

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

1 of 3

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#40 Cable	JCS TS Gp 3 unnumbered JCS to Cincpac 2 p	JCSlu. 2/10/77 8/4/64	A

FILE LOCATION

NSF Country File
Vietnam Gulf of Tonkin (Misc.) 1964

RESTRICTION CODES

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2 of 3

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#48 Cable	DOD S Gp 3 0101a 2/9/77 161407Z fm Cincpacflt to Cincpac 8 p	8/16/64	A

FILE LOCATION

NSF Country File

Vietnam Gulf of Tonkin (Misc.) 1964

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3 of 3

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
	<i>audience spec OSD by 3/3/77 unless otherwise noted</i> To be submitted to Defense for concurrence.		
#1 List	WH S Questions which may be asked & answers 9 p	8/16/64	A
#43 List	WH TS Units alerted and/or moved... 2 p	undated	A
#5 Time chart	WH S of Tonkin Gulf events 1 p	undated	A
#5a Time chart	WH S of Tonkin Gulf events 1 p	undated	A
#19	duplicate of #5a		
#20	duplicate of #5a		
#29 Transcript	<i>> duplicate of 26a open 1-29-89</i> of 8/4 5/64 telephone conversations in DOD 74 pp	undated	A
#29a Transcript	<i>of McNamara-Sharp phone conversations 3 pp open 9-16-86</i>		A
#26a Transcript	of 8/4 5/64 telephone conversations in DOD 73 pp	undated	A
<i>more released 8/4/95 NY 94-104</i>	<i>duplicate of #29)</i>	<i>73 pp sanitized 11-17-82</i>	<i>is NLJ 82-188</i>
<i>#26b Transcript of McNamara-Sharp phone</i>	<i>OPEN 5/11/12/05 conversation</i>	<i>3 pp. undated</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>NY PAC</i>	<i>open 11-17-82</i>		
	<i>NLJ 82-188</i>		

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~~SECRET~~

QUESTIONS WHICH MAY BE ASKED

16 August 1964

Keep loose from base

Question 1: How many aircraft, and what type of aircraft, were used on each strike?

Answer: A total of 59 aircraft were used, grouped as follows:

Group 1	4 A-1's	Group 7	2 A-4's
Group 2	6 A-4's	Group 8	4 A-1's
Group 3	6 F-8's	Group 9	10 A-4's
Group 4	4 F-8's	Group 10	5 A-4's
Group 5	8 A-4's	Group 11	4 A-1's
Group 6	6 F-8's		

Question 2: At what times were each group of these aircraft launched and what were their positions at 11:34 p.m. EDT?

Group	Times Launched	Positions 11:34 p.m.	Assigned Target
Group 1	050243Z	Enroute to target	VINH/BEN THUY/
Group 2	050421Z	On carrier	PHUC LOI Complex
Group 3	050416Z	On carrier	"
Group 4	050800Z	On carrier	"
Group 5	050800Z	On carrier	"
Group 6	050434Z	On carrier	QUANG KHE
Group 7	050800Z	On carrier	HON ME
Group 8	050500Z	On carrier	HON GAY
Group 9	050630Z	On carrier	HON GAY
Group 10	050630Z	On carrier	LOC CHAO
Group 11	050500Z	On carrier	LOC CHAO

Question 3: What courses did the aircraft follow and at what speed and altitude?

Answer: Courses were flown toward targets in a generally north-west direction but curving to avoid Hainan Island. Speeds were combat speeds as discussed in Question 5, below.

Altitudes:	HON GAY	A-1	1,000-5,000 ft. ✓
		A-4	25,000-30,000 ft. ✓
	LOC CHAO	A-1	1,000-5,000 ft. ✓
		A-4	25,000-30,000 ft. ✓
	VINH/BEN THUY	A-1	13,000 ft. ✓
		A-4	25,000 ft. ✓
	HON ME	A-4	25,000 ft. ✓
	QUANG KHE	F-8	25,000 ft. ✓

Question 4: Where were the aircraft carriers at 10:36 (050236Z) (first launch) and what courses did they follow from that time through the time of the last strike:

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Answer: The USS Ticonderoga steamed various courses in the vicinity of its assigned Reconnaissance Point (16-04N, 110-16E). The USS Constellation steamed to the South-East from an initial position of 17-34N, 111-34E.

Question 5: What are the operational characteristics of the three types of aircraft used: speed ("Operational," maximum), ordnance capabilities, range, navigation (bad weather), etc.?

Answer: A4C - CARRIER COMBAT AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES

Jet attack A/C

Radius - 500 NM with inflight refueling

True Air Speed - 431 KTS

Combat Speed - 532 KTS

Ordnance - Total Weight 7000 LB

Ordnance Racks Available - 2

BOMB LOAD COMBINATION

1 - 2000# LD	8 - 500# LD
3 - 1000# GP	3 - 250# GP
3 - 1000# LD	18 - 250# LD
3 - 500# GP	3 - 220/260# FRAGS

INCENDIARY

3 - 1000# MK 79

3 - 500# MK 77

MISSILES

3 - BULLPUP

4 - SIDE WINDERS

8 - ZUNI

55 - 2.75" Folding Fin Aircraft Rockets

GUNS

2 - 20MM 100 Rounds/Gun

INFLIGHT REFUEL

YES

DROP TANKS

YES

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The Bomb Load, Missile Load, and number of guns will vary according to the mission assigned.

AIH - CARRIER COMBAT AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES

Propeller driven A/C

Radius - 561 NM

True Air Speed - 170 KTS

Combat Speed - 266 KTS

Ordnance - Total Weight 8600 LB

Ordnance Stations Available - 14

BOMB LOAD COMBINATIONS

3 - 2000# GP/LD	15 - 250# LD
3 - 1000# GP/LD	15 - 100# GP
11 - 500# GP/LD	15 - 250/260# FRAGS
11 - 250# GP	15 - 100# FRAGS

INCENDIARY BOMBS

9 - 500# CLUSTER

3 - 1000# MK 79

3 - 750# MK 77-0

9 - 500# MK 77-1

MISSILES

12 - 5" HVAR

8 - AERO 7D 2.75 FFAR 19 Rockets to POD - Total 152

8 - AERO 6A ROC PAG 7 Rockets/POD - 56 Total

GUNS

4 - 20MM 200 RDS/GUN - Total 800 RDS

INFLIGHT REFUEL

NO

DROP TANKS

YES

The Bomb Load and Missile Load will vary with mission.

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SECRET

F8D/E CARRIER COMBAT AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES

Jet driven A/C
Radius 320 NM
True Air Speed - 495
Combat Speed - 570
Ordnance - Total Weight - 4000#

BOMB LOAD COMBINATIONS

2 - 2000# GP
2 - 2000# LD
2 - 1000# LD
8 - 500# LD
12 - 250# LD

MISSILES

2 BULLPUP (F8E ONLY)
4 - SIDEWINDERS
8 - ZUNI

GUNS

4 - 20MM 144 ROUNDS/GUN

INFLIGHT REFUELING

YES

DROP TANKS

NO

The Bomb Load, Missile Load, and Number of Guns will vary according to the mission assigned.

Question 6: What is the basis for saying the North Vietnamese had picked up the attacking aircraft on radar at 11:34?

Answer: The aircraft carriers were within the radar coverage range of known Communist shore-based radar.

Question 7: Which of the aircraft had been picked up in that time, where were they, and how did the North Vietnamese know they were about to conduct a strike (rather than flying cover or patrolling)?

Answer: Don't know. However, the North Vietnamese had the capability to pick them up. We had to assume they knew it and evidence indicates that they did know it. Standard air defense procedures should react to a raid of this size; we know the ChiComs have such procedures.

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Question 8: When was the decision made to conduct the strikes, and why weren't they made earlier?

Answer: a. Message of execution was JCS 7720 to CINCPAC, DTG 042119Z (5:19 p.m. EDT, 4 Aug 64)

b. The Operational Commander's outline plan had given reaction times for selected sizes of strikes. The time was 9 hours for this size, which included briefing the pilots, arming the aircraft and flight time to targets. This was achieved and even surpassed.

Question 9: Why weren't all the strikes simultaneous.

Answer: This was the Operational Commander's choice. He needed to be able to recycle some aircraft before darkness.

It was assumed that aircraft presence was known anyway.

Question 10: Did any of the aircraft participating in the strikes fly more than one sortie, and if so, how many and why?

Answer: Twentyone aircraft were recycled in order to augment the total effort.

Question 11: Were the two carrier task forces capable of mounting the attack on all objectives when the decision was made, and if not, why not?

Answer: Yes. They were in position within the preplanned reaction time and, in fact, did make the attack.

Question 12: Did the failure to make all strikes simultaneously affect the success of the later strikes?

Answer: Some of the later strikes were more successful than the earlier ones.

Question 13: Compare the effectiveness of the earlier strikes conducted by aircraft from TICONDEROGA with the effectiveness of the later strikes conducted by CONSTELLATION aircraft.

Answer: See attached composition chart.

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Question 14: Do we know whether any North Vietnamese patrol craft were able to put to sea or otherwise evade attack by reason of (a) the 99 minutes warning; (b) the lapse of time between strikes?

Answer: We don't know, however, of their inventory of 42 boats more than half were sunk or damaged.

Question 15: Was the anti-aircraft fire more intense by reason of (a) the 99 minutes warning; (b) the lapse of time between strikes?

Answer: Did not appear to make any noticeable over-all difference. See attached analysis by targets.

Question 16: The LOC CHAO raid appears to be relatively less successful, i.e., one aircraft lost, one damaged, only two patrol craft out of six hit. Why?

Answer: LOC CHAO had only nine aircraft while HON GAY, for example, had 14 with twice as many jets. This may have made a difference.

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~~SECRET~~

COMPARISON TICONDEROGA - CONSTELLATION

CATEGORIES OF COMPARISON

CVA/TARGET	TYPE ACFT	NR. SORTIES	NR. ACFT LOST	NR. ACFT DAMAGED	CATEG- ORY OF TARGET	RESULTS	
						SIGHTED	DESTROYED DAMAGED
USS TICONDEROGA							
QUANG KHE	F-8	6	0	0	PGM/PT PC	7 1	0 0 5 1 (Beached)
HON ME	A-4	2	0	0	PGM-PT	6	3 3
VINH/BEN THUY/ PHUC LOI COMPLEX							
1ST STRIKE	F-8	6	0	1	PGM/PT	6	0 8 2 GUNS
	A-4	6	0	0	POL TANKS		
	A-1	4	0	0	AAA POSITION		
2ND STRIKE	F-8	4	0	0	POL TANKS		2-4
	A-4	8	0	0	AAA POSITION		5 GUNS
USS CONSTELLATION							
HON GAY	A-1	4	0	0			
	A-4	10	1	0	PGM/PT	5	5
LOC CHAO	A-1	4	1	1			
	A-4	5	0	0	PGM/PT	5	5

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~~SECRET~~

ANALYSIS BY TARGETS: (QUESTION #15)

✓ VINH - 1st strike TOT 051325H
2nd strike TOT 051645H

CTG 77.5 051310Z final summary reported moderate AAA fire during 1st strike. Two-gun AAA position near storage area struck and destroyed.

During 2nd strike reported heavy concentration AAA fire from a 6-gun position which was hit and 5 guns destroyed.

Conclude that defenses were neither strong nor alert during 1st strike. Additional AAA guns apparently brought into position after 1st strike.

✓ QUANG KHE - TOT 051315H

CTG 77.5 051310Z reported one aircraft hit by single .30 cal. No injuries or other aircraft hit.

Conclude that AA defense was neither alert nor effective.

✓ LOC CHAO - TOT 051525H

CTG 77.6 051000Z and 051330Z strike FLASH report reported AA fire from boats.

One group struck by A-4's encountered moderate 20-mm fire.

One group struck by A-1's encountered light 37-mm fire and heavy AAMG fire.

Six boats were located in two groups of 3 boats each approximately 6 miles apart. Conclude that since boats were not underway that they had not been alerted.

HON GAY - TOT 051540H

CTG 77.6 final sitrep 051430Z reported:

5 boats observed in harbor. A-4's made first attack followed by A-1's who observed boats underway.

All aircraft experienced moderate to intense light AA fire from numerous positions located on 50 ft. hill overlooking harbor and from machine guns on all boats throughout the attack.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

Conclude that possibility exists that in the approximately 2 hour interval between the first strike at Vinh and the TOT at Hon Gay AA defense forces at Hon Gay were alerted. This possibility is weakened, however, by the fact that the boats did not get underway until after the strike started. Best naval practice would have called for having the boats disperse or underway prior to the strike.

HON ME armed recce TOT 051715H ✓

Boats may have been alerted, but defense was ineffective regardless.

~~SECRET~~

12
1118

12

1248

4

848

2

4.30

BOB HARVEY

59082

SPLIT

Sting
my way

2400	1200	2000	800
0100	100	2100	900
0200	200	2200	1000
0300	300	2300	1100
0400	400		
0500	500		
0600	600		
0700	700		
0800	800	1. When deer make about 1000 2. Start land at 7:00 PM	
0900	900		
1000	1000		
1100	1100		
1200	1200		
1300	100		
1400	200		
1500	300		
1600	400		
1700	500		
1800	600		
1900	700		

YN Loukinshin JCS Msg Center 5337

3

CTF 77 050300Z

1st launch CVA-14 050243Z

TOT EST 050510Z

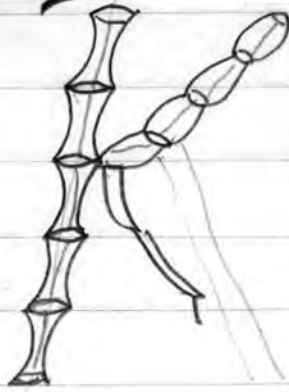
CTG 77.6 050128Z

Recommend TOT 1545H

CTG 77.6 050347Z

Simultaneous TOT 050745Z

⑦ 23456 →



C+K 77.

050300

TOR 0504362

C+G 77.6

050128

TOR 0502262

C+G 77.6

050347

" 0506142

PRES ANNOUNCEMENT

ALL TIMES ZEBRA

GROUP

0230 0300 0330 0400 0430 0500 0530 0600 0630 0700 0730 0800 0830 0900 0930 1000

~~SECRET~~

Ticonderoga

1 (4 A-1s)

L 0243

2 (6 A-1s)

L 0424 VINH 0525 ("")

3 (6 F-8s)

L 0416 VINH 0525 ("")

4 (4 F-8s)

L 0800 VINH 0845 (no surprise)

5 (8 A-1s)

L 0800 VINH 0845 (no surprise)

6 (6 F-8s)

L 0434 DANIE 0515 KHE (surprise? 9 PTs getting under way)

7 (2 A-1s)

L 0800 DANIE 0915 KHE (surprise?)

Constellation

8 (4 A-1s)

L 0500

9 (10 A-1s)

L 0630 HON GAY 0740 (5 boats at anchor)

10 (5 A-1s)

L 0630 LOC CHAD 0725 (5 PTs under way)

11 (4 A-1s)

L 0500 LOC CHAD 0725** ("")

59

* Pilot lost on 2d pass. Alvarez. Boats at anchor. 2d in column.
 ** Pilot lost on 1st pass. Boats opened fire first. Sather 3d in column.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority OSMA 3/3/07

By ang, NAKS, Date 4/24/77

5-b

NAVAL MESSAGE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

NAVY DEPARTMENT

REFERENCE FLASH FLASH	(ACTION) INFO	RELEASED BY	DRAFTED BY	EXT. NO.
-----------------------------	------------------	-------------	------------	----------

ROUTING CHANGE

Z 110432Z
FM CINCPACFLT

TO RUECW/CNO

INFO RUMGZL/COMSEVENTHFLT

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 11652 SEC. 5(A) and (D)
By JB, NARS, Date 5/4/26

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TICONDEROGA PRESS INTERVIEWS (C)

1. FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM CTF 77: QUOTE REF A IS ANSWERED IN TWO PARTS. PART ONE DIRECTS ANSWER TO ADM MOORE'S COMMENTS REGARDING STRIKE LAUNCH TIME. PART TWO TO DANIEL'S COMMENTS RE ATTACKING BASES. THIS IS PART ONE. FOLLOWING IS TAKEN FROM TAPE. QUESTION: WERE OUR PLANES IDENTIFIABLE BY ENEMY RADAR BY THE TIME THE PRESIDENT BEGAN SPEAKING AT I BELIEVE 11:36 P.M. EDT IN WASH AUG 4 OR 11:36 HERE AUG 5 UNQUOTE. INTERVIEWER CONTINUED TO EXPLAIN QUOTE THAT SOME ONE IN WASH RAISED THE QUESTION THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD FIRED TOO SOON AND GAVE THE ENEMY WARNING UNQUOTE. ADM MOORE'S ANSWER "I DON'T THINK HE DID, YOU KNOW THERE IS A TIME LAG THERE BETWEEN THE TIME THE PRESS AND RADIO GET A REPORT LIKE THAT AND BY THE TIME IT GETS TO AN OPERATIONAL STAFF AND GETS FILTERED OUT AS TO WHETHER THIS IS JUST SOME" INTERRUPTED HERE BY INTERVIEW WHO SAID "WELL THE PRESIDENT STARTED SPEAKING AT ABOUT 11:36 AT WHAT TIME DID YOU LAUNCH THE FIRST PLANE. SHORTLY AFTER, DIDN'T YOU?" ADM MOORE "NO, WE LAUNCHED OUR FIRST PLANES AT 10:36" INTERVIEWER: "WELL THEN HOW LONG WOULD IT HAVE TAKEN THEM, APPROX THEN, FOR MY INFO (ONLY)." -

007 ACT
00 09 090 03 06 00 92 94 IP FLAGPLOT BFR
ADD: ASD(PA) PER 037/12AUG64/RRL/5
- ADVANCED COPIES DELIVERED

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CONTROL NO. 14513/BL/LL	CIRCUIT NO. N026	PAGE 1	OF 2	PAGES	TIME OF RECEIPT 11/0416Z AUG	DATE TIME GROUP 110402Z AUG 64
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(When filled in)

PRECEDENCE	ACTION	RELEASED BY	DRAFTED BY	EXT. NO.
	INFO			

ADM MOORE, "WELL THEY WERE UP THERE ABOUT AN HOUR AND 23 MINUTES AFTER THE PRESIDENT STARTED. I THINK THERE WAS PLENTY OF TIME FOR THEM (NOT TO BE ALERTED).
 INTERVIEWER: "PLENTY OF TIME NOT BE ALERTED. WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXPLAIN THAT SIR?" YOUR ANSWER MAY BE MIS-CONSTRUED BECAUSE THE FACT IS THAT SOME PAPERS HAVE MADE A POINT OF THIS, WHY I PUT THE QUESTION IN TO GET YOU CLARIFICATION AS TO WHETHER IN OTHER WORDS PRESIDENT JOHNSONS SPEECH IN YOUR VIEW ALERTED ENEMY TO OUR PLANES COMING IN.

ADM MOORE: "I DON'T THINK IT DID.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: "DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE PLANES WERE ON WHATEVER RADAR MAY BE AVAIL TO THESE PEOPLE AT THE TIME THE PRESIDENT BEGAN SPEAKING ADM MOORE
 "WELL, I THINK THEY WOULD HAVE GOTTEN THEM ON RADAR REGARDLESS."

THIS ENDS PART ONE

1. THIS IS PART 2 REF B.

THIS IS TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM TAPE

QUESTION: WHAT IF YOU ARE ATTACKED AGAIN; DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER RETALIATION PLANS PREPARED?

ANSWER: YES SIR, WE ARE PLANNED WAY AHEAD, WE HOPE THAT ON ANYTHING THAT MAY COME UP. OUR PLANS INCLUDE, WE HOPE, ANY POSSIBLE CONTINGENCY.

QUESTION: WELL IN THE EVENT THAT IF YOU ARE ATTACKED WOULD YOU HAVE TO WAIT ORDERS FROM WASHINGTON TO RETALIATE?

ANSWER: NO SIR, WE DO NOT HAVE TO WAIT ORDERS IF WE ARE ATTACKED UNPROVKED, IF THE ATTACKED COMES WE HAVE OUR ORDERS TO DESTROY AT THE TIME, PURSUE IF THEY GET AWAY, AND TO DESTROY IF WE CAN FIND THEM. END

2. BELIEVE CAUSE OF MISINTERPRETATION IS USE OF WORD QUOTE. RETALIATION UNQUOTE. REPULSING AN ATTACK AND A RETALITORY STRIKE ARE OF COURSE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS THAT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN WRAPPED INTO ONE PACKAGE.

3. THIS ENDS PART TWO

GP-4

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CONTROL NO.	CIRCUIT NO.	PAGE	OF	PAGES	TIME OF RECEIPT	DATE TIME GROUP
24513/		2		2		113402Z AUG 6

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(When filled in)

5c

UPI A157N HC

URGENT

2ND NIGHT LEAD GOLDWATER (A138N)

BY JOHN GOLDSMITH

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

BALBOA, CALIF., AUG. 4 (UPI)--REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE BARRY M. GOLDWATER TONIGHT EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S COURSE OF ACTION IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIA CRISIS, INCLUDING USE OF DIRECT MILITARY AIR ACTION AGAINST NORTH VIET NAM GUNBOATS AND SUPPORTING FACILITIES.

"I BELIEVE IT IS THE ONLY THING HE CAN DO UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES," SAID GOLDWATER IN A BRIEF PREPARED STATEMENT ISSUED AFTER A PERSONAL TELEPHONE CALL FROM THE PRESIDENT OUTLINING HIS POLICY.

"WE CANNOT ALLOW THE AMERICAN FLAG TO BE SHOT AT ANYWHERE ON EARTH IF WE ARE TO RETAIN OUR RESPECT AND PRESTIGE," SAID THE ARIZONA SENATOR, WHO LONG HAS BEEN AN ADVOCATE OF A FIRMER POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

"I AM SURE THAT EVERY AMERICAN WILL SUBSCRIBE TO THE ACTIONS OUTLINED IN THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT," GOLDWATER SAID.

GOLDWATER'S RESPONSE ACTUALLY WAS RELEASED ALMOST AN HOUR BEFORE THE PRESIDENT WENT BEFORE THE NATION TO SPELL OUT THE STEPS HE TOOK TO MEET THE CRISIS, WHICH FOLLOWED A SECOND ATTACK ON U.S. DESTROYERS. -WA 12014EM

GOLDWATER, BEFORE BOARDING A CHARTERED PLANE TONIGHT FOR WASHINGTON, D.C., WAS ASKED IF THE PRESIDENT ASKED HIS SUPPORT.

"I TOLD HIM I THOUGHT ALL AMERICANS WOULD STAND BEHIND HIS DECISION," SAID GOLDWATER; HIS FLIGHT ON THE CHARTERED DRUMMOND GULF-STREAM WAS EXPECTED TO REACH WASHINGTON, D. C., ABOUT 7 A.M. EDT.

GOLDWATER AIDES CONFIRMED A SERIES OF THREE TELEPHONE ATTEMPTS BY THE PRESIDENT TO REACH SENATOR GOLDWATER WHEN HE WAS ABOARD THE YACHT SUNDANCE, UNAWARE OF TODAY'S ATTACK ON U.S. DESTROYERS BY NORTH VIET NAM GUNBOATS.

WHEN GOLDWATER DID LEARN OF THE PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS TO REACH HIM, HE RETURNED ON THE YACHT AND MADE A TELEPHONE CALL AT 7:07 P.M. PDT TO THE PRESIDENT.

ASKED TONIGHT WHAT HAD HAPPENED, GOLDWATER SAID "THE PRESIDENT CALLED ME AND WE TALKED." HIS AIDES EXPLAINED THE CHRONOLOGY OF JOHNSON'S THREE ATTEMPTS TO REACH GOLDWATER AND THE LATTER'S SUBSEQUENT TELEPHONE CALL TO THE PRESIDENT.

WA 12014EM

See Burchinal

8:45 MVB JS AM

- ① Target list potential ones
Look at target folders.
Types .

Confusion

JCS meety.

Recommend.

Bury Paul.

B+R - how to retaliate
JCS to consider -

RMVB separately
Level of response.
Chips plan.

1333
4
9

CALL LOG

7

3AV664

4 AUGUST

10:04 AM

Call
General

Mc K. ^{Kutcheon}

CINCPAC (1-3) → Brumwell

Fleet & Task Force are alerted to threat

TICO - alerted

CONNIE - ^{left} Hoyt yesterday

→ Bring Connie down to SVN.

Burchinall: Take a look at possible retaliatory
plans. Mc plans. but line.

SHARP - Burchinall

10:59 AM

Burchinall's
office
(McNS)

1. Sharp: What we might hit:

HON ME ISLAND

PT BASE.

HONG ME

Connie could strike easily

QUANG KHE

Burchinall
DISCUSS.

BEN THUY - PHUC LOI

ELIMINATED ONE NEAR HAIPHONG

TO HAVE McNAMARA

Burchinall: TICO = MINING CAPABILITY

TO BE MOUNTED (or CONNIE) 48 HRS.
TO DO.

Telephone CALLS

8

10:19 McNamee to Shimp.

- (1) Maddon attack information
Slight change in rules of engagement
3 min. limit aft only
- (2) Examine hill capability of
Maddon to destroy craft
attacking. + air also.
~~Examine hill~~ Whatever
you need. Wants air
support. Beinhull here.
- (3) ~~Si~~ Si: TICO has 3 destroyers
J04 has good battery

(A) Cables on time?

10:59 AM

Shap → Bumbul
(already here)

CONNIE COULD SUPPORT NOW

IS SPEEDED UP

2 CUA'S READY TO GO.

B: Air against boat, then

S: And see along coast.

"say go"

Other targets discussed

BOTH CAPABILITIES "CRANKED UP"

CONNIE CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT AS NEEDED.

ST REPS COMING.

11:18 AM Shap → Brumell

S: Shooting started
Stopedas dodged.
Possible rammy.
Is it on air action by PT's
Mining capability → Connie
Option to mining. Take 48 hrs.

B: LOC CHAD ESTUARY IS
HIDING PLACE for PT's.

Armed recess

B: More severe than armed recess.

~~S: S:~~ S: Suggests armed recess
first. "open recess" we'll take.

B: Sec State; What Home mess

✓ WHSR - Pac Reel NMCC
12:13

Air support for destroyers - When?

12:22 Sharp - Bump

S: { 9 torpedoes. All missed
2 PT boats sunk - T.J. guns
No enemy air.
Bogey not confirmed.
Connie - has CAP over scene.
is closing.
T+C close enough to support
each other.
Open seas on PT's.

Rules of Engagement
Hot point for apt

→ B: Dig out target material on
Phoc Loi Quang Khe
VINH POL

1:01 PM Ship → Bunker

S: Rules of engagement on deck.

CHICOM DE V attack - reass. certainty.

Possibly Sound of Hainan.

Gets. 400 km.

Panang. Last night.

Can't let bogey over carrier.

B: ^{chips of} At W. H. Security of four put out

1:03 PM

WHSR - CCTI

OHMOR
ENTER

WH: NSC broken up.

McCONR, MCN, ROSIE LUNCH with Pres

BUNDY. AT White House

Be sure getting Mordecai message

(White Hne)

1:24 PM McNam - Bunker

~~McN~~ ^G McN further report?

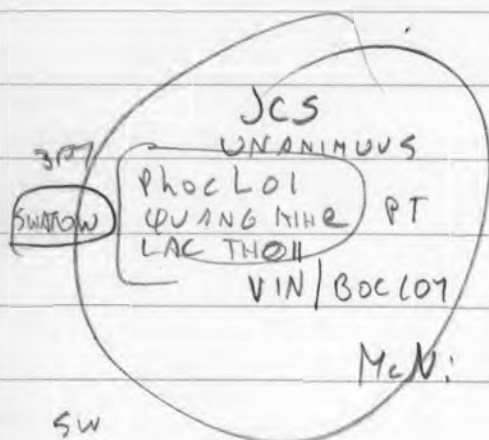
B: abrupt security order - 1L 28g

JCS - come of action (3)

a) low level - PHOC LOI + VINH

b) 2 SWATOW BASES + LOC BINH + DIL

c) all 5 ^{SWATOW} bases + oil + Haiphong



McN: Further action reports.

Call sharp.

~~request~~ more SITREP.

Get on radio

1:28

B → Sharp

B: McNamee from WH called
news of urgent
~~Get on radio~~

S: 2 sunk

~~Down~~

B: Get on radio directly.

S: 13 torpedoes launched.

TICO airt attack

CONNIE airt on scene.

1:59 Ship - B

S: Cent contact ship by radio
Expedite sit reps also.
Contacts + Torpedoes downful.
No ^{FINER WEATHER} visual return of Madden
T.J. still going

B: Will pass on to Mc Namara.

2108

S - B:

S: More recent info on atlas

BPT sunk

Weather rept.

Weather ^{ERW6} likely Hapen, apt

No contacts on radar screen.

May torpedo in water from

Sonar; my inaccuracy

* No doubt about Torpedo attack.

3: odd on recorder



3:34 PM

MOSTIN → DD Ops

- ① Miller enroute message by typed up
- ② JCS to review
- ③ Open line transmission
- ④ Sharp knows its coming
- ⑤ JCS in session

4:40PM

S - B

- S:
- ① Message in Sec Refs offers ready to go
 - ② Still a slight amount of doubt on action
 - ③ Some definite info. needed on attack - to ask Mosser.
 - ④ Some visual identification
 - ⑤ "No go" till attack confirmed
 - ⑥ ~~Can you land~~

3:13

B: Can you land by 7

S: "You'll be tight" but that's so just as well to wait a hour.

B: One more go.

S: That message. Reconfirming message.

B: OK, if as message.

S: Kind of be reconfirmed. So my place at once. Reconfirming.

S: 70 airt for 2

5:00PM Jones (JCS) → NMCC Pac Desk

"Gold room"

JCS wants forecast on weather ^{target} over
0700 target time.

W | G | H |
 x
 0700

S:23

S → B

S: 1933 - Sacramento 2 ships
 (UN message piled),
 Admission by NVN.
 Shows they there at on here.
 Also must start do plans.
 7th fleet recap.

Turner 107 - 2 PT's destroyed
 Satisfied with evidence.

S is satisfied

3130

S. THIS IS COMING OF A7
^{WASH TIME}
 2000 - SHOOTING ON "GOLF"
 TIME. USED "HOTEL" IN OUR
 MESSAGE. THEY'LL MEET IT.
 AT 0700 LOCAL TIME.

Will CHANGE 2000 on the
 7:00 local

They'll meet it.

Will call 6 M & N

Also here in M

(8:29)

USTIN

M → DDO (SMITH)
NMCC

Confusion about time in
Gulf of Tonkin. but on teletype
to sleep out

Sargent time

Carries time also

Is there any difference. 12-11 hr
difference. In JCS tank.

CINCPAC was room. difference in time.

IR
63472

CON
63472

(5:33)

000 (Smart) - McTulch

Time in Bay of Tonkin

Carriers vs. Saigon

CINCPACFLT TOLD TO GO ON
GOLF on hotel time

But went on Golf time to 7th Floor

Realizing car use entire hour

SNARE SAYS TO USE
Use golf time:

2000 Wash Time (8:00 PM)

~~1900~~ ~~1900~~

0700 out local time.

What is time in Bay of Tonkin carriers

HOTEL TIME:

1900 Wash time

0700 hotel

13 th GOLF	12 HOTEL
SAIGON TARBOYS	SOUTH CHINA POSITION ON CARDIANS
CINCPACFLT TO 7 ON GOLF 21 HQ. NOOP-	CINCPAC ON HOTEL

S: 39 S → B

S: ~~Indicates~~
Time is laund time
0700 local

B: Arguent and clod
EDT - 12⁰⁰ difference
5:40 PM here.

S: 4:40 Sargatins

6:07

S → B

- ⊕ S: Are satisfied that
attack. Have message that
says go. See Ref satisfied.
B: He says you are on highway.
Shor is on road.

0400

S: ^{TOLD CINCPAC} Suppress fire part of game.
Press should not get stay
at 1900 EDT.

B: Are correct. ^{we will insure NOTHING} Early com out
and you are on target. ^{Till 7000}
^{ON TARGET.}

S: 2100 your time.

B: Much later, meeting over

^{Divert now}
B: Will OPLAN 34 - NO possibility of anyone reading this.

S: CINCPAC to go.

B: OPLAN 34 to agent area. if change
mildly is intended focus to other.

S: Won't call along. Will event.

24 - 12
23 - 11
22 - 10
21 - 9

7:59 PM

~~NE~~ NMCC - CINCPAC P. PAGE

① 041759 Z

NMCC OFF TIMES NO'S AND TYPES

CINCPAC NOTHING 107

CAP AGAINST EARLIER

805

Wheeler → Burling

W: Ayrly Lapping (Pres. enter office)

B: Clear line - no word

W: Let me know when word

1st round
at 12:00
weekend

7:

8:

OFFICE

8:39

McN → Ship

McN - what about land?

S - not heard yet. Probably
will give us coord rpt.

McN - radio - ^{are} taking off; if not
when? 40 mins ^{late}. ^{ordered} ^{line of} ^{take-off}

S - will try. Will give a
coord t/10 report after launch

4:19

4:21

* McN = ^{need immediate statement. PROBABLY IS} Hang on t news
^{GOES TO PEOPLE} ~~Heldy~~ Heldy had
40 min past times I told him
we could land.

~~Land over target~~

S: ^{CINPAC DIRECT} same over target

McN ^{LAUNCH OVER} TARGET - 1 hr.

McN 1st ones over target

S: ^{Don't have plan of land} If all go at once, so

McN. When land; When ^{plans} ^{first one} over target.

9:09

S → McN (office)

S: One carrier, (maybe for bad)

T/LAUNCH - not for 50 minutes
COULDN'T MAKE TIME.

McN Oh my God!

S: 11:00 PM .. LAST OVER TARGET.

McN. LAUNCH - 50 MINUTES NOW (10:00 PM WASH TIME)
LAST TO 7 MIDNIGHT WASH (LAST)

S: DON'T KNOW 1ST TO T.

ATTACK. ALL AT SAME TIME

COORDINATED. COMPRESSION OF TIME = DELAY

HOW SERIOUS

McN. Pres. Statement - T. Laund, WOULD SAY
AT THIS MOMENT

Air action now in execution

against P7 bases & some factories

DON'T THINK IT WOULD

S: Not good. Will alert them.

NO DOUBT

McN: Will be alerted AS SOON AS PLANES OFF.

S: But how when the guy

alerted as soon as get in air (HARINON)

WON'T KNOW WHERE.

Compression. Comments lag. ^{one talk} _{two}

9:22

Shap → McNam

S: Some indication - PT's going into
close to shore. Going into Estuary.
3 min. limit may be sanctuary.

McN: Stay with target we have; wary about
3 min later. Use whale bone for
target

S: Up north; beards

McN: Aft on studs - hit on way in
which they are found.
Way in - hit where they are.
Get em off - main thing.

10:26 McN → Sharp

McN. ^{any} word they've launched

S: Not yet. Am sure ^{ONE OUTFIT 0200} ~~or to go~~
DID 600A7
10:00

The other - not used 1300

their time - show. 1430 others.

Can't get into position in time.

2 1/2 hrs. from now 1 set

4 hrs ^{from now} month set

5:15 to
target

McN: My God.

S: Com from ^{FARTHEST NORTH TARGET.} ~~North~~ to get into
position. ^{TO MAKE} Strike schedule. Long
flight. My act for ^{One} refuelers.

~~MCN~~ Got off 1/2 hour ago. S: SHOULD HAVE
GOTTEN OFF AT 1000PM

McN Make sure.

MC MAKE SURE THEY ARE
GET IN TOUCH

No announcement here to influence.

~~Sp~~ if launched, ^{after 1 1/2 h ago.} cut out of ^{S.} ~~Statement~~ - 6000
still element of surprise.

Don't say what targets are.

Element of surprise. OK if cut off

10:46 McN → Sharp

McN - conf. of launch

S: no conf. of launch

McN

go in clear - do what Joe said at
10 AM

Pres. want at 11:15 a.m.

Needs confirmation of launch.

Keep after.

Post trial reports essential on 1/2 by.

10:48

Clifton → DDO

Clifton: New launch time on Connie
Bundy + Pres. 11:15 statement
How much will be revealed.

McN has deleted portion from Pres. merge.
Will be alert.

Shap: Not so as long as he doesn't
reveal targets.

11:05

DDD → Bunker

DDD: Notly anxious yet.

Connie not in position yet

Several hours later.

Scrub Connie later - bad weather.

Will cut up operation.

Hand tipped if one found gas in.

Chambers / See / Ref.

Director - don't send tell for check and see
Ref.

B: Not good

DDD - Notly anxious. My he weather.

B: Want good. go.

11:11 Mc N $\rightarrow$ S

(McN)

No land or roughly lands
Commie but Souther target
Can't sit here ^{as a nation} & let us attack
or by seas & not retaliate
S: No? but they've launched

WISPMAN

DDD - B

11:20 PM

DDD - repeat prior comment.

Ship - McN

11:20

0243

S: 10:43 Plans off.

~~Less~~ 50 mint ago

Over ~~time~~ target

1 hr. 50 mints.

2 waves. Get there at same time.

Over Target 1 hr. 50 mints.

CINCPAC → NMCC PAC DESK 11:23

CDR.
MAJ Jones: → Henson

TICO 1st TOT 0510Z

Launch 0243Z

Passed to McNamee already and now.
From CINCPACFLT.

NMCC PAC DESK = WHSR 11:27

Henson: TICO 0243Z² launched | TOT 0510Z

DDO → MUSTIN 11:37 PM

DDO: M.
~~OF~~ NORTH MAY PUT ONE IN SOUTH.

DDO → Reeves 11:38

11:51 SHARP TO Wheeler

Connie
S: Sec Def: off most northern
target. Shift to next target.
Group back to carrier
Reynolds - VINH - need authority.
MAX DIST STRIKES.
W: Will chat Sec Def.
S: Need to do job

12:00PM Wheeler - Sharp

W: Would not target
S: All ops all right.
Sandy & launching - behind position -
land late.
TICO smaller one. My target for 1
shot deal. Reynolds. Need more
Recycle.
THIN ON 1ST STRIKE.
JUST MOST northern one
close to china | STRAT | possible opposition |
weather bad

8:45-11:00

VANCE-wheelon

WORD OF ATTACK R. L. TENS IN
McN; VANCE; BUNCH; J. STAFFS MEET.
LEVEL OF RESPONSE DISCUSSED
ATTACK COMBINED
TARGET FOLDERS REVIEWED

9

11:30-12:40

PLANNING GOES ON
JCS MEET SEPARATE ROOM. WHAT RETALIATION
Mc; BUNCH, VANCE, RUSH - LEVEL OF RESPONSE

12:40-3 PM

NSC MEETING

CIRCUSS ISSUE

TOKIN ATTACK

JOHNSON, McN, BUNCH

LUNCH

TYPE OF RESPONSE
DECISION MADE TO STRIKE TAIWAN
PRES. = WHAT TIME CAN WE STRIKE
DON'T KNOW
TALK TO CHIEFS

3 PM - 6:00

JCS/TAMM/
OFFICE

JCS MESSAGE WORKED ON.
7:00 PM TLOFFICE TIME (JCS AGREE)
LATER DISCOVERED TIME WAS 12:45 PM
NOT 11, $\therefore$ 8:00 PM
4 HRS. REACTION TIME.

6:00 PM - 6:45

WHITE HSE. NSC
NO 7:00 PM 8:00 BUNCH (BOTH)
NSC APPROVAL

His. time difference.
8:00 new appoint.

NSC: 6:20

not at 7:00

Calcut at 8:00 T+C

NSC approved proposed
 course of action

JCS message in hand.

→ Additional forms: V. Ltr to R

- ① thru US
- ② thru no. US

ASW can go
 Attalcan gp.
 List of firm
 Other form.

BUNOY - NSC draft of JR
 Proposed for statement.

11:45

NSC

~~Cyprus~~
We had her attend - to be

PMB

LUNCH 12:00 PM

⊛ Types of ~~report~~
Agreed at lunch to list
P.E. Wallin

John - What time lunch
not here?
Tabled to chairs

JCS msg to CINCPAC
CINCPAC advised

7:00 Tally off.

W McN R- 6:45 General
meetings

* BUNDY

That evening. General
assembly.

McN, Vane, Wheeler -
Plans

8:39 Admnl Ship has started
2d sentence
P7 bar ^{attain} remove
from.

NAVY

9 hrs. sentence time
beats by 2 hrs.

Morning -

10

act -

① Blentray Centre
& Herbert Wallcut
Hang Amoy, Hi Fuy,
Fuk boy, Queen Kong -
Pudibhi not H
Fong

[1]

② Morning ops -

Fuk boy
~~Hang Goy~~
Arong the
Port Wallcut

③ Duty of Birth
in 2nd work
④ In front of
workers -

[2]

⑤ Pol Target

Vinh
Hi Fung
Hanoi

⑥ Budget Target

Ton Hoa
Vinh Truong
Duy Xuan
Ninh Binh

[3]

⑦ Other Targets

Targets

Start Plant at
Thong Nguyen

End Yen Airfield

[4]

Then

Rub, M. d. V,
Bandy

Wint Count
for —

① Off Sat
Beth + Bess

② Mining

③ POL

[5]

④ Seed in

HS neighbors:

Agatha, Schumpke

Berba Aunt &
such Novellants
in Chip might
recomm —

✓ Alert ground
elect recovery

[6]

much discuss

as mining —

of new things

— all a head

all

just hit Vint —

the Fog has done
to urban population

[7]

10 a

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

21 Aug 64

MEMO FOR Mr. Califano

Mr. Bundy's secretary called.
In answer to your question: Exactly
what time the President talked to Senator
Goldwater. The answer is that he talked
to Senator Goldwater on August 4th at
10:06 p.m.

Evelyn

78863

10-6

56031

(1) FIRST WORD OF ATTACK?

(2) MEETING AT PENTAGON (11AM)?

PROMPTNESS

RUSH

TIMING OF ATTACK

(3) NSC MEETING (12:15) 1:03

(5) THAT NIGHT - TIMING

CAUSE - ETC.

REASON FOR DELAY

(4) LUNCH

(8) FINAL WORD (11:27)

DECISION

TIME OF STRIKE

(5) NSC MEETING

(6:15)

DRAFT RESOL.

SPEECH - (WHEN TO GO ON)

(6) CONG. BRIEFING (6:45)

COMMITMENTS - WHAT WAS SAID

DEADLINE FOR ATTACK

BUNDY

Levy

6:45

Notes are by typed up

(1) Only about when it will come

(2) Fully appropriate amount.

DE SECRET
SAY NOTHING.
WILL INVOICED LIES.

9:30 PM

Safe to go at 10
Ships this so.

11:10 PM

NCN

"in the air"

10:43

"off"

40 MINUTES OF LAUNCH ON TAD67

BUNDY.

(1) Mc Calls Bundy.
Arrives at 11:00 PM.

ICS

Therbuks up to
up at meeting.

(2) NSC briefing

(3) Lunch

McCallisto

No mines here.

4 hit

McN:
leapfrogging

7:00 PM - can get it done 1st Lt.

early as possible not many.
Have come back early
McNamm.

(4) Hedging at time that afternoon.
TV-Busses.

(5) 6:15 NSC - time not to be met.

8-9-10.

2 hrs ago

McN = amount

21 August 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF

Subject: Complete log entries and taped conversations from August 04/1739 EDT to 05/0111 EDT handled thru NMCC console.

1. In accordance with your request attached hereto is an extract of all log entries made in the Emergency Actions section from August 04/1739 EDT to 05/0111 EDT. Where conversations are recorded on tape a brief of the conversation is indicated. In addition the original log is available in the EA Room for your perusal that reflects those entries and taped conversations prior to and after the times indicated above. Those conversations you select to hear are ready to be played in the EA Room.

2. In addition to the taped conversations above, Captain Willman, J-3 Executive Officer, has been working on a complete documented case history with maps, TWXs, memos, etc., of the Tonkin Bay incident and this information is readily available.

Copy to:
J-3


E. C. FOGLE
Brigadier General, USA
Deputy Director For
Operations (NMCC)

EA CHRONOLOGICAL LOG4 August 1964 Z
(Date)

C-O-P-Y

TIME (Z)EVENT & ACTION TAKEN5:39 PM
2139

Adm Sharp to Gen Burchinal. Gen Burchinal had read message referred to earlier. Launch time is 0700 local time out there. DDO monitored. (CDR ALLISON)(A)

5:40 PM
2140

Adm Sharp to Gen Burchinal. Situation report (additional forces from the north). (Duplicate of 2139Z entry.) (MAJ BACCI)

2152

Lt Col Michela directed that informal message be sent to CINCPAC stating that we are holding EMATS line until further notice. (CAPT SCHNEIDER)

6:07 PM
2207

Adm Sharp to Gen Burchinal. A "go" situation --- Yes. Suppressing fire part of deal. Press will not get word until we have Pac forces off target (2100Q). Nr 37 will be coming pretty soon, pertains to alerts & deployments. (CDR ALLISON)(A)

2207

Mr McNaughton to Lt Ripbeger (DIA). Desires Chinese Air Order of Battle (calling for Mr McNamara at WH). (MAJ BACCI) (C)

2215

Lt Ripbeger to WHSR (Mr McNaughton). Reference his request in 2207 entry. Data is in Gold Room. He will get it and call back. (MAJ BACCI) (A)

2231

SACSA DO informed by CCOC to come in to Pentagon. (CDR ALLISON)(B)

2235

J-5 DO informed to come in. (CDR ALLISON)(B)

2240

J-4 DO informed to come in. (Not recorded). (CDR ALLISON)

2257

Eur DO to Pac Desk. Reference situation report in Pac area. Pac Desk informed Eur DO that situation report was in process of being released. (MAJ BACCI) (D)

2318

Eur Desk to all SWRs & ANMCC. Reference Congo. Congo Army successful against rebels; plan to continue attack tomorrow. (MAJ BACCI) (D)

2339

Col Rogers to CCOC. Asking the latest status. Answer: going ahead as planned. No reports as yet. (CDR ALLISON)(A)

2346

DDO to Silver Dollar & Zenith. Placing non-duty teams on telephone alert. No comments to be made. When TV announcement is made, they are to check back to see if they will be recalled. (CDR ALLISON)

2357

DDO (Gen Wisman) instructed EA to maintain an open KY-9 line to Pac DO. (CDR ALLISON)(A)

7:59 PM
2359

Pac Desk to Pac DO. Reference CTG 77.6 msg DTG 04/1759Z. DDO in conference at 0000Z requesting take-off info etc ASAP. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

5 August 1964

0001

EA Team 3 relieved EA Team 5, however, they are still on duty. (TSgt MCELROY)

C-O-P-Y

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EA CHRONOLOGICAL LOG

5 August 1964 Z

C-O-P-Y

(Date)-----

TIME (Z)

EVENT & ACTION TAKEN

✓ 0005

Gen Wheeler to Gen Burchinal -- Gen Wheeler is in Presidents outer office; pass any word to Gen Wheeler in WH Cabinet Room. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0005

Norad to NMCC & AFCEP. Subsystems test at 0030Z. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0012

Lant Desk to JRC, CIA, State Ops, WHSR & all SWRs. Yankee Team launch information. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0015

WHSR to Lant Desk. Where is the Yankee Team launched from? Answer: from 77.5. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0017

Gen Humfeld to Gen Blanchard. Do not have # 37-64, will come up on KY-9 and talk. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0031

Col Rogers, Chairman's office, to CCOC. Any information yet? Answer: not yet. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

✓ 0039

Mr McNamara to Adm Sharp. Requesting timing on Ops Order. Adm Sharp to call back to Mr McNamara's office. DDO monitored. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0047

DDO requested a voice circuit with Amb Taylor in Saigon. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0104

Unable to hear Saigon (Amb Taylor) and requested Saigon DO to stay on the line and when it clears up, call will be completed to Gen Wheeler. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

✓ 0109

Adm Sharp to Mr McNamara with time of launch of air strike forces: 0200Z. Time on target: 0400Z. Adm Sharp advises against Presidential release of information. Adm Sharp to keep Mr McNamara informed as to progress. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(C)

✓ 0122

Adm Sharp to Mr McNamara. Strike forces are to attack any place on this mission after the strike is completed, go back to their three mile limit for patrol. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(C)

0127

Pac Operator to Mr McNamara. Amb Taylor not available; he is with PM. Mr McNamara said he'll take the call only if Amb Taylor is on the line. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0140

Gen Reaves to DDO. For info on launch of strike force. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0142

Adm Mustin to DDO for same as 0140Z. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(D)

0155

Gen Sweeney to Gen Burchinal. Movement of SAC forces to Pacific. (MAJ LUTTRELL)(C)

0157

Gen Manhart for the DDO (Gen Wisman). VN strike. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0159

Priority One call from Saigon for Mr McNamara. Audibility too low and Mr McNamara cancelled call. (CDR NORTH) (B)

0223

Gen Sweeny, Pac, to Gen McPherson, J-3. Gen McPherson in DDO's office. Regarding relay in receipt of message addressed "action" CINCSTRIKE hqtrs. (CDR NORTH) (A)

C-O-P-Y

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EA CHRONOLOGICAL LOG

5 August 1964 Z
(Date)

C-O-P-Y

TIME (Z)

EVENT & ACTION TAKEN

✓ 1026 PM 0226	Mr McNamara to Adm Sharp. Re launch times. No positive info yet. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
0228	Gen Ryan to Col Liedman. Non receipt of JCS messages. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (C)
✓ 1046 PM 0246	Mr McNamara to Adm Sharp. Requesting progress report. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (C)
✓ 1048 PM 0248	WH calling DDO (Gen Clifton for DDO). Launch times of carrier strikes. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (B)
0250	Gen Reaves to DDO. Re progress report, none yet. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
0254	Gen Wilson (Strike) to DDO. Re increase in readiness of forces. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
0259	NA Desk to CINCAL DO. Re tonight's OPSUM. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
0304	DDO to Gen Wheeler. Gen Wheeler is in Mr McNamara's office. Call not completed. (CDR NORTH) (A)
✓ 1102 PM 0305	DDO to Gen Burchinal. Re "getting airborne". Won't be launching immediately because of bad weather. (CDR NORTH) (A)
0302	LATE ENTRY - Adm Mustin to CCOC & DDO. Briefing on launch times. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
✓ 1114 PM 0311	Mr McNamara to Adm Sharp. Requesting info on launch times, not confirmed yet. (DDO monitored). (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
✓ 1124 PM 0320	DDO to Gen Burchinal. Re strike weather and launch times. (CDR NORTH) (A)
✓ 1124 PM 0320	Adm Sharp to Mr McNamara. 1st planes off at 0243, take off in two waves, slowest first. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
0323	EA to DDO. Suggested playback. (MAJ LUTTRELL)
✓ 1123 PM 0323	Pac DO to Pac Desk. Ticonderoga 1st TOT 0510Z, based on TO 0243Z, has been given to Mr McNamara. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
0327	Played back 0320 entry to DDO. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
✓ 1127 PM 0327	Pac Desk to all SWRs, State Ops, WHSR & CIA. Pierce Arrow notification, 1st A/C off Ticonderoga at 0243Z. Est TOT 0510Z. (CDR NORTH) (A)
0334	DDO to Gen Wheeler. Gen Wheeler in Mr McNamara's office. Call not completed. (CDR NORTH) (A)
✓ 1127 PM 0337	DDO to Adm <u>Miner</u> . Re A/C take offs from carriers. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)
✓ 1135 PM 0338	DDO to Gen Reaves. A/C are airborne. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

C-O-P-Y

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EA CHRONOLOGICAL LOG

5 August 1964 Z
(Date)

C-O-P-Y

TIME (Z)

EVENT & ACTION TAKEN

LATE
E NTRY
0333

DDO to Gen Burchinal's office. No answer. DDO requested we ring Gen Burchinal's office every minute on the minute and then bring him in on his hot line. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0340

DDO to Gen Burchinal (MM88). Gen Burchinal will be in NMCC in a few minutes. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0345

Gen Burchinal to Gen Wilson (Strike). RE para (b) of JCS message wait until given political clearance. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0348

White House Situation Room to Pacific Desk. RE take-off time of TICONDEROGA Aircraft. (CDR NORTH) (A)

2351 PM

0351

Adm Sharp to Gen Wheeler, Gen Burchinal in conference. RE Target change due to weather, distance and recycling of aircraft. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0400 PM

0400

Gen Wheeler to Adm Sharp, DDO monitored. RE poor northern weather, distance very long, proximity to northern country. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0405

PAC Desk to PAC DO. RE number of aircraft airborne on strike. CTF 77 message DTG 050300Z gives best picture. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0416

PAC DO to PAC Desk calling attention to CTG 92.1 message, DTG 050300Z. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0424

North American Desk to White House Situation Room. RE YANKEE TEAM Recovery Report. Recovered at 0300Z at CUBI PT., P.I. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0425

PAC Desk to Service War Rooms, State Ops, CIA and JRC with YANKEE TEAM Recovery Report. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0430

CUBANA Flight 477 departed Gander at 0350Z. 7 + 17 enroute to Havana, 10 + 11 fuel. Over water route. CINCLANT DO and LANT SOUTH desk copied. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0433

Col Freidrick to PAC Desk RE Location of place in JCS 7720. (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0438

Gen Wheeler to Adm Sharp. RE re-cycling of 20 aircraft to the same targets. Request limited to 0300EDT latest take-off time. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0443

Gen Wheeler to Adm Sharp. RE recycle all aircraft they can until 0400EDT... "then knock it off". (MAJ LUTTRELL) (D)

0448

Mr. Vance to his quarters ... he is going to stay the night in the Pentagon. (CDR NORTH) (A)

0502

PAC DO to Col Moody. RE KY-9 call and it will be taken in CAC by PAC Desk. (CDR NORTH) (D)

0511

PAC DO to Col Smith in SEC DEF's office. RE Time over Targets. First TOT 0515Z. Details by KY-9. (CDR NORTH) (A)

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(P)

4:05 PM

McA → SHARP

12

INSERTS

10:19 AM:

McNAMARA calls SHARP AND DISCUSSES
THE KILL CAPABILITY OF THE MAODOX.

McNAMARA IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN
ASSURING THAT THE MAODOX HAS WHATEVER
IT NEEDS IN THE WAY OF AIR SUPPORT.

11:18 AM

SHARP calls Burchinall and provides

HIM WITH THE LATEST SITUATION REPORT ON THE
ATTACK ON THE DESTROYERS (SHOOTING HAS STARTED, THE
MADDOX HAS DODGED AT LEAST 5 TORPEDOS). SHARP SUGGESTS
THAT LOC CHAD ^(ESTUARY) BE ADDED TO ANY LIST OF TARGETS
HE NOW HAS INFORMATION IT
AS SINCE ~~IT~~ IS BEING USED AS A HIDING PLACE FOR THE
PT BOATS. WHEN SHARP AGAIN MENTIONS AN ARMED
RECONNAISSANCE ALONG THE COAST, BURCHINALL SAYS THAT
MUCH MORE SEVERER ACTION IS BEING CONSIDERED.
He tells SHARP THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS
ON HIS WAY TO THE ~~WHITE~~ PENTAGON, AND THAT
MEETINGS ARE GOING ON AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

1:03 PM:

THE WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM CALLS
THE PENTAGON COMMAND CENTER AND ADVISES THAT
THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING HAD JUST
BROKEN UP. McNAMARA, McCONE, RUSK, AND BUNDY
HAVE NOW GONE TO LUNCH WITH THE PRESIDENT.

1:24 PM

McNAMARA, STILL AT THE White House, calls

Burchinal AT THE PENTAGON. Burchinal

TELLS HIM THAT SHARP HAD REPORTED THE

PRESENCE OF HOSTILE AIRCRAFT (PROBABLY IL28'S) FLYING OUT OF

HAINAN

→ AND WAS ISSUING ^{"TO} ~~AND~~ ENGAGE ~~ORDER~~ ORDER IF

THE SECURITY OF HIS FORCES WAS THREATENED BY ENEMY AIR.

(SEE THE 1:01 PM ENTRY ABOVE), McNAMARA IS

INSISTENT THAT FASTER SITUATION REPORTS BE

OBTAINED FROM THE MADDOX AND ASKS THAT

SHARP TRY TO CONTACT THE ^{DESTROYER} ~~MADDOX~~ BY RADIO.

Burchinal ADVISES THAT THE JCS HAD BEEN

CONSIDERING 3 COURSES OF ACTION, ^{(EACH PROGRESSIVELY HIGHER IN ITS} AND RECOMMENDED ^{level of intensity.}

THE SECOND UNANIMOUSLY. THIS CONSISTED OF AIR

STRIKES AGAINST THE PT BOAT BASES AT Phoc Loi,

QUANG KHE, LOC THOI, AND THE VINH ^{OIL} COMPLEX. REJECTED

WAS THE FIRST OPTION, A STRIKE ONLY AT VINH,

AND THE THIRD, THE PT BOAT BASES AND OTHER TARGETS

SUCH AS HAIPHONG.

3:34 PM MUSTIN CALLS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR
OPERATIONS, JOINT STAFF AND INFORMS HIM THAT THE
JOINT CHIEFS ARE IN SESSION, THAT A STRIKE
EXECUTION MESSAGE IS BEING ^{NOW} TYPED UP ~~REMOVED~~ AND THAT
SHARP KNOWS IT IS COMING. MUSTIN ASKS THAT AN
(TRANSMISSION)
~~REMOVED~~ / LINE, BE KEPT OPEN.

4:40 PM SHARP calls Burchinal AND IS INFORMED

THAT THE JCS STRIKE EXECUTE MESSAGE IS IN THE
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE'S OFFICE READY TO GO, BUT THAT

THERE IS STILL A SLIGHT AMOUNT OF DOUBT ^{WHETHER THE DESTROYERS}
~~WERE IN FACT ATTACKED~~ ~~ON THE~~

~~THE ATTACK ON THE DESTROYERS.~~ UNTIL THE ATTACK IS

^{ACCORDING TO BURCHINAL,}
DEFINITELY CONFIRMED, THE PUNITIVE STRIKE WILL BE "NO GO".

BURCHINAL THEN ASKS SHARP WHETHER THE LAUNCH COULD
BE ACCOMPLISHED BY 7:00 PM, SHARP RESPONDS THAT

"IT WILL BE TIGHT" BUT "I THINK SO." SHARP THEN

SUGGESTS IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO RECYCLE SOME
OF THE AIRCRAFT FOR A SECOND STRIKE AGAINST VINH.

AND BURCHINAL SAYS "THIS WILL BE ALLRIGHT," ^{IF NEEDED.} SHARP ESTIMATES

THAT ABOUT 70 AIRCRAFT IN ALL WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE
STRIKES.

5:29 PM

MUSTIN CALLS THE NMCC- (GENERAL SMITH)

AND INDICATES THAT SOME CONFUSION EXISTS OVER
THE TIME IN THE GULF OF TONKIN. HE ASKS
SMITH TO GET ON THE TELETYPE AND STRAIGHTEN
OUT THE MATTER. SMITH, AT 5:33 PM, CALLS
GENERAL MCKUTCHEON AT CINCPAC AND ASKS FOR
A BREAKDOWN OF THE TIMES BETWEEN THE
CARRIERS (IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND ON "HOTEL" TIME)
~~AND~~ SAIGON AND THE TARGETS (ON "GOLF" TIME) AND
WASHINGTON. MCKUTCHEON REPLIES THAT AT

"GOLF" TIME, THE WASHINGTON TIME WOULD BE - 8:00 PM

AND THE LOCAL TIME 7:00 AM, ^{A 13 HOUR DIFFERENCE,} AT "HOTEL" TIME, THE

WASHINGTON TIME WOULD BE ~~17:00~~ 7:00 AM, WITH THE

LOCAL TIME STILL 7:00 AM, ^{A 12 HOUR DIFFERENCE} MCKUTCHEON THEN ~~REPEATS~~ ADDS

THAT CINCPACFLT WENT ON GOLF TIME, ~~IN ERROR~~.

~~GIVING THE CARRIERS~~ REALIZING THAT THE CARRIERS

COULD USE THE EXTRA HOUR TO GET READY.

5:23PM SHARP CALLS BUCHINOL AND SAYS THERE IS

~~NO~~ NO DOUBT THAT AN ATTACK ^{(ON THE DESTROYERS) FOR} HAD OCCURRED, HE

^(INTERCEPTED) HAS A NORTH VIETNAMESE MESSAGE ^{STATING} IN WHICH THE

~~STATED~~ THAT "2 PT BOATS WERE "SACRIFICED"

~~WAS MADE~~ ^{NOW} SHARP IS ^{ALL} SATISFIED WITH THE EVIDENCE,

WHAT WITH SEVERAL ADDITIONAL REPORTS FROM THE TURNER JOY.

SHARP THEN MENTIONS THAT THE ATTACK WILL BE COMING

OFF AT 8:00PM WASHINGTON TIME ^(NOT 7:00PM) BUT STILL AT ~~7:00~~

7:00AM LOCAL TIME. THE REASON IS THAT THE CINCPAC

MESSAGE USED "HOTEL" TIME, WHEREAS THE CARRIERS

^{SHOOTING FOR THE OPERATION} WERE ~~OPERATING~~ ON "GOLF" TIME. ACCORDING TO SHARP,

^{EVER} HOWEVER, THE CARRIERS WILL MEET THE 8:00PM ^{SCHEDULE} ~~TIME~~.

(GIVING THEM AN EXTRA HOUR).
~~which would~~

5:39PM

SHARP CALLS BURCHINEL AND ~~GOFFINS~~

SAYS THAT THE INDICATIONS ARE THAT LAUNCH TIME
WILL BE 0700 LOCAL OR 8:⁰⁰PM WASHINGTON TIME.

6:07PM

SHARP CALLS BURCHINOL AND REPEATS

THAT HE IS SATISFIED THAT THE DESTROYERS

WERE ATTACKED. HE NOW HAS THE JCS

STRIKE EXECUTE MESSAGE. BURCHINOL

SAYS THAT ~~THE SECRETARY~~ ^{NOW AT THE WHITE HOUSE,} McNAMARA, IS ALSO

SATISFIED THAT THE ATTACKS HAVE OCCURRED

AND ~~HAD~~ ^{JUST A SHORT TIME AGO} MADE THE STATEMENT THAT THE

"SHOW WAS NOW ON THE ROAD." SHARP

THEN STATES THAT THE PRESS SHOULD NOT

GET THE STORY A-T-7:00PM. ^{(AND BURCHINOL REPLIES} ~~BECAUSE IF~~

NOW LOOKED LIKE THE STRIKE COULD NOT

~~BE LAUNCHED UNTIL~~ ^{WE} THAT ~~THEY~~ WILL INSURE

THAT NOTHING GETS OUT UNTIL "YOU ARE ON

YOUR TARGET," WHICH SHARP ESTIMATES TO

BE 9:00PM. BURCHINOL EMPHASIZES THAT

ANY ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE DELAYED SO THAT THERE

IS "NO POSSIBILITY OF ANYONE READING" THE STRIKE.

THE MATTER OF DEPLOYING ADDITIONAL FORCES TO

THE THEATER IS ALSO DISCUSSED.

7:59 PM

NMCC calls ~~THE~~ CINCPAC AND ASKS FOR
THE OFF-TIMES, NUMBERS AND TYPES. CINCPAC
REPLIES THERE IS NOTHING YET.

8:05 PM

General Wheeler, IN THE CABINET ROOM AT
THE WHITE HOUSE, CALLS BURCHINAL AT THE PENTAGON
AND ASKS IF ANYTHING IS HAPPENING. BURCHINAL
SAYS THAT HE HAS A CLEAR LINE OPEN, BUT NO WORD-
HAS BEEN RECEIVED. WHEELER WANTS TO KNOW
AS SOON AS THE WORD ARRIVES THAT THE AIRCRAFT
HAVE BEEN LAUNCHED

8:39 PM

McNAMARA, BACK FROM THE WHITE HOUSE, CALLS SHARP AND ASKS WHETHER THE CARRIERS HAVE LAUNCHED THEIR AIRCRAFT. SHARP REPLIES THAT HE HAS RECEIVED NO WORD YET, PROBABLY BECAUSE THE CARRIERS WILL PROVIDE A COORDINATED REPORT. McNAMARA, HOWEVER, SAYS THAT THE LAUNCH IS ^(ALREADY) 40 MINUTES LATE AND WANTS SHARP TO CONTACT THE CARRIERS DIRECTLY BY RADIO.

McNAMARA STRESSES THAT HE MUST GET AN IMMEDIATE STATEMENT ~~FROM~~ SINCE THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO GO ON THE AIR AND INFORM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THIS, ^{[SAYS McNAMARA,} IS BEING

^{ALREADY NOW} HELD BACK, ^{PENDING WORD OF THE LAUNCH, WITH MORE THAN 40 MINUTES HAVING} ~~AND IT IS NOW MORE THAN 40 MINUTES PAST~~ ELAPSED ^{PAST} ~~THE TIME~~ ^(LAUNCH GIVEN TO THE PRESIDENT, WHO INFORMED THE LAUNCH WOULD TAKE PLACE) THE TIME McNAMARA TOLD THE PRESIDENT THE LAUNCH COULD OCCUR.

SHARP ESTIMATES, ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT HAVE THE LAUNCH PLAN, THAT IT WOULD TAKE THE AIRCRAFT ABOUT AN HOUR TO REACH THE TARGET.

9:09 PM

SHARP CALLS McNAMARA AT HIS OFFICE AND
SAYS THAT ONE CARRIER (PERHAPS BOTH) WOULD NOT BE
ABLE TO LAUNCH FOR ANOTHER 50 MINUTES (10:00 PM
WASH TIME). ^(McNAMARA IS VISIBLY DISTURBED.) SHARP EXPLAINS THAT THE COMPRESSION
OF TIME AND ~~THE~~ ^{THE} COMMUNICATIONS ~~LAG~~ ^{LAG} ARE THE
REASONS, AND THINKS THAT THE ESTIMATED TIMES TO TARGET,
WITH A 10:00 PM LAUNCH ARE 11:00 PM FOR THE
FIRST AIRCRAFT, AND 12:00 PM FOR THE SECOND.
McNAMARA THEN ASKS ^{(SHARP ABOUT THE EFFECT OF A} ~~HOW SERIOUS WOULD A~~
PRESIDENTIAL ~~STATEMENT~~ ^{ANNOUNCEMENT} ~~BE TIED TO THE FIRST LAUNCH THAT WOULD STATE THAT~~
~~WE WOULD INDICATE THAT AN~~
AIR ACTION ~~IS~~ ^{CERTAIN} IN EXECUTION AGAINST PT
BASES & SUPPORTING FACILITIES. SHARP THINKS
IT WOULD NOT BE A "GOOD IDEA" BECAUSE ^{THE ENEMY} ~~IT~~ COULD BE
ALERT ^{ED} ~~THE ENEMY~~ McNAMARA REPLIES THAT THE
ENEMY WOULD BE ALERT AS SOON AS THE AIRCRAFT
TAKE OFF. SHARP SAYS THIS WOULD BE SO, SINCE
HAINAN WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PICK THEM UP, BUT COULD NOT
TELL AT THAT POINT WHERE THE PLANES WOULD BE HEADING.

10:26 PM McNAMARA CALLS SHARP AND ASKS WHETHER

THE AIRCRAFT ARE LAUNCHED YET, SHARP SAYS

HE HAS NO FIRM WORD, BUT IS SURE ONE CARRIER (Ticonderoga)
HAD LAUNCHED AT 10:00 PM. ^(According to Sharp, however) THE OTHER CARRIER, ^(Constellation) ~~Hobbes~~

^(THE JETS) ~~will~~ NOT BE ABLE TO LAUNCH ^(ONE GROUPS) UNTIL ^(THE SLOWER PROPELLER DRIVEN A-1 AIRCRAFT) 1:00 AM AND

^(VOICES HIS CONCERN) THE OTHER ^(THE JETS) ~~group~~ UNTIL ^(McNAMARA AGAIN) 2:30 AM, WITH A TIME OVER TARGET FOR BOTH GROUPS
ESTIMATED AROUND 3:15 AM. SHARP EXPLAINS THIS BY

STATING THAT THE CONSTELLATION WAS COMING FROM THE
NORTH AND HAD TO GET INTO POSITION. ~~HAD TO GET INTO POSITION. HAD TO GET INTO POSITION.~~

~~WAS USED FOR RECONNAISSANCE.~~ SHARP REPEATS THAT

ONE OF THE CARRIERS LAUNCHED AT 10:00 PM, BUT McNAMARA

WANTS HIM TO ^{MAKE} ~~BE~~ ABSOLUTELY SURE. McNAMARA

SHARP CONCLUDES BY DISCUSSING THE PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL

ANNOUNCEMENT, AND SHARP ^{SAYS "GOOD"} ~~CONCLUDES~~ WHEN McNAMARA TELLS

HIM THAT ^{REFERENCES TO HAVE} THE TARGETS ~~ARE~~ BEEN CUT OUT OF THE

^{THAT} STATEMENT, PRESERVING THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

10:46 PM McNAMARA calls SHARP AGAIN, ^{SEEKING} ~~ASKING FOR~~
CONFIRMATION OF THE LAUNCH TIMES. SHARP SAYS
NO WORD HAS YET BEEN RECEIVED, AND McNAMARA
~~HE~~ SUGGESTS HE ~~IS~~ RADIO IN THE CLEAR, ASKING
THE ~~USS~~ TICONDEROGA IF IT DID WHAT IT WOULD
DO AT 10 PM. McNAMARA STATES THAT THE PRESIDENT
WANTS TO GO ON THE AIR AT 11:15, ^{FIRST} BUT MUST HAVE
CONFIRMATION OF THE LAUNCH.

10:48PM

GENERAL CLIFTON AT THE WHITE HOUSE

DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS, JOINT STAFF

CALLS THE ~~DDO~~ AND STATES THAT NEW

LAUNCH TIMES FOR THE CONSTELLATION HAVE BEEN

RECEIVED, THAT THE PRESIDENT IS SHOOTING FOR AN

11:15PM STATEMENT, AND NOW MUCH WOULD BE REVEALED

AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT. DDO STATES THAT

SHARP AGREES WITH A PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

NOW THAT McNAMARA HAS DELETED ^{SPECIFIC} PORTIONS DEALING

THE
WITH TARGETS. --

11:05

~~PPD~~ CH

THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS
CALLS BURCHINAL & REPORTS THAT NOTHING IS
AIRBORNE YET, ~~AND~~ THAT THE CONSTELLATION IS NOT IN POSITION, AND THAT
~~WITH~~ SEVERAL MORE HOURS ^{WOULD BE} REQUIRED FOR ^{ITS FIRST} LAUNCH,
ACCORDING TO THE DDO,
THERE IS NOW THE POSSIBILITY, THAT BECAUSE OF
WEATHER, THE CONSTELLATION MAY HAVE TO SCRUB
BURCHINAL RECOGNIZES THAT
ITS OPERATIONS. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT OUR HAND
WOULD BE TIPPED IF ONE FORCE GOES IN, ^{AND} ~~BURCHINAL~~
SAYS THAT-- THERE CAN BE NO SCRUBBING OF THE
MISSION UNTIL THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE & THE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS ARE FIRST NOTIFIED, PER THE
JCS STRIKE EXECUTE MESSAGE.

11:11 PM McNAMARA calls SHARP, AND HEARS

THAT "THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT WHAT

THEY'VE LAUNCHED." McNAMARA, WITH

REGARD TO THE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND POSSIBLE CANCELLATION
STRIKES

OF ~~THE~~ THE CONSTELLATION, STATES THAT "WE CANNOT SIT

HERE AS A NATION AND LET THEM ATTACK VS

ON THE HIGH SEAS AND NOT RETALIATE." McNAMARA

SAYS THE CONSTELLATION COULD BE DIVERTED TO

HIT SOUTHERN TARGETS, WHERE THE WEATHER WAS

BETTER.

11:20 PM SHARP CALLS McNAMARA AND SAYS IT
IS NOW CONFIRMED. PLANES WERE LAUNCHED FROM
THE THUNDERBOLT 50 MINUTES AGO, AT 10:43 PM. IT
WILL TAKE THE AIRCRAFT ABOUT ~~FOR~~ AN HOUR
AND FIFTY MINUTES TO REACH THEIR TARGETS.
THE ATTACK WILL BE IN TWO WAVES, BOTH ^{Scheduled} ~~TWO~~
TO ARRIVE AT THE SAME ~~PER~~ TIME.

~~SHARP TO WHEELER~~

11:51 PM

SHARP CALLS WHEELER AND THEY DISCUSS
THE POSSIBILITY OF A RESTRICTION AGAINST VINH,
WITH WHEELER SAYING HE WILL DISCUSS WITH ^{IT} ~~THE~~
~~SEANER~~ McNAMARA.

12:00 MIDNIGHT

WHEELER CALLS SHARP AND THEY DISCUSS
THE RECYCLING OF THE VINH STRIKE. SHARP ALSO
TELLS WHEELER THAT ADTH CARRIERS HAD BEEN
CONDUCTING AIR OPERATIONS ALL NIGHT BEFORE IN
SUPPORTING THE MADDOX, AND WITH THIS CONTINUAL
SERIES OF LAUNCHINGS AND LANDINGS, ^(GETTING INTO PROPER POSITION) THEY SIMPLY
LAUNCHED THE CURRENT STRIKES ^{somewhat} ~~AT A LATER~~ LATER THAN ORIGINALLY
FORECAST.
~~THE TICONDEROGA WAS A SMALLER CARRIER, AND HAD~~
~~MANY TARGETS FOR A ONE SHOT STRIKE~~ SHARP
INDICATES THAT THE CONSTITUTION WOULD HAVE TO ^{A COMBINATION OF}
^{ONLY} SCUB THE NORTHERNMOST TARGET (PORT WALLU), ^{AND THIS} BECAUSE OF ^{THE TARGET'S} ~~HIS~~
^{DISTANCE, &} ~~OF WEATHER,~~ ^{AND} ITS CLOSE PROXIMITY TO CHINA ^{AND} ~~COMBINED~~
^{ADVERSE} ~~WITH THE~~ WEATHER.

Title 1A6E

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS OF AUGUST 4-5, 1964

TONKIN GULF STRIKE

(TIMES ARE E. D. T.)

(FOR SAILOR TIME, SUBTRACT 12 HOURS)

AUGUST 4th, 1964

~~AT THE ONSET OF THE FIGHT~~

7:40 AM-- The MADDOX reports that from actions being taken by unidentified vessels, an attack appears imminent. The MADDOX is heading southeast near the center of the Gulf of Tonkin in international waters approximately 65 miles from nearest land.

SINGLE SPACE

8:36 AM-- The MADDOX establishes new radar contact with two unidentified surface vessels and three unidentified aircraft. At this time, U.S. fighter aircraft are launched from the USS TICONDEROGA to rendezvous with the MADDOX and the TURNER JOY to provide protection against possible attack from the unidentified vessels and aircraft, in accordance with the President's previously issued directives.

(8:45 - 11:30 AM)

EARLY MEETING AT THE PENTAGON

McNamara, Vance, Burchinall and the Joint Staff meet at the Pentagon as reports of the attack on the MADDOX are coming in. As the situation grows more intense, possible levels of retaliation are discussed, and folders with potential targets are examined. High on the list are the PT boat bases and supporting POL targets is reviewed. The meeting is more or less continuous until 11:30 AM.

~~NO COPY~~

9:08 AM. The MADDOX reports that the unidentified aircraft had disappeared from its radar screen out and that the surface vessels are still remaining at a distance. The U.S. aircraft from the TICONDEROGA arrive and commence defensive patrol over the MADDOX and the TURNER JOY.

INSTALLATIONS BUT OTHER TARGETS SUCH AS AIRFIELDS, INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES, AND BRIDGES ARE ALSO REVIEWED. SCOUT 141200

9:30 AM. Additional vessels are observed on the MADDOX radar, ^(SCREENS) and these vessels begin to close rapidly on the destroyer patrol at speeds in excess of 40 knots. ^{AS} The attacking craft continue to close rapidly from the west and south ~~and the MADDOX reports that their intentions are evaluated as hostile.~~ ^{EVALUATES THEIR INTENTIONS AS HOSTILE,}

9:52 AM. The destroyers report that they are under continuous torpedo attack and are engaged in defensive counterfire against North Vietnamese patrol boats.

10:15 AM. The destroyers report ~~that~~ ^{VE} that they had avoided torpedoes and had ^E sunk one of the attacking craft.

10:04 AM. General McKutcheon (CINCPAC J-3) calls General Burchinall, who is then in Mr. McNamara's office. He says that the fleet and the ^{CARRIER} Task Force have been alerted to the threat. The TICONDEROGA is alerted, and the CONSTELLATION had left Hong Kong yesterday. General Burchinall indicates that the CONSTELLATION will ~~would~~ be ordered to move into position off ~~North~~ ^{SOUTH} Vietnam. He also tells McKutcheon that a possible retaliat^{ORY} strike is being considered ^{(BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND THE CHIEFS} against North Vietnam ^{BASES.}

IN 10:19 10:33 AM. ^A Message ^{ISSUED THE} from JCS to CINCPAC ^{OUTLINING THE RULES} gives De Soto Rules of engagement for ~~the destroyers and requests~~ that the CONSTELLATION be moved into the area off South Vietnam, with the exact location ~~to be~~ ^{AT} the discretion of the Commander.

10:42 AM. The destroyers report that they have ^E evaded additional torpedoes and have ^E sunk another of the attacking craft. Other protective aircraft has arrived overhead, but weather and darkness are hampering their ^{ACTIVITIES} capabilities. (The time is 10:42 PM ^{IN THE TONKIN GULF} local time.)

10:52 AM. The MADDOX reports that the destroyers are again under attack.

10:59 AM: Sharp calls Burchinal (who is still in McNamara's office) and a discussion of possible targets for a retaliatory strike ensues. Burchinal indicates that a number of options are being considered. Sharp says that a strike could be carried out on "your say so" and points out that the CONSTELLATION is coming in to provide needed support. There is also ~~discuss~~ ^{TALK} discussion of providing the carriers with a mining capability, which Mr. McNamara feels is important.

11:18 AM. Admiral Sharp calls General Burchinal and gives him a status report on the engagement with the PT Boats. He advises Burchinal that recent information indicates that the North Vietnamese PT Boats are using the LOC SHAO Estuary as a base.

11:30 AM. Carrier CONSTELLATION receives ~~CONTACT~~ ^A preliminary alerting message addressed to COMSEVENTHFLT stating that for planning purposes "There is a strong possibility you will be directed on short notice to lay on armed recce at sea against Swatows or reprisal attack against Swatow bases such as QUANG KHE, BEN THUY or PHUC LOI." At this time, the CONSTELLATION ^{IS} proceeding to join the TICONDEROGA, heading in a SSW direction, ^{LEAVING} ~~LEFT HONG KONG THE DAY BEFORE~~ ^{THE AFTERNOON OF THE FOURTH} ~~AT 11:30 AM - 12:40 PM~~

At 11:30 AM Bundy and Rusk arrive at the Pentagon to consider ~~the~~ ^{WHAT THE U.S. WILL NOW DO. THEY} nature of the retaliation and meet with Vance and McNamara. In the meantime, the Joint Chiefs of Staff ^{GATHER AN} ~~meet~~ in adjoining room to plan a recommended course of action. McNamara is clear on one point: The strike must be accomplished promptly, for a fast response is part of the lesson to be driven home.

12:00 Noon. The destroyers report that, even though torpedoes had been ~ ^{BUT THAT} fired at them, they had suffered ^{NORTH} no hits nor casualties, ^{THAT THESE THAT} and that the defensive aircraft from the TICONDEROGA ^(THAT STRESS) are illuminating the area and attacking the enemy surface craft.

COAST IS ALSO CONSIDERED, WITH McNAMARA AND BUNDY BRINGING THIS ADDITIONAL OPTION.

12:22 PM. Admiral Sharp calls General Burchinal and gives him a status report on ^{THE} torpedo firings at the destroyers. Estimates are that 3-6 PT Boats are engaged, with two reported sunk, ~~and~~ No enemy aircraft are reported in the area, ~~and~~ Aircraft from the CONSTELLATION are on station over the destroyers.

Sharp asks that the destroyers be given permission to pursue PT Boats to the three-mile limit. **BURCHINOL ADVISES SHARP TO DIG OUT THE TARGET MATERIAL ON PHOC LOI, QUANG KHE, AND THE VINH ADL CONDOL.**

12:32 PM. The destroyers report that at least two enemy craft had been sunk, ^{BUT} and that low ceilings continue to hamper the aircraft operations.

12:40 PM - 3:00 PM

I A National Security Council Meeting is in progress ^{WHEN} McNamara, ~~and~~ Vance, ^(RUSK AND BUNDY) arrive at the White House to brief the participants, including the President, ~~on events in the Gulf of Tonkin.~~ At a lunch ~~immediately~~ following the NSC Meeting, the types ^S of response ^{AND THE TARGETS} are discussed. The President agrees that a retaliatory air strike against ~~certain~~ North Vietnamese PT Boat bases and supporting installations should be ordered. He asks how long it would take to execute the strike. **McNAMARA, ACCORDING TO BUNDY, THINKS THAT THE PLANES COULD BE UNDERWAY AT FIRST LIGHT (7 IN THE MORNING SAIGON TIME) OR 7:00 AM CHICAGO.** ^[Details] WASHINGTON TIME. IT IS AT THE LUNCH THAT THE OPTION TO CONDUCT MINING OPERATIONS OFF THE COAST IS REJECTED. SO IS THE OPTION TO HIT HAIPHONG.

12:54 PM. The TURNER JOY reports that during the engagement, ^{ON GROUND} in addition to the torpedo attack, she was fired upon by automatic weapons while being illuminated by searchlights. ^{THAT IT IS TOO CLOSE TO HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS}

12:57 PM. ^A CINCPAC message to JCS recommends that authority be granted to conduct punitive U.S. air strikes as soon as possible against BEN THUY, HON ME, QUANG KHE, and LOC CHAO.

1:01 PM. Sharp calls Burchinal and reports two jet aircraft have been sighted flying out of HAINAN as far south as DANANG. Sharp says that we cannot afford to permit hostile aircraft to fly over carriers. Sharp then quotes a proposed message on rules of engagement for aircraft which would grant authority to declare hostile and engage any North Vietnamese/ChiCom aircraft whose actions show within a "reasonable certainty" that an attack on U.S. Forces is intended. Burchinal agrees that the message ~~could~~^{should} be sent if needed for the security of CINCPAC Forces.

1:03 PM

1:28 PM.

(Following up McNAMARA'S REQUEST,

Burchinal calls Sharp and asks for a status report on the

1:24 PM

engagement. Sharp reports that two PT Boats have been sunk but is uncertain

as to the total number involved. *(AND SAYS THAT SOME 13 TORPEDOES HAVE BEEN LAUNCHED)*

Also, *(HE REPORTS THAT)* there is some indication of enemy aircraft in the area. Burchinal asks Sharp to obtain a direct *(RADIO)* report from

the ships engaged. *(BUT SAYS THAT AIRCRAFT BOTH FROM THE TICONDEROGA AND CONGRESSION ARE ON THE SCENE.)*

1:30 PM. The destroyers report that the attacking craft had apparently broken off the engagement. The MADDOX and TURNER JOY are directed to resume their patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin at daylight on the 5th of August.

1:59 PM. Sharp calls Burchinal and says that he cannot contact ships by voice radio, but *(Tells him)* ~~indicates~~ that he has sent a message requesting that the situation reports be expedited. The last message from the ships reports that freak weather is affecting radar performance, with many contacts and torpedo runs doubtful. *SHARP SAYS THAT THE MADDOX ITSELF HAS REPORTED NO VISUAL SIGHTINGS.*

2:08 PM. Sharp *(ADVISES)* ~~tells~~ Burchinal that the latest status report indicates that three PT's have been sunk. *(AND THAT)* The weather is deteriorating and hampering aircraft operations. *SHARP STRESSES THAT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT A TORPEDO ATTACK DID OCCUR.*

(EXPRESSES THE VIEW)

MEETINGS AT THE JCS
THE STRIKE EXECUTE MESSAGE IS SENT

(3:00 PM - 6:00 PM)

McNamara ~~and~~ ^{JOINS} Vance ~~at~~ ^{AT} the Pentagon. They divide their time between their office and the JCS "tank". During this period they work ~~on~~ ^{WITH THE CHIEFS} the JCS message (7720) ordering the strike, ~~EXECUTED~~ ^{BEGINNING AT 7:00 PM (IN THE MORNING)}, ~~WITH 7:00 PM~~ ^{LOCAL TIME}.
3:30 PM. Rear Admiral Mustin ^(JCS) calls Sharp and tells him to be on the alert, a strike execut~~ed~~ ^{FOR} message ~~is~~ ^{IS} being prepared and would be transmitted as soon as released.

3:34 IN 2027
4:05 PM. McNamara discusses the latest situation report with Sharp and requests that definite confirmation be obtained from the Fleet Commander of the attacks on the destroyers. McNamara notes that the time is three hours away from the scheduled execution and directed~~s~~ that preparations proceed for the strikes.

4:14 PM. CINCPACFLT transmits an alert message to COMSEVENTHFLT and the TICONDEROGA and CONSTELLATION to be prepared to strike targets at 7:00 PM. (0700 LOCAL TIME)
The targets are ~~designated~~ ^{DESIGNATED} as PT Boats ^{BASES} at QUANG KHE, BEN THUY, HON NE Island, and SONG MA Estuary, HON GAY and PORT WALLUT; any identified North Vietnamese PT Boats located at sea; and the VINH ^{petroleum} Storage Depot. The latter ~~was~~ ^{is} ~~designated~~ ^{LABELED} as the number one target priority. The message indicates that it would be "desirable" that all targets be struck simultaneously, and added^s that if the Forces on the TICONDEROGA and CONSTELLATION ~~were~~ ^{ARE} inadequate, authority ~~was~~ ^{IS} granted to relieve aircraft as necessary and strike the two southern targets (QUANG KHE and BEN THUY) with second launch. The message ~~is~~ ^{concludes SPECIFICALLY} ended by saying that this was a preparatory order, and that launching should not be accomplished until an execute order was received.

4:35 PM. CINCPAC transmits an official message alert to CINCPACFLT to prepare to execute air strikes at 7:00 p.m.

4:00 PM (See insert)

4:40 PM. Sharp tells Burchinal that he estimates that aircraft launches could be made by 7:00 PM (0700 local time) in the South China Sea. He also discussed possible recycles of the strikes, if necessary.

4:49 PM. The JCS strike execute message to CINCPAC is transmitted by direct teletype from NMCC to ^{THE} Command Center. At 5:19 PM it is retransmitted flash precedence via normal channels as JCS 7720 to CINCPAC. It states that by 7:00 PM EDT (0700 local time) a one-time maximum effort attack against the following targets should be conducted: PT Boats located at PORT WALLUT (later cancelled because of weather), HON GAY, PHUC LOI and QUANG KHE and at LOC CHAO. ^(The ~~entire~~ specified) Targets are boats, POL at VINH, and ^{AN} armed reconnaissance against PT Boats beyond the three-mile limit. The message cautioned ^S that if the weather precludes ^{THE COMMANDER WAS TO} meeting the above time of attack, "proceed soonest" and notify the JCS as soon as possible.

4:55 PM. TICONDEROGA receives ^{THE} CINCPACFLT alert message directing COMSEVENTHFLT to be prepared at 7:00 PM to strike the PT Boats at designated locations. ^{THE TICONDEROGA IS} Carrier ^{AN} was already on alert status as a result of the PT Boat attacks on the destroyers. Upon receipt of alert message, ^{NS} Pilots and Weapons Planning Board commenced ^{TO} planning ^{THE} for strikes. A message ^{IS} was also sent to ^{Naval Air} Station at Cubi Point, Philippines (some 500 miles away), directing all up-status A-1 and A-4 aircraft to return to the TICONDEROGA as soon as possible. This ^{was} ^{IS} necessary because the complement of aircraft on the TICONDEROGA ^{had} to be augmented by additional strike aircraft for the maximum strike effort. A number of the aircraft on the TICONDEROGA ^{had} been used previously for reconnaissance (Yankee Team) efforts over Laos, and could not ^{be} used for the strike. ^(Approved 10717)

5:23 insert

5:29 insert

See insert
5:39 PM. Sharp confirms with Burchinal the desired launch time as

7:00 PM.

6:00
~~5:00~~ PM - 6:45 PM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

ALL CAPS
The National Security Council is convened as McNamara, Vance and Wheeler arrive at the White House. Here, the NSC, joined by McCone and ~~Bill~~, formerly ^{ally} approves the retaliatory strike. Vance and McNamara have the JCS strike message in hand. Bundy has a draft of a Joint Congressional Resolution supporting the action as well as a draft of a proposed Presidential statement. ~~THE PRESIDENT IS TOLD~~
It now becomes apparent, ^{PREVIOUSLY} almost at 6:20 PM, that the estimated 7:00 PM launch time will not be met, ^{with} The earliest launch time ~~is~~ now estimated to be 8:00 PM. ~~perhaps later~~. Also discussed are the deployment of additional forces to the

~~area.~~

6:07

INSIDE

6:06 PM. Sharp confirms to Burchinal his satisfaction that the attack on the destroyers had occurred. He acknowledges receipt of the strike execute message and stated his intention to proceed with the strikes. Sharp expresses caution against an early release to the press.

6:45 PM - 7:15 PM

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The President briefs the Congressional leaders of both parties and indicates that he will make a statement later that night (Bundy has details ~~IN THE FORM OF JONKINS TRANSCRIBED NOTES~~). The President did not say that he would withhold the announcement until the ~~aircraft were actually dropping bombs over the target.~~

6:56 PM. CONSTELLATION receives JCS strike execute message.

TV 0
7:22 PM. Carrier TICONDEROGA receives CINCPACFLT execute message and makes final preparations to launch the strike as soon as possible consistent with ensuring mission success.

7:30 PM. Carrier CONSTELLATION receives ^{THE} CINCPAC message which passes JCS strike message with instructions not to execute until directed.

7:49 PM. Carrier CONSTELLATION receives target assignments.

7:50 PM. Carrier CONSTELLATION receives ^{THE} CINCPAC strike execute message.

7:59 → 8:05 → 8:39 PM. ^(see OTHER SHEET) McNamara calls Sharp and requests an immediate direct report

8:39 → 9:00 → as soon as information is available on the launches.
[GIVE PICTURE OF PRESENT SITUATION AT 9:00 PM AS SEEN BY HOSTILE RADAR]

9:00 PM. Sharp reports to McNamara that information from one Carrier (TICONDEROGA) indicates a 10:00 PM launch; the first aircraft time over target at 11:00 PM and the last aircraft at 12:00 PM. The proposed Presidential announcement was discussed with Sharp recommending against a release at this time because it could alert enemy.

9:22 PM. Sharp tells McNamara that PT Boats (presumably those returning from attack on the destroyers) were taking sanctuary within the three-mile limit. McNamara recommends that he proceed to hit designated targets, but authorizes striking any boats sighted on way in.

9:28 PM. CONSTELLATION submits strike plan to ^{ITS} ~~CINCPAC~~ 77 (TICONDEROGA). ^{FOR APPROVAL TO THE CARRIER TASK FORCE COMMANDER.}

10:26 PM. ^{See IN 9017} Sharp calls McNamara and says that there is no specific word yet on the TICONDEROGA's actual launch, but that he was sure "they went at 10:00 PM EDT." Sharp said "you are now OK on public announcement." Sharp indicates CONSTELLATION launch times are 1:00 AM and 2:30 AM.

10:40 PM. CONSTELLATION recovers ^{THE} last group of A-1 aircraft from combat ^{over} air patrol for the destroyers.

10:06 AFTER TRYING TO REACH SENATOR GOLDWATER FOR SEVERAL HOURS, THE PRESIDENT FINALLY GETS THROUGH WITH HIM AND INFORMS HIM OF THE STRIKE ABOUT TO BE LAUNCHED. DECISION TO RETALIATE.

10:43 PM. TICONDEROGA launches four A-1 strike aircraft with instructions to orbit overhead ~~at an altitude of~~ ¹⁵ This ~~was~~ necessary so that the carrier deck could be freed for the landing of A-4 aircraft from Cubi Point then orbiting overhead and to permit coordination of prop and jet strikes to ensure ^A simultaneous ^{ARRIVAL} time over ^{THE} target. The A-1 launching marks the beginning of the attack, and within the hour these four A-1's depart for VINH.

10:46 → 11:11 - See insert
10:48 → 11:11 PM. Sharp calls McNamara and says "I don't think there is any question but what they've launched."

11:03 → 11:27 PM. The NMCC Duty Officer (Cdr. Henson) calls White House situation room and confirms that the first strike was launched at 10:43 PM.

11:34 PM

ALL CAPS
On the recommendation of the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the President goes on the air and states that: ^{REPEATED ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE} "Air action is now in execution against gunboats and certain supporting facilities in North Vietnam which have been used in ... hostile operations." ^{Paraphrase}

11:35 PM. A-1's from TICONDEROGA depart for target at VINH at altitude of 13,000 feet.

THE CARRIER TASK FORCE COMMANDER
11:47 PM. CONSTELLATION advises ~~STP 77~~ of intended launch position for strikes for simultaneous time over target 3:45 AM.

11:51 → 11:54 PM. CONSTELLATION receives ^A message that TICONDEROGA had launched aircraft at 10:43 PM with scheduled arrival over target at 1:10 AM.

August 5th, 1964 ALL CAPS

12:02 AM - 12:30 AM

McNAMARA PRESS CONFERENCE

1200 MIDNIGHT insert
12:00 AM
Secretary McNamara holds a press conference in which he describes ^{SOME OF THE ACTION "HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE". HE GOES ON TO ADD THAT} the nature and extent of the strikes against the selected targets. ^{STATES THAT}

"SOME OF THAT ACTION HAS ALREADY TAKEN

10
"US NAVAL AIRCRAFT FROM THE CARRIERS TICONDEROGA AND CONSTELLATION... HAVE ALREADY CONDUCTED AIR STRIKES AGAINST THE NORTH VIETNAMESE BASES FROM WHICH THESE PT BOATS HAVE OPERATED. OUR NAVAL AIRCRAFT HAVE ALSO

WHICH HAVE DIRECTLY SUPPORTED
CERTAIN OTHER TARGETS.
CONDUCTED STRIKES AGAINST THE PT BOATS.
THE OPERATION OF THE PT BOATS.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~SECRET~~

12:12 AM. Four A-1's from the TICONDEROGA are within enemy radar zone.

12:15 AM. Six A-4's and six F-8's are launched from the TICONDEROGA and immediately depart for VINH, ^{FLYING AT} going to an altitude of 25,000 feet. ^{THE} Target is 320 NM away.

12:32 AM. TICONDEROGA's six A-4's and six F-8's penetrate ^{THE} radar screen.

12:34 AM. TICONDEROGA launches six F-8's which immediately penetrate ^{THE} radar screen and ^{THEN} immediately depart for QUANG KHE, ^{FLYING AT} going to an altitude of 25,000 feet. Target is 250 miles away.

1:00 AM. CONSTELLATION launches four A-1's which immediately penetrate ^{THE} radar screen and ^{THEN} immediately depart for HON GAY, ^{FLYING AT} going to an altitude of from 1,000 - 5,000 feet. HON GAY is 360 miles away. CONSTELLATION also launches four A-1's which immediately penetrate the radar screen and ^{ENEMY} immediately depart for LOC CHAO, ^{FLYING AT} going to an altitude of 1,000 - 5,000 feet. LOC CHAO is 330 NM away.

1:15 AM. TICONDEROGA's six F-8's launched at 12:34 AM strike QUANG KHE with 20 mm shells and 5" rockets. The base is caught by surprise. There is no AA fire. Seven boats are sighted, four are severely damaged and one moderately. There are no U.S. losses

1:25 AM. TICONDEROGA's four A-1's launched at 10:43 PM, six A-4's launched at 12:15 AM and six F-8's launched at 12:15 AM strike ^{THE} VINH ^{THE} BEN THUY ^{THE} PUC LOI complex. The report moderate AA fire, but surprise is achieved. Overall, the defenses are neither strong nor alert during this first attack. Of the six boats sighted, four are moderately damaged and two lightly. Eight

POL tanks and two AA guns are destroyed. There are no U.S. losses. The ordnance used ranges from 1,000 lb. bombs to Zuni 5" rockets to 2.75 mm rockets.

2:30 AM. CONSTELLATION launches ten A-4's and two F-4's which immediately penetrate radar screen and ^{THE ENEMY} immediately depart for HON GAY at an altitude of 25,000 - 30,000 feet. CONSTELLATION also launches five A-4's and three F-4's which immediately penetrate the radar screen and ^{ENEMY} immediately depart ^{THEN} for LOC CHAO, ^{FLYING AT} going to an altitude of 25,000 - 30,000 feet.

3:25 AM. CONSTELLATION's four A-1's launched at 1:00 AM and its five A-4's and three F-4's launched at 2:30 AM strike LOC CHAO. They report moderate AA fire (20 mm from ^{THE} boats). The boats are not underway and thus had not been alerted. Of the five PT Boats sighted, two are damaged seriously and three moderately. One ^{A-1} aircraft (Sather, third in column) is shot down. One A-1 is ^{LATER} damaged, but recovered. ^{THE} Attack lasts 25 minutes. 2.75" rockets and 20 mm ^{AND} strafing attacks utilized.

3:40 AM. CONSTELLATION's four A-1's launched at 1:00 AM and its ten A-4's and two F-4's launched at 2:30 AM strike HON GAY. They report moderate to heavy AA fire. Of the five boats sighted, five are destroyed. The boats do not get underway until after the attack started. Alvarez' ^{A-4} aircraft, ^{THE} second in column, is shot down ^{while A} on second pass against boats at anchor. The attack lasts 25 minutes, with 2.75" rockets and 20 mm strafing attacks utilized.

4:03 AM. TICONDEROGA launches four F-8's and eight A-4's which immediately penetrate the radar screen and ^{ENEMY} immediately depart for ^{ABOVE} restrike in VINH.

4:15 AM. TICONDEROGA launches two A-4's which immediately penetrate the radar screen and ^{THEN} immediately depart for HON ME at an altitude of 25,000 feet.

4:45 AM. TICONDEROGA's four F-8's and eight A-4's, all launched at 4:03 AM, strike VINH. They report heavy AA fire from the additional AA guns brought into position after first strike, but they destroy two to four POL tanks and six AA guns. There are no U.S. losses.

5:15 AM. TICONDEROGA's two A-4's launched at 4:15 AM strike HON ME with 20 mm shells and rockets. They report no AA fire, and surprise is achieved. Of the six boats sighted, three are destroyed, three moderately damaged, and one is forced to beach. There are no U.S. losses. While the boats may have been alerted, their defenses were ineffective. This ~~raid marked the end of~~ the 64 sortie attack, at which

"Pierce Arrow"

- ABOUT 25 PATROL BOATS WERE DESTROYED OR DAMAGED
- 90% OF THE PETROLEUM STORAGE FACILITY WAS DESTROYED
- SEVEN AA INSTALLATIONS IN THE VINH AREA WERE DESTROYED OR SEVERELY DAMAGED.

rescue

I

CENTERING ON THE
CYPRUS SITUATION

~~ALL CAPS~~

14

12:40 - 3:00 PM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING - LUNCH WITH THE
PRESIDENT

(REGULARLY SCHEDULED)

A) NATIONAL SECURITY MEETING ^{CONSIDERATION OF THE CYPRUS SITUATION} IS IN PROGRESS, WHEN

McNAMARA, RUSK, VANCE AND BUNDY ARRIVE AT THE WHITE HOUSE TO BRIEF THE PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT. AT A LUNCH FOLLOWING THE NSC MEETING, THE TYPES OF RESPONSE AND THE TARGETS ARE DISCUSSED. THE PRESIDENT AGREES THAT A FIRM, SWIFT RETALIATORY STRIKE MUST BE CARRIED OUT. HERE, THE TARGETS ARE NARROWED TO THE PT BOATS, THEIR BASES AND THE SUPPORTING POL INSTALLATION AT VINH. OTHER OPTIONS, AMONG WHICH WERE THE MINING OPERATION AND AN AIR RAID AGAINST HAIPHONG, ARE REJECTED. THE PRESIDENT ASKS HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE TO EXECUTE THE STRIKE.

McNAMARA, ACCORDING TO BUNDY, ESTIMATES FROM THE ADVICE HE HAS THAT A STRIKE COULD BE LAUNCHED AT FIRST LIGHT (7:00 AM ^{LOCAL} ~~SUN~~ TIME) OR 7:00 PM WASHINGTON TIME. VANCE RETURNS TO THE PENTAGON ^{EARLY} ~~FAST~~ TO WORK OUT ^{THE DETAILS AND A} STRIKE EXECUTE MESSAGE WITH THE CHIEFS.

12 August

1600

Haslem/Furbish

Corddry UPI

1. Has the patrol been withdrawn from the Gulf of Tonkin?
2. Are both carriers still in the S. China sea?

Navy Info

CCF

1645

From VANCE interview: The patrol will end within the next few days and similar patrols will be run again in the future.

Q: When the patrol ends there will be a hiatus...a period when there is no destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin?

A: This gets into operational matters

1. Yes. (but as noted above, they will be back)

2. Yes

LPL
HWA 16

NIGHT DUTY REPORT MONDAY 10 AUGUST.

- 6:30 Gilikan passed Clark Molenhof answers to his querries concerning Godel. Lil Leigh informed. He added two more Q's for tomorrow.
- 6:45 Howard Handleman, USNWR is looking for a map of Cyprus that would show the "green line", apparently the line held by UN Forces. Said STATE Dept didn't have one, but felt Pentagon would. Told Howard unable to locate one tonight but would make a try in the morning. (Lil: suggest check with ISA, see if they can help.)
- 6:50 Told AP we had no estimate of North Viet Nam casualties resulting from Navy attack. Added objective was to eliminate PT boats and supporting facilities. Attacks were not made against populated areas
- 7:45 Told Sloyan, UPI, DOD had no further comment beyond our ealier statement attributable to SecDef relative to the timing of the announcement of the attack. (Admiral Moore on TICONDEROGA is reported to have said he didn't think planes had been picked up on radar. This contradicts Mac's statement. Coordinated reponse with Sylvester.
- 8:30 Told Wichita (Kans) Beacon we wouldn't confirm movement of 357th TacFtr Wing to Pacific.

Secured at 1000.

Furbish, Gilikan, Realsen, Parent, Hall.

August 10, 1964

1015 pm

gillikin

~~MEMO~~ AP

Wonder if you have any comment on New York Herald Tribune story quoting Cabot
Lodge to effect that ChiComs have sent in Chinese MIGS to North Viet Nam?

completed immediately

Aug 10/pm

We have no comment on the story which we have not yet seen, however,

Secretary McNamara commented on this possibility at the 5 PM news briefing
on August 6. Read caller the passage from transcript.

10 August

7:45 pm

Furbish

Sloyan UPI

Admiral "Core on TICONDEROGA is reported to have said he did not think his planes were viewed by radar prior to the attack...or when the President started talking. What is DOD comment since SecDef statement said "Hanoi, thru its radar, had then received indications of the attack."

Furbish, from the record.

AsstSec Sylvester

CGF

8:00 pm

~~Transmitted~~ See DOD statement #583-64 on Aug 7. We have no further comment.

8 August

1700

Mike McGinnis , Time , FE 7-8800

1. Is it conceivable that the PT boats involved in the Vietnam incident could have carried homing torpedos?

Lt Gammell

1745

1. It is conceivable.....but since none were recovered it is not known what type they carried.

8 August

1700

Mr. Hakai, Sanki Japanese Newspaper DE 23753

1. The Chinese Communists claim that there was no second encounter as claimed by the U.S. Is this so?
2. Were there any North Vietnamese survivors recovered from the water during the second attack?
3. What is the approximate size of a Destroyer crew?

files

Lt. Gammell

1705

1. Referred him to DOD Release 571-64 and subsequent information already released concerning second attack.....all of which he already held.
2. No.
3. Approximately 250.

8 August 1964

1145

Vickery

Ed Dale, New York Times

Can you give me some facts or a run-down on Sec McNamara's day on that busy Tuesday?

Cleared statement in task fo rce file

none

Vickery

1145

Told him of the Secretary's day as log shows it.

8 August 1964

0920

Vickery

Mr. Salpeter - Tel Aviv Haaretz

I understand that the PT boats used by the RVN were Russian and were gotten to The RVN via Egypt, who passed them along to the RVN as Surplus.
Do you have anything on this.

Janes Fighting ships

Vickery

0935

We have no information concerning this report. You should refer to the record in "Janes fighting ships"....

Mary

8 August 1964

1130

Vickery

John Travieso NBC

New York wants to know if we have any information ^{to add to} ~~of~~ a report that the Turks are moving ships in the Mediterranean.

Will our Navy ships keep watch on this movement and any other comments The DOD might have.

LCDR SNYDER, CAPTAIN USN ELLIS , SOP ON THIS

XXXX

Vickery

1200

We do not comment on other Nation's affairs of any kind.
In answer to his question put again I stated that the Fleet as a part of its mission would report or log all items as a ~~matters~~ matter of course.

Navy

USS MADDOX(DD-731)

Sumner Class

Commissioned 2 June 44

Displacement 2200 tons

Length 376.5'

3 5"/38 twins

2 3"/50 twins

2 3"/50 single

2 ASW projectors

2 Mk32Mod2 torpedo launchers(three in group)

15 Officers 260 men

USS TURNER JOY(DD-951)

Forrest Sherman Class

Commissioned 3 August 59

Displacement 2850

Length 418.5'

3 5"/54 single

2 3"/50 twins

2 ASW projectors

2 Mk32 torpedo launchers(3 tubes ea)

15 officers 240men

USS GRIDLEY(DIG-21)

Geontz(Improved) Class

Commissioned 25 May 63

5670 ton displacement

535' length

2 twin Terrier surface to air launchers
(one fwd...one aft)

2 3"/50 twins

2 3"/50 singles

ASROC

31 officers 369 men

2Mk32Mod2 torpedo launchers

USS TICONDEROGA (CVA-14)

Improved Essex Class

Displacement 33,100 tons

Length 786'

7 5"/38

85-100 aircraft

2260 with air group

(Note from Janes: Sherman Class are the first U.S. warships with gun batteries arranged to provide more fire power aft than forward.)

USS FECHTELER(DD-870)

~~Fechter Class~~

Gearing Class

Commissioned 2 March 46

Displacement 2425 tons

Length 390.5'

4 5"/38

2 Mk32 torpedo launchers

ASROC

15 officers 240 men.

USS CONSTELLATION(CVA-64)

Commissioned 27 Dec 61

Displacement 60,000 tons

Length 1047.5'

Kitty Hawk Class

90-100 aircraft according to type and size

2 twin Terrier launchers

4000 + officers & men

USS PRESTON(DD-795)

Fletcher Class

Commissioned 20 March 44

Displacement 2050 tons

Length 376.5'

4 5"/38

3 3"/50

2 Mk32Mod2 torpedo launchers

15 officers 240 men.

Marr

August 7, 1964

The following is a message from Admiral Thomas H. MOORE, USN, CINCPACFLT, to Vice Admiral Roy L. JOHNSON, COMSEVENTHFLT.

I have watched your operations of the last several days in the Gulf of Tonkin and over North Vietnam with great personal pride and satisfaction. Although we have come to expect an alert and ready response by SEVENTHFLT to every operational demand, the circumstances surrounding this operation required a special effort and the immediate and full response from every resource available to your fleet in the area of action. The alert and precise professional performance of Rear Admirals Moore and Guest and their respective carrier groups warrants my special commendation. The destroyers MADDOX and TURNER JOY once again proved their capabilities in a difficult and unusual situation.

Your operations have been followed closely and critically throughout the military establishment and at the highest levels of government. The laudatory comments heard from many sources are gratifying.

Well Done.

NOTE: ADMIRAL MOORE WAS RECENTLY RELIEVED BY ADMIRAL JOHNSON AS COMSEVENTHFLT.

Many

7 Aug 1964

1130

Realson

Simmons/ Newswack

Re DoD News Release No. 564-64 August 3, 1964.

1. The 75 junks, whose were they, RVN or SVN? And, were they out of sight when the attack occurred?
2. What was the course of the Maddox ~~minima~~ from the sighting of the junks to the time of the attack?
3. At what range did the Maddox fire her warning shots? At what range did the Maddox fire at the PT boats?
4. Were the PT boats directed in their attack by mainland radar, their own radar, or by eyeball?

(He's asking for any ~~ELINT~~ info, couldn't discourage him).

LCIR SNYDER

Furlan

Phoned to secretary

1720

1. Identification not reported. Waters in that part of the world are filled with junks, ~~generally~~ In a given area, junks are usually from the nearest coast. ~~Not reported.~~ Not reported.
2. ~~Patrol was on a southerly track, turned seaward at time of attack.~~ Patrol was on a southerly track, turned seaward at time of attack.
3. Over 5,000 yards. At about 5,000 yards.
4. ~~Information not available.~~ Information not available.

Mary

August 7, 1964

2:40 pm

gillikin

NY Times (Raymond); Reuters; CBS; UPI (corddry)

There is report that U.S. air attack on North Vietnam has been repulsed.

Any comment?

Col Nichols NMCC

Sylvester

(furbish)

~~Defense Department has no information to confirm this.~~

*There has been no additional attack
UPON NORTH VIET NAM.*

There has been no additional air attack upon North Viet Nam.

pass to NY HT & NY Times / G

Mary

7 August 1964

1500

Vickery

Neil Strawser

CBS

Is there now and has there been constant reconnaissance over or near the NVN land. (as opposed to recon around the ships etc.)

When ~~xxxx~~ and why and what did they learn or are learning

Was there a SVN Navy raid on a NVN island or coastal site on Sat, 1 Aug.

What is the explanation for the delay of some 2 hours in striking the last 2 PT boat bases.

Where is the WH statement concerning the revelation of the attack prior to the event...~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Any further statements on this.

Navy/ Haslem/ Furbish/ record

Haslem

1700 8/7/64

1. We have no comment.
2. We can not speak for the South Viet Nam Navy
3. There was no delay. The attacks were carried out according to schedule.
4. See the White House. (see also Sec'r Sylvester amplifying statement.)

Mary

7 Aug 1964

REVENUE Ceikos

BOB SCHWEITZ / ANAF TIMES 2966900 thru Maj McBrinn, Duty Off 6 Aug

Re: Personnel being transferred or moved as a result of crisis in the Pacific and southeast Asia:

1. Will those whose families are left behind in government quarters be able to collect separation pay?
2. Will the families be able to remain in government quarters (how long)?
3. If they must move and the move constitutes the second permanent change of station in a year, will the family be entitled to dislocation allowance?

This is a joint query:

LtCol Scott, ODCSPER& BUPERS

1600

1. The member is not entitled to the \$30 per month family separation allowance if his dependents are occupying adequate government quarters. Should the dependents occupy inadequate government quarters, the member is entitled to both the basic allowance for quarters and the \$30 family separation allowance.
2. The usual practice is to authorize up to 30 days in quarters after the departure of the sponsor. However, the Post Commander may authorize longer periods of occupancy if vacant quarters exist after installation requirements are met or to alleviate the effects of an unexpected contingency over which the sponsor had no control.
3. A member moved on a second PCS may be authorized a second dislocation allowance when on the finding of the Secretary of the Service concerned that the exigencies of the service require more than one such change of station during the current fiscal yr.

~~BUPERS~~
Separation pay, occupation of government quarters, and dislocation allowances are all covered by statute and amplified by decisions of the comptroller general. It is not anticipated that this current crisis will require any alteration of these regulations as they presently apply. There is enough flexibility in these statutes to meet any requirements that may be imposed. The Navy is geared for contingencies such as the one now in existence.

Navy

7 August 1964

1600

Major Parent

Godfrey Hodson London Observer RE 7-1234 Paris Match

Reference Dick Fryklund story in today's Washington Star in which it is alleged that a minor incident led to the Red's PT attack:

1. Is the story true?
2. Was there a South Vietnamese attack on the island of Hon Me?
3. Did South Vietnamese Naval units put guerrilla forces ashore?
4. What was the Maddox doing at the time?
5. What was the purpose of the Maddox patrol?
6. Were there air strikes by the South Vietnamese Air Force at any time?

LCDR SNYDER

CAPTAIN DOWDELL/CAPTAIN GLENN

Paris Match by Gillikin

Hodson by Haslam

1730 8/7/64

1830 8/7/64

~~XX~~

4. The Maddox was engaged in a routine patrol, the purpose of which was and is surveillance of the general traffic in the area. Refer all other questions to Republic of Vietnam thru their embassy.

Note: Hodson called at 1730 by Haslam- had left for the day and was not expected in tomorrow (Sat)

Mary

THE FOLLOWING IS A MESSAGE FROM ADMIRAL ULYSSES S. GRANT SHARP, JR., CINCPAC,
TO ADMIRAL THOMAS H. MOORE, USN, CINCPACFLT.

The supreme test of readiness and the undisputed mark of real professionalism
is the smart execution of an operation conceived of necessity on short notice,
complicated by the elements and fraught with the normal dangers of our calling.

My personal well done to all hands.

NOTE: ADMIRAL SHARP WAS RECENTLY RELIEVED BY ADMIRAL MOORE AS CINCPACFLT.

Mary

August 7, 1964

2 pm

gillikin

Mr. Buckhorn, UPI (looking for Corbary-who not in desk at moment)

Trying to get an explanation on the discrepancy on time factor in announcement and the attack time- what is the DOD saying?

Has the release put out by DOD last nite giving the attack time that has caused the debate been withdrawn? Read me the line about the time of the first attack.

Capt. Ellis

supplied

immediately

The White House has made a statement on the subject and we have not. We have nothing to add.

The release has not been withdrawn. Read him the 1:15 AM line.

(Suggested he should check with Charlie for guidance.)

Mary

August 7, 1964

gillikin

Raymond/ NY Times

re the statement by DOD that there has been "no additional attack upon north Viet Nam ", I would like to change my question and get answer to the following
Hanoi reported an "intrusion " upon North Vietnam had been repulsed. Did
the U.S. make any flights in/^{or}over North Vietnam since the air strikes and post
strike reconnaissance flights over targets, already announced?

Furnish

phoned by gillikin

August 7/ 1964

We have no comment beyond the statement that there have
No
been/ additional attacks against North Vietnam.

Murray

7 August 64

1335

Diakon

Leaf Bell, Copley Press (296 8583)

I would like to check out a statement that San Diego has "all tactical military units have been alerted." Camp Pendleton says it is "in a state of readiness."

1. What is the wording of the message that alerted all military units in the continental U. S.?
2. When was it put out, and how long will it be in effect?
3. Who originated it? President or SecDef or who?

Headquarters Marine Corps (Lcol Derryberry) via Maj
Durrell

Haslam

1745 8/7/64

As a matter of standing policy alerted units are not identified. All military units are being maintained in a state of readiness sufficient to meet requirements placed upon them.

Am. J. Sci.

Aug 7 1964

1130

Furbish

Corddry UPI

Air craft from the mainland are passing through Hickam in plain view.
Obviously the people at bases and towns from which they went know they are gone.
Therefore, can we not now have some information on the units deployed?

Furbish

Hinkle.. Sec'r Review

CGF

1215

The type, size, and numerical designations of units deploying from
the U.S. to the Western Pacific must remain unannounced for the present as it
would add to the air order of battle information available to a possible enemy.

Am Force

Augu 6, 1964

1200

Kent

AP UPI

Names of B-57 casualties in Vietnam?

Casualties

NOTE REVERSE
TIME
1730

B-57 August 6, 1964 missing --North East of Saigon, about 37 mi. n.e.
From 405th Fighter Wing, Clark Air Base. Enroute from Clark,

USAF Captain Cutrer, ~~Robert~~ ^{Fred} C. Jr. pilot

wife: Shirley A. Cutrer

Lot 26, Don Adriano, Diamond Subdivision, Angeles, Phil.

mother: Mrs. Julia L. McVleen

Route 2, Osyka, Mississippi

brother: Mr. Hugh Cutrer

2741 Day Drive, Baker, Louisiana

1st Lt. Kaster, Leonard L. Navigator

father: Mr. Ernest L. Kaster
Moravia, Iowa (

mother: Mrs. Regina Y. Shea

7 Sylvia Lane, Holyoke, Mass.

air force

6 Aug 64

2152

Major Cannon

Sid Roberts AF Washington AD 4, 5400

The Delaware Air National Guard has been asking for volunteers for cargo carrier crews for Viet Nam ... Can you confirm how widespread this is?

Answer: No Air National Guard personnel have been called up or asked to volunteer for service in Viet Nam. The same is true for reserves.

Add for background: The Air National Guard has been asked if there are crews who would like to participate in training flights during the leave days.

Whenever a backlog of cargo accrues for any reason whatever, the AF, as a matter of routine requests the ANG or AF Reserve to assist in clearing it out. There are ANG and Air Force Reserve crews and aircraft flying in support of the Air Force's Military Air Transport Service on a routine basis as part of their aircrew training. During the last fiscal year, for instance the ANG flew 32.5 million ton miles on overseas flights. (See continuation below)

ANG Colonel Lichy, W.

524-4240

AF Colonel Jesse Stay, SIF-CIF -- Major Ken. Stewart, AFRA Col. Stevens

Comd Post

Major Cannon

2152 6 Aug '64

(Continuation:)

During the last several months of the fiscal year Air Force Reserve heavy troop carrier units flying C-124's airlifted 2.6 million ton miles of cargo overseas.

Training flights of this nature originating from anywhere in the United States do not normally proceed beyond Tachikawa, Japan.

During the Cuban crisis of 1962 volunteer aircrews of the ANG flew ^{cargo} missions to Europe, the Far East and point in the Western Hemisphere.

Am Force

Ans to Inquiry only!

August 6, 1964

CHRONOLOGY OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE McNAMARA's ACTIVITIES
VIETNAM PT BOAT CRISIS:

Sunday, August 2, 1964

Discussions with the President and the Chairman of the JCS, General Earle G. Wheeler -- which resulted in instructions from the President to continue the patrol, to double its size and to issue orders to U.S. forces not only to defend against patrol boat attacks but to destroy them as well.

Monday, August 3, 1964

7:15 a.m. arrived at Pentagon office as usual and spent a normal morning of work.

12:30 p.m. lunched with General Wheeler, the Chairman of JCS, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance in his dining room, as is normal procedure for Monday.

1:30 p.m. went to the Joint Chiefs' "Tank" for meeting.

3:00 p.m. went from "Tank" directly to Capitol Hill to keep appointment with Senator Mansfield, and subsequently met with joint committees of House and Senate.

5:25 p.m. returned to his Pentagon office where he kept several routine appointments.

6:15 p.m. went to White House for meeting with President and others.

7:30 p.m. was back in Pentagon office and left at once for dinner with Indian Minister aboard the Sequoia, Secretary of Navy Nitze's official boat, after which he spent the night at his home.

Tuesday, August 4, 1964

7:15 a.m. arrived at office as usual and spent routine morning until 9:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. military officers and civilian officials were reporting on action situation in the Gulf of Tonkin. Throughout the morning, Secretary engaged in several telephone discussions with the President as to the situation.

11:30 a.m. met with Joint Chiefs in Secretary's Dining Room at Pentagon.

11:45 a.m. Secretary Rusk joined Secretary of Defense at Pentagon for discussions.

12:40 p.m. left for White House to attend a National Security Council meeting and lunch with the President, Secretary of State Rusk and McGeorge Bundy.

3:00 p.m. returned to Pentagon and went immediately to JCS meeting in the "Tank."

3:30 p.m. returned to Pentagon office.

4:30 p.m. went back to meeting in JCS "Tank", after which he returned to his office briefly before going to White House.

6:00 p.m. went to White House for series of meetings.

6:15 p.m. met with National Security Council at White House.

6:45 p.m. met with Congressional Leadership at White House.

8:45 p.m. returned to Pentagon office and met with various officials until midnight.

12:00 midnight went to Studio on second floor of Pentagon and held press conference, after which he returned at 12:30 a.m. to his office and then retired to his adjoining bedroom at 1:30 a.m. to spend the night, during which he received situation reports regularly.

Wednesday, August 5, 1964

6:00 a.m. arose, received situation reports and began consideration of what further action should be taken.

7:10 a.m. had breakfast in his Dining Room, after which he met with various officials in his office.

7:30 a.m. reviewed situation with President by telephone and discussed further action.

9:00 a.m. briefed press in Studio of Pentagon.

9:15 a.m. back in office and spent morning working and talking to various officials.

11:00 a.m. reported latest information to President at Syracuse University.

12:30 p.m. had lunch with Deputy Secretary Vance in his Dining Room.

1:15 p.m. went to White House to brief President on his return from Syracuse, New York.

2:30 p.m. back in Pentagon office.

7:30 p.m. appeared on CBS-TV in DoD Studio with Neil Strawser as interviewer.

8:00 p.m. dinner in office with Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton to review testimony Secretary was to give Thursday morning before Senate and House Committees in support of President's resolution authorizing action in Southeast Asia.

8:50 p.m. went to the Pentagon Studio and did live TV interview with NBC, with Peter Hackes as interviewer.

9:30 p.m. returned to office and departed immediately for home.

Thursday, August 6, 1964

Spent normal morning, then went to Capitol Hill for meetings with Joint Committees of Senate at 9:00 a.m. and of House at 10:30 a.m.

4125

524

[Faint, illegible text from bleed-through]

1. LHM Winston op 33261
2. GCM Richardson 3121
3. GCM Foote op 33262

CONTINUED IN MC EAGLEMAN

75343

1609

100

3. No

Mary

6 Aug 1964

1310

Realsen

Fay AP

Has 3rd Mar Div or elements thereof started arriving from Far East?
It is reported that at least some units began coming to west coast yesterday.

Div Info

Notified Mr. Fay

1400

^{are}
There are regularly rotating units arriving on the west coast at this time.

Manning
f

3 Aug 64

Mr. Greenway, Time Magazine (PE 7 5000)

- 1) Number of ships attached to 7th Fleet as of time of strike
- 2) Number of Carriers and planes in 7th Fleet
- 3) Will TIME be allowed to show where other 7th fleet carriers were at the time of the strike?
- 4) What is the British strength at Singapore?

INFOC Lt Fernald (via Lt Kolbenschlag)
Cdr Stephens, RN, UK naval staff

76574

REALSEN
~~REALSEN~~

13705
JOE

- 1) 125
- 2) 4 carriers (3 CVA and 1 CVB) 650 planes
- 3) ~~BONY~~ HORNET RICHARD (CVA 31) was at sea off Japan; CONSTELLATION (CVA 64) was at sea in S. China Sea, TICONDEROGA (CVA 14) was at sea in S. China Sea
- 4) Not releasable (from UK Naval Staff). KEARSARGE (CVS 33) departing Yokosuka, Japan

Mary

6 August 64

1340

Dick Frydland Washington STAR

WERE any bombs dropped during the attacks on North Vietnam?
(This does NOT refer to whether any were carried etc etc etc, but were
any DROPPED).

CHIEF LT MC EACHERN

MAJOR HARRILL

75342

1445

~~WERE any bombs dropped during the attacks on North Vietnam?~~
~~(This does NOT refer to whether any were carried etc etc etc, but were~~
~~any DROPPED).~~

Many

6 Aug 1964

1800

Realsom

Hannifin
Jerry Hannifin/Time FE 7-8000

Adm. Sharp's CincPac Command -

1. number of men
2. number of a/c
3. Estimate of annual ~~expenses~~ appropriations needed to run CincPac.
4. Number of ships

Capt Berndtson-JCS

#3 Mr. Brazier OSD(COMP) 76142
Cdr Clark-Security Review

(1)

7 Aug 1964
1212

1. Over 450,000
2. Over 3500
3. Programming is not accounted for on that basis, it is funded by the individual services
4. Over 400

many

6 August 64

1340

Dick Fryklund Washington STAR

WERE any bombs dropped during the attacks on North Vietnam?
(This does NOT refer to whether any were carried etc etc etc, but were
any DROPPED).

CHINFO LT MC KACHAN

75312

MAJOR BARRELL Naalan

1445

Completed by Steele

~~WERE any bombs dropped during the attacks on North Vietnam?~~
~~(This does NOT refer to whether any were carried etc etc etc, but were~~
~~any DROPPED).~~

11

Mary

6 August 1964

0900

Haslam

Bem Price/AP

1. Had there been any action involving offensive operations against any N. Vietnamese installation within a 72 hour period ending Sunday night, 2 Aug.?
2. Did MADDOX have any mission which fell outside the bounds of "routine patrol" at any time?

Snyder/Chinfo

*Coc 1st Co/ Yes
gilliken to Eth-*

Aug 6/5:30 pm

1. There has been no report of any such action.
2. Negative.

may

5C
6 August 1964

At 6:30 PM tonight in the Pictorial Studio Rm 2E781, ^{Deputy} Sec Vance will be a participant in a filmed interview with Bill Downs of ABC.

Also after the filming a six minute interview with Bill Evenson of Mutual Radio will take place. Press are invited to listen. Embargo on material for ABC show is 10:30 PM 6 August 1964. Mutual 8:30 PM 7 August 1964.

Gennett (C) 6

all

6 August 1964

1120

Vickery

Jack Raymond New York Times..

I want an official statement on the results of the recon flights carried on after the attacks.

Mr. McNamara's Statement

Captain Ellis

Vickery .

1140

The results of the recon mission were very successful. The post strike reconnaissance supported earlier estimates of damage. ~~The reconnaissance aircraft did not~~
~~with no anti-aircraft fire.~~ The reconnaissance aircraft met with no anti-aircraft fire.

*am Jore
may*

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR INFORMATION SERVICES
Washington, D. C. 20301

August 6, 1964

FOR THE PRESS:

For your planning purposes, authority has been granted to cognizant commanders to arrange, if and as feasible, a news media pool visit to the carriers USS TICONDEROGA and USS CONSTELLATION. Pool arrangements will be made in Saigon. We will advise you the date of the pool visit to the carriers and shipping data on news materials when known.

END

all

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS DIVISION

DATE 5 August 1964 TIME 1010 OSD REPRESENTATIVE Vickery

QUERY FROM: ~~Frank Ray~~, Knight Newspapers

QUERY: Phil Meyers

What kind of evidence are we prepared to present to the UN to back up our charges of aggression..

Russia says we have made up the story

Some Goldwaterites say the same...

Same deal as Russian msl pics. in cuba crisis.

SOURCE OF ANSWER _____ PHONE _____

COORDINATION _____

ACTION: Completed by _____ TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED _____

Referred to Staff.

Vickery

are

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS DIVISION

DATE 5 August 1964 TIME 0930 OSD REPRESENTATIVE Vickery

QUERY FROM: Jess Cook, Time magazine

QUERY: What did the SEC DEF do yesterday...How long was his day, who did he see, who kept him informed etc...Need some material for personal color item.

SOURCE OF ANSWER Col Sylvester and Sec Def statement PHONE 55261

COORDINATION _____

ACTION: Completed by Vickery TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED _____

He stayed in the Pentagon all night
Was in constant contact with W H and military chiefs
They and his aides kept him/ informed instantly and instant receipt of
messages from the theatre.
Many meetings with Service secs, NSC and WH.

ad

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS DIVISION

DATE 5 August 1964 TIME 1530 OSD REPRESENTATIVE Vickery

QUERY FROM: Bob Schweitz ANAF 296-8900

QUERY: Has dependent travel to Viet Nam been cancelled?

SOURCE OF ANSWER Col. Lawrence/ Manpower PHONE _____

COORDINATION _____

ACTION: Completed by Gillikin TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED Aug 5/pm

No.

all

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

5 August

1700

Haslam

Jack Jury/ WTOP News

When did McNamara go to the White House today and when did he return?

Secretary in Mr. McNamara's office

Completed by Vickery/g

He went to the White House this afternoon and remained for about 1 hour and 15 min.

air

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS DIVISION

DATE 5 May 1964 TIME 1130 OSD REPRESENTATIVE Vickery

QUERY FROM: Al Sehlstedt Baltimore Sun, Wire Services, many others

QUERY:

Why can't we have some elaboration and perhaps some identification of these units set for reinforcements. At least type of unit or a little more on capability etc.

SOURCE OF ANSWER _____ PHONE _____

COORDINATION _____

ACTION: Completed by _____ TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED _____

We will not go further than the Secretary's statement. At least for the present, troop or unit movements are sensitive information. This is quite normal for such a period as this.

STILL VALID AS OF 1630 5 MAY 64
SEE SOC DEF

Army
Navy
Air Force

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

5 Aug 1964

1008

Realsen

Norfolk area papers

IsCTF-1 continuing on its found-the-world cruise or is it being diverted due to Viet-Nam developments?

Capt Glenn

There is no change in ~~their~~ itinerary.

Many

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS SERVICES

INFORMATION REPORT

DATE ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 5 Aug 64 TIME ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 1145 OSD REPRESENTATIVE Kent

QUERY FROM: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Burkhardt 347-6492 Journal of Commerce

QUERY:

Has MATS gone out to any commercial airlines to provide additional
airlift. (relative to Vietnam crisis)

If s, how much is involved in contract dollars.

SOURCE OF ANSWER SAFOI, France PHONE

COORDINATION

ACTION: *Completed by Kent* TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED *Aug 7*

No increase in commercial airlift in relation to
Vietnam.

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

Am Jure

NITE DUTY REPORT 5-6 AUGUST

1. Reviewed text of unclassified version of SecDef statement to Joint Meeting of Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees and same statement to House Foreign Affairs Committee. Csikos cut stencils, proof read and ran copies (normally a legislative affairs task) prepared 150 copies of first version, 50 copies of second version, delivered to Leg Affairs. Have 200 copies to be assembled for immediate OASD(PA) needs.
2. Noted in above statement SecDef states "our losses were two aircraft destroyed and two damaged." However, in SecDef TV statement to CBS last evening he said "earlier reports were two damaged but I find it was only one", or words to that effect. I checked Mr McNaughton to see if he wished to change the Committee statement. McNaughton said he had specifically covered this point with McNamara at dinner...two were damaged...although one was very slight damage. Lt Carmel, HON, confirms that from his reports two were damaged. Hence, in answer to queries today recommend we stay with the original figure.
3. All press departed well before midnight and media phone query load was insignificant. Recommend no duty officer need be physically present after midnight tonight unless major change in the crisis.
4. Corrdry and Raymond both irked at SecDef having an "exclusive" with CBS that they didn't cover.
5. Above CBS interview seemed to contain some new info and recommend transcript be made from the tape this morning. McNamara said:
 - a. no antiaircraft fire was made against the post-strike recon aircraft.
 - b. mission was "very successful"
 - c. To question about HON statement that they had captured one of our pilots, he said: "It's possible." (Expect query on this..which one might have been captured?)
6. Released names, HON, and photos of two missing pilots.
7. Admitted group of HBC men into studio for set-up for TODAY show..0640

Furbish

Mary

DATE August 5, 1964 TIME OSD REPRESENTATIVE gillikin

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

5 August 1964

AP / UPI

San Jose

Blair
Request for identification on pilots downed in Vietnam attacks

Refers

Completed by night staff

5 Aug

LTJG Everett Alvarez Jr. age 26, assigned to Attack Squadron 144 based at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Pilot of A-1H aircraft from USS CONSTELLATION.

Wife: Mrs. Emma Teresa Alvarez 1203 Madison Avenue
San Jose, California

Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Everett Alvarez
2148 Bohannon Drive
Santa Clara, California

LTJG Richard G. Sather, age 26, assigned to Attack Squadron 145 based at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Pilot of A-1H aircraft from USS CONSTELLATION.

Bachelor. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Christian Sather 139 West Redding
Fremont, California.

Mary

5 Aug

1000

Luther Carter Norfolk Pilot

What ships comprise the ASW group moved to the South China Sea?

What units comprise the CVA group from First Fleet?

USS KEARSARGE and eight Destroyer types

USS RANGER and escorting Destroyers

Mary

5 August 64

1000

Has lam

Deroche, AFP - NY Times/ AV Week/

What types of aircraft were lost?

Msg Traffic

Capt Ellis

Haslam

~~RECEIVED~~ ALH and  ALH

May

5 August

1115

atcals

Gray/Newsweek

1. did any other planes (Navy) land in S. Vietnam? has heard that 2 did.
2. How many rounds of 25mm shell expended. How many rockets and bombs?
3. If two planes lost, crashed at low altitude without chance of ejection, was crash on land or sea? Was it observed by other a/c?
4. Can you eject from a Mi 1? A1?
5. Are more F4 fleet units moving into Gulf?

Mag traffic via Sigbee

Capt Ellis, Mr. Spenser

Completed by Maclean

CSMO 8/6/68

1. One F4 landed at Da Nang Tuesday after being hit by Mi fire.
2. Reports not complete.
3. At sea. (Ref: Mr. McQuinn's briefing 0700 5 Aug.
4. A1 yes. A1 No.
5. Movements of fleet units not discussed.

many

Interview - CBS - Aug 5, 1964

1. post strike recon from carriers supports earlier estimate of damage.
no antiaircraft fire was directed against recon flights.
2. said we lost 2 aircraft and only one was damaged. (incorrect)
3. asked about comment that N. Viet Nam said they had captured a pilot he said:
"That's possible."
4. Says we destroyed or damaged 25 PT boats. He suspects they still have 1/4 to 1/3rd of their force still operational.
5. On movements of reinforcements he said:
interceptor and fighter bomber aircraft were going to South Viet Nam
fighter bombers were moving to Thailand
an anti-sub force was moving to South China Sea to protect attack carriers and their accompanying destroyers.
substantial interceptor and fighter bomber forces were moving from U.S. to advance bases in western pacific.
attack carrier force from First Fleet which operates off Pacific coast is moving to western Pacific.
selected Army and Marine units have been alerted.
6. Our conventional capacity is sufficient to respond to any expected reaction.
7. He had about 3 1/2 hrs sleep last night. Will not stay here tonight.

Many

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS SERVICES

INFORMATION REPORT

DATE Aug 5 1964 TIME ^ OSD REPRESENTATIVE _____

QUERY FROM: UPI

QUERY:

Request identification on pilots missing in VietNam attacks

SOURCE OF ANSWER _____ PHONE _____

COORDINATION _____

ACTION: _____ TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED _____

LTJG Everett Alvarez Jr. Age 26, assigned to Attack ^Squadron 114, based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California. Pilot of A4E aircraft from USS CONSTELLATION.

Wife: Mrs. Tangee Alvarez 1203 Madrona Avenue
San Jose, California

Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Everett Alvarez 2168 Bohannon Drive, Santa Clara, Calif

LTJG Richard C. Sather, age 26, assigned to Attack ^Squadron 115 based at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Pilot of A1H aircraft from USS CONSTELLATION.

Bachelor

Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Christian Sather 339 West McKinley
Pomona, California

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

Man

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS SERVICES

INFORMATION REPORT

DATE _____ TIME _____ OSD REPRESENTATIVE _____

QUERY FROM: _____

QUERY: _____

SOURCE OF ANSWER _____ PHONE _____

COORDINATION _____

ACTION: _____ TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED _____

Follow up info on two pilots missing in Viet Nam attacks:

LTJG Sather: University of Calif, Riverside, Calif. BA Zoology June 1961
Commissioned 16 March 1962. Designated Naval Aviator through the NAVCAD
(Naval Aviation Cadet) program 1 July 1963. Promoted to LTJG 16 Sept 63.
Date of first Active Duty 4 November 1961.

LTJG Alvarez: Santa Clara University BS Electrical Engineering June 1960.
Entered Navy NAVCAD program 23 June 1960. Commissioned Ensign 12 Sept 60.
Designated Naval Aviator 9 November 1961. Promoted to LTJG 14 April 1962.

THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

May

UPI

Request identification on pilots missing in Vietnam attacks

LTJG Everett Alvarez Jr. Age 26, assigned to Attack Squadron 144, based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California. Pilot of A1E aircraft from USS CONSTELLATION.

Wife: Mrs. Tanges Alvarez 1203 Madrona Avenue
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Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Everett Alvarez 2168 Bohannon Drive, Santa Clara, Calif

LTJG Richard C. Sather, age 26, assigned to Attack Squadron 145 based at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Pilot of A1H aircraft from USS CONSTELLATION.

Bachelor

Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Christian Sather 339 West McKinley
Fresno, California

may

5 Aug

1900

LCDR Steele

Luther Carter Norfolk Pilot

Are there any SSBNs in the Pacific?

Snyder Chinfo

Furbush

none

many

5 Aug 1964

1540

Realsen

Chapman - ABC NEWS Bill Howard/Newhouse Papers

What type ordnance did the U. S. planes use in the attack on NVH?

Flag Plot (Navy)

Capt Ellis

Completed by Haslam

1630 8/5/

1,000 lb bombs

500 lb bombs

250 lb bombs

Zuni 5" rockets (Folding fin A/c)

2.75" rockets

20 mm ammunition

40582

may

August 5, 1964

AF

~~F-106~~ Kadena or
F-102 s at Clark Naha Yokota Misawa 1 sqdn at each

B-57 2 at Clark

F-105 3 at Yokota 3 at Kadena (are flyable)

F-100 2 at Misawa 1 at Clark

RF-101 1 at Misawa 1 at Kadena

C-130 1 Tachi 3 at Naha

PACAF 5th AF

5th AF at Fuchu

13th at Clark AFB

315th Air Div Tachi (Troop Carrier)

Hqtr's at Okie

BACKGROUND INFO
ONLY
C4Turbine

air Force

5 August 1964

1730

Haslam

Tom Lambert/NY Herald Trib

298-9160

Les Bell/ Copley

Did the Photo-recon planes return to the attack area and if so, did they
get back to their carrier without incident?

CNO BRIEFER VIA SNYDER

Capt Ellis

Haslam

1830 8/5/64

YES YES

May

5 Aug 1964

1856

Realsen

Bill Wise - Life Mag FE 7-8000

Was it routine, prior to 2 Aug, to observe Pt boats while on patrol in the Tonkin Gulf?

Snyder - Chinfo

1903

PT boats had been sighted previously, however, no aggressive action was taken by them.

May

5 Aug

1320

Haslam

Elton Fay AP

④
G
Exp

What type aircraft were used in the attack?

Flag Plot

Capt Ellis

Haslam

1530 8/5

F4B Phantom
A1H Skyraider
A1E Skyhawk
F8E Crusader

None

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORATE FOR NEWS SERVICES
NEWS DIVISION

DATE August 5, 1964 TIME _____ OSD REPRESENTATIVE gillikin

QUERY FROM: Al Sehlstedt/ Baltimore Sun

QUERY:

Would like confirmation or denial on report from Hanoi (by Reuters) that the North Vietnamese shot down five U.S. aircraft and have captured one pilot?

SOURCE OF ANSWER Command Post PHONE 59625

COORDINATION Mr. Odom

ACTION: Completed by Vickery TIME INQUIRER NOTIFIED 1500

The figure given by Mr. McNamara in this morning's conference still holds.

may
THIS REPORT IS TO BE TURNED INTO THE CHIEF, NEWS DIVISION, IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION.

5 August 1964

1115

Major Parent

Betty Cunningham

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR WA 8-21142/2228

Request longitude and latitude locations of the five sites mentioned this morning by Secretary McNamara as having been struck by carrier based aircraft--specifically, Hon Gay, Loc Chao, Phuc Loi, Vinh and Quang Khe.

Col Maholic and Chief Austin NMCC

59625

None Required

Major Parent

1245

Hon Gay ~~20-57 N~~ 20-57 N
107-05 E

Loc Chao 19-47 N
105-56 E

Phuc Loi 18-42 N
105-40 E

Vinh 18-40 N
105-40 E

Quang Khe 17-42 N
~~106-39 E~~
106-39 E

Mary

NAVY

on
Aug 5, 1964

Aircraft aboard the Ticonderoga and Constellation:

A1 - Skyraiders
A4 - Skyhawks
A3 - Skywarriors
A5 - Vigilantes
F8 - Crusaders
F4 - Phantoms
RF8 - -Crusaders
E1 - Tracer

Mary

0926:

AM

1st CAP over

2- F-8's

2- A-3's

4- A-1's

(TICONDEROGA)

11:20 AM

- 1) JCS MEETING
- 2) McN TALKING TO Pres
- 3) Quick response capability.
- 4) OPTIONS TO CHIEFS

MINE PT BASES

DEST DOATS

BASES

NVN (ATMOL CAP)

PERNO SYSTEM

3/4 - Heavy Bombers

PRESTIGE TARGETS

~~START~~

11:38 AM RUSK ARRIVES / Marshall 6200

11:40 BUNDS

McN ISSUED ORDERS SUICIDE → DANANG
LEMAI / CHIEFS CONTINUE TO MEETING

+ 22-44-68 HAS IN FUTURE.

B-57's; SWA to Phl

12:04 McN Rustle
Greene
Bundy
Vance
→ See Def.

12:15 McN rest up to WH

12:20 Vance to chips
? entering

12:25 Vance left

discuss of targets

13:49 - chips back up
met at 1500

1505 - McN + Vance

McN said Pres shls at 70000

QUANG KE

Phu COI

POW wall

HONG 07

VINH

LOCCHAO

15:15 no descent on the
chips continue
meeting

16:42 M+U+W enter JCS
MCN = JCS message
Don't at 7 dept
TIME 1M07. DONZ WAND
TO ANNOUNCE RESPONSE
Till IT STARTS

- SURE THERE WAS A 7704

17112 EVIDENCE OF A 7704
LEMA7 = ^{STRITE} only met by 7:00 PM
Defendants
ASW, etc.

Wheeler - 7:00 AM there
8:00 PM here
Ship needs h. OK

INTRODUCTION

This is a chronological account of the events of Tuesday, August 4, 1964 and Wednesday, August 5, 1964 as they relate to the attacks on the destroyers MADDOX and C. TURNER JOY in international waters by patrol boats of the North Vietnamese Navy and the subsequently executed retaliatory strikes against the North Vietnamese by naval aircraft from the USS CONSTELLATION and TICONDEROGA.

No chronology, of course, can ever hope to capture the full flavor and intensity of these two days in August. The events were complex, the pressures were great. Throughout, however, a number of basic themes emerge. There is the search for options, as word of the second attack on the destroyers filters in early on the morning of August 4th. These options must be shaped not only to the immediate problem of dealing swiftly and sharply with the PT Boat Bases but must, in the selection of additional reinforcements, deal as well with the long range strategic implications of the situation. There is a period of carefully refining these options for the President, the ultimate decision resting in his hands. Planning the strike occupies a good part of the afternoon of the 4th, coupled with the insistent demand that the attacks on the destroyers be verified clearly and convincingly. Throughout the evening, word is awaited for the first launch, signalling the start of the retaliatory response. The launches begin at 10:43 p.m., and the President goes on the air within the hour to announce our action to the world. Finally, the strike itself is completed, a remarkably successful operation.

The chronology has relied substantially on cables, recordings, maps, news releases, minutes of relevant meetings, and discussions with Messrs. McNamara, Vance, Bundy, McNaughton and General Wheeler.

It must be remembered that much of the action reported is occurring simultaneously at different levels - the Pentagon, in CINCPAC Headquarters Honolulu, Tonkin Gulf, the South China Sea, and the target areas. Most of these locations are in different time zones, and reports of the action arrive at different intervals. For ease of reference, however, all of the times, unless otherwise indicated, are Washington Eastern Daylight Time.

Saigon time is 12 hours later than EDT. Gulf of Tonkin time is 13 hours later, but the Destroyer^s in the Gulf of Tonkin kept Saigon time. CINCPAC (Honolulu) time is 6 hours earlier than EDT. Thus, for example, 10:00 AM in Washington is 10:00 PM Saigon time and 4:00 AM Honolulu time.

The various abbreviations used throughout are these:

CINCPAC - Commander in Chief, Pacific - Admiral Sharp

CINCPACFLT - Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet - Admiral Moorer

COMSEVENTHFLT - Commander, Seventh Fleet - Admiral Johnson

TUESDAY

3

AUGUST 4th, 1964

7:40 AM: (or 7:40 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The MADDOX reports that an attack appears imminent from actions taken by unidentified vessels. The MADDOX in company with the C. TURNER JOY is heading southeast near the center of the Gulf of Tonkin in international waters approximately 65 miles from the nearest land. These ships immediately go on the alert. NMCC receives this report at about 9:30 AM.

8:14 AM: -- First word of a possible attack on the MADDOX is received at the Pentagon by the DIA Indications Center over the phone from NSA. While on the phone, a copy of the NSA field unit message arrives and copies are delivered, sometime between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. to the Secretary of Defense McNamara, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Wheeler.

8:36 AM: (or 8:36 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The MADDOX establishes its first radar contacts with two unidentified surface vessels and three unidentified aircraft. ~~At this time,~~ U.S. fighter aircraft are THEN launched from the USS TICONDEROGA to provide the MADDOX and the TURNER JOY with protection against possible attacks from the unidentified vessels and aircraft, in accordance with the President's previously issued directives. At this time, the TICONDEROGA is located approximately 100 nautical miles East North East of Da Nang. (NMCC receives this report at about 10:30 AM)

9:08 AM: (or 9:08 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The MADDOX reports that the unidentified aircraft have disappeared from its radar screen but that the surface vessels are still remaining at a distance. ~~The~~ U. S. aircraft from the TICONDEROGA arrive and commence defensive patrol over the

MADDOX and the TURNER JOY. (NMCC receives this report at 11:04 AM.)

9:12 AM: McNamara calls the President and tells him about the NSA intelligence warning he has just received that the MADDOX is on the alert again, with the presence of hostile ships reported.

9:19 AM: Wheeler is now in receipt of several messages, including the NSA cable, indicating that the MADDOX may be under attack. He calls Admiral Grimm, NMCC, and asks whether Grimm has seen any messages on the attack and whether CINCPAC will be able to respond effectively. Grimm reports that he has one message, but has not talked to CINCPAC. Wheeler then says he will call CINCPAC himself.

9:23 AM: Wheeler calls General McCutcheon (CINCPAC J-3) and asks whether he has received any word on an impending attack on the destroyers. McCutcheon says he has no word, but will immediately check. Wheeler is insistent that the destroyers "clobber" the attackers, and make every effort to destroy the hostile ships, using additional air support, if required. (The time is 3:23 AM, August 4, ^{CINCPAC} Honolulu.)

* * * *

Tu Aug 4, 1967
9:25 AM - 11:25 AM

EARLY MEETINGS AT PENTAGON

McNamara, Deputy Secretary Vance, General Burchinal, Colonel Jones, and Admiral Mustin of the Joint Staff met at the Pentagon as reports of the attack on the destroyers come in. As the situation grows more intense,

possible levels of retaliation are discussed, and target folders are examined. High on the list are the PT boat and supporting POL installations, but other targets such as airfields, industrial complexes and bridges are also scrutinized. McNamara, about 10:00 AM, asks that the JCS be summoned, and they arrive shortly thereafter. Captain Miller of the Navy, a mine expert, is also asked to join the meeting and the possibility of mining the coast is discussed. Here it is pointed out that the mines would have to be brought into the carriers from Subic Bay, the Philippines. ^(*) McNamara, during this time, calls the President, informs him that a retaliatory attack is being planned, and tells ^{The President} ~~him~~ that he will present a number of options to him as soon as possible.*

2- JCC W/NO 002
 3- JCC W/NO 002
 4- JCC W/NO 002
 ***** CIN
 (9:26 PM, August 4, Saigon Time)
 9:26 AM THE CARRIERS REPORT THAT THEY HAVE LAUNCHED
 A COMBAT AIR PATROL OVER THE DESTROYERS
 patrol over the destroyers, to consist of 2 F-8s, 2 A-3s, and 4 A-1s.
 (NOTE: THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH JCS DIRECTIVE ISSUED TO CINCPAC ON AUGUST 2, 1964.
 CAD 106)
 9:30 AM: (9:30 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- Additional vessels are observed on the MADDOX radar screens, and these vessels begin to close rapidly on the destroyer patrol at speeds in excess of 40 knots. As the attacking craft continue to close rapidly from the west and south, the MADDOX evaluates their intentions as hostile. (NMCC receives this message at 11:20 EDT.)

9:32 AM: (3:32 AM, August 4, at CINCPAC) -- Grimm (NMCC) contacts the CINCPAC duty officer, Major Rosenbaum. Grimm reports that the NMCC

*McNamara made three calls to the President during this period at 9:43 AM, 10:53 AM and 11:06 AM.

has just received word from the MADDOX that a possible attack appears imminent from PT boats, wants to know if air cover is available, and what has been done to supply the destroyers with an effective response capability. Grimm indicates that additional measures, beyond those directly involving the destroyers, are being considered in Washington. The duty officer has no information about the situation but adds that McCutcheon is on his way in. Grimm says that he will arrange for an open line between CINCPAC and Washington, and tells the CINCPAC representative that this is a "hot one."

9:52 AM: (~~at~~ 9:50 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The destroyers report that they are under continuous torpedo attack and are engaged in defensive counterfire against North Vietnamese patrol boats. (NMCC receives this message at 11:39 AM and 11:42 AM.)

10:04 AM: McCutcheon calls Burchinal, who is then in McNamara's office. Burchinal tells him that the Pentagon has just received a "flash" that the destroyers are under attack. McCutcheon replies that he has not seen it yet, but indicates that the fleet and the Carrier Task Force have been alerted. The TICONDEROGA, about 15 minutes away from the destroyers by air, is alerted. So is the CONSTELLATION, which had left Hong Kong yesterday and is headed south. Burchinal states that the CONSTELLATION will be ordered to move into position off South Vietnam, in the vicinity of the TICONDEROGA. He also tells McCutcheon that a possible retaliatory strike is being considered against North Vietnamese bases and asks him to take a look at some of the possible targets if, in fact, an attack is carried out against the destroyers. Burchinal states that

MESSAGE IS BEING PREPARED OUTLINING A SET OF RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE DESTROYERS TO COME OUT 11 miles of NVN coast, and attempt to (leave at 10:33 AM, hrs) land damage the bases. This is the plan.

10:15 AM: (10:15 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The destroyers report that they have avoided torpedoes and have sunk one of the attacking craft. (NMCC receives this at 11:52 AM.)

10:19 AM: (4:19 AM, CINCPAC Time) -- McNamara calls Sharp and asks whether he has seen the messages regarding a possible attack on the MADDOX. Sharp says he has just arrived at the CINCPAC Command Center and that the messages are in. They discuss the "kill" capability of the MADDOX and the TURNER JOY. McNamara is particularly interested in assuring that the destroyers have whatever they need in the way of ^{air} support, ^{Sea} McNamara ^{fighter} also indicates that a modification of the rules of engagement is being sent to Sharp. (See 10:33 entry below.) ^{That's right, I want to destroy the attacking craft.}

10:33 AM: A message, personally signed by McNamara, is sent from the JCS to CINCPAC outlining the rules of engagement for the destroyers. Under the rules, the closest approach to the North Vietnam coastline for the destroyer patrol is 11 nautical miles, and in the event of a hostile attack, aircraft only are authorized to pursue and attack the hostile forces up to the three mile limit of the North Vietnamese coastline. The message also directs that the CONSTELLATION be moved into the area off South Vietnam, with the exact location at the discretion of the commander.

NOTE: AT 5:19 AM EDT, AUGUST 2ND COMSEVENTHFLT DIRECTED THE CONSTELLATION
 (Note: The CONSTELLATION was ordered to slip quietly out of Hong Kong on
 TO MAKE ALL PREPARATIONS TO LEAVE HONG KONG, BUT TO DO IT QUIETLY.
 August 2nd, 1964.) IT WAS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE HONG KONG ON AUGUST 3rd
 AT 6:01 PM EDT. HEADED SOUTH.

10:42 AM: (or 10:42 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The destroyers report that they have evaded additional torpedoes and have sunk another

of the attacking craft. Other protective aircraft have arrived overhead, but weather and darkness are hampering their activities. (NMCC receives this message at 11:37 AM.)

10:52 AM: (~~at~~ 10:52 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The MADDOX reports that the destroyers are still under attack. (NMCC receives this message at 12:24 PM.)

10:53 AM: McNamara calls the President.

10:59 AM: Sharp calls Burchinal in McNamara's office, and a discussion of possible ^{OPTIONS} ~~targets~~ for a retaliatory strike ensues. Sharp suggests HON ME, HON ME, BEN THUY, and QUANG KHE. Burchinal indicates that a number of options along these ^{OTHER LINES} ~~lines~~ are being considered. Sharp says that a strike could be carried out ^{- "All you have to do is"} ~~on your say so~~; states that an armed reconnaissance along the North Vietnamese coast would be advantageous, and points out that the CONSTELLATION, about 350 miles from the destroyers, is coming in to provide support. There is also talk of providing the carriers with a mining capability ~~which McNamara considers important~~. Sharp says that it might take about 48 hours to achieve the capability, the problem being to get the mines aboard the carriers. He also reports that he has a message indicating that the destroyers are under continuous torpedo attacks. (Note: Since actual word of this situation had not yet reached Washington, Sharp is filling in McNamara on the details.)

11:06 AM: McNamara calls the President.

Burchinal says that
"WHAT MR. McNAMARA WANTS
IS FOR YOU TO MOVE TO
ASSONABLE, MOVE, GET ON
THE TICO AS QUICKLY AS
YOU CAN A MINING CAPABILITY, THIS
WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL TO YOUR
PEOPLE ASKING TO GET

SHE COULD GO IN THERE
RIGHT NOW & SUPPORT
THOM. NO STRAIN!!!
"WE'VE SPEEDED
HER UP TO GET
HER DOWN THERE
AS FAST AS
POSSIBLE" REPORTS
SHARP

100
MARKS 50'S
WITH
ASSONABLE
TURNS TO
THE TICO
AS WORTH
AS 10:15:11

THE MINING OPTION
IS DISCUSSED AGAIN,
AND SHARP REITERATES
IT WILL TAKE "ROUGHLY 48 HOURS"

11:18 AM: Sharp calls Burchinal and provides him with the latest situation report on the attack. According to Sharp, the destroyers were exchanging fire with the patrol boats and the MADDOX had dodged at least five torpedoes. Sharp then suggests that the LOC CHOU estuary be added to any list of targets since he now has information it is being used as a hiding place for the PT boats. When Sharp again mentions the desirability of an armed reconnaissance along the coast line, Burchinal makes it absolutely clear that McNamara is seriously considering severer action.

* Then, ~~how~~ THIS EXCHANGE OCCURS:

He tells Sharp that Secretary of State Rusk is on his way to the Pentagon, and that meetings will be held later at the White House. Again, Sharp reiterates that it will take about 48 hours to attain a mining capability.

11:30 AM: (11:30 PM, August 4, Saigon Time) -- The CONSTELLATION receives a preliminary alerting message stating that for planning purposes "there is a strong possibility you will be directed on short notice to lay on armed reconnaissance at sea against Swatows or reprisal attack against Swatow bases such as QUANG KHE, BEN THUY or PHUC LOI." At this time, the CONSTELLATION is heading in a south southwest direction to join the TICONDEROGA.

Quoie P.16

[E] 11:35 AM: (5:35 AM, August 4, CINCPAC). CAPT MILLER OF THE JOINT STAFF calls CINCPAC AND DIRECTS THAT MINES BE AIRLIFTED TO THE CARRIAGES, WITH A REPORT OF THE ESTIMATE CINCPAC RETRANSMITS THIS DIRECTIVE TO CINCPACFLT AT 11:47 AM EDT, (5:47 AM CINCPAC time). (AT 1300Z THIS TIME)

X X X X

11:20 AM - 12:30 PM

JCS MEET

BUNDY AND RUSK ARRIVE AT PENTAGON

THE OPTIONS ARE DEVELOPED

11:20 AM: At McNamara's call, ^{THE} JCS meet in McNamara's dining room with Vance and McNamara. Present are Acting Chairman LeMay, Admiral McDonald, General Johnson, General Greene, General Goodpaster, Burchinal, Mustin and assistants. McNamara informs ^{THE} JCS he has called the President and that he is interested in a quick capability to respond.

11:38 AM: Rusk and Greene (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Far Eastern Affairs) arrive at JCS meeting. At McNamara's direction, Burchinal briefs Rusk.

11:40 AM: Presidential Assistant Bundy arrives at JCS meeting. McNamara briefs Bundy. McNamara informs ^{THE} group that he has issued orders to have mines moved from Subic Bay into Da Nang. There is a discussion of retaliatory measures. McNamara and Bundy discuss ^{TI} a sharp limited blow such as air strikes as opposed to the continuing pressure of mining the North Vietnamese coast. ^{THE} During discussion McNamara develops four options for ^{or} the sharp limited blow and one option for ~~the~~ continuous pressure. ^{agent N}
 ^{NUN} The four options for the sharp limited blow are:

1. Air strikes against PT boats and their bases.
2. Air strikes against petroleum installations.

3. Air strikes on bridges.

4. Air strikes on prestige targets, such as air fields.

The option for continuing pressure against the North Vietnamese is to mine their coastline. McNamara tells LeMay that the JCS should work up recommendations for immediate action, then recommended actions for 24, 48 and 60 hours ahead, ^{with} including special emphasis on reinforcements, such as the movement of B-57s into South Vietnam and fighter-interceptors into the Philippines.

12:04 PM: McNamara, Rusk, Bundy, Greene and Vance move to McNamara's office, while Chiefs continue meeting in McNamara's dining room. At this meeting the options are generally refined to three:

1. Sharp limited strikes against such targets as PT boats, PT bases, oil dumps, etc.
2. Continuing pressure, i.e., mining the Vietnam coast.
3. A combination of both.

12:20 PM: McNamara, Rusk, Bundy and Greene depart for White House. Vance goes into McNamara's dining room to ask ^{the} JCS if it would make any difference whether the retaliatory strikes were conducted at first light. ^{The} JCS tell Vance that such an attack would make no difference from a military standpoint but that fewer people might be there.

12:25 PM: Vance departs for the White House. ^{The} JCS continue meeting until 1:49 PM. During their meeting, at JCS direction, Burchinal calls McNamara at White House to recommend the sharp limited response option.

* * * *

* * * *

12:40 - 3:00 PMNATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETINGLUNCH WITH THE PRESIDENT

A regularly scheduled National Security Meeting centering on the Cyprus situation is in progress when McNamara, Rusk, and Bundy arrive at the White House. McNamara briefs the participants, ^{1/} including the President, on the available details of the attack on the destroyers. Rusk indicates that he, McNamara, and the JCS are developing a set of options, but that they are not sufficiently refined for presentation at that time.

At a lunch, which began about 1:00 PM and ended about 2:50 PM, following the NSC meeting, the types of response and the targets are key topics. Rusk, McNamara, McCone, Bundy, and Vance are with the President. The President agrees that a firm, swift retaliatory strike must be carried out. Here, a general consensus is formed on the approach finally taken in the JCS message to CINCPAC, developed later that afternoon, ordering the strikes into execution, ^{against} the PT boats located at bases PORT WALLUT, HON GAY, PHUC LOI and QUANG KHE and LOC CHAO estuary and the oil depot VINH. (See the 5:19 PM entry below.) The mining options as well as an attack on HAIPHONG are rejected. The President asks how long it would take to execute the strike. McNamara estimates from the advice he has received that a strike could be launched at first light (7:00 AM local time) or 7:00 PM Washington time. The President asks McNamara to call the Chiefs to confirm the time, but McNamara says he will check it out on his return to the Pentagon.

1/ Present are Robert Kennedy, McCone, McDermott, Ball, Talbot, Dillon, Rowan, Reedy, Valenti, Clifton, Smith, and Komer.

12:22 PM. -- Sharp calls Burchinal and gives him the latest situation report on the torpedo firings at the destroyers. Estimates are that 3 to 6 PT Boats are engaged, with two reported sunk, no enemy aircraft are reported in the area, and aircraft from the CONSTELLATION are on station over the destroyers. Sharp asks that the destroyers be given permission to pursue PT Boats to the three-mile limit, and that aircraft be permitted to engage in hot pursuit over North Vietnamese territory. Burchinal advises him that the rules of engagement are being considered by McNamara and the JCS. Burchinal advises Sharp to dig out target material on PHOC LOI, QUANG KHE, and the VINH oil complex. SHARP INDICATES THAT A

MESSAGE IS BEING SENT TO WASHINGTON SUGGESTING AN ARMED RECONNAISSANCE BETWEEN HON NG AND HON ME.

12:32 PM. (12:32 AM Saigon time, August 5th) -- The destroyers report that at least two enemy craft have been sunk, but that low ceilings continue to hamper the aircraft operations. (IMCC receives this report about 1½ to 2 hours later.)

12:54 PM. (12:54 AM Saigon time, August 5th) -- In addition to the torpedo attack, the TURNER JOY reports that during the engagement she was fired upon by automatic weapons while being illuminated by searchlights. (IMCC receives this report about 1½ to 2 hours later.)

6:57 AM CINCPAC TIME
* 12:57 PM. (12:57 AM Saigon time, August 5th) -- CINCPAC sends message to JCS recommending that authority be granted to conduct punitive U. S. air strikes as soon as possible against BEN TRUY, HON ME, QUANG KHE, and LOC CHAO. (IMCC receives this message at ____ PM.)

1:01 PM. -- Sharp calls Burchinal and reports two jet aircraft have been sighted flying out of HAINAN as far south as DA HANG. Sharp says that we cannot afford to permit hostile aircraft to fly over carriers. Sharp then quotes proposed message on rules of engagement for aircraft which would grant authority to declare hostile and engage any North Vietnamese/ChiCom aircraft whose actions show within a "reasonable certainty" that an attack on U.S. Forces is intended. Burchinal agrees that the message should be sent if needed for the security of CINCPAC Forces, will note Sharp's comments for the JCS, and tells Sharp that a meeting is now going on at the White House.

(Bob Hayes)

1:03 PM. -- White House Situation Room/calls Pentagon Command Center and advises that the NSC meeting has just broken up. McNamara, McCone, Rusk, Bundy, and Vance have now gone to lunch with the President. Situation Room wants to be sure that the latest reports from the destroyers are forwarded at once.

1:24 PM. -- McNamara, still at White House, calls Burchinal at Pentagon. Burchinal tells him that Sharp had reported the presence of hostile aircraft (probably IL 28's) flying out of HAINAN and was issuing a "to engage" order if the security of his forces was threatened by enemy air (see the 1:01 PM entry above). McNamara is insistent that faster situation reports be obtained from the MAIDOK and asks that Sharp try to contact the destroyer by radio. Burchinal advises that the JCS had been selected ~~THAT OPTION INVOLVING AIR STRIKES AGAINST~~ considering 3 courses of action, each progressively higher in its level ~~PHUC LOI, QUANG KHE, LOC CHAB, AND THE VINH-PHUC LOI DIL~~ of intensity, and recommended the second unanimously. This consisted of
STORAGE COMPLEX

RECOMMENDED

Area

air strikes against the PT Boat bases at PHOC LOH, QUONG KHE, LOC THOI, and the VHHI oil complex. Rejected was the first option, a strike only at VHHI, and the third, not only the PT Boat bases but other targets such as HAIHONG.

1:27 PM. (1:27 AM Saigon time, August 5th) -- The Destroyer Division Commander on the MADDOX sends a "FLASH" message to CINCPACFLT, with JCS on the information list. The "FLASH" states that a review of the action makes many reported contacts and torpedoes fired "appear doubtful." "Freak weather effects" on radar, and "over-eager" sonarman may have accounted for many reports. "No visual sightings" have been reported by the MADDOX, and the Commander suggests that a "complete evaluation" be undertaken before any further action. (USMC receives this report about 1½ to 2 hours later.) (Note: Sharp repeats the substance of this message to Burchinal. See the 1:59 PM and 2:08 PM entries below.)

1:28 PM. -- Following up McIlwain's request, Burchinal calls Sharp and asks for a status report on the engagement. Sharp reports that two PT Boats have been sunk but is uncertain as to the total number involved and says that some 13 torpedoes have been launched. Also, he reports that there is some indication of enemy aircraft in the area but says that aircraft both from the TICONDEROGA and CONSTELLATION are on the scene. Burchinal asks Sharp to obtain a direct radio report from the ships engaged.

1:30 PM. (1:30 AM Saigon time, August 5th) -- The destroyers report that the attacking craft had apparently broken off the engagement. The MADDOX and TURNER JOY are directed to resume their patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin at daylight on the 5th of August. (DMCC receives this message about 1½ to 2 hours later)

1:59 PM. -- Sharp calls Burchinal and says that he cannot contact ships by voice radio, but tells him that he has sent a message requesting that situation reports be expedited. ^{REPORTS} Sharp ~~says~~ that the last message from the ships reports that freak weather is affecting radar performance, with many contacts and torpedo runs doubtful. Sharp says that the MADDOX itself has reported no visual sightings, and over-anxious sonar men may have accounted for what they erroneously thought to be torpedoes. *AS FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS LINE, SHARP SAYS THAT "WHAT'S HAPPENED IS THAT OUR FLASH MESSAGES HAVE CHOKED UP THE CIRCUIT. I JUST TOLD EVERYBODY TO KNOCK OFF USING FLASH."*

2:08 PM. -- Sharp advises Burchinal that the latest situation report indicates that three PT boats have been sunk, and that the weather is deteriorating and hampering aircraft operations. Sharp expresses the view that there is no doubt that a torpedo attack did occur, but adds that many of the reported torpedo attacks may have been due to inaccurate sonar reports. "Whenever they get keyed up on a thing like this, everything they hear on the sonar is a torpedo," says Sharp.

* * * *

3:00 PM - 5:15 PM
MEETINGS AT THE PENTAGON
THE STRIKE EXECUTE MESSAGE IS DRAFTED

At the Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs begin their meeting at 3:00 PM.^{1/} McNamara and Vance arrive at 3:06 PM and inform⁵ the Chiefs that the President wants the strikes to take place at 7:00 PM Washington time, and at the following targets: PT boats and bases at QUANG KHE, PHOC LOI, PORT WALLUT, HON GAY and LOC CHAO, and the oil complex at VINH. The JCS agree with this proposal. At 4:42 PM, they return to the JCS meeting and indicate that the time of the strike is important, for there will be no announcement until the strike gets under way. McNamara reviews the strike message which originally reads "By 0700 local time 5 August or as soon thereafter as weather permits conduct attack" and changes it to "By 0700 local 5 August conduct a one-time maximum effort attack." The weather portion is placed in another part of the message, and states that "if weather precludes meeting the above time of attack, proceed soonest, and notify JCS ASAP". ^{A 1430Z} (The ~~major part of the~~ message is quoted in the 5:19 PM entry below) ~~based on a decision made in the earlier morning meeting with the Chiefs.~~ ^(AND ALCA71N6) Also during this meeting, the deployment of reinforcements to the area is considered, telling proof of our desire to escalate if we had to. These are divided into three categories. In the First category are those forces ordered deployed as soon as possible. They consist of the 1st CVS

^{1/} Throughout the afternoon, Wheeler, LeMay, McDonald, Johnson, Greene Burchinal, Jackson, Carpenter, Palmer, Buse, Manhart, Goodpaster, Forbes, Bottomly, Flickinger, Mustin and Carroll are present at various intervals.

Group (the Kearsage, 4 destroyers, and 3 destroyer escorts) which would be moved from Japan to the South China Sea; a Marine Special Landing Force (1600 men, 24 helicopters, the Valley Forge and supporting craft) to be moved from Subic Bay to the vicinity of Da Nang; the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, consisting of 6500 men to be moved from Okinawa to the South China Sea; an F-101 Reconnaissance Task Force to be moved from Shaw AFB to Kadena and a CVA Task Group, consisting of the Ranger and 4 destroyers to be moved from the 1st Fleet to WESTPAC.

The Second category ^{are} ~~consists of~~ those forces alerted for deployment immediately upon the receipt of political clearance. ^e This will be comprised of 2 B-57's squadrons, to be moved from Clark AFB to South Vietnam; 1 F-105 squadron to be moved from Yokota to Korat; 1 F-100 squadron to be moved from Clark AFB to Takhli; 12 F-102's to be moved from Clark AFB to South Vietnam; 8 KC-135's to be moved from SAC to Clark AFB; 2 F-100 squadrons from STRACOM to Clark; 1 F-105 squadron from STRICOM to Yokota; and 1 Reconnaissance Task Force (6 RF 101's) from Misawa/Kadena to Southeast Asia.

The Third category consists of those forces alerted for possible deployment to Southeast Asia. These are the 173rd Airborne Brigade, a Forward Floating Depot, a Marine Air Group, and an Army Brigade.

3:30 PM: -- Mustin of the Joint Staff calls Sharp and tells him to be on the alert since a strike execute message is being prepared and would be transmitted as soon as released.

3:34 PM: -- Mustin calls General Smith, Deputy Director for Operations, Joint Staff and informs him that the JCS are in session, that a strike execute message is now being typed and Sharp knows it is coming. Mustin asks that ^{the} ~~transmission~~ line be kept open ^{for} TRANSMISSION OF THE MESSAGE ^{to} SHARP.

FOR FINAL REVIEW BY THE CHIEFS

4:05 PM. (10:05 AM, August 4, CINCPAC time) -- McNamara discusses the latest situation report with Sharp and requests that definite confirmation be obtained from the Fleet Commander of the attacks on the destroyers. McNamara notes that the time is three hours away from the scheduled execution and directs that preparations proceed for the strikes.

4:14 PM. (4:14 AM, August 5th, Saigon time; 10:14 AM, August 4th, CINCPAC time) -- CINCPACFLT transmits an alert message to COMNAVFORV and the TICONDEROGA and CONSTELLATION to be prepared to strike targets ^{AN "INFORMATION COPY" TO} AT "0700 6" (ACTUALLY 8:00PM EDT) [NOTE: See TH-007000] at 7:00 PM (7:00 AM Saigon time). The designated targets are the PT Boat bases at QUANG KHE, BEN THUY, HON ME Island and SONG MA Estuary, HON GAY and PORT WALIAT; any identified North Vietnamese PT Boats located at sea; and the VINH petroleum storage depot. The latter is labeled the number one target priority. The message indicates that it would be "desirable" that all targets be struck simultaneously, but adds that authority is granted to recycle aircraft as necessary to strike the two southern targets (QUANG KHE and BEN THUY) with a second launch if the Forces on the TICONDEROGA and CONSTELLATION are inadequate. It concludes by specifying that this is a preparatory order, and that launching should not be accomplished until an execute order is received. (TICONDEROGA receives this message at 4:55 PM)

0700 6
5:29
ON TIME
SHIP

4:35 PM. (4:35 AM, August 5th, Saigon time; 10:35 AM CINCPAC time) -- CINCPAC transmits an official alert message to CINCPACFLT to prepare to execute air strikes at 7:00 PM (7:00 AM local time), against (1) PORT WALIAT, (2) BEN THUY (VINH), (3) HON GAY, (4) QUANG KHE, and (5) LOC CHAO.

4:40 PM. (10:40 AM CINCPAC time) -- Sharp calls Burchinal and is informed that the JCS strike execute message is in the McNamara office ready to go, but that there is still a slight doubt whether the destroyers were in fact attacked. Sharp will try to get more definite information from Admiral Moore. Burchinal then asks Sharp whether the launch could be accomplished at 7:00 PM. Sharp responds that "it will be tight" but "I think so." He adds, however, "that it may be just as well to wait an hour or so, if we have to, to be certain an attack had occurred." Sharp then suggests it might be necessary to recycle some of the aircraft for a second strike against VINH and Burchinal says "this will be all right", if needed. Sharp estimates that about 70 aircraft in all will be involved in the strikes.

4:49 PM. (10:49 AM CINCPAC time) -- The JCS strike execute message to CINCPAC is transmitted by direct teletype from the NMCC to the CINCPAC Command Center. (CINCPAC receives this message at ____.)

4:55 PM. (4:55 AM, August 5, Saigon time) -- TICONDEROGA receives the CINCPACFLT alert message directing COMSEVENTHFLT to be prepared at 7:00 PM to strike the PT Boats at designated locations. The TICONDEROGA is already on an alert status as a result of the PT Boat attacks on the destroyers. Upon receipt of this alert message, its pilots and Weapons Planning Board commence to plan for the strikes. A message is also sent from TICONDEROGA to Naval Air Station at Cubi Point, Philippines (some 500 miles away), directing all ready to go A-1 and A-4 aircraft to return

BUT
STOPS
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REPORTS
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ILLUMINATED
AND FIRED AGAINST.

to the TICONDEROGA as soon as possible. This is necessary because the complement of aircraft on the TICONDEROGA has to be augmented by additional strike aircraft for the maximum strike effort. A number of the aircraft on the TICONDEROGA had been used previously for reconnaissance (Yankee Team) efforts over Laos, and could not appropriately be used for the strike.

5:00 PM. -- Colonel Jones of the Joint Staff, in the JCS conference room, calls the NMCC Pacific desk at Pentagon (Commander Hathaway) and says that the JCS would like a forecast of the weather over the target area at 7:00 AM local time.

4:47 PM - 6:00 PM
JCS-SECDEF MEETING TO DETERMINE
IF ATTACK ON DESTROYERS OCCURRED

One of the recurrent problems throughout the afternoon was a lack of clear and convincing showing that an attack on the destroyers had in fact occurred. At 4:47 PM McNamara, Vance and the JCS meet to marshal the evidence. They conclude that an attack had taken place. In this regard five factors are considered:

1. The TURNER JOY was illuminated when fired on by automatic weapons.
2. One of the destroyers observed cockpit lights.
3. A RBM 142 shot at two U.S. aircraft.
4. A North Vietnamese announcement that two of its boats were "sacrificed."
5. Sharp's determination *sure and* that there was indeed an attack.

It is here that Burchinal, at Wheeler's request, indicates that the 7:00 PM strike time will not be met because the carriers are operating on a time which makes 8:00 PM here 7:00 AM their time. McNamara, Vance, and Wheeler leave the meetings at 5:51 PM for the White House.

5:19 PM. - JCS strike execute message is retransmitted flash precedence as JCS 7720 to CINCPAC. It states that by 7:00 PM EDT (0700 local time) a one-time maximum effort attack against the following targets should be conducted: PT Boats located at PORT WALLUT (later cancelled because of weather), HON GAY, PHUC LOI and QUANG KHE and at LOC CHAO. The specified targets are boats, Pol at VINH, and an armed reconnaissance against PT Boats beyond the three mile limit. The message cautions that if the weather precludes meeting the above time of attack, the commander is to "proceed soonest" and to notify the JCS as soon as possible.

5:23 PM. -- Sharp calls Burchinal and says there is no doubt that an attack on the destroyers had occurred, for he has intercepted a North Vietnamese message stating that two of its PT Boats were "sacrificed." Sharp is now satisfied with all the evidence, what with several additional reports from the TURNER JOY. Sharp then mentions that the attack will be coming off at 8:00 PM Washington time not 7:00 PM but still at 7:00 AM local time. The reason is that the CINCPAC execute message used "HOUEL" time (A 12 HOUR DIFFERENTIAL), whereas the carriers, were shooting for the operation on "GOLF" time (A 13 HOUR DIFFERENTIAL) giving them an extra hour. *SHARP SAYS THE 13 HOUR TIME DIFFERENCE*

5:29 PM. -- Mustin calls the NMCC (General Smith) and indicates that some confusion exists over the time in the Gulf of Tonkin. He asks Smith

*WHILE
ATTENDING
TO THE
CONVERT TO "GOLF" TIME.*

*HIS STRIP
MESSAGE*

to get on the teletype and straighten out the matter. Smith, at 5:33 PM, calls McCutcheon at CINCPAC and asks for a breakdown of the times between the carriers, Saigon, and Washington. McCutcheon replies that when the Washington time is 8:00 PM, the local time for the carriers would be 7:00 AM the next morning, a 13-hour differential. When the Washington time is 7:00 PM, the local time in Saigon would be 7:00 AM the next morning, a 12-hour differential. *McG Reports that SHARP HAS TOLD THE CARRIERS TO USE THE 13 HOUR DIFFERENTIAL*

5:39 PM. (1:39 PM CINCPAC time) -- Sharp calls Burchinal and says that *his understanding is the* the indications are that launch time will be *7:00 AM* 0700 local (carrier time) or 8:00 PM Washington time.

6:10 PM. (6:10 AM, August 5th, Saigon time) -- The TICONDEROGA receives a copy of the JCS strike execute message.

6:15 PM - 6:38 PM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

6:38 PM - 6:45 PM

SPECIAL MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT

The National Security Council^{1/} is convened as McNamara, Vance and Wheeler arrive at the White House. McNamara outlines the four-part plan:

1. The strike against the PT boat bases and the supporting installations, but not against Haiphong, because it is too far north and too close to Red China.
2. Sending reinforcements to the area, an expression of our will to escalate, and armed reconnaissance along the North Vietnamese coast.
3. Presidential announcement of these actions.
4. A Joint Congressional Resolution in support of these actions.

There are no objections to the four-part plan and the President approves it. McNamara informs the President that the previously estimated 7:00 PM launch time will not be met, but that the launch time is now estimated to be 8:00 PM. McNamara then recommends that no public statement be released until 9:00 PM, the estimated time over target of the first strike.

The NSC meeting breaks up at 6:38. McNamara, Rusk and Bundy meet with the President in his office, prior to the Congressional leadership meeting which starts at 6:45. Vance returns to Pentagon to determine what reinforcements can be moved without political clearance from other countries and to put in motion the political clearance process where required.

^{1/} Present at this meeting are the President, Speaker McCormack, McCone, Cline, McNaughton, Rusk, Ball, William Bundy, Dillon, Rowan, Reedy, McG. Bundy, Jenkins, Moyers, Valenti, Bromley Smith and Cater.

* * * *

6:07 PM: (12:07 PM CINCPAC Time) -- Sharp calls Burchinal and repeats that he is satisfied that the destroyers were attacked. He now has the JCS strike execute message. Burchinal says that McNamara, now at the White House, is also satisfied that the attacks on the destroyers have occurred and had made the statement just a short time ago that the "show is now on the road." After agreeing that suppressive fire "was part of the game," Sharp then states that the press should not get the story at 7:00 PM. Burchinal replies that we will insure that nothing ^{CD/CS} ~~comes~~ out until we know that you're off target." Sharp estimates this to be 9:00 PM, one hour after launch. Burchinal emphasizes that any announcement will be delayed so that there is "no possibility of anyone reading" the strike. The matter of deploying additional forces to the theater is also discussed.

* * * *

6:45 PM - 8:45 PMCONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP MEETING

General Wheeler was one of those in attendance at the leadership meeting. In his recent testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Wheeler stated that the President told the Congressmen that he would make a public announcement but left the time "up in the air because he did not want to make the announcement too soon." Wheeler then recalled that the timing of the announcement may have actually been settled either in a preliminary meeting between McNamara and the President around 6:38 PM

or at the leadership meeting itself. In any event, Wheeler said that the decision was made that a statement could be released "at the time the aircraft took off from carriers, in other words when the strikes were enroute." Chairman Carl Vinson said he would verify this because "I sat there and I heard the whole discussion." In short, Wheeler remembered that the President "was going to wait until it was safe to make the announcement... it would not be made prior to the launching of the aircraft." McNamara remembered that the President said

* * *

6:56 PM: (6:56 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The **CONSTELLATION** receives a copy of the JCS strike execute message.

7:22 PM: (7:22 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The **TICONDEROGA** receives the **CINCPACFLT** execute message.

7:30 PM: (7:30 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The **CONSTELLATION** receives the **CINCPAC** message which passes the JCS strike message with instructions not to execute until directed. (Note: According to Mustin, the "hold" notice was presumably prompted by **CINCPAC**'s desire to make certain that the second attack on the **MADDOX** did in fact occur. Once this was confirmed the strike execute message was issued (see the 7:50 PM entry below).

7:49 PM: (7:49 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The CONSTELLATION receives its target assignments.

7:50 PM: (7:50 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The CONSTELLATION receives the CINCPAC strike execute message.

7:59 PM: General Wisman, NMCC Pacific Desk at Pentagon, calls the CINCPAC Duty Officer, Lt. Colonel Lindsey, and asks for the take-off times, numbers and types of planes in the carrier strike. Lindsey replies there is nothing yet on the strikes, although there is some combat air patrol activity in relation to the earlier attacks on the destroyers.

8:05 PM: Wheeler, in the Cabinet room at the White House, calls Burchinal at the Pentagon and asks if anything is happening. Burchinal says that he has a clear line open, but no word has been received. Wheeler wants to know as soon as the word arrives that the aircraft have been launched.

8:39 PM: McNamara, back from the White House, calls Sharp and asks whether the carriers have launched their aircraft. Sharp replies that he has received no word yet, but this is probably because the carriers will provide a coordinated report when the launch is completed. McNamara, however, says that the launch is already 40 minutes after the ordered time of take-off and wants Sharp to contact the carriers directly by radio.

8:45 PM: McNamara stresses that he must get an immediate statement since the President wants to go on the air and inform the American people. This, says McNamara, is being held back pending word of the launch, with more

THE PRESIDENT HAS TO MAKE A STATEMENT TO THE PEOPLE AND I AM HOLDING HIM BACK

FROM MAKING IT, BUT WE'RE 40 MINUTES PAST THE TIME I TOLD HIM WE WOULD LAUNCH

than 40 minutes having already elapsed beyond the launch time given to the President. Sharp estimates, although he does not have the launch plan, that it would take the aircraft about an hour to reach the target. McNamara asks Sharp to find out when they are launching and the time of the first flights over the targets.

9:00 PM: (9:00 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The picture of air situation at this time and thereafter as reflected on North Vietnamese and Chinese radar is described at Appendix 1.

9:09 PM: (3:09 PM, August 4, CINCPAC Time) -- Sharp calls McNamara at his office and says that one carrier (perhaps both) would not be able to launch for another 50 minutes (10:00 PM Washington time). "In other words, they couldn't make the time," reports Sharp. Sharp explains that the compression of time and the communications lag are the reasons, and thinks that the last estimated times over target, with a 10:00 PM launch will be about 12:00 midnight, Washington time. McNamara then asks what Sharp thinks about a Presidential statement issued about the time of launch that would say this: "At this moment air action is now in execution against gun boats and supporting facilities in and near four ports of North Vietnam which have been used in support of hostile operations." Sharp thinks it would not be a "good idea" because it will alert the enemy, "No doubt about it." McNamara says that the enemy would be alerted as soon as the aircraft start coming into the coast. Sharp says, "They won't know where they're going. Of course they will be alerted

as soon as they get in the air because Hainan is going to pick them up and so will the other people. But they won't know where they are going. I wouldn't recommend it."

9:22 PM: Sharp tells McNamara that PT boats (presumably those returning from attack on the destroyers) were taking sanctuary within the three-mile limit. McNamara recommends that the aircraft proceed to hit designated targets, but authorizes striking any boats sighted on the way in. He says, "Get them off, that is the main thing."

9:28 PM: (9:29 AM, August 5, Saigon Time) -- The CONSTELLATION submits its strike plan for approval to the Carrier Task Force Commander.

9:30 - 10:45 PM: Sometime during this period McNamara calls Bundy and recommends deletion of that part of the President's statement dealing with the targets.

*after discussion -- stated need for fully
the delete*

10:06 PM: After trying to reach Senator Goldwater for several hours, the President finally gets through and informs him of the decision to retaliate. Immediately after talking to the President, Goldwater issues a statement to the wire services that "I am sure that every American will subscribe to the action outlined in the President's statement. I believe it is the only thing he can do under the circumstances." This is released almost an hour before the President ^{goes} ~~went~~ before the nation to announce the punitive strike.

10:26 PM: -- McNamara calls Sharp and asks whether the aircraft are launched yet. Sharp says he has no firm word, but is "sure" one carrier (TICONDEROGA) "is going to go, or has gone" at 10:00 PM Washington time. According to Sharp, however, the other carrier (CONSTELLATION) "is not going to launch" one of its groups (the slower propeller driven A-1 aircraft) until 1:00 AM Washington Time and the other (the jets) until 2:30 AM, with a time over target for both groups estimated around 3:15 AM, apparently because "she is not able to get in position in time." Sharp explains this by stating that the CONSTELLATION was coming from the north and had to get into position by coming around Hainan to strike her assigned northern targets. In order to get into position, "she had to use a good many of her aircraft for refuelers." Sharp repeats that the TICONDEROGA "should have gotten off a half hour ago (10:00 PM) but "we haven't heard yet." McNamara tells Sharp to make "dam^N sure she got off" by getting in touch with her right away. As to the CONSTELLATION, McNamara asks how long it would take its aircraft to reach the target. Sharp replies the farthest target S will be reached in about five hours from now. McNamara then says that no announcement here "is going to influence what they think about those aircraft coming in because you will already have launched about a half hour ago against the other targets." Sharp agrees "as long as they don't know what the targets are." McNamara states that "I have cut that out of the statement," and Sharp says "there will still be the element of surprise^(...) as long as you don't say what [the targets] are."

10:40 PM: -- (10:40 AM, August 5th Saigon time) -- CONSTELLATION recovers the last group of A-1 aircraft from combat air patrol over the destroyers.

10:43 PM: -- (10:43 AM, August 5th Saigon time) -- TICONDEROGA launches four A-1 strike aircraft with instructions to orbit overhead. This is necessary so that the carrier deck could be free for the landing of A-4 aircraft from Cubi Point then orbiting overhead and to permit coordination of prop and jet strikes to ensure a simultaneous arrival time over the target. The A-1 launching marks the beginning of the attack, and within the hour these four A-1's depart for VINH. (NMCC receives this message at _____ PM)

10:46 PM: -- McNamara calls Sharp again, seeking confirmation of the launch times. Sharp says that he has been trying to reach the Task Force but "it is just a question of getting through this circuit and apparently the circuit is a little jammed." He reports that no word has yet been received, and McNamara suggests he radio in the clear, asking the TICONDEROGA if it did "what it said it would do at 10:00." McNamara states that the President wants to go on the air at 11:15, but should not go on "unless he has a confirmation of the launch". McNamara then wants Sharp to secure half-hourly post-strike reports, once the launching occurs.

10:48 PM: -- Clifton at the White House calls General Wisman, the Deputy Director for Operations, Joint Staff and states that new launch

times for the CONSTELLATION have been received which are considerably later than the TICONDEROGA's, that the President is shooting for an 11:15 PM statement, and asks how much would be revealed by the announcement. Wisman states that Sharp agrees with a Presidential announcement now that McNamara has recommended the deletion of specific portions dealing with the targets.

11:05 PM: -- Wisman calls Burchinal and reports that nothing is airborne yet, that the CONSTELLATION is not in position, and that several more hours would be required for its first launch. There is now the possibility, according to Wisman, that the CONSTELLATION because of weather may have to scrub its operation. He recognizes this would tip our hand if one force goes in, and says that there can be no scrubbing of the mission until the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs are first notified.

11:11 PM: -- McNamara calls Sharp, and is told "it is just that I don't think that there is any question that they have launched. It is just a question of getting the report." McNamara, with regard to the weather conditions and possible cancellation of the CONSTELLATION strikes, states that ^{"AS A NATION WE JUST CAN'T} ~~"we cannot sit here as a nation~~ and let them attack us on the high seas and not do something." So I think the President has to say we are going to retaliate." McNamara asks if there is "any reason why the CONSTELLATION couldn't launch against the southern¹⁴ targets, including the

oil depot." Sharp responds that this is "exactly what we would do," although he mentions that the weather to the south is not good and beginning to deteriorate.

11:20 PM: -- Sharp calls McNamara and says it is now confirmed. "She (the TICONDEROGA) got her planes off at 0243 ^(10:43) [Zebra Time]" (10:43 PM) (10:43 AM Saigon Time). Sharp indicates that it will take the aircraft about an hour and fifty minutes ^(FROM NOW) to reach their targets. ^(1:10 AM, was EDT, AUGUST 5) The attack will be in two waves, both scheduled to arrive at the same time.

11:27 PM: -- Commander Henson of the NMCC Pacific Desk at the Pentagon notifies the White House Situation Room that the TICONDEROGA launched its first aircraft at 10:43 PM, with an estimated time over the target at 1:10 AM. ^{EDT}

11:35 PM: (11:35 AM, August 5th Saigon time) -- The CONSTELLATION advises the Carrier Task Force Commander of its intended launch position for strikes with a simultaneous time over target at 3:45 AM. ^{EDT}

11:40 PM
PRESIDENT GOES ON THE AIR

On the recommendation of McNamara, Vance, and Wheeler, the President goes on the air and states:

"Repeated acts of violence against the armed forces of the United States must be met not only with alert defense, but with positive reply. That reply is being given as I speak to you. Air action is now in execution against gun boats and certain supporting facilities of North Vietnam which have been used in these hostile operations."

The recommendation to go on the air is based on these considerations:

1. By 11:34, U.S. Naval Aircraft had been in the air on their way to the targets approximately one hour.
2. Hanoi and Hainan through their radar, had then received indications of the attack.
3. The time remaining before the aircraft arrived over the targets would not permit the North Vietnamese to move their boats to sea or to alert their forces.
4. It was important that our country learn of the manner in which their government was responding to the attacks on its vessels from their President, rather than from Hanoi which was expected to announce the attack at any moment.
5. That it was desirable that the North Vietnamese government and others be told as soon as possible the limited, punitive, character of the attack.
6. It was important that the North Vietnamese and Chinese Communists know that this was the first and deliberate response of the U.S. Government to an unprovoked aggressive act, and not the act of a local commander.

11:51 PM: (11:51 AM, August 5th Saigon time) -- Sharp calls Wheeler and they discuss the possibilities of a restrike against VINH, with Wheeler saying that he will ^{take} ^{up} discuss it with McNamara.

which these PT boats have operated. Our naval aircraft have also conducted strikes against certain other targets which have directly supported the operation of the PT boats."

12:15 AM: (12:15 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- Six A-4's and six F-8's are launched from the TICONDEROGA flying to VINH at an altitude of 25,000 feet. The target is 320 nautical miles away.

12:34 AM: (12:34 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- TICONDEROGA launches six F-8's which depart for QUANG KHE, flying at an altitude of 25,000 feet. Target is 250 nautical miles away.

12:38 AM: Wheeler calls Sharp and tells him that he has discussed the recycle with McNamara. Wheeler's major concern is that the attacks must not be "open-ended" affairs. Three rules are set for the recycle: First, up to 20 aircraft may be used; second, the only target will be VINH; and third, the attack should be launched no later than 3:00 AM, Washington time. Sharp thinks that the 3:00 AM time is cutting it too short, with closer to 4:00 AM as the more realistic hour. Sharp adds that he will do his best to compress the time and will recycle as quickly as possible. Wheeler indicates that he will pass this on to McNamara.

12:43 AM: Wheeler calls Sharp and tells him that the 4:00 AM recycle time is acceptable to McNamara, but Sharp now indicates launch on the recycle could not begin until 5-6:00 AM. Wheeler says this is too late,

and they arrive at an agreement that Sharp would launch what he could up to 4:00 AM (~~presently 4:00 AM~~) and would then have to cease.

1:00 AM: (1:00 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- CONSTELLATION launches four A-1's which depart for HON GAY, flying at an altitude of from 1,000 - 5,000 feet. HON GAY is 360 nautical miles away. CONSTELLATION also launches four A-1's which depart for LOC CHAO, flying at an altitude of 1,000 - 5,000 feet. LOC CHAO is 330 nautical miles.

1:11 AM: (1:11 PM, August 5, Saigon Time; 7:11 PM August 4, CINCPAC time) -- CINCPAC duty officer calls Lt. Col. Smith in McNamara's office and says that the estimated times over target for the TICONDEROGA will be 1:15 AM for the first and 1:25 AM for the second. "Everything is on track," he reports.

1:15 AM: (1:15 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- TICONDEROGA's six F-8's launched at 12:34 AM strike QUANG KHE with 20 mm shells and 5" rockets. The base is caught by surprise. There is no AA fire. Seven boats are sighted, four are severely damaged and one moderately. There are no U.S. losses. (NMCC received this report at _____ AM.)

1:25 AM: (1:25 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- TICONDEROGA's four A-1's launched at 10:43 PM, six A-4's launched at 12:15 AM and six F-8's launched at 12:15 AM strike at the VINH - BEN THUY - PHUC LOI complex. They report moderate AA fire. Overall, the defense are neither strong nor alert during this first attack. Of the six boats sighted, four are

moderately damaged and two lightly damaged. Eight Pol tanks and two AA guns are destroyed. There are no U.S. losses. The ordnance used ranges from 1,000 lb. bombs to 5" Zuni rockets to 2.75 mm rockets. (NMCC receives this message at _____ AM.)

2:16 AM: Sharp calls McNamara's office and gives the first strike report to Col. Moody. He states that VINH has been struck, the oil installation is burning fiercely, the four PT boats in the harbor have all been hit, with one dead in the water. Heavy flak has been experienced and one F-3 is hit, headed for Da Nang. Moody says Vance will be promptly advised of these developments.

2:30 AM: (2:30 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- The CONSTELLATION launches ten A-4's and two F-4's which depart for HON GAY at an altitude of 25,000 - 30,000 feet. HON GAY is 360 nautical miles away. The CONSTELLATION also launches five A-4's and three F-4's which then depart for LOC CHAO, flying at an altitude of 25,000 - 30,000 feet. LOC CHAO is 330 nautical miles away. (NMCC receives this message at _____ AM.)

3:25 AM: (3:25 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- CONSTELLATION's four A-1's launched at 1:00 AM and its five A-4's and three F-4's launched at 2:30 AM strike LOC CHAO. They report moderate AA fire (20 mm from the boats). The boats are not underway and thus had not been alerted. Of the five PT boats sighted, two are damaged seriously and three moderately. One A-1 aircraft (Sather's, third in the column) is shot down. One A-1 is damaged, but is later recovered. The attack lasts

25 minutes. 2.75" rockets and 20 mm strafing attacks utilized. (NMCC receives this message at _____ AM.)

3:40 AM
3:43 AM: -- Sharp tells Wisman of the Joint Staff that it might be best to pull the MADDOX and C. TURNER JOY out of their patrol. This is because they are low on fuel and ammunition, and we have already given the North Vietnamese a "good punishment." Sharp adds that to keep the destroyers on station might invite further attacks, perhaps even a loss. Wisman says this will require JCS approval.

3:58 AM: -- McCutcheon at CINCPAC calls Wisman about pulling the destroyers out. McCutcheon says that since these destroyers have special equipment and could not readily be replaced, but that the ships have had several sleepless nights. The relief of these ships would be temporary only, about a 24 hour rest, after the strikes had ceased. Wisman says he will talk to Burchinal.

4:03 AM: (4:03 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- TICONDEROGA launches four F-8's and eight A-4's which depart for the restrike against VINH.

4:15 AM: (4:15 PM, August 5th, Saigon Time) -- TICONDEROGA launches two A-4's which depart for HON ME at an altitude of 25,000 feet.

4:41 AM: -- Wisman calls Burchinal and tells him that an A-1 and A-4 from the CONSTELLATION have been lost over HON GAY. (Note: Actually, one was lost over HON GAY, another over LOC CHOU.) Burchinal is the first to be notified, and he suggests that Wisman inform the Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense.

SPECIAL ASST HAS SEEN

GROUP

TICONDEROGA

4 A-1's

2. 6 A-4's

3. 6 F-8's

4 4 F-8's

58 A-45

6. 6 F-8's

7. 2 A-4's

CONSTELLATION

8. 4 A-1's

9 10 A-4's

10. 5 A-4's

11 4 A-1's

59 TOTAL

$L = \text{LAUNCH TIME}$

D = DEPART FOR TARGET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

Authority OSD Lt 3/3/77
By mm, NARS, Date 4/6/77

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

Authority OSD Lt 3/3/77
By mm, NARS, Date 4/6/77

19