT VC CONCENTRATIONS OR BASE AREAS WHICH THREATEN THE INSTALLATIONS IN QUESTION. THIS WILL PERMIT OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS, COMBINED OR UNILATERAL, IN DIRECT RELATION TO THE DEFENSIVE MISSION. THIS SEEMS TO US FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH PARAGRAPH 1 OF STATE DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR 2483 OF 10 JUNE IN WHICH THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS QUOTED AS FOLLOWS: "NOW OBVIOUSLY WE DON'T

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EXPECT THESE MEN TO SIT THERE LIKE HYPNOTIZED RABBITS WAITING FOR THE VC TO STRIKE. THEY ARE NOW IN THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE TO BE SURE THAT THE VC ARE KEPT OFF BALANCE AND A STRONG STRIKING FORCE IS NOT ORGANIZED IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO STRIKE THESE INSTALLATIONS."

B. WE WILL ORGANIZE AND PLAN WITH THE VIETNAMESE FOR THE COMMITMENT OF US RESERVE REACTION FORCES TO BE CALLED UPON BY THE VIETNAMESE WHEN IN THEIR OPINION AND OURS THE GENERAL RESERVE OF RVNAF HAS BEEN COMMITTED OR IS NOT IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE. THIS WE REGARD AS ENTIRELY COMPATIBLE WITH THE STATEMENT ISSUED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE ON 9 JUNE WHICH SAYS: "GENERAL WESTMORELAND ALSO HAS AUTHORITY WITHIN THE ASSIGNED MISSION TO EMPLOY THESE TROOPS IN SUPPORT OF VIETNAMESE FORCES FACED WITH AGGRESSIVE ATTACKS WHEN OTHER EFFECTIVE RESERVES ARE NOT AVAILABLE AND WHEN IN HIS JUDGMENT THE GENERAL MILITARY SITUATION URGENTLY REQUIRES IT."

5. WE HAVE REACHED A POINT IN VIETNAM WHERE WE CANNOT AVOID THE COMMITMENT TO COMBAT OF US GROUND TROOPS. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO MAINTAIN INTACT THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUT VIETNAM AND ITS ARMED FORCES. THEY CAN NO LONGER COPE ALONE WITH THE INCREASED VC DRV THREAT. THEY (THE VIETNAMESE) ARE FULLY AWARE OF THIS FACT AND NEED AND EXPECT US SUPPORT. WE SEE NO DIFFICULTY IN EXPLAINING THE ACTIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS SET FORTH IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT MESSAGES.

6. AMBASSADOR JOHNSON HAS READ AND CONCURS

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080700Z IS IN 50858
ADV CY TO OSD CJCS DJS NMCC

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TO WHITE HOUSE

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REFERENCE COMUSMACV MESSAGE DTG 130540Z.

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE HAS BEEN SENT TO GEN WESTMORLAND
BY ADM SHARP QUOTE

YOU ARE THE MAN ON THE GROUND AND WILL HAVE TO WEIGH THE PROS
AND CONS OF COMMITTING THE TWO BATTALIONS OF THE 173RD. CONCUR
THAT YOU HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO COMMIT THEM.

I'M SURE YOU REALIZE THAT THERE WOULD BE GRAVE POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS INVOLVED IF SIZABLE U.S. FORCES ARE COMMITTED FOR
THE FIRST TIME AND SUFFER A DEFEAT.

NOTIFY AMBASSADOR JOHNSON AND NOTIFY CINCPAC AND JCS PRIOR TO
COMMITMENT OF ANY U.S. GROUND COMBAT FORCE. UNQUOTE

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Authority OSD Hr 2/24/77

By MJE, NARS, Date 4/12/78

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~~TOP SECRET~~

*Box 2
1/11/77*
(2)

16a

Monday, June 14, 1965

Text of cable from General Westmoreland (COMUSMACV 20055)

SUBJECT: Concept of Operations -- Force Requirements and Deployments, South Vietnam

1. There has been an extended exchange of messages regarding the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese threat, the requirement for U. S. forces, the concept of their employment and the details of their deployment. I propose to treat each of these matters in an effort to bring the picture into closer focus.
2. The Threat. State message 287 of 11 June 1965 raises questions about my current estimate of the seriousness of the situation in South Vietnam. This message will be answered separately by an Embassy telegram reflecting my views. Suffice it to say that the South Vietnamese have lost five ✓ infantry battalions on the battlefield in the last three weeks while rising casualties and high desertion rates have caused a moratorium to be proposed in connection with the formation of new battalions. Thus, the South Vietnamese battlefield strength is declining in the face of North Vietnamese reinforcements and a Viet Cong offensive. It is my considered opinion that the South Vietnamese Armed Forces cannot stand up to this pressure without substantial U. S. combat support on the ground.
3. Force Requirements. I have asked for added forces. These consist of two battalions to round out the 3rd Marine Division, a South Korean Division, an Airmobile Division, the retention of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, tactical fighters and a corps headquarters plus combat and logistic support forces. We have also flagged the possibility of additional forces.
4. Concept of Employment.

A. The CINCPAC analysis of the situation and concept of operations is properly focussed upon the population -- that is, upon the people. There is no doubt whatsoever that the insurgency in South Vietnam must eventually be defeated among the people in the hamlets and towns. However, in order to defeat the insurgency among the people, they must be provided security of two kinds:

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Authority OSD 1A 2/24/77
By MJE, NARS, Date 4/12/78

(1) Security of the country as a whole from large, well organized and equipped forces, including those which may come from outside their country.

(2) Security from the guerrilla, the assassin, the terrorist and the informer.

B. I am convinced that US troops can contribute heavily in the first category of security, but that only the Vietnamese can make real progress and succeed in respect to the second. Unfortunately, the Vietnam Army is being drawn away from the people and their security in order to meet the challenge of the main force Viet Cong/North Vietnamese offensive. The best illustration of this point is the fact that the II Corps commander has removed most of the troops from the Province of Binh Dinh with its nearly one million people in order to defend the relatively less important Province capitals of Kontum and Pleiku. Therefore, my concept is basically to employ US forces, together with Vietnamese Airborne and Marine Battalions of the general reserve, against the hardcore North Vietnam/Viet Cong forces in reaction and search and destroy operations, and thus permit the concentration of Vietnamese troops in the heavily populated areas along the coast, around Saigon and in the Delta.

C. We have tailored logistic support forces to provide for some tactical flexibility so that forces may be shifted in accordance with the strength and movement of the Viet Cong. Continuous adjustments and redistributions undoubtedly will be necessary. It is likely that the war will continue to become more fluid and more mobile. We believe that the major bases at Da Nang, Chu Lai, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh and Saigon - Bien Hoa provide the backbone support on which mobile forces can be supported and from which they can maneuver.

D. It is not our concept that the US would take exclusive control or responsibility for any entire province although, in practice, only token South Vietnamese forces might remain. Thus generally, we must match our forces with the territorial organization of the South Vietnamese. We must strengthen and support the South Vietnamese Armed Force structure to keep it alive and operative. We should generally concentrate US forces away from major population centers and whenever possible do the bulk of our fighting in more remote areas.

5. Deployments

A. I recognize that the in-country location of ground combat forces has a bearing upon the size, nature and location of logistic support forces,

ports, airfields and related facilities. For this reason, I have indicated from time to time the proposed initial location of the combat forces for which requirements have developed. However, as the number of combat forces requested and required increases and the number of combinations and permutations regarding location correspondingly increases, we rapidly approach a point where everyone will be confused and no useful purpose will be served.

B. The Viet Cong are now maneuvering large forces up to reinforced regiments equipped with heavy weapons. Thus, we are approaching the kind of warfare faced by the French in the latter stages of their efforts here. It is entirely possible that the North Vietnamese can and will deploy three or more divisions into South Vietnam by infiltration. It is highly likely that one is already here. Therefore, it will be necessary to react to the introduction of North Vietnamese forces and to the shift and tactical play of the Viet Cong. Thus, tactical dispositions will change and only the major bases will be fixed. In short, we will be conducting mobile warfare from fixed and defended bases. Some of these bases will be major logistics centers at ports and airfields such as Chu Lai and Cam Ranh. Others will be tactical bases such as An Khe or Pleiku. The tactical bases will move as necessary and that may be with some frequency as the battle develops.

C. With these thoughts in mind, my review of the tactical situation, corps-by-corps, will indicate the probable deployment of required US forces:

(1) I Corps. This corps is highly vulnerable to the introduction of North Vietnam forces. It has virtually no reserve and is barely able to hold the major population centers, province and district towns. We believe that the 3rd Marine Division, augmented by two battalions, as recommended, can provide adequate reserve reaction forces for this I Corps at the present level of Viet Cong activity. With a full division, the equivalent of one battalion will be available for employment throughout the corps in a reaction role away from the base area.

(2) II Corps. This corps has a hopelessly large area to cover with the meager forces available. Additionally, the Vietnamese have a fixation on the importance of Kontum and Pleiku, probably derived from the history of the Viet Minh War. Recently, the corps commander has denuded Binh Dinh Province (with nearly a million inhabitants) in order to reinforce Kontum with two marine battalions. The Viet Cong control Phu Yen Province except for Tuy Hoa itself and, as reported earlier, the 325th

Division may be deployed in Kontum, Pleiku and Phu Bon. The 23rd Division is scattered so widely that it cannot react in strength to Viet Cong attacks against isolated province capitals and district towns. We are greatly concerned that such towns as Ham Tan in Binh Tuy and Gia Nghia in Quang Duc and even Phan Thiet in Binh Thuan may be attacked. Corps commanders without adequate reserves have shown conclusive evidence that they will move timidly and too late in a piecemeal manner upon the event of a Viet Cong heavy attack. This is resulting in the loss of Vietnamese battalions faster than they can be organized, trained and equipped. The II Corps requires heavy reinforcements. We have asked for an infantry brigade, an airborne division and a South Korean Division. We would generally employ these forces as follows:

(a) The South Koreans appear to be sensitive to the possibility of heavy casualties and would be pleased, we believe, to take over the security mission at the major logistic bases of Cam Ranh and Qui Nhon. Although two regimental combat teams are not required for the defense of Qui Nhon, they can profitably be used there to extend the secure area and reinforce the South Vietnamese in that populous and important province. If only one South Korean regimental combat team becomes available, we would employ it to relieve the 1st Division Brigade at Qui Nhon and Cam Ranh.

(b) Having been relieved by the South Koreans of the security of Qui Nhon and Cam Ranh, we visualize the employment of the 1st Division Brigade in the general area of Highway 19 west of Qui Nhon toward An Khe. The security of Route 19 is important not only in the event of the deployment of major US forces on the high plateau, but is equally essential for the support of the population in that area and for the delivery of fuel for current combat operations. The fact is that highway 19 must be kept open. There is no feasible way into the high plateau from north or south. If the plateau is abandoned, it will form the first significant territory of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam and will be recognized and supported by China through Cambodia.

(c) We believe that Route 19 and the Pleiku-Kontum area present a challenge which must be met. We do not believe that the Vietnamese Armed Forces can do the job. If the Viet Cong elect to fight a major campaign for Route 19 with North Vietnamese or Viet Cong forces, this is as good terrain as any, and better than most, on which such a battle should take place. It is vastly preferable to the populated lowlands. The problem in Vietnam has always been one of finding, fixing and fighting successfully the elusive Viet Cong. If Route 19 becomes a magnet, it

tends to solve several of these problems. With the mobility, communication and firepower of the air assault division supported by tactical air, we believe the battle of the road will be won and that the road can be used by the division. The division can be supported over the road for the bulk of its requirements; and can be backed up as necessary by a C130 Squadron on a contingency basis, augmented by C-123 and Caribou, as well as Chinook helicopters, which are organic to the division. The air assault division consumes fuel, ammunition, food, and miscellaneous supplies at a rate which varies from 600 tons at the maximum to 100 tons or less at the minimum. When all aircraft are flying at the maximum rate and ammunition expenditures are the highest conceivable in this kind of war, the division might hit the 600 ton requirement. If on the other hand, it is necessary to pull in the belt--define the hard bases, curtail both flying and shooting--then the consumption comes down dramatically. In short, the division can subsist easily on air resupply while relatively inactive and yet defend itself.

We would have a corps force with one US and one South Korean Division operating in the northern half of the II Corps. This would permit the regrouping of the 22nd and 23rd divisions so that more ample coverage could be provided in the south and would provide the kind of reaction force required to meet and defeat major Viet Cong attacks. The foregoing deployment relates to the situation as we know it now. If that situation changes or additional forces are introduced by the North Vietnamese, these forces will be shifted correspondingly.

(3) III Corps. This Corps is extremely weak on its northern and eastern flanks and has inadequate reserves to react to heavy Viet Cong attacks, particularly in isolated areas. The Viet Cong attacks in Phuoc Long Province on 10 and 12 June illustrated the dire consequences of a piecemeal commitment of small battalions against a Viet Cong regiment in an intelligence vacuum. There are no prospects of additional South Vietnamese forces in the near future. Thus, we foresee the eventual requirement for a full US Division northeast of Saigon to meet the Viet Cong threat as it is now constituted. In the meanwhile we wish to retain the 173rd Airborne Brigade after the arrival of the Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. If for some reason the Airmobile Division is not deployed, we would station one of the airborne brigades at Pleiku.

(4) IV Corps. At the moment, this Corps is standing on its own two feet. The terrain in the IV Corps lends itself to the full use of air mobility and the absence of cover compounds the difficulty of the Viet Cong. The units of the 7th and 21st Divisions have attained a high state

~~TOP SECRET~~ -6-

of morale and certain units have achieved an outstanding record against the Viet Cong. We consider that, although the margin is favorable, it is certainly thin. Whether or not US forces will be required in this area cannot now be forecast.

6. The Viet Cong are destroying battalions faster than they can be reconstituted and faster than they were planned to be organized under the buildup program. The Vietnamese Armed Forces Commanders do not believe that they can survive without the active commitment of US ground combat forces. The only possible US response is the aggressive employment of US troops together with Vietnamese general reserve forces to react against strong Viet Cong/North Vietnamese attacks. To meet this challenge successfully, troops must be maneuvered freely, deployed and redeployed if necessary, and the challenge of Highway 19 and the high plateau must be met.

~~TOP SECRET~~

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OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

✓ 09168

17a / 4

JUN 15 9 10 PM '65

Origin ACTION: Amembassy LONDON 7915 IMMEDIATE

Info NODIS

EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

Request you urgently seek out Menzies and Wilson, preferably in that order, to inform them of following:

1. We have located key Viet Cong base area 40 - 50 miles northwest of Saigon, about 2 1/2 miles by one mile, located in jungle and believed on basis reliable intelligence to contain headquarters plus one confirmed battalion, two other probable battalions, and one additional possible battalion. Location and units based on reliable intelligence and further confirmed by repeated ambushes immediately adjacent to area in past month, trail networks leading into target area, etc.

2. Area is densely covered and located in area in which there are no known populated locations within the area itself and only a very few scattered individual huts for several miles outside.

3. Dispersed nature of observed and suspected targets throughout area precludes well-defined aiming points essential for effective use tactical air.

Drafted by:

FE: WPBundy/bmm 6/15

Telegraphic transmission and

classification approved by:

The Secretary

Clearances:

DECLASSIFIED

Authority MLJ 88-201

By [Signature], NARA, Date 4-8-14

~~TOP SECRET~~

S/S - Mr. Merriam

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~~TOP SECRET~~

commitment already over-strained tactical air power within SVN and even then would be largely ineffective.

4. Accordingly, we have decided that only effective method of hitting this vital military objective is through use B-52 aircraft deployed from Guam. Aircraft would be guided to target by two ~~XXXXXXXX~~ ^{beacons} and ~~XXXX~~ would lay down pattern of bombs with anticipated target error, based on long SAC experience and practice, of 700 - 1000 feet.

5. Operation now planned for daylight Friday morning Saigon time (Thursday evening Washington and London time).

6. Operation would necessarily be announced along lines above and would be followed up by ARVN ground action. Operation fully coordinated with GVN.

6. (If asked). We have no plans to conduct further operations of this type ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ against or near populated areas.
~~XXXXX against such XXXX military objectives when XXXX are populated areas~~

Operations by B-52 aircraft are not now contemplated in DRV.

FYI: Please report reactions urgently as final execute order must go out Wednesday night here. End FYI.

~~XXXX~~ You may wish to use same call to carry out septel instructions ~~XXXX~~ re informing Wilson of summary diplomatic actions.

GP-3/

END

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 15, 1965

NOTE for Mr. Bundy

Mac:

Of interest. Prepared at
our request.

General pitch is that Commie
countries moving closer to
"volunteer" stage without making
explicit commitments.



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OCI No. 1775/65

188

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
15 June 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Communist Bloc Reaction to US Statements on the
Use of US Ground Forces in Combat in South Vietnam

1. Initial Communist bloc reaction to US statements last week on the use of US ground forces in combat in South Vietnam has taken a line aimed at convincing US policymakers that bloc support for the insurgents in South Vietnam might soon increase. However, all bloc capitals have been careful to avoid spelling out the nature of this support. On 9 June, Hanoi broadcast a Liberation Front statement issued the same day which condemned US actions and threatened "to call for volunteers from the armies of North Vietnam and of friendly countries, when necessary." The Front had earlier threatened to call for volunteers, but this was the first specific reference to volunteers from "armies." Chinese reaction appeared designed to convey the impression that Peiping is moving closer to more direct involvement in Vietnam without actually increasing its present conditional commitment to send men "if needed." Soviet reaction, confined primarily to Pravda editorial commentaries thus far, scores the US for taking another "dangerous step," but provides no further elaboration on Moscow's policy.

North Vietnamese Reaction

2. On 9 June the Liberation Front issued a statement condemning US announcements that US troops could be made available for combat in Vietnam. The Front statement threatened to "call for volunteers from the armies of North Vietnam and of friendly countries, when necessary." Hanoi Radio broadcast

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Authority CIA HR 2/22/77
By MJE, NARS, Date 4/12/78

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the statement the same day. The DRV party daily Nhan Dhan on 10 June called the US move a "new and brazen step to intensify the war" and at the same time attempted to play down the effectiveness of US forces in South Vietnam. On 12 June, Hanoi Radio added the assertion that "now more than ever before" a call for "foreign volunteers" has all the necessary conditions to be materialized. The only new element in the Liberation Front's statement of 9 June was the threat to call in volunteers from friendly armies. In its 22 March statement, the Front threatened to call for "volunteers" but did not specify a particular category. Both the Front and Hanoi have subsequently boasted that the "Liberation Forces" are ready to meet US troops and to defeat them. The more troops the US commits, asserted the Front recently, the larger US defeats will be.

Communist Chinese Reaction

3. The Chinese response to the 8 June announcement that US troops could be made available for combat in Vietnam appears designed to give the impression that Peiping is moving closer to more direct involvement in Vietnam without actually increasing its present conditional commitment to send men "if needed." Peiping's initial response came in an NCNA broadcast on 9 June which asserted that after a series of defeats and having lost confidence in the South Vietnamese troops, the US "had to run the risk" of openly taking part in land operations in South Vietnam.

4. A more authoritative response came in an "Observer" article on 11 June in People's Daily, which asserted that the US action was "fraught with extremely grave consequences" and warned that the US was quickening its steps toward a Korean-type war. Observer declared that the action gave China a "greater right to back up the Vietnamese people" and warned that "all friendly countries" now have a greater right to dispatch volunteers at any time, "as the Liberation Front requires."

North Korea

5. North Korea's party daily has voiced full support for the Liberation Front statement and noted

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that "if the US government has the right to order its troops to take part in the fighting in South Vietnam, it has the right to ask for North Vietnamese troops and volunteers from brother countries to come to South Vietnam and fight US aggression." Although Pyongyang attempted to convey a sense of urgency in its statement, the North Koreans carefully avoided extending their commitment beyond the previously announced intention to respond with aid and volunteers "when requested."

USSR

6. Soviet commentary thus far has been relatively sparse and confined to Pravda editorial commentary. There has been no authoritative commentary on the 9 June Liberation Front statement. Moscow TASS reported the statement, including the right of the Front to call for "volunteers" from friendly countries, but omitted the words "from armies." An 11 June Pravda editorial reiterated the standard Soviet pledge to render the necessary assistance to defend North Vietnam. Pravda decried alleged US plans to use troops "in offensive activities on a wide scale," and warned of the danger of an enlarged war. Soviet press commentators have attempted to paint a picture of widespread consternation and dissension in the US against the Administration's policy toward Vietnam.

Eastern Europe

7. Initial reaction has been reflected in Polish, Czech, and East German commentary. Both Poland and Czechoslovakia mention the wealth of manpower available to the Viet Cong from Hanoi and the socialist countries should it be needed or requested. Polish commentary cites the inherent risk in the US action and concludes that it marks a decisive stage in the conflict, i.e., the beginning of the end for US influence in Southeast Asia.

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

46

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SAH ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ JUNE 15.

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H

EUR WITH AMERICAN TROOP INVOLVEMENT COMBAT SUPPORT INCREASINGLY
P POSSIBLE, BELIEVE HIGHLY DESIRABLE UNDERTAKE LONG-DELAYED
NSC BACKGROUNDER ON COMMAND RELATIONSHIP IN NEXT FEW DAYS.
INR AUSTRALIAN BATTALION ARRIVAL CONSTITUTES ADDITIONAL FACTOR
NSA CREATING CORRESPONDENTS INTEREST THIS SUBJECT. PROPOSE UNDER-
NIC TAKE SUCH DISCUSSION IN COURSE BACKGROUNDER THURSDAY EVENING
AID BY GENERAL WESTMORELAND WITH SELECTED CORRESPONDENTS ON GENERAL
MILITARY SITUATION. GENERAL WESTMORELAND WOULD BE PREPARED
DISCUSS COMMAND RELATIONSHIP IN GENERAL TERMS AS WELL

RSR

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 819A ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
AS LAY-AT-REST QUESTION AMERICAN COMBAT UNITS SERVING
UNDER VIETNAMESE COMMAND WHICH COULD CREATE DIFFICULTIES
IN U.S. PUBLIC OPINION AND WHICH IS DRAWING INCREASED INTEREST
CORRESPONDENTS HERE. HE WOULD ALSO INCLUDE GENERAL DISCUSSION
CONTEMPLATED DEVELOPMENT MACV ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE. THIS
APPROACH WOULD PLACE DISCUSSION THESE ISSUES IN NATURAL
FRAMEWORK OF OVERALL REVIEW MILITARY SITUATION AND HELP KEEP
FOCUS ON COMMAND RELATIONSHIP QUESTION IN PERSPECTIVE.

REQUEST PROMPT WASHINGTON APPROVAL THESE PLANS. GP-3 TAYLOR

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 8:43 AM 6/15/65
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA AT 7:20 AM 6/15/65

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Authority State Hr 12/19/77

By MJE, NARS, Date 4/2/78

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

Bundy

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~~TOP SECRET~~ JUNE 16.

E X D I S

REF: CINCPAC'S 1277, DTG 120242Z TO MACV

DURING THE CALL ON GENERALS THIEU AND KY REPORTED IN EMBTEL 4221 I RECEIVED GOVERNMENTAL CONCURRENCE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF AN ADDITIONAL F4B SQUADRON IN THE DANANG AREA. AT THE SAME TIME, I VERIFIED THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF QUAT'S AGREEMENT TO THE INTRODUCTION OF A U.S. BIRGADE INTO THE QUI NHON AREA (EMBTTEL 3799).

ALSO, I MENTIONED THE PAST PROCEDURE FOR RECEIVING PRIME MINISTERIAL CONCURRENCE IN ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT HENCEFORTH I WILL TAKE UP THIS MATTER WITH GENERAL KY IN HIS NEW ROLE AS PRIME MINISTER.

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 890A ~~TOP SECRET~~
IN DISCUSSING THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION, I EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE MOUNTING NUMBER OF COMBAT INEFFECTIVE ARVN UNITS. WHEREAS A FEW WEEKS AGO THE NUMBER AMOUNTED TO TWO REGIMENTS AND THREE BATTALIONS, NOW THERE ARE FOUR REGIMENTS AND NINE BATTALIONS ON THE INEFFECTIVE LIST. I URGED THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE TO FILL UP THESE UNITS AND TO RESTORE THEM RAPIDLY TO COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS. THIEU INDICATED THAT HE WAS THOROUGHLY AWARE OF THE PROBLEM AND HAD HAD A MEETING OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS ON THIS SUBJECT THE PREVIOUS DAY. GP-3 TAYLOR
BT

Note: Advance copy to S/S-0 at 8:15 a.m. 6/16/65
Passed to White House, DOD & CIA at 8:28 a.m. 6/16/65

~~TOP SECRET~~

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Authority *RAC 20952*
By *ic/ly*, NARA, Date *4-4-14*

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NEWS CONFERENCE
OF
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
ROBERT S. McNAMARA

2/a

- - - - -
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 1965

2:30 P.M. (EDT)
- - - - -

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I have two announcements I would like to make today, and then I will be very happy to take your questions.

First, I have today authorized the Army to organize a new division, the Air Mobile Division. This new division will be organized and made combat ready as expeditiously as possible at Fort Benning, Georgia. Its introduction will greatly increase our capability to meet all kinds of threats. It places the Army on the threshold of an entirely new approach to the conduct of land warfare.

I have also asked the Chief of Staff of the Army to report to the Joint Chiefs and to me before the first of next year on possible conversion of other units of the Army to the new type of structure.

The development of this new division was begun over three years ago. It is a result of 36 months of study, experiment, test, and evaluation by both the Army and the Air Force. The concept was initially established by the Howze Board which, as you know, was chaired by General Howze of the Army. It has been subsequently evaluated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They have tested it, using the experimental 11th Air Assault Division. This division will have a strength of about 16,000 men. That is approximately equal to the strength of an infantry division, but it will have four times the number of aircraft assigned to an infantry division.

(MORE)

As a result, about one-third of its combat elements can be moved into combat by its own aircraft; the other two-thirds will move simultaneously either in air transport aircraft or by shuttling of the division's own aircraft.

One of the division's brigades will be capable of airborne operation. This new type of division will make its greatest contributions to improving combat readiness in operations where terrain obstacles could give enemy guerrilla or light infantry forces an advantage over our standard combat formations.

The tactics, the techniques, the procedures that will be employed by this new division will result in a markedly different approach to the solution of tactical problems. The use of aircraft to bring combat personnel directly to the battlefield, to remove them from the battlefield, provides a capability which neither we nor any other army in the world possess today.

Now I should like to bring you up to date upon our latest estimates of the strength of the Viet Cong forces in South Vietnam, and upon the strength of the U. S. combat forces deployed to that country to assist the Vietnamese government in combating the insurgency.

According to the latest intelligence information available to us, the number of hard core, that is the number of full time Viet Cong Communists, regular combat and combat-support forces in South Vietnam totals approximately 65,000 men. In addition to that, there are between 80 and 100 thousand part-time or irregular guerrillas. The regular and irregular guerrilla forces therefore total about 165,000. In addition, there are approximately 30,000 Viet Cong serving in political and propaganda activities in South Vietnam. As I have reported previously, between 1960 and the end of 1964, infiltration of combat personnel into South Vietnam totaled approximately 39,000 men, all of these from North Vietnam. It is probable that the actual figure, exceeded that number, but 39,000 represents the number of confirmed infiltrates. In 1964 alone, for example, we believe that about 10,000 men were brought from North Vietnam to fight in South Vietnam.

In addition, as you know, there is at least one regular North Vietnamese Army battalion in South Vietnam, the second battalion of the 325th North Vietnamese Division. That battalion has been located in the central highland region, in the plateau area around Pleiku and Kon Tum for some time. We have recent indications that as many as 8 additional North Vietnamese regular army battalions are also in that highland area.

Moreover, the Viet Cong forces have recently been re-equipped through the infiltration of new weapons, modern weapons from North Vietnam. The

(MORE)

net situation at present is that the ratio of guerrilla to anti-guerrilla forces is unfavorable to the Government of South Vietnam.

Unfavorable taking into account the hit-and-run characteristics of guerrilla war, unfavorable taking into account the fact that the mission of the Viet Cong forces, the guerrilla forces, is to kill and terrorize the people, whereas the mission of the Government forces is to protect the populace.

It is worth noting, I think, that in addition to large scale activities which have been reported in the news recently, the attacks by the Viet Cong forces on the South Vietnamese forces, as always, in addition to that, there has been a deliberate program of terror and harrassment, actions to kill, maim, capture hundreds of South Vietnamese citizens every week.

Today's terrorist bombing, for example, of the commercial airport at Saigon is illustrative of these tactics. The South Vietnamese regular and para-military forces facing the Viet Cong total something in excess of 500,000 men. They are facing, as I mentioned, about 165,000 guerrillas, a ratio of something on the order of four to one.

That is considerably less than is recognized as required to effectively deal with guerrillas. We have made efforts to improve these ratios. About 100,000 men are currently being added to the South Vietnamese forces. As you know, through the assistance of U. S. forces, ^{we} increased the mobility and firepower and the close air support of the South Vietnamese making each of their soldiers more effective as a result. But this has not been enough.

Therefore, we are seeking to correct the unfavorable manpower balance by the addition of combat forces from other nations -- Australia, United States, and Korea.

The United States has deployed nine battalions of combat troops to South Vietnam. These battalions consist of approximately 13,000 men out of the total of about 53,000 U. S. military personnel now assigned to that country. In addition, six new combat battalions, plus additional logistic and combat support, are now moving to South Vietnam from this country. They will be in place in a few weeks. Their deployments will bring the total number of combat battalions to approximately 15 from the United States.

The total U. S. military strength in South Vietnam will then approximate 70,000 to 75,000, of which number about 20,000 will be ground combat personnel.

I will be very happy to take your questions.

(MORE)

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, will these be Army troops? Will they be coming from the United States? What will their mission be?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The question is will the combat battalions moving into South Vietnam be Army troops. They will be Army and Marine troops and I am not at liberty to tell you the units from which they will come.

QUESTION: Do you foresee a build-up beyond the 70,000 to 75,000 man level?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The Secretary of State and I and the President have repeatedly said that we will do whatever is necessary to achieve our objective in South Vietnam, and we won't do more than is necessary. I can only give that answer to your question.

QUESTION: Can you spell out the mission of all of the people in Vietnam you now classify as ground combat personnel?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The mission of our troops is to protect the bases on which we have very heavy concentrations of aircraft, helicopters, and U. S. personnel and supplies. In addition, if the Vietnamese military commanders request the assistance of U. S. troops, U. S. combat troops, because the Vietnamese lack the necessary reserves to effectively counter Viet Cong attacks, General Westmoreland has authority to send our combat troops to the assistance and support of the Vietnamese.

I think you can realize that if he didn't have that authority, a situation could arise in which very heavy loss of life could occur and in which great advantage could be won by the Viet Cong forces.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, do you have anything further for us on the effectiveness of the U. S. bombing raids?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: A question frequently arises as to how effective are the U. S. bombing raids. Let me repeat again to you the objective of these raids.

Our objective is to effect and reduce the capability of the North Vietnamese to infiltrate men and equipment from North Vietnam into South Vietnam, particularly to reduce their ability to infiltrate into Laos and through the roads of Laos into South Vietnam. I think you are familiar with the routes they have been using. They come from North Vietnam across into the Plaines des Jarres area south through Laos, back into South Vietnam, or they come from the southern tail of North Vietnam into Laos and then into South Vietnam.

(MORE)

Into this area in the southern portion of South Vietnam there are about 23 bridges on the main rail and highway lines. We have destroyed or made impassable 22 of those bridges. You have seen some of the pictures, I think, previously. I will just review some of them for you briefly. I think you will see some change since you last noticed them.

Here is a bridge at Phuong Can, in this area. You can see the span was dropped as a result of our bombing attack. The bridge was destroyed, in effect. Since that was accomplished, the North Vietnamese, because this is a primary road supporting their infiltration routes, have constructed a temporary bridge across that dropped span. It will be necessary to take that out again. We have done so in several of the other areas where they have acted to replace the bombing damage.

Here is another bridge at Dong Hoi in the southern portion of South Vietnam, again on one of the main infiltration routes. You see it destroyed in this photograph after our bombing raid. You see here (indicating) the action that the North Vietnamese are taking to establish ferry slips in order that they may again use that road for infiltration. They have moved tens of thousands of people into this area to repair the bomb damage that has been done to the routes of infiltration.

Here is another railroad bridge. Again you can see the span destroyed.

So the first point I want to make is that the rail route and the road routes of infiltration from North Vietnam into South Vietnam have been substantially damaged as a result of the bombing. In addition, we have attacked their ammunition depots and their barracks. Here are a few pictures of the bomb damage that has resulted.

This is a barracks area, a very substantial one. You can see in these pictures the near complete destruction of certain areas of it. In total, about 41 percent of this large Vietnamese barracks, North Vietnamese barracks, was destroyed.

This is an ammunition depot containing about 8 percent of the total ammunition stored in the country. You can see here the dispersed storage area covering a very wide geographic area. Here are the post-attack photographs showing the destruction of the ammunition bunkers. About 21 percent of this ammunition storage area was destroyed.

We are also attacking petroleum targets. One of the major targets is at Vinh, which is approximately in this area (indicating). This was

(MORE)

attacked in August of last year following the attack on our destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. At that time we substantially damaged the center of this area. Since then, the Vietnamese have greatly expanded the area, adding in this section and this section you can see the new tanks. These are the post-attack photographs taken on the 26th of May, two or three weeks ago, showing the destruction resulting from our bombing attacks.

Here is another petroleum area at Phu Qui. They are expanding their petroleum storage in the country. This was a new petroleum storage depot that was being built. We waited until it was nearly completed, and shortly before it was in operation destroyed these tanks, as you can see here (indicating).

As I said, we have attacked the bridges to reduce the flow of men and material over the roads and the railroads, we have attacked the ammunition storage depots to reduce the amount of equipment they had to infiltrate. We have attacked the barracks to reduce the number of men they could infiltrate. We have also attacked their supply depots, of which this is one of the largest at Phu Van. Here it is before the attack, and here it is afterwards, with a tremendous amount of destruction as a result. I would guess about 60 percent of the area and capacity has been destroyed.

Here is another army supply depot in the southern portion of North Vietnam. You can see it before and after.

So I think the answer is that the attacks have been effective. They haven't stopped the flow of men and materiel. They have reduced the flow, and they have greatly increased the cost to the North Vietnamese of continuing their efforts to support the insurgency in South Vietnam.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, will these new deployments require an additional supplemental request beyond the 700 million dollars?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: No.

QUESTION: And will we need additional draft calls?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: No, I don't believe that the new deployments will require any time in the near future an additional budget supplement. When we presented the budget supplement a few weeks ago asking for 700 million dollars to be added to the fiscal '65 budget, we stated it was not possible 14 months in advance to predict accurately the total expenditures in 1966 and we did not wish to foreclose, therefore, the possibility of a budget supplement sometime during fiscal 1966.

(MORE)

But in any event, we are not prepared and see no requirement for submitting such a supplement now. Furthermore, the deployment of the troops that I mentioned earlier will not affect the draft calls in any way.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, if our American forces do join the South Vietnamese under the conditions that you have outlined in ground combat, who will be in charge of the battlefield, the deployment plan, the South Vietnamese officers or ours?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The battlefield will be split into segments and the South Vietnamese forces will operate under their own commanders in one segment and U. S. troops under their Command in support of the Vietnamese forces in another segment under command of U. S. Officers.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, the monsoon offensive of the Viet Cong has made certain initial successes. Could you give us some assessment of the effect on the morale of the South Vietnamese army and government and how do you combat it? Can we hold on before our reinforcements get there?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: We have said previously that the Viet Cong were building up their strength throughout 1964. They had built it to a total, we believe, by the end of the year, greater than they had then deployed in combat, and we therefore expected that during 1965, and we so stated publicly that they would deploy these additional troops after they had been fully trained and fully equipped. We assumed that that deployment of additional Viet Cong troops would take place during the monsoon season, which began roughly the first of May and which extends very roughly through the end of October, depending upon the latitude and elevation of the terrain. Our forecasts proved remarkably accurate.

They did increase the number of troops assigned to combat. They did increase the number of overt actions. They did increase the intensity and level of both their harassment and their overt actions. In the month of May, we saw, therefore, a substantial increase in terror incidents, a substantial increase in the number of attacks, and a very large increase in the number of casualties, both to Government forces and to Viet Cong forces.

The level of casualties absorbed by both the Viet Cong and the Government forces far exceeds in proportion to the population the level of casualties U. S. forces have ever absorbed in any war in our history.

Under these circumstances, it is remarkable that the morale of the government troops is as good as it is. They're fighting well, they are fighting hard, they are fighting effectively.

(MORE)

We continue to see increases in their recruitment. We are continuing to see some increase in their strength, not as rapidly as we would like to see, because the casualty rates exceed those estimated at the time the plans for expanding the forces were developed. But the fact that they can recruit, the fact that the men will fight under these very heavy strains, I think is indicative of the morale in those troops.

QUESTION: What are the latest figures on desertions?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The desertions are running somewhat less than last year, but higher than desirable.

QUESTION: Do you not plan at all to have a coordinated command for the joint use of Vietnamese and U. S. troops?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: There would have to be a coordinated command both at the field level and at the staff level when the troops are operating in combat areas adjacent to each other.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, you state that the new First Cavalry Division, the new Air Mobile Division, will be made combat-ready as expeditiously as possible. Do you foresee little use in Viet Nam?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I don't want to predict future deployments of any units beyond those that I have announced today on which decisions have already been made. We have made no decisions affecting other units than those I have announced. I do want to say, however, that because of the great amount of work undertaken by the Army in developing the 11th Air Assault Division over the past three years, that they can quickly convert that into the air mobile division, and I believe it will be combat-ready for deployment should that become necessary within about eight weeks.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, if you say that the ratio between anti-guerrilla forces and guerrilla forces is unfavorable now, what would you say would be a favorable ratio?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: It is difficult to develop a statistical objective here that relates in any way to the assumed requirement of a ten to one advantage in favor of the anti-guerrilla forces. It is difficult because never before has there been as much mobility, fire power and close air support brought to bear upon the guerrilla units.

Therefore, I don't want to give you a statistical answer. I do want to emphasize, however, that the Viet Cong strength has increased to such a degree that it is necessary to expand the South Vietnamese forces, that even taking account of that expansion, which is a very substantial one, that they presently have underway, it will be necessary to still add to the mobility, the fire power and the air support which we have been adding to recently, and beyond that it will be necessary to provide combat troops in reserve to take care of the emergency situations where Viet Cong in force are about to overrun the South Vietnamese forces.

MORE

Under those circumstances, our troops will be available to come to the assistance of the South Vietnamese.

QUESTION: Where does the Viet Cong get their petroleum supplies?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The petroleum supplies for the Viet Cong come from several sources, some from China over land, some by sea.

MORE

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, there has been a lot of speculation that the United States is embarking on a Korean-type war. Would you elucidate what is the overall American strategy?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Well, first let me repeat again our objective. The Secretary of State has stated this, I have stated it, the President has stated it on several occasions, but I think it bears repeating because it bears directly on the type of deployments we are making and the strategy we are following.

The United States has no designs whatsoever on the territory or the resources of Southeast Asia or any country in it. Our national interests do not require that we introduce military bases for our forces in Southeast Asia. They don't require that the states of Southeast Asia become members of Western military alliances. The ultimate goal of our country, therefore, in Southeast Asia is to help maintain free and independent nations there in which the people can develop politically, economically, and socially, according to patterns of their own choosing, and with the objective of becoming responsible members of the world family of nations.

That is our objective, that is our only objective. We are not seeking to destroy the government of the North. We are not seeking to acquire military bases. We are seeking to preserve the independence of those people to whom we are committed by treaty to provide protection.

Now, with that as our objective, our strategy is to convince the North Vietnamese that their Communist-inspired, directed, and supported guerrilla action to overthrow the established government in the South cannot be achieved, and then to negotiate for the future peace and security of that country.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, because of the precise nature of this war and the way it has escalated, do you and the President personally involve yourselves with picking out targets beforehand to keep it on a precise way?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I noticed considerable speculation in the press in the last few days about the role played by myself as Secretary of Defense, and the President and others in civilian departments of the Government in connection with the military operations. I thought yesterday there was a very, very interesting article in the New York Times over the by-line of one of your colleagues, Jack Raymond. He was reporting an interview he had had the day before, I think, with Admiral Felt --

QUESTION: Sharpe.

(MORE)

SECRETARY McNAMARA: -- Admiral Sharpe, who is Commander in Chief of all of our forces in the Pacific. Admiral Sharpe, in response to this same question, I think, said to Jack Raymond that the President and the Secretary of Defense had never usurped the role of the military commanders, and he went on to say that certainly restrictions had been placed upon the military commanders, and that those were perfectly logical and, to use his words, he said the President must consider all political and diplomatic ramifications of his acts, and he is, after all, Commander in Chief under our form of Government. He then ended by this statement, and I quote Admiral Sharpe's words: "If I were the President, with his responsibilities, I would do no less."

And that is exactly the policy we are following with respect to military operations. The decisions relating to military operations are made at the lowest possible echelon, taking account of the political ramifications.

QUESTION: Mr. McNamara, you mentioned eight North Vietnamese battalions have moved in. Does this amount to a full division, and is this an overt invasion of South Vietnam?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I said that we had clear evidence of one regular North Vietnamese battalion in South Vietnam, and there was a possibility that eight additional battalions were there. This is not a division in any normal sense of the word. The battalions are small in size. But it is, I think, an important development. It does indicate not that the strength of the guerrillas is greater than it would be if a comparable number of men other than from regular battalions was present, because I don't think that is the case, but, rather, that the North Vietnamese are having difficulty recruiting individuals to send down into the South as guerrillas and that, therefore, to build up the strength to the level they believe required to achieve their end in South Vietnam they have had to call upon their regular army units.

QUESTION: And the second part: Is this an overt invasion from the North?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: No, it is further evidence of their infiltration. They haven't been infiltrated as battalions. They are not uniformed. They are continuing to function in many cases as individuals.

(MORE)

QUESTION: Sir, you didn't say where the petroleum for the Viet Cong was coming from when it comes by sea, and could you say whether any of the supplies for the Viet Cong or North Vietnamese are coming from our allies or from ships owned by our allies?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I think it is correct to say that some of the sea-borne commerce coming to North Viet Nam is coming in bottoms chartered from nations of the free world.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, how much would the war have to intensify before some sort of mobilization of American industry would be required?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Mobilization of American industry?

QUESTION: Yes, sir.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I think that it is difficult for me to even estimate the circumstances under which that would be required. We have so built up our supplies of equipment and ammunition in recent years that I can't conceive of any mobilization of American industry being required in connection with the operations of South Viet Nam.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, regarding South Korea, what kind of a military contribution do you expect from that country?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The South Koreans presently have about 2,000 troops in South Viet Nam, primarily logistical support and engineering troops, but including some combat units to protect those troops. Whether the Vietnamese Government will request additional troops of South Korea and how South Korea would respond to that request, I can't predict.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, has the resignation of the Quat Government affected plans being made by the Defense Department to any measurable extent?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: No, it hasn't, but needless to say, we are all interested in seeing the development of stable political institutions in South Viet Nam.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, will the increase of American forces necessitate a change in the command structure, and will the role of Ambassador Taylor be involved in this?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: No, I don't see any need to change either the command structure or the role of Ambassador Taylor. I do think it may be necessary to introduce intervening command elements, perhaps, between the U. S. field forces in South Viet Nam and the commander of all forces in South Viet Nam, all U. S. forces, General Westmoreland. We may find it necessary to introduce a field force headquarters, therefore, at some time in the future.

QUESTION: In that connection, sir, is it possible that General Krulak will move his headquarters from Hawaii to Viet Nam?

MORE

SECRETARY McNAMARA: No possibility that I am aware of.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, can you give us an estimate of how many of the 39,000 infiltrates have since become battle casualties?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I can't, other than to say that the losses by the Viet Cong have been staggeringly large for several years. This has been one of the reasons why they have had to move toward the use of regular North Vietnamese army battalions as a source of infiltrates.

Now, I can take only one more question. I think we are running out of time.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, in his speech yesterday, Senator Fulbright advocated a holding action that would avoid any escalation of the action in South Viet Nam. Is this a policy to which you are committed?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I don't think you correctly quoted Senator Fulbright. I think yesterday in his speech what he said was that he supported the objective of preserving the independence of South Viet Nam and he supported the military action required to meet that objective. That is our objective. That is our military program.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

22

302

22a

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Wednesday
June 16, 1965
6:35 rec'd 6:44p

Mr. President:

Will you let me know if this
does not give you what you
want?

McG. B

*Excellent. See that
it is deleted as
paraphrased to P.M. Murphy
at once. C*

*copy sent
to LBJ
6/17
McG. B*

RECENT HISTORY OF NEGOTIATING

EFFORTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

During the last four and one-half years the United States has made repeated attempts with Communist countries to reach reasonable solutions in Southeast Asia. The results to date have in all cases been negative or unsatisfactory.

(1) Bilateral Talks with USSR and Peiping. The United States has frequently held bilateral talks with the Soviets and Chinese Communists on these problems without finding any genuine desire on their part to arrive at any settlement except Communist takeover.

(2) Geneva Conference on Laos. Only one agreement has been reached, and that one has not been honored. In 1961-62 the United States entered the Geneva Conference on Laos and accepted an agreement to neutralize Laos. The United States withdrew all its military personnel. But Communist North Vietnam did not withdraw its thousands of combat military personnel, and these forces have supported Pathet Lao offensives against the forces of the Laotian Government. North Vietnam has also continued to use Laos as a corridor for the infiltration of personnel from North Vietnam to South Vietnam in violation of the Laotian agreement. Repeated attempts to enforce the agreement have been frustrated by Communist obstruction.

(3) Cambodia. The United States has always supported the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Cambodia. In 1964 the United States and South Vietnam responded favorably to Cambodian call for a conference, but the proposal came to nothing when Prince Sihanouk formally withdrew it in March, 1964.

In 1965, following a renewed Cambodian proposal for a formal conference on Cambodia, the United States and South Vietnam agreed to such a conference, but the Chinese have opposed it; the Soviets have now backed away from it; and the Cambodians too have changed their position.

(4) United Nations. The United States raised the Tonkin Gulf events last August in the Security Council. The President of the Security Council invited North Vietnam to furnish information relating to the complaint of the United States, either through participation in the

in the Security Council discussions or by other means. The Foreign Minister of Communist China, in a letter of August 12 to the Foreign Minister of North Vietnam, emphatically pointed out that the United Nations had no right at all to consider the Indochina question. North Vietnam then responded on August 19 to the President of the Security Council, stating that the war in Vietnam does not lie within the competence of the Security Council.

In early April, 1965, the Secretary General of the United Nations, U Thant, considered visiting Peiping and Hanoi on the Vietnam question. Communist China through the medium of the People's Daily commented on April 12 that U Thant was knocking at the wrong door and should spare himself the trouble since "the Vietnam question has nothing to do with the United Nations." The Prime Minister of North Vietnam, Pham Van Dong, in a statement on April 8 said that "any approach tending to secure United Nations intervention in the Vietnam situation is...inappropriate."

(5) Exploration of a Vietnam Settlement. On February 20 the United Kingdom, with our encouragement and support, proposed to the Soviet Union that the British and Soviets undertake as Geneva Co-Chairmen to explore the bases of a possible Vietnam settlement with all the Geneva Conference countries. The Soviets -- obviously under pressure from Hanoi and Peiping -- were not even prepared to cooperate in seeking the views of the parties concerned regarding the grounds for settlement.

(6) Gordon Walker Mission. The British then undertook to send Gordon Walker to visit interested countries and explore the bases for a Vietnam settlement. Gordon Walker visited South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Burma in April. Peiping, however, informed the British Government that he would not be welcome. Hanoi also declined to receive him.

(7) United States Readiness for Unconditional Discussions. On April 7 President Johnson stated that the United States remains ready for unconditional discussions with the governments concerned. He noted that we have stated this position over and over again to friend and foe alike. Hanoi and Peiping have refused to respond, calling the proposal "a hoax," "a big swindle," "a lie covered with flowers."

(8) Appeal of Seventeen Nonaligned Nations. In responding April 8 to an appeal of seventeen nonaligned nations for a peaceful solution through negotiations without preconditions, the United States reiterated President Johnson's statement that it remains ready for unconditional discussions.

But through the medium of the People's Daily Communist China rejected unconditional negotiations. Marshal Tito and other unspecified backers of the 17-nation appeal were labeled "monsters and freaks." North Vietnam likewise rejected the nonaligned appeal through an authorized statement by the Vietnam News Agency.

(9) Indian Proposal on Vietnam. The Indian Government has proposed (a) the cessation of hostilities by both sides, (b) the policing of boundaries by an Afro-Asian patrol force, and (c) the maintenance of present boundaries so long as the people concerned desire it. The United States has publicly noted this proposal with interest and is giving it very careful consideration. The United States is continuing discussions of this proposal with the Indian Government.

Communist China has denounced the Indian proposal as a plot to use Afro-Asian countries to serve US aggression against Vietnam, and accuses the Indian Government of betraying the Afro-Asian stand against "imperialism" and "colonialism." Hanoi has also rejected the Indian proposal.

(10) Bombing Pause. During the period May 13-17 the United States suspended bombing operations against North Vietnam. This fact was known to Hanoi, but there was no response indicating an intention to move toward a settlement. The Vietnam News Agency in Hanoi called the suspension "a worn-out trick of deceit and threat." The New China News Agency in Peiping characterized the suspension as "a peace swindle," "an American hoax," and "war blackmail."

(11) Canadian Approach to North Vietnam. At the end of May the Canadian representative on the International Control Commission in Vietnam went to Hanoi to learn the North Vietnamese reaction to this pause. On the basis of his report, Canadian Foreign Minister Martin has concluded that North Vietnam and Communist China are not receptive to peace overtures at this time. They are not ready for negotiations.

23

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DECLASSIFIED

24

Authority State 7-5-78, OSD 9-8-78

By is, NARS, Date 1-29-80

09931

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

82
Origin
55
Info

ACTION: AmEmbassy SAIGON 29.33 IMMEDIATE

JUN 16 9 59 PM '65

INFO: CINCPAC _____ IMMEDIATE

EXDIS

JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE

We do not rpt not agree with COMUSMACV ~~MEMEX~~ 150305Z that we can avoid publicity or comments concerning use of B-52's in SVN. With follow-up operation sure to reveal nature of attack and with possibility of leak at any level, believe this would get us into situation where we appeared to be concealing type of attack and aircraft involved, and this would only heighten suspicions and perhaps lead to reactions similar to those that accompanied unauthorized stories on tear gas.

Hence, we believe there should be initial announcement from Saigon promptly after word is received that strike has been completed. Following is our present proposed text on which we request your comment for accuracy and tone. Our objective would be to have initial story include full enough detail so that nature and justification of attack would be clear from outset, but we would leave further questions and any discussion and policy implications for follow-up treatment in Washington following day. Request your comments urgently on this plan and on proposed text. You should

Drafted by: 6/16 William P. Bundy/bmm
FE: William P. Bundy/bmm
Clearance: _____
Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Leonard Unger

DoD - Secretary McNamara
FE/VN - Mr. Unger

S/S - Mr. Christensen

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~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

also get highest available GVN reaction to this general plan and to nature of giving text without ~~giving~~ them exact version.

DRAFT TEXT

B-52 ~~aircraft~~ aircraft today bombed a wooded Viet Cong concentration area in South Vietnam. The attack was carried out at the request of the GVN and in cooperation with Vietnamese ~~air~~ ground forces.

It had become evident in recent months that the Viet Cong were using a new tactic of concentrating forces in uninhabited areas, concealed under heavy forest canopy, prior to launching an attack against a South Vietnamese district town or other target ~~or~~ objective. They apparently have adopted this tactic to avoid concentrating in open, more visible areas.

The Viet Cong followed this practice prior to the attacks some ten days ago against Ba Gia in Quang Ngai province of central South Vietnam and last week in the attack against Dong Xoai, a district town north of Saigon. Several days ago reliable intelligence indicated a new grouping of Viet Cong forces between their War Zones C and D, an uninhabited region north of Saigon that has long been a Viet Cong stronghold. The area is believed to contain a Viet Cong headquarters, several combat units, and the hub of a VC radio net. These Viet Cong forces evidently were preparing to launch an attack within the next day or two against one or more South Vietnamese villages or district towns.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

In order to disperse and destroy these Viet Cong forces, 30 United States Air Force B-52 bombers have just carried out a pattern bombing attack against this concentration in the portion of War Zone D marked by a ~~rectangle~~ rectangle on the photograph (if photograph available). The area subjected to attack is approximately one by two miles; it is heavily forested and is located several miles away from any ~~any~~ areas in South Vietnam populated by civilians. Because of the heavy forest canopy, it was not possible to pinpoint the specific Viet Cong targets -- if they were to be destroyed it could only be by an area attack, uniformly ~~distributed~~ distributed and rapidly executed. B-52's were selected for this mission because their bomb-carrying capacity and equipment make them the aircraft best suited to carry out such an attack most accurately and safely.

The bombing was carried out in full daylight by aircraft based on Guam; precise delivery of the weapons used was assured by the assistance of electronic systems ordinarily employed by these forces.

Government of South Vietnam forces are continuing attacks against Viet Cong forces in the area. END DRAFT TEST.

GP-1.

END

RUSK

~~TOP SECRET~~

25

304



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

✓
25a

June 16, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR Honorable Douglas MacArthur II
Assistant Secretary of State for
Congressional Relations

SUBJECT: Congressional Travel to Vietnam

Our soundings with the chairmen of the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees and your soundings with the chairmen of the Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees all indicate an almost uniformly cool attitude toward the idea of a combined committee trip to Vietnam such as the one we have been exploring. Under these circumstances we believe we should not proceed further with plans for the trip at this time but should reopen the question if and when new requests for congressional travel to Vietnam are received. Do you agree?

SIGNED

David E. McGiffert
Assistant to the Secretary
(Legislative Affairs)

cc: Mr. O'Brien
Mr. McGeorge Bundy

26

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26a v
File

June 17, 1965

TO: The Secretary
FROM: P - James L. Greenfield
SUBJECT: American Opinion on
Viet-Nam, June 10-16

U.S. forces in South Viet-Nam constitute the chief discussion topic during this period; some attention was given also to the Saigon government crisis. Highlights of this discussion are given here; a fuller analysis is attached.

- 1 - Extensive press discussion of the increasing U.S. military role in South Viet-Nam shows widespread acceptance of current U.S. policy.
- 2 - At the same time, many editors ask for fuller information about the role of U.S. forces there, and for fuller discussion of this role by Congress and the public.
- 3 - Although dismayed by the return to a military government in Saigon, commenting editors maintain we must carry on our efforts in South Viet-Nam.
- 4 - A few press for a cease-fire.

P/POS:HSFoster:em

27

306

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

✓ WH
#2
27a

~~SECRET~~

Bandy

Action

CONTROL : 15905
RECD : JUNE 17, 1965 10:01 AM
FROM : SAIGON
ACTION: SECSTATE PRIORITY 4220

(Being typed for the President)

Info

~~SECRET~~ JUNE 17

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State Letter 12-15-78

FOR THE PRESIDENT

By if, NARS, Date 3-26-79

N O D I S

MY FIRST ACTION UPON RETURNING FROM WASHINGTON WAS TO SEEK OUT PRIME MINISTER QUAT, GENERAL THIEU AND GENERAL KY TO FIND OUT THE MEANING OF THE ACTION OF THE QUAT GOVERNMENT IN RETURNING POLITICAL POWER TO THE MILITARY. I PRESUME THAT YOU HAVE SEEN THE RESULT OF THIS INTERVIEW REPORTED IN EMBTEL 4190. IN ESSENCE, A TEN-MAN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL INITIALLY COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF GENERALS WILL OVERSEE THE AFFAIRS OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE CHAIRMAN AND HEAD OF STATE WILL BE GENERAL THIEU, WHO WAS FORMERLY MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND GENERAL KY, FORMER COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE, WILL BECOME PRIME MINISTER WITH THE LONG-HANDLED TITLE OF "COMMISSIONER IN CHARGE OF DIRECTING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH". KY AS DE FACTO PRIME MINISTER WILL FORM A CABINET LARGELY OF CIVILIANS AND PRESENT IT FOR APPROVAL TO THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL.

WHILE THERE ARE SOME FAVORABLE ASPECTS IN THIS SITUATION, I AM DISTURBED BY THE SELECTION OF GENERAL KY AS PRIME MINISTER. WHILE HE IS A WELL-MOTIVATED, COURAGEOUS, AND PATRIOTIC OFFICER WHO HAS MATURED CONSIDERABLE OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, HE IS COMPLETELY WITHOUT THE BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE NECESSARY FOR AN ASSIGNMENT AS DIFFICULT AS THIS ONE. THE AMERICAN GENERAL OFFICER CLOSEST TO HIM DESCRIBES HIM AS "A PROUD MAN AND A FINE MILITARY COMMANDER, ALTHOUGH A NAIVE, INEXPERIENCED POLITICIAN AND CIVIL AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATOR. I BELIEVE HE WILL DO HIS ABSOLUTE BEST TO SUCCEED IN HIS NEW POSITION, BUT HE WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, MORAL SUPPORT AND A NORMAL AMOUNT OF CONSCIENTIOUS UNDERSTANDING." WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO PROVIDE THESE MISSING INGREDIENTS.

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

-2- 4220, June 17, From Saigon

SECOND ONLY TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION IS THE MILITARY. AS YOU KNOW, THE VIET CONG MONSOON OFFENSIVE IS CLEARLY ON, MARKED BY ANOTHER LARGE BATTLE (AS VIETNAMESE BATTLES GO) AT THE DISTRICT TOWN OF DONG XOAI. AS IN THE ENGAGEMENT NEAR QUANG NAGI ON MAY 29, THE VIET CONG HERE SOUGHT TO DESTROY REGULAR GVN FORCES AND WERE WILLING TO TAKE HEAVY LOSSES TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE. THEY SUCCEEDED TO THE EXTENT OF ABOUT TWO BATTALION EQUIVALENTS OF GVN CASUALTIES. THE PERFORMANCE OF THE VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN THIS VERY HOT ENGAGEMENT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN FIRST RATE.

IT IS CLEAR THAT THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE VIET CONG IS TO CHEW UP THE REGULAR FORCES OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND TO CAUSE THEIR ATTRITION TO A POINT WHERE MAJOR GEOGRAPHIC OBJECTIVES CAN BE TAKEN AND HELD FOR CONSIDERABLE PERIODS OF TIME. THEY ARE COUNTING UPON THE HABITUAL REACTION OF THE GVN TO COME TO THE AID OF REMOTE POSTS ATTACKED IN AREAS FAVORABLE TO VIET CONG AMBUSHES. SINCE GVN FORCES COME BY HELICOPTER WITH LIMITED CARGO LIFT, INEVITABLY THEY ARRIVE PIECEMEAL ON THE BATTLEFIELD AND TOO OFTEN SUFFER HEAVY CASUALTIES UPON LANDING.

AS A RESULT, OVER THE PAST THREE WEEKS, THE NUMBER OF GVN INEFFECTIVE UNITS HAS RISEN FROM TWO REGIMENTS AND THREE BATTALIONS TO FOUR REGIMENTS AND NINE BATTALIONS. INEFFECTIVENESS IS CAUSED LARGELY BY UNDER-STRENGTH CONDITIONS RESULTING FROM BATTLE LOSSES.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND IS THOROUGHLY AWARE OF THE PROBLEM AND IS STUDYING NEW TACTICS TO COPE WITH THE VIET CONG. UNFORTUNATELY, THEY ARE PRESENTING US WITH TWO ALTERNATIVES, BOTH UNATTRACTIVE, EITHER TO INTERVENE PIECEMEAL AS IN THE PAST AND TAKE THE CASUALTIES, OR TO CONCEDE THE LOSS OF REMOTE TOWNS DIFFICULT TO DEFEND. WHILE THESE TOWNS ARE NOT IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF POPULATION, THE EFFECT OF ABANDONING THEM CAN HAVE A SERIOUS EFFECT ON NATIONAL MORALE.

IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE PRESENT POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND THE VIET CONG OFFENSIVE COINCIDE WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE ALGIERS CONFERENCE WHICH BEGINS ON JUNE 29. IN ANTICIPATION OF THIS MEETING, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE VIET CONG WILL TAKE EVERY ACTION POSSIBLE TO UNDERMINE GVN PRESTIGE AND TO BOLSTER THE APPEARANCE OF STRENGTH AND LEGITIMACY OF THE LIBERATION FRONT.

TAYLOR

~~SECRET~~

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307

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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~~TOP SECRET~~

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Action
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Info

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1965 JUN 17 AM 4 43

VV MJA776SPA765JIA283
.....ZZ RUEHCR RUEKDA
DE RUMJIR 938A 17/0615Z
ZR 170602Z ZEA
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE (FLASH 4240)
INFO RUEKDA/DOD 533
RUHKA/CINCPAC FLASH 2480
STATE GRNC
BT

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 7-5-78 letter
By is, NARS, Date 1-29-80

~~TOP SECRET~~ JUN 17

E X D I S

REF A) DEPTTEL 2933; B) JCS 004081 TO CINCPAC

THERE IS APPARENTLY CONFLICT BETWEEN REF A) AND B) WITH REGARD TO PRESS RELEASE ON USE OF B-52'S. TO CLARIFY SITUATION, I RECOMMEND THAT JOINT GVN/US MISSION RELEASE BE MADE SAIGON ON CONFIRMATION COMPLETION STRIKE TO FOLLOWING EFFECT:

QUOTE IN CONTINUATION OF ZONAL ATTACKS UPON VIET CONG CONCENTRATION IN REMOTE AREAS, AT REQUEST OF GVN, 30 B-52 AIRCRAFT BASED ON GUAM TODAY BOMBED SUCH CONCENTRATION NORTH OF BEN CAT IN

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 938 ~~TOP SECRET~~
BINH DUONG PROVINCE. B-52 AIRCRAFT WERE USED BECAUSE OF THEIR GREATER BOMB CARRYING LOAD AND HENCE GREATER EFFECTIVENESS RATHER THAN TACTICAL AIRCRAFT HERETOFORE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE.

UNQUOTE.

IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, WE WOULD EXPECT TO USE SOME OF DETAILS CONTAINED IN PROPOSED DRAFT TEXT OF REF A). STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, IN OUR OPINION, SHOULD FOLLOW THIS RELEASE IN SAIGON.

TAYLOR
BT

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 4:45 A.M. JUNE 17, 1965
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, CIA, 6/17/65 - 5:00 A.M.

~~TOP SECRET~~

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308

Flash

RECEIVED
WHCA

195 JUN 17 05 36

29a
Copy given Bundy

SD888
*****ZZ RUEPWW

DE RUEHCR 15458 17/0531Z
Z 170529Z ZEA
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO RUEPWW/WHITE HOUSE ATTN MR BUNDY
RUEPIA/CIA
ZR 170515Z ZEA
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 4239
INFO RUEKDA/DOD 537
RUHLHQ/CINCPAC FLASH 2479
STATE GRNC
BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ JUN 17

WE HAVE JUST SEEN TEXT OF SECRETARY MCNAMARA'S PRESS CONF WHICH ANNOUNCES THE EARLY INTRODUCTION INTO SVN OF "SIX ADDITIONAL US BATTALIONS PLUS ADDITIONAL LOGISTIC AND OTHER SUPPORT (WHICH) HAVE BEEN REQUESTED BY GOVT OF SOUTH VIETNAM. THEY ARE NOW MOVING AND WILL BE IN PLACE WITHIN FEW WEEKS. THESE DEPLOYMENTS WILL BRING TOTAL US MILITARY PERSONNEL THERE TO 70-75,000 OF WHICH ABOUT 21,000 WILL BE GROUND COMBAT PERSONNEL".

INFO IS REQUESTED URGENTLY AS TO IDENTITY OF THESE SIX ADDITIONAL BATTALIONS AND COMPUTATION UPON WHICH FIGURES 70-75,000 AND 21,000 ARE BASED. THIS INFO IS NEEDED AT ONCE TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS OF GVN AND OF PRESS.

TAYLOR
BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

NNNN

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 12/19/77
By MJE, NARS, Date 4/12/78

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309

30a

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

10175

INDICATE: COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

F
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80
Origin
SS
Info:

ACTION: Ambassy SAIGON

FLASH 2939

JUN 17 3 15 PM '65

INFO: CINCPAC

FLASH ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

PER
S/S

EXDIS VERBATIM TEXT

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 7-5-78 letter
By is, NARS, Date 1-29-80

Ref: Deptel 2937

Following is revised version of text contained Deptel 2933. This confirmation will be issued in Washington upon receipt Saigon's telephone/cable that arelight mission completed and Saigon Mission has released statement.

Revised version as follows:

QUOTE We call your attention to the joint OVN/US Mission release just made in Saigon:

INNER QUOTE In continuation of aerial attacks upon Viet Cong concentrations in remote areas, at the request of the Government of Vietnam, 30 B-52 aircraft based on Guam today bombed a Viet Cong concentration north of Ben Cat in Binh Duong province. B-52 aircraft were used because of their greater effectiveness rather than tactical aircraft heretofore used for this purpose. END INNER QUOTE

QUOTE It had become evident in recent months that the Viet Cong were using a new tactic of concentrating forces in uninhabited areas, concealed under heavy forest canopy, prior to launching a sneak attack

Drafted by: FE:LJnger:gn	6/17/65	Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: FE - Leonard Unger
Clearances:		

The Secretary Secy. McNamara S/S - Mr. Hilliker

~~TOP SECRET~~

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~~TOP SECRET~~

against a South Vietnamese district town or other civilian population areas. They have adopted this tactic to avoid concentrating in open, more visible areas.

QUOTE The Viet Cong followed this practice prior to the attacks some ten days ago against Ba Gia in Quang Ngai province of central South Vietnam and last week in the attack against Dong Xoai, a district town north of Saigon, where they killed many civilians. Several days ago reliable intelligence indicated a new grouping of Viet Cong forces between their War Zones C and D, an uninhabited region north of Saigon that has long been a Viet Cong stronghold. The area contained a Viet Cong headquarters/ ^{and} several combat units. These Viet Cong forces evidently were preparing to launch an attack within the next day or two against one or more South Vietnamese villages or district towns.

QUOTE

/ In order to disperse and destroy these Viet Cong forces, 30 United States Air Force B-52 bombers have just carried out a pattern bombing attack against this concentration in the portion of War Zone D marked by a rectangle on the photograph (if photograph available). The area subjected to attack is approximately one by two miles; it is heavily forested and is located several miles away from any areas in South Vietnam populated by civilians. Because of the heavy forest canopy, it was not possible to pinpoint the specific Viet Cong targets -- if they were to be destroyed it could only be by an area attack, uniformly distributed and rapidly executed. B-52's were selected for this mission because their bomb-carrying capacity and equipment make them the aircraft best suited to carry out such an attack most accurately and safely.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

QUOTE The bombing was carried out in full daylight by aircraft based on Guam; precise delivery of the weapons used was assured by the assistance of electronic systems ordinarily employed by these forces.

QUOTE Government of South Vietnam forces are continuing attacks against Viet Cong forces in the area. UNQUOTE

GP-2

END

RUSK

~~TOP SECRET~~

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3/a

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OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: COLLECT
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~~TOP SECRET~~

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Origin
SS
Info

ACTION: AmEmbassy SAIGON FLASH 2940

INFO: ~~AmEmbassy~~
CINCPAC FLASH
DOD FLASH

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JUN 17 3 15 PM '65

EXDIS

Deptel 2937

Delete from joint CVN/US Mission release phrase "greater bomb carrying load and hence".

GP-2

END

DECLASSIFIED
Authority State 7-5-78 letter
By [Signature], NARS, Date 1-29-80

RUSK

Drafted by: 17 | Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: FE Leonard Unger
Clearances: FE; Unger; hjh 6/18/65

S/S - Mr. Hilliker
IDD-Secretary McNamara (in substance)
Secretary Rusk (in substance)

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OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

10592

INDICATE: collect
 CHARGE TO

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Origin
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Info:

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON

FLASH 2945

JUN 17 6 52 PM '65

INFO: CINCPAC

EXDIS

DECLASSIFIED

2

JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE

Authority State 7-5-78; OSD 9-8-78

Embtl 4239

By isf, NARS, Date 1-29-80

Six battalions referred to in ref tel are three maneuver battalions of the Army Infantry Brigade scheduled for deployment in the Qui Nhon-Nha Trang-Cam Ranh Bay area and three maneuver battalions of the Army Airborne Brigade originally scheduled to replace the 173rd Airborne Brigade (two battalions) now in country.

Realize that with deployments as presently approved, the net increase of maneuver battalions would be only four since plans envisaged withdrawal of 173rd Airborne Brigade; however, a Washington decision to retain the 173rd Airborne Brigade in SVN is pending. You will be advised as soon as decision is reached on this and other deployments discussed on Amb Taylor recent Washington visit, following which you will wish obtain GVN clearance.

The total strength of 70-75,000 would include approximately 8,000 increase in the aforementioned two brigades with the remainder of increase in air, logistics and support units and personnel.

Drafted by

FE:EMCowherd:hjh:gm 6/17/65

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by

FE - Leonard Unger

Clearances

- P - Mr. Jordan
- DDO/ISA - RAdm. Blouin (JtStf J-3-VAdm. Mustin)
- S/S - Mr. Hilliker

~~TOP SECRET~~

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~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

The 21,000 combat personnel mentioned include 13,370 reported by MACV in
brigades
NMCC telecon 111000Z and personnel in two ~~units~~ above on the way.

GP-3

END

RUSK

~~TOP SECRET~~

33

3/2

33a

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

10793

INDICATE: COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

87

Origin

ACTION: CIRCULAR TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS AND USUN, HONG-KONG,
SINGAPORE, CINCPAC FOR POLAD IMMEDIATE

JUN 17 10 06 PM '65
2536

FE

Infor

SS

Joint US/Government of Viet-Nam announcement on use of

G

SP

American B-52 aircraft to bomb Viet Cong stronghold in South Viet-Nam has

SAH

just been made in Saigon. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Department of Defense ^{follow-up} announcement has been

L

made here giving full details of strike location, reasons for use B-52's.

H

AF

Texts of announcements transmitted septel.

ARA

and if it deemed such initiative will be useful

EUR

Subject Ambassador's discretion/action addresses should ~~be~~

NEA

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ draw host government's attention to announcements.

IO

P

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ (Other posts may do so if they believe useful,

USIA

otherwise use as needed to respond to questions.) Announcement answers

NSC

INR

most questions that will arise. In discussions should be made clear

CIA

NSA

that action is in pursuance our firm determination help GVN defend self

DOD

against aggression, but does not rpt not represent ^{any new departure} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ in

AID

war.

If questioned on previous use of Strategic Air Command, you may say that SAC was set up in March 1946, flew more than 21,000 sorties in Korean war between July 13, 1950 (its first use in combat) and July 1953. ~~Also if questioned, you may say that SAC was set up with conventional aircraft~~

RISK

Drafted by: FE:MLBreckon;hjh 6/17	Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: FE-Leonard Unger
Clearance: EUR-Mr. Davis	IO- Mr. Cleveland NEA/SOA - Mr. Lakeland (substance)

XXX
NEA-
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FORM 8-63 DS-322 Authority State Lt 12/19/77
By MJE NARS, Date 4/12/78

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ACTION ADDRESSEES:

PARIS (Also for USRO)
ROME
BONN
BRUSSELS
THE HAGUE
OTTAWA
BANGKOK
SEOUL
VIENTIANE
TOKYO
KUALA LUMPUR
MANILA
NEW DELHI
WELLINGTON
~~USRO~~

INFO:

Other Addressees

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

34

313

34a

10803

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

UNCLASSIFIED

87

Origin
FE
Info:
SS
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NEA
IO
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USIA
NSC
INR
CIA
NSA
DOD
AID

ACTION: CIRCULAR ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS AND USUN, HONG KONG, SINGAPORE,

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE 2537

JUN 17 11 11 PM '65

VERBATIM

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Following is text of announcement issued by Department of Defense tonight:

QUOTE We call your attention to the joint GVN/US Mission release just made in Saigon:

INNER QUOTE In continuation of zonal attacks upon Viet Cong concentrations in remote areas, at the request of the Government of Vietnam, 29 B-52 aircraft based on Guam today bombed a Viet Cong concentration north of Ben Cat in Binh Duong province. B-52 aircraft were used because of their greater effectiveness rather than tactical aircraft heretofore used for this purpose. END INNER QUOTE

QUOTE It had become evident in recent months that the Viet Cong were using a new tactic of concentrating forces in uninhabited areas, concealed under heavy forest canopy, prior to launching a sneak attack against a South Vietnamese district town or other civilian population areas. ~~They have adapted this tactic to avoid concentrating in open, accessible areas.~~

QUOTE The Viet Cong followed this practice prior to the attacks

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some ten days ago against Ba Gia in Quang Ngai province of central South Vietnam and last week in the attack against Dong Xoai, a district town north of Saigon, ~~where they killed many civilians~~ where many civilians died. Several days ago reliable intelligence indicated a new grouping of Viet Cong forces between their War Zones C and D, ~~in an uninhabited region north of Saigon, that has long been a Viet Cong stronghold~~ in an uninhabited region north of Saigon, ~~that has long been a Viet Cong stronghold~~. The area contained a Viet Cong headquarters and several combat units. These Viet Cong forces evidently were preparing to launch ~~an~~ a surprise attack within the next day or two against one or more South Vietnamese villages or district towns.

QUOTE In order to disperse and destroy these Viet Cong forces, ²⁹ ~~20~~ United States Air Force B-52 bombers have just carried out a pattern bombing -- utilizing non-nuclear, high-explosive bombs -- against this concentration attack ~~against this concentration in the portion of War Zone D marked by a rectangle on the photograph (if photograph available)~~ in the area. ~~by a rectangle on the photograph (if photograph available)~~. The area subjected to attack is approximately one by two miles; it is heavily forested and is located several miles away from any areas in South Vietnam populated by civilians. Because of the heavy forest canopy, it was not possible to pinpoint the specific Viet Cong targets -- if they were to be destroyed it could only be by an area attack, uniformly distributed and rapidly executed. B-52's were selected for this mission because their bomb-carrying capacity and equipment make them the aircraft best suited to carry out such an attack most accurately and safely.

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QUOTE The bombing was carried out in full daylight by aircraft based on Guam; precise delivery of the weapons used was assured by the assistance of electronic systems ordinarily employed by these forces.

QUOTE Government of South Vietnam/^{ground}forces are continuing attacks against Viet Cong forces in the area. UNQUOTE

END

RUSK

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