

59

120

1. Assessment and prognosis. The situation in Vietnam is bad and deteriorating. Even with great, imaginative efforts on the civilian as well as military sides inside South Vietnam, the decline probably will not "bottom out" unless major actions are taken.
2. The "trilemma." US policy appears to be drifting. This is because, while there is near-consensus that efforts inside SVN will probably fail to prevent collapse, all 3 of the possible remedial courses of action have been rejected for one reason or another: (a) Will-breaking strikes on DRV; (b) large troop deployments; (c) exit by negotiations
3. Urgency. Even with a stretched-out strike-North program, we could reach flash points within a few weeks (e.g., confrontation with DRV MIGs, hot pursuit of Chicoms MIGs, DRV air attack on SVN, massive VC attack on Danang, sinking of US naval vessel, etc.). Furthermore, there is now a hint of flexibility on the Red side: The Soviets are struggling to find a Gordian knot-cutter; the Chicoms may be wavering (PARIS 5326).
4. Actions:
  - (1) Redouble and redouble efforts inside SVN (get better organized for it!).
  - (2) Prepare to deploy US combat troops, first to Pleiku (and more to Danang).
  - (3) Continue distended strike-North program, postponing Phuc Yen until June.
  - (4) Initiate quiet talks along the following lines:


PHASE ONE: (A) When? Now, before a flash point. (B) Who? US-USSR, perhaps US-China in Warsaw or Moscow, or US-DRV via Seaborn in Hanoi. (Not with Liberation Front or through UK, France, India or UN; be alert for GVN officials talking under the table.) (C) How? With GVN consent; private and quiet. (Refuse formal talks until Phase Two.) (D) What? (1) Offer to stop strikes on DRV and to withhold deployment of division-size US forces in exchange for DRV withdrawal of named units in SVN, and stoppage of infiltration, communications to VC, and VC attacks, sabotage and terrorism. (2) Compliance would be policed unilaterally. If, as is likely, complete compliance by the DRV is not forthcoming, we would carry out occasional strikes (3) Do not demand stoppage of propaganda or public renunciation of doctrines. (4) Regarding "defensive" VC attacks -- i.e., VC defending VC-held areas from encroaching ARVN forces -- we take the public position that ARVN forces must be free to operate throughout SVN, especially in areas where amnesty is offered (but in fact, restraint and discretion will be exercised by the ARVN). (5) Terrorism and sabotage, however, must be dampened markedly throughout SVN -- e.g., civilian administrators must be able to move and operate freely, certainly in so-called contested areas, and roads and railroads must be open.

PHASE TWO: (A) When? At the end of Phase One. (B) Who? All interested nations. (C) How? Publicly in large Geneva-type conference. (D) What? (1) Offer to remove US combat forces from South Vietnam in exchange for repatriation (or regroupment?) of DRV infiltrators and hard-core sympathizers and for erection of international machinery to verify the end of infiltration and coded communication. (2) Offer to seek to determine the will of the people under international supervision, with an appropriate reflection of those who favor the VC. (3) Any recognition of the Liberation Front would have to be accompanied by disarming the VC and at least avowed VC independence from DRV control.

NOTE: If the DRV will not "play" the above game, we must be prepared (1) to risk passing some flash points in the Strike-North program, (2) to put more US troops into SVN, and/or (3) to reconsider our minimum acceptable outcome.

5. Outcomes. In between "victory" and "defeat" in SVN lie (a) a Laos-like "government of national unity" attempting to rule all of SVN; (b) a live-and-let-live stand-down (ceasefire) tacitly recognizing current, or recent, areas of influence; (c) a "semi-equilibrium" or "slow-motion war" with slowly shifting GVN-VC areas of control.

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1. US aims: 70% - To avoid a humiliating US defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor).  
 20% - To keep SVN (and then adjacent) territory from Chinese hands.  
10% - To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.  
ALSO - To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used.  
NOT - To "help a friend," although it would be hard to stay in if asked out.
2. The situation: The situation in general is bad and deteriorating. The VC have the initiative. Defeatism is gaining among the rural population, somewhat in the cities, and even among the soldiers -- especially those with relatives in rural areas. The Hop Tac area around Saigon is making little progress; the Delta stays bad; the country has been severed in the north. GVN control is shrinking to enclaves, some burdened with refugees. In Saigon we have a remission: Quat is giving hope on the civilian side, the Buddhists have calmed, and the split generals are in uneasy equilibrium.
3. The preliminary question: Can the situation inside SVN be bottomed out (a) without extreme measures against the DRV and/or (b) without deployment of large numbers of US (and other) combat troops inside SVN? The answer is perhaps, but probably no.
4. Ways GVN might collapse:
  - (a) VC successes reduce GVN control to enclaves, causing:
    - (1) insurrection in the enclaved population,
    - (2) massive defections of ARVN soldiers and even units,
    - (3) aggravated dissension and impotence in Saigon,
    - (4) defeatism and reorientation by key GVN officials,
    - (5) entrance of left-wing elements into the government,
    - (6) emergence of a popular-front regime,
    - (7) request that US leave,
    - (8) concessions to the VC, and
    - (9) accommodations to the DRV.
  - (b) VC with DRV volunteers concentrate on I & II Corps,
    - (1) conquering principal GVN-held enclaves there,
    - (2) declaring Liberation Government,
    - (3) joining the I & II Corps areas to the DRV, and
    - (4) pressing the course in (a) above for rest of SVN.
  - (c) While in a temporary funk, GVN might throw in sponge:
    - (1) dealing under the table with the VC,
    - (2) asking the US to cease at least military aid,
    - (3) bringing left-wing elements into the government,
    - (4) leading to a popular-front regime, and
    - (5) ending in accommodations to the VC and DRV.
  - (d) In a surge of anti-Americanism, GVN could ask the US out and pursue course otherwise similar to (c) above.
5. The "trilemma": US policy appears to be drifting. This is because, while there is consensus that efforts inside SVN (para 6) will probably fail to prevent collapse, all three of the possible remedial courses of action have so far been rejected:
  - a. Will-breaking strikes on the North (para 7) are balked (1) by flash-point limits, (2) by doubts that the DRV will cave and (3) by doubts that the VC will obey a caving DRV. (Leaving strikes only a political and anti-infiltration nuisance.)
  - b. Large US troop deployments (para 8) are blocked by "French-defeat" and "Korea" syndromes, and Quat is queasy. (Troops could be net negatives, and be besieged.)
  - c. Exit by negotiations (para 9) is tainted by the humiliation likely to follow.

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-2-

6. Efforts inside South Vietnam: Progress inside SVN is our main aim. Great, imaginative efforts on the civilian political as well as military side must be made, bearing in mind that progress depends as much on GVN efforts and luck as on added US efforts. While only a few of such efforts can pay off quickly enough to affect the present ominous deterioration, some may, and we are dealing here in small critical margins. Furthermore, such investment is essential to provide a foundation for the longer run.
- a. Improve spirit and effectiveness. [fill out further, drawing from State memo to the President]
- (1) Achieve governmental stability.
  - (2) Augment the psy-war program.
  - (3) Build a stronger pro-government infrastructure.
- b. Improve physical security. [fill out]
- c. Reduce infiltration. [fill out]
7. Strikes on the North (program of progressive military pressure).
- a. Purposes:
- (1) To reduce DRV/VC activities by affecting DRV will.
  - (2) To improve the GVN/VC relative "balance of morale."
  - (3) To provide the US/GVN with a bargaining counter.
  - (4) To reduce DRV infiltration of men and materiel.
  - (5) To show the world the lengths to which US will go for a friend.
- b. Program: Each week, 1 or 2 "mission days" with 100-plane high-damage US-VNAF strikes each "day" against important targets, plus 3 armed recce missions -- all moving upward in weight of effort, value of target or proximity to Hanoi and China.
- ALTERNATIVE ONE: 12-week DRV-wide program shunning only "population" targets.
- ALTERNATIVE TWO: 12-week program short of taking out Phuc Yen (Hanoi) airfield.
- c. Other actions:
- (1) Blockade of DRV ports by VNAF/US-dropped mines or by ships.
  - (2) South Vietnamese-Implemented 34A MAROPS.
  - (3) Reconnaissance flights over Laos and the DRV.
  - (4) Daily BARREL ROLL armed recce strikes in Laos (plus T-28s).
  - (5) Four-a-week BARREL ROLL choke-point strikes in Laos.
  - (6) US/VNAF air & naval strikes against VC ops and bases in SVN.
  - (7) Westward deployment of US forces.
  - (8) No deSoto patrols or naval bombardment of DRV at this time.
- d. Red "flash points." There are events which we can expect to imply substantial risk of escalation:
- [(1) Air strikes north of 17°. (This one already passed.)]
  - (2) First US/VNAF confrontation with DRV MIGs.
  - (3) Strike on Phuc Yen MIG base near Hanoi.
  - (4) First strikes on Tonkin industrial/population targets.
  - (5) First strikes on Chinese railroad or near China.
  - (6) First US/VNAF confrontation with Chicoms MIGs.
  - (7) First hot pursuit of Chicoms MIGs into China.
  - (8) First flak-suppression of Chicom- or Soviet-manned SAM.
  - (9) Massive introduction of US ground troops into SVN.
  - (10) US/ARVN occupation of DRV territory (e.g., Ile de Tigre).
  - (11) First Chi/Sov-US confrontation or sinking in blockade.

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-3-

- e. Blue "flash points." China/DRV surely are sensitive to events which might cause us to escalate:
- (1) All of the above "Red" flash points.
  - (2) VC ground attack on Danang.
  - (3) Sinking of a US naval vessel.
  - (4) Open deployment of DRV troops into South Vietnam.
  - (5) Deployment of Chinese troops into North Vietnam.
  - (6) Deployment of FROGs or SAMs in North Vietnam.
  - (7) DRV air attack on South Vietnam.
  - (8) Announcement of Liberation Government in I/II Corps area.
- f. Major risks:
- (1) Losses to DRV MIGs, and later possibly to SAMs.
  - (2) Increased VC activities, and possibly Liberation Government.
  - (3) Panic or other collapse of GVN from under us.
  - (4) World-wide revulsion against us (against strikes, blockade, etc.)
  - (5) Sympathetic fires over Berlin, Cyprus, Kashmir, Jordan waters.
  - (6) Escalation to conventional war with DRV, China (and USSR?).
  - (7) Escalation to the use of nuclear weapons.
- g. Other Red moves:
- (1) More jets to NVN with DRV or Chicom pilots.
  - (2) More AAA (SAMs?) and radar gear (Soviet-manned?) to NVN.
  - (3) Increased air and ground forces in South China.
  - (4) Other "defensive" DRV retaliation (e.g., shoot-down of a U-2)
  - (5) PL land grabs in Laos.
  - (6) PL declaration of new government in Laos.
  - (7) Political drive for "neutralization" of Indo-China.
- h. Escalation control. We can do three things to avoid escalation too-much or too-fast:
- (1) Stretch out. Retard the program (e.g., 1 not 2 fixed strikes a week).
  - (2) Circuit breaker. Abandon at least temporarily the theory that our strikes are intended to break DRV will, and "plateau" them below the "Phuc Yen airfield" flash point on one or the other of these tenable theories:
    - [a] That we strike as necessary to interdict infiltration.
    - [b] That our level of strikes is generally responsive to the level of VC/DRV activities in South Vietnam.
  - (3) Shunt. Plateau the air strikes per para (2) and divert the energy into:
    - [a] A mine- and/or ship-blockade of DRV ports.
    - [b] Massive deployment of US (and other?) troops into SVN (and Laos?):
      - [1] To man the "enclaves," releasing ARVN forces.
      - [2] To take over Pleiku, Kontum, Darlac provinces.
      - [3] To create a 16<sup>th</sup> sea-Thailand infiltration wall.
- i. Important miscellany:
- (1) Program should appear to be relentless (i.e., possibility of employing "circuit-breakers" should be secret).
  - (2) Enemy should be kept aware of our limited objectives.
  - (3) Allies should be kept on board.
  - (4) USSR should be kept in passive role.
  - (5) Information program should preserve US public support.

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8. Program of large US ground effort in SVN and SEA.

- a. Purposes:
  - (1) To defeat the VC on the ground.
  - (2) To improve GVN/VC relative "morale balance."
  - (3) To improve US/GVN bargaining position.
  - (4) To show world lengths to which US will go to fulfil commitments.
- b. Program:
  - (1) Continue strike-North "crescendo" or "plateau" (para 7 above).
  - (2) Add any "combat support" personnel needed by MACV;
  - and (3) Deploy remainder of the III Marine Expeditionary Force to Danang;
  - and (4) Deploy one US (plus one Korean?) division to defeat VC in Pleiku-Kontum-Darlac area,
  - or (5) Deploy one US (plus one Korean?) division to hold enclaves (Blen Hoa/Ton Son Nhut, Nha Trang, Qui Non, Pleiku);
  - and/or (6) Deploy 3-5 US divisions (with "international" elements) across Laos-SVN infiltration routes and at key SVN population centers.
- c. Advantages:
  - (1) Improve (at least initially) manpower ratio vs. the VC.
  - (2) Boost GVN morale and depress DRV/VC morale.
  - (3) Firm up US commitment in eyes of all Reds, allies and neutrals.
  - (4) Deter (or even prevent) coups in the South.
- d. Risks:
  - (1) Deployment will suck Chicom troops into DRV.
  - (2) Deployment will suck counterbalancing DRV/Chinese troops into SVN.
  - (3) Announcement of deployment will cause massive DRV/Chicom effort pre-emptively to occupy new SVN territory.
  - (4) US losses will increase.
  - (5) Friction with GVN (and Koreans?) over command will arise.
  - (6) GVN will tend increasingly to "let the US do it."
  - (7) Anti-US "colonialist" mood may increase in- and outside SVN.
  - (8) US forces may be surrounded and trapped.
- e. Important miscellany:
  - (1) There are no obvious circuit-breakers. Once US troops are in, it will be difficult to withdraw them or to move them, say, to Thailand without admitting defeat.
  - (2) It will take massive deployments (many divisions) to improve the GVN/US:VC ratio to the optimum 10+:1.
  - (3) In any event, our Project 22 planning with the Thais for defense of the Mekong towns must proceed apace.

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-5-

9. Exit by negotiations.

a. Bargaining counters.

- (1) What DRV could give:
- [a] Stop training and sending personnel to SVN/Laos.
  - [b] Stop sending arms and supplies into SVN/Laos.
  - [c] Stop directing military actions in SVN/Laos.
  - [d] Order the VC/PL to stop their insurgencies.
  - [e] Stop propaganda broadcasts to South Vietnam.
  - [f] Remove VM forces and cadres from SVN and Laos.
  - [g] See that VC/PL stop incidents in SVN and Laos.
  - [h] See that VC/PL cease resistance.
  - [i] See that VC/PL turn in weapons and bases.
  - [j] See that VC/PL surrender for amnesty/expatriation.
- (2) What GVN/US could give:
- [a] Stop (or not increase) air strikes on DRV.
  - [b] Remove (or not increase) US troops in SVN.
  - [c] Rice supply to DRV.
  - [d] Assurance that US/GVN have no designs on NVN.
  - [e] Assurance that US/GVN will not demand public renunciation by DRV of Communist goals.
  - [f] Assurance that "peaceful coexistence" (e.g., continuation of Red propaganda in SVN) is acceptable.
  - [g] Capitulation: Leftists in GVN, coalition government, and eventual incorporation of SVN into DRV.

b. Possible outcomes.

- (1) Pacified non-Communist South Vietnam.
- (2) "Laotian" solution, with areas of de facto VC dominion, a "government of national unity," and a Liberation Front ostensibly weened from DRV control.
- (3) Explicit partition of SVN, with each area under a separate government.
- (4) A "semi-equilibrium" -- a slow-motion war -- with slowly shifting GVN-VC lines.
- (5) Loss of SVN to the DRV.

- c. Techniques to minimize impact of bad outcomes. If/when it is estimated that even the best US/GVN efforts mean failure ("flash" or defeat), it will be important to act to minimize the after-damage to US effectiveness and image by steps such as these:
- (1) Publicize uniqueness and congenital impossibility of SVN case (e.g., Viet Minh held much of SVN in 1954, long sieve-like borders, unfavorable terrain, no national tradition, few administrators, mess left by French, competing factions, Red LOC advantage, late US start, etc.).
  - (2) Take opportunity offered by next coup or GVN anti-US tantrum to "ship out" (coupled with advance threat to do so if they fail to "shape up").
  - (3) Create diversionary "offensives" elsewhere in the world (e.g., to shore up Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, India, Australia; to launch an "anti-poverty" program for underdeveloped areas).
  - (4) Enter multi-nation negotiations calculated to shift opinions and values.

- d. Risks. With the physical situation and the trends as they are, the risk is overwhelming that an exit negotiated now would result in humiliation for the US.

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10. Evaluation: It is essential -- however badly SEA may go over the next 1-3 years -- that US emerge as a "good doctor." We must have kept promises, been tough, taken risks, gotten bloodied, and hurt the enemy very badly. We must avoid harmful appearances which will affect judgments by, and provide pretexts to, other nations regarding how the US will behave in future cases of particular interest to those nations -- regarding US policy, power, resolve and competence to deal with their problems. In this connection, the relevant audiences are the Communists (who must feel strong pressures), the South Vietnamese (whose morale must be buoyed), our allies (who must trust us as "underwriters") and the US public (which must support our risk-taking with US lives and prestige).

a. Urgency. If the strike-North program (para 7) is not altered: we will reach the MIG/Phuc Yen flash point in approximately one month. If the program is altered only to stretch out the crescendo: up to 3 months may be had before that flash point, at the expense of a less persuasive squeeze. If the program is altered to "plateau" or dampen the strikes: much of their negotiating value will be lost. (Furthermore, there is now a hint of flexibility on the Red side: The Soviets are struggling to find a Gordian knot-cutter; the Chicoms may be wavering (PARIS 5326).)

b. Possible course: (1) Redouble efforts inside SVN (get better organized for it).  
 (2) Prepare to deploy US combat troops in phases, starting with one Army division at Pleiku and a Marine MEF at Danang.  
 (3) Stretch out strike-North program, postponing Phuc Yen until June (exceed flash points only in specific retaliations).  
 (4) Initiate talks along the following lines, bearing in mind that formal partition, or even a "Laos" partition, is out in SVN; we must break the VC back or work out an accommodation.

PHASE ONE TALKS: (A) When: Now, before an avoidable flash point.  
 (B) Who: US-USSR, perhaps also US-India. (Not with China or Liberation Front; not through UK or France or U Thant; keep alert to possibility that GVN officials are talking under the table.)  
 (C) How: With GVN consent, private, quiet (refuse formal talks).  
 (D) What: (1) Offer to stop strikes on DRV and withhold deployment of large US forces in trade for DRV stoppage of infiltration, communications to VC, and VC attacks, sabotage and terrorism, and for withdrawal of named units in SVN.  
 (2) Compliance would be policed unilaterally. If, as is likely, complete compliance by the DRV is not forthcoming, we would carry out occasional strikes.  
 (3) We make clear that we are not demanding cessation of Red propaganda nor a public renunciation by Hanoi of its doctrines.  
 (4) Regarding "defensive" VC attacks -- i.e., VC defending VC-held areas from encroaching ARVN forces -- we take the public position that ARVN forces must be free to operate throughout SVN, especially in areas where amnesty is offered (but in fact, discretion will be exercised).  
 (5) Terrorism and sabotage, however, must be dampened markedly throughout the country, and civilian administrators must be free to move and operate freely, certainly in so-called contested areas (and perhaps even in VC base areas).

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-7-

- PHASE TWO TALKS:
- (A) When: At the end of Phase One.
  - (B) Who: All interested nations.
  - (C) How: Publicly in large conference.
  - (D) What:
    - (1) Offer to remove US combat forces from South Vietnam in exchange for repatriation (or regroupment?) of DRV infiltrators and for erection of international machinery to verify the end of infiltration and communication.
    - (2) Offer to seek to determine the will of the people under international supervision, with an appropriate reflection of those who favor the VC.
    - (3) Any recognition of the Liberation Front would have to be accompanied by disarming the VC and at least avowed VC independence from DRV control.

PHASE THREE TALKS: Avoid any talks regarding the future of all of Southeast Asia. Thailand's future should not be up for discussion; and we have the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Accords covering the rest of the area.

- c. Special Points:
- (1) Play on DRV's fear of China.
  - (2) To show good will, suspend strikes on North for a few days if requested by Soviets during efforts to mediate.
  - (3) Have a contingency plan prepared to evacuate US personnel in case a para-9-type situation arises.
  - (4) If the DRV will not "play" the above game, we must be prepared [a] to risk passing some flash points, in the Strike-North program, [b] to put more US troops into SVN, and/or [c] to reconsider our minimum acceptable outcome.

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6C

121



INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Action

Info

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Authority STATE letter NOV 7 1978  
By ing, NARS, Date 6-28-79

CONTROL : 21010  
RECEIVED : MARCH 24, 1965, 2:46 AM  
FROM : SAIGON  
ACTION : SECSTATE 3073, IMMEDIATE  
DATE : MARCH 24, 3 PM

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FOR THE SECRETARY

N O D I S

REF. A. EMBTEL 3066.  
B. DEPTTEL 2067.

REFERENCE A LIKE ALL PREVIOUS REPORTS OF MY BACKGROUND SESSIONS WITH THE PRESS IS MORE OF A TOPICAL RESUME OF ITEMS DISCUSSED THAN A STENOGRAPHIC RECORD. THUS IT DOES NOT CONTAIN MANY OF THE AMPLIFYING AND QUALIFYING PHRASES WHICH I USE IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

I HAVE, OF COURSE, STUDIED CLOSELY YOUR AND THE PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND HAVE NEVER KNOWINGLY GONE BEYOND THEM IN MY PUBLIC STATEMENTS. HOWEVER, IN BACKGROUNDS I HAVE FOLLOWED WHAT, IN MY OBSERVATION, HAS BEEN WASHINGTON PRACTICE AND OFTEN DISCUSSED THE FACTORS INVOLVED IN FUTURE MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC POSSIBILITIES AND ALTERNATIVES IN HOPE OF IMPROVING PRESS REACTION AND INTERPRETATION AS THE FUTURE UNFOLDS.

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-2- Page SAIGON 3073, March 24, 1965, 2:46 AM

AS I READ REFERENCE B, IT SUGGESTS THAT I SHOULD REMAIN WITHIN THE LIMITS OF WASHINGTON PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN MY BACKGROUNDEERS. IF THIS IS INDEED YOUR DESIRE, IT WILL REQUIRE A FUNDAMENTAL REVISION NOT ONLY OF MY PRESS HABITS BUT THAT OF MOST OF THE SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE MISSION.

I AM FIRST TO CONFESS THAT OUR PRESENT PRESS POLICY IS NOT DOING WELL AND NEEDS IMPROVEMENT. MY ATTENTION HAS JUST BEEN CALLED TO STANLEY KARNOW ARTICLE IN THE SATURDAY EVENING POST "VIET-NAM WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE", WHICH IS FILLED WITH QUOTATIONS ATTRIBUTED TO ME WHICH EITHER I HAVE NEVER SAID IN ANY CONTEXT OR, IF APPROXIMATELY TRUE, WERE MADE IN NONATTRIBUTABLE BACKGROUNDEERS. ALL OF THIS ADDS UP TO THE NEED FOR A REVIEW OF WHAT WE ARE DOING HERE IN THE PRESS FIELD AND HOW TO DO BETTER. I HOPE THAT WE CAN GO OVER ALL THESE MATTERS DURING MY VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

CFN A. 3066 B. 2067 A NOT B NOT NOT STANLEY KARNOW

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61

122



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 1965 61a

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

1. It is important for us all to keep a cool and clear view of the situation in Vietnam.
2. The central cause of the danger there is aggression by Communists against a brave and independent people. There are other difficulties in Vietnam, of course, but if that aggression is stopped, the people and government of South Vietnam will be free to settle their own future, and the need for supporting American military action there will end.
3. The people who are suffering from this Communist aggression are Vietnamese. This is no struggle of white men against Asians. It is aggression by Communist totalitarians against their independent neighbors. The main burden of resistance has fallen on the people and soldiers of South Vietnam. We Americans have lost hundreds of our own men there, and we mourn them. But the free Vietnamese have lost tens of thousands, and the aggressors and their dupes have lost still more. These are the cruel costs of the conspiracy directed from the North. This is what has to be stopped.
4. The United States still seeks no wider war. We threaten no regime and covet no territory. We have worked and will continue to work for a reduction of tensions, on the great stage of the world. But the aggression from the North must be stopped. That is the road to peace in Southeast Asia.
5. The United States looks forward to the day when the people and governments of all Southeast Asia may be free from terror, subversion, and assassination -- when they will need not military support and assistance against aggression, but only economic and social cooperation for progress in peace. Even now, in Vietnam and elsewhere, there are major programs of development which have the cooperation and support of the United States. Wider and bolder programs can be expected in the future from Asian leaders and Asian councils -- and in such programs we would want to help. This is the proper business of our future cooperation.

6. The United States will never be second in seeking a settlement in Vietnam that is based on an end of Communist aggression. As I have said in every part of the union, I am ready to go anywhere at any time, and meet with anyone whenever there is promise of progress toward an honorable peace. We have said many times -- to all who are interested in our principles for honorable negotiation -- that we seek no more than a return to the essentials of the Agreements of 1954 -- a reliable arrangement to guarantee the independence and security of all in Southeast Asia. At present the Communist aggressors have given no sign of any willingness to move in this direction, but as they recognize the costs of their present course, and their own true interest in peace, there may come a change -- if we all remain united.

Meanwhile, as I said last year and again last week, "it is and it will remain the policy of the United States to furnish assistance to support South Vietnam for as long as is required to bring Communist aggression and terrorism under control." The military actions of the United States will be such, and only such, as serve that purpose -- at the lowest possible cost in human life to our allies, to our own men, and to our adversaries, too.

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62

/23



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~~SECRET -- EYES ONLY~~

March 26, 1965

MEMORANDUM TO: Secretary Rusk  
Secretary McNamara  
Mr. McGeorge Bundy ✓

Subject: Possible Topics for Discussion on Saturday Morning.

Among the topics you may wish to discuss at the 11 o'clock meeting on Saturday would be the following:

1. Actions over the next 2-3 months:
  - a. Military--progress on 12-week program.
  - b. Political--content of possible pronouncement and whether any other political action should be considered.
2. Issue of possible added ground forces in South Viet-Nam:
  - a. Nature of added logistic and support need.
  - b. Alternative possible deployments of combat troops, including possibility of third-country components, notably Australia and New Zealand. Possible force missions and political factors. Question of response if situation in II Corps area or elsewhere becomes serious.
3. Miscellaneous issues under ROLLING THUNDER program, such as rules of engagement.
4. Order of discussions during Ambassador Taylor's visit, and collateral issues such as Congressional and press exposure.

William P. Bundy

Copies to:

Mr. Ball  
Ambassador Thompson  
Mr. McNaughton  
Mr. Unger

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Authority State 5-19-78, OSD 9-20-78  
By inf, NARS, Date 1-25-80

FE:WPBundy:mk

~~SECRET -- EYES ONLY~~

63

124

63a  
March 26, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I think the NSC meeting today should be devoted centrally to Vietnam, and that it would be helpful at this point for all present to take a deep breath and listen to each other for about a half hour in a review of the situation as it now stands. Accordingly, I have asked John McCone to discuss the situation in South Vietnam and the attitudes of the major Communist powers. I have asked Dean Rusk to follow on with a discussion of the political and diplomatic situation, and I have asked Bob McNamara to wind up with a comment from the military side.

The group, although carefully selected, will be quite large, and I doubt if in this group you will wish to go beyond the line you have taken with the Governors and in your Cabinet statement yesterday. (The fact of a possible longer statement or speech is being as tightly held as we know how.)

This meeting is the first for Governor Ellington and the last for Douglas Dillon, and you may wish to say a word about each of them.

McG. B.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AGENDA

March 26, 1965 - 1:15

VIETNAM

1. Intelligence review - Director of Central Intelligence
  - a. The situation in South Vietnam
  - b. Estimates of Communist reaction and intent --  
Hanoi, Peking and Moscow
2. The political and diplomatic situation - The Secretary of State
3. The military situation - Secretary of Defense



64

125

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 9-19-79 State 7-6-79

By inf, NARS, Date 10-24-79



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

JCSM-221-65

87 MAR 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Air Strike Program Against North Vietnam (C)

1. On 22 March 1965, you were briefed in conceptual terms by the Joint Staff on an air strike program against North Vietnam. This memorandum addresses a twelve-week program of air attacks against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) prepared in accordance with your guidance to avoid heavily populated areas and avoid direct attacks against the DRV-based air capability.
2. The air strike program contained in the Annex hereto is forwarded in response to your request to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, on 20 March 1965.
3. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the third, fourth, and fifth weeks' program against the DRV LOCs south of the 20th parallel reflected in the Annex (Tabs A, B, and C) be approved for execution during the period 2 April through 22 April 1965.
4. It is the view of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the operational commander must have flexibility in the execution of this military program in order to achieve a high degree of effectiveness. In a LOC interdiction campaign, it is particularly important that the field commander be able to detect and exploit targets of opportunity through frequent random reconnaissance operations. This concept would provide this latitude within policy guidance.

Special handling of this paper is requested.  
Access should be limited to individuals  
requiring the information herein in order to  
carry out their special duties.

Copy 14 of 2 Copies each  
of 2 pages series B

~~SENSITIVE~~  
GROUP 3  
Downgraded at 12 year  
intervals; not  
automatically declassified

~~TOP SECRET~~

5. The Joint Chiefs of Staff do not endorse the programs for weeks six through twelve, and they are considering alternatives for a follow-on program of air strikes beginning with the sixth week. They will advise you further in this regard, taking account of the developing situation, the current policy considerations, and military measures available to us.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SIGNED

ERIC G. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachments

2

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~~SENSITIVE~~

## ANNEX

64a-1

## AIR STRIKE PROGRAM AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM (C)

1. Concept. The concept, simply stated, is to conduct an air strike program during the remaining 10 weeks of a 12-week program which increases in intensity and severity of damage over the period. The program can be considered in four phases.

a. The initial phase consists of a three-week interdiction campaign against the vulnerable Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) LOCs south of the 20th parallel. The concept of this campaign is to conduct strikes against a number of interrelated but separated choke points which will disrupt the flow of military supplies and equipment and tax the DRV capability to restore these facilities. Essential to the success of this phase is the initial attacks on targets No. 14 and 18.8. The dropping of at least one span in either and preferably both of these bridges will sever the main north-south railroad and highway routes in sufficient depth for an effective follow-on program. This initial action would be accompanied by an intense armed reconnaissance mission to destroy the isolated transport equipment. Subsequent strikes against choke points throughout the isolated area are designed to make the program effective and to complicate the DRV recovery program. Day and night armed reconnaissance would be conducted at random intervals to harass these recovery efforts and to sustain the interdiction, including armed reconnaissance against junk traffic over sea LOCs. This initial program should bring home to the

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Authority JCS 9-19-79, State 7-6-79

By isp, NARS, Date 10-24-79GROUP 3  
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JCSM-221-65

1

Annex



population the effects of air strikes since consumer  
goods will be competing with military supplies for the  
limited transport. An effective interdiction in this  
area will also impede the DRV capability to mass  
sizeable military forces and to deploy air defense  
resources. (TABs A, B, and C reflect the fixed targets  
for the third, fourth, and fifth weeks.) The remaining  
few installation targets in this area would be left for  
later strikes by VNAF. Also, the interdiction in this  
area would be sustained by VNAF as US strikes moved to  
the north.

b. The second phase, the launching of the interdiction  
campaign north of the 20th parallel, introduces a considera-  
tion which was not a major factor in the campaign in the  
southern DRV; i.e., the possibility of MIG intervention  
as strikes are made against targets progressively closer  
to the Hanoi-Haiphong area. In order to reduce this  
possibility to a minimum, the first week of air opera-  
tions north of the 20th parallel (TAB D) includes strikes  
against the radar net in the delta area to blind or  
minimize DRV early warning and intercept capability.  
Following these preparatory attacks, operations against  
the LOCs north of the 20th parallel are scheduled (TABs E  
and F) with the primary objective of isolating the DRV  
from external overland sources; i.e., rail and highway  
supply routes from Communist China. Subsequent to  
cutting these primary LOCs, the initial phase of the  
interdiction campaign would be completed by striking  
LOC targets in depth throughout the area of the DRV  
north of the 20th parallel.

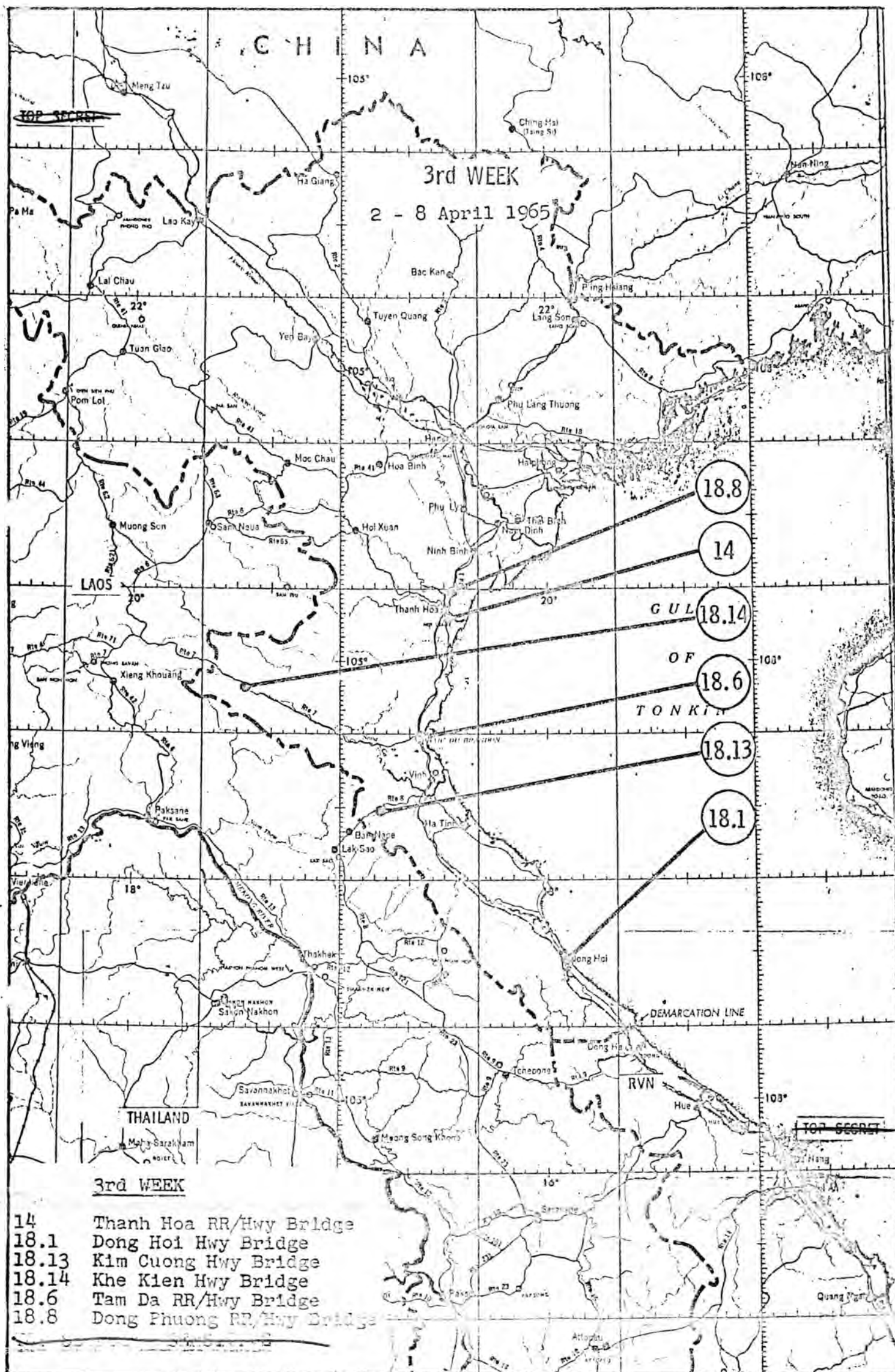
c. Having completed the primary interdiction program 1  
in the delta area, a substantially lower effort should 2  
maintain its effectiveness. With his overland LOC cut, 3  
blocked, and harassed, the enemy can be expected to 4  
turn more and more to his port facilities and sea LOC. 5  
The ninth week air strikes (TAB G) will include attacks 6  
against these port facilities and the mining of seaward 7  
approaches to block the enemy from relieving his resupply 8  
problems over the sea LOC. Strikes will be initiated 9  
during the tenth week (TAB H) against ammunition and 10  
supply dumps to destroy on-hand stores of supplies and 11  
equipment to further aggravate his logistic problems. 12

d. In the wind-up phase of the 12-week program (during 13  
the eleventh and twelfth week) (TAB I and J), strikes 14  
against on-hand supplies, equipment, and military 15  
facilities will be continued, attacking remaining worth- 16  
while targets throughout the DRV. As a part of this 17  
phase, industrial targets outside of population areas 18  
will be struck, leading up to a situation where the 19  
enemy must realize that the Hanoi and Haiphong areas 20  
will be the next logical targets in our continued air 21  
campaign. 22

2. Restrictions. TAB K reflects an anti-MIG strike 23  
package; however, as provided in the policy guidance furnished 24  
the Joint Chiefs of Staff, this mission will not be executed 25  
unless the DRV MIG aircraft are able to impair the effective- 26  
ness of the strike forces. Combat air patrol aircraft, in 27  
sufficient numbers to deter MIG attack, will accompany all 28  
missions and will engage these DRV aircraft as required to 29  
protect the force. Strike forces and armed reconnaissance 30

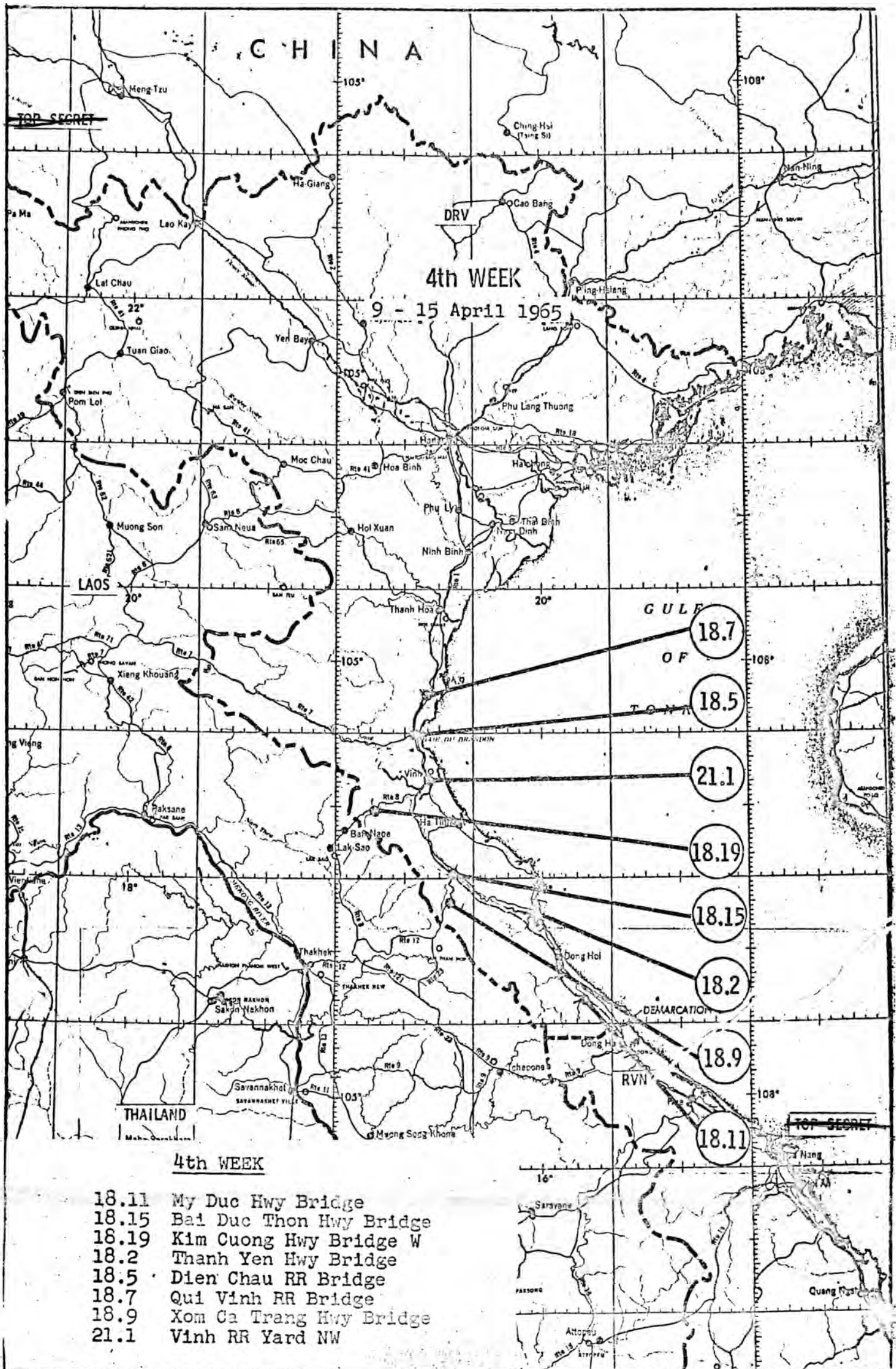
aircraft may persist in their missions but other recon- 1  
naissance missions will break off mission to avoid contact 2  
with MIG aircraft if feasible. Heavily populated areas will 3  
be avoided by both strike and armed reconnaissance missions. 4  
3. Strike sorties for the next ten weeks would total 5  
approximately 3,000 or roughly 300 per week. CINCPAC has 6  
reported a capability to conduct approximately 1,600 strike 7  
sorties per week on a sustained basis. This leaves ample 8  
margin for US air support within South Vietnam and Laos and 9  
substantial armed reconnaissance to sustain the LOC inter- 10  
diction. The deployment of the air units recommended in 11  
JCSM-204-65, dated 20 March 1965, subject: "Deployment of 12  
US/Allied Combat Forces to Vietnam (C)," will further 13  
improve this capability. 14



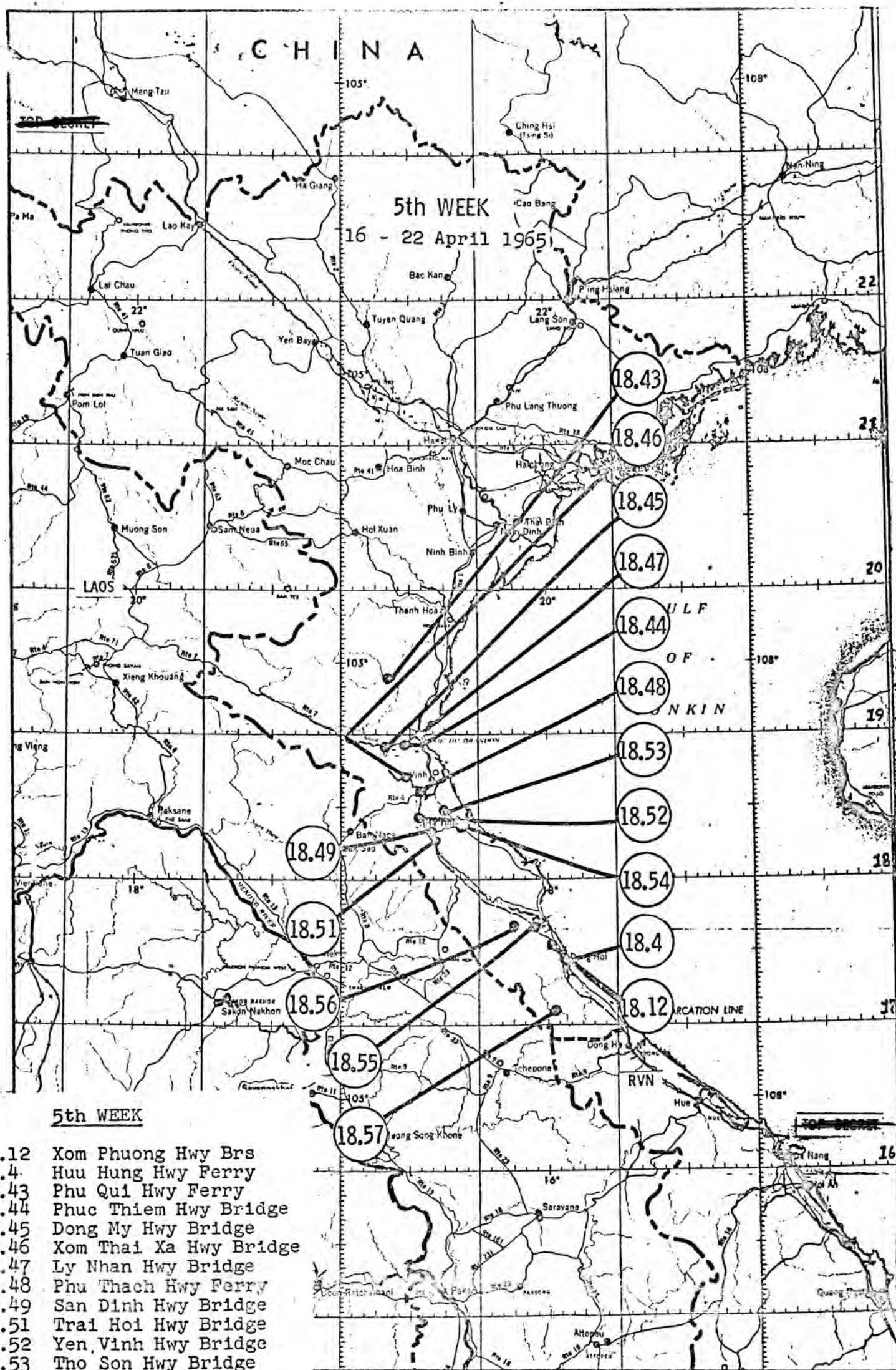


TAB A

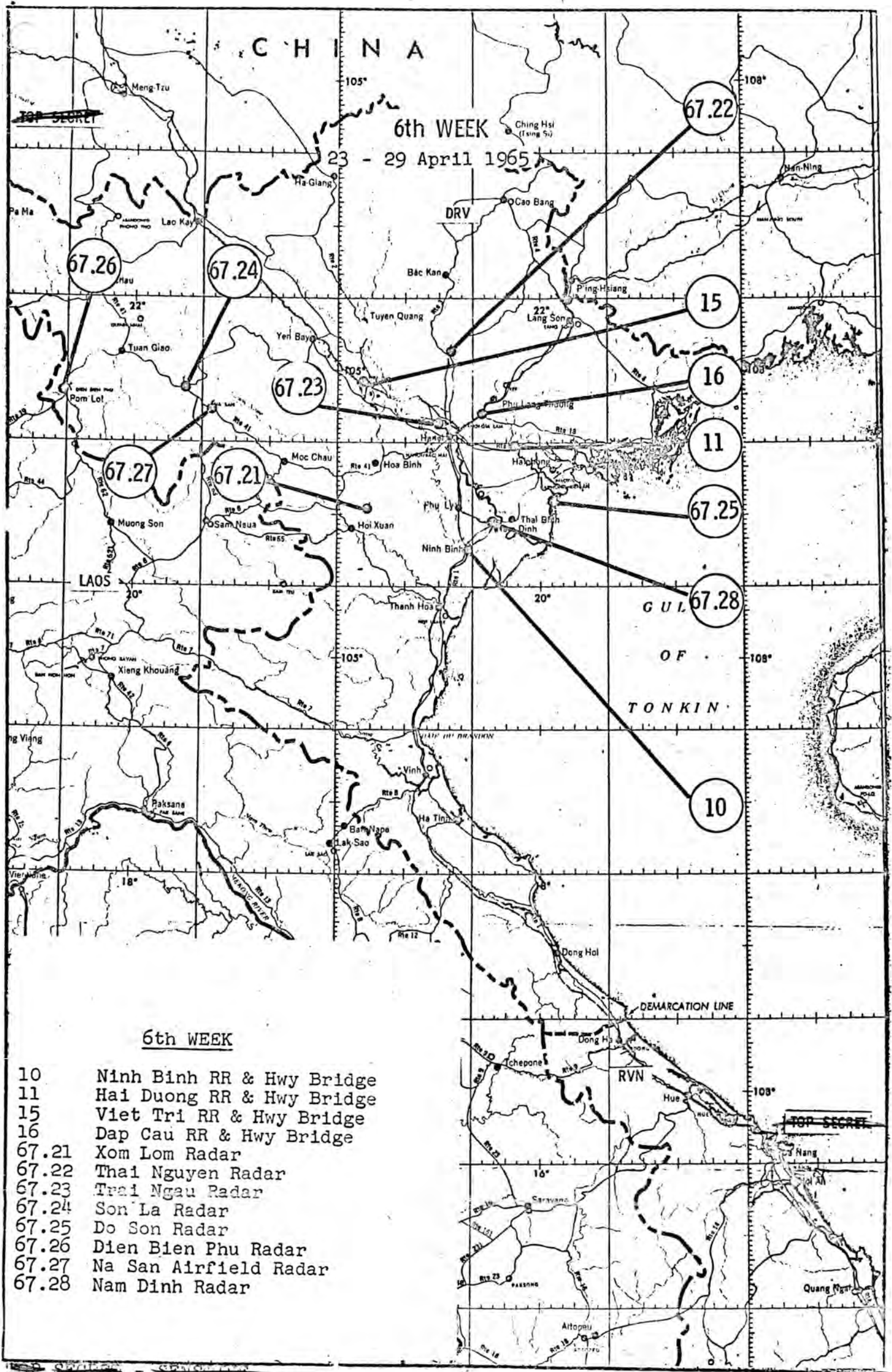




TAB B

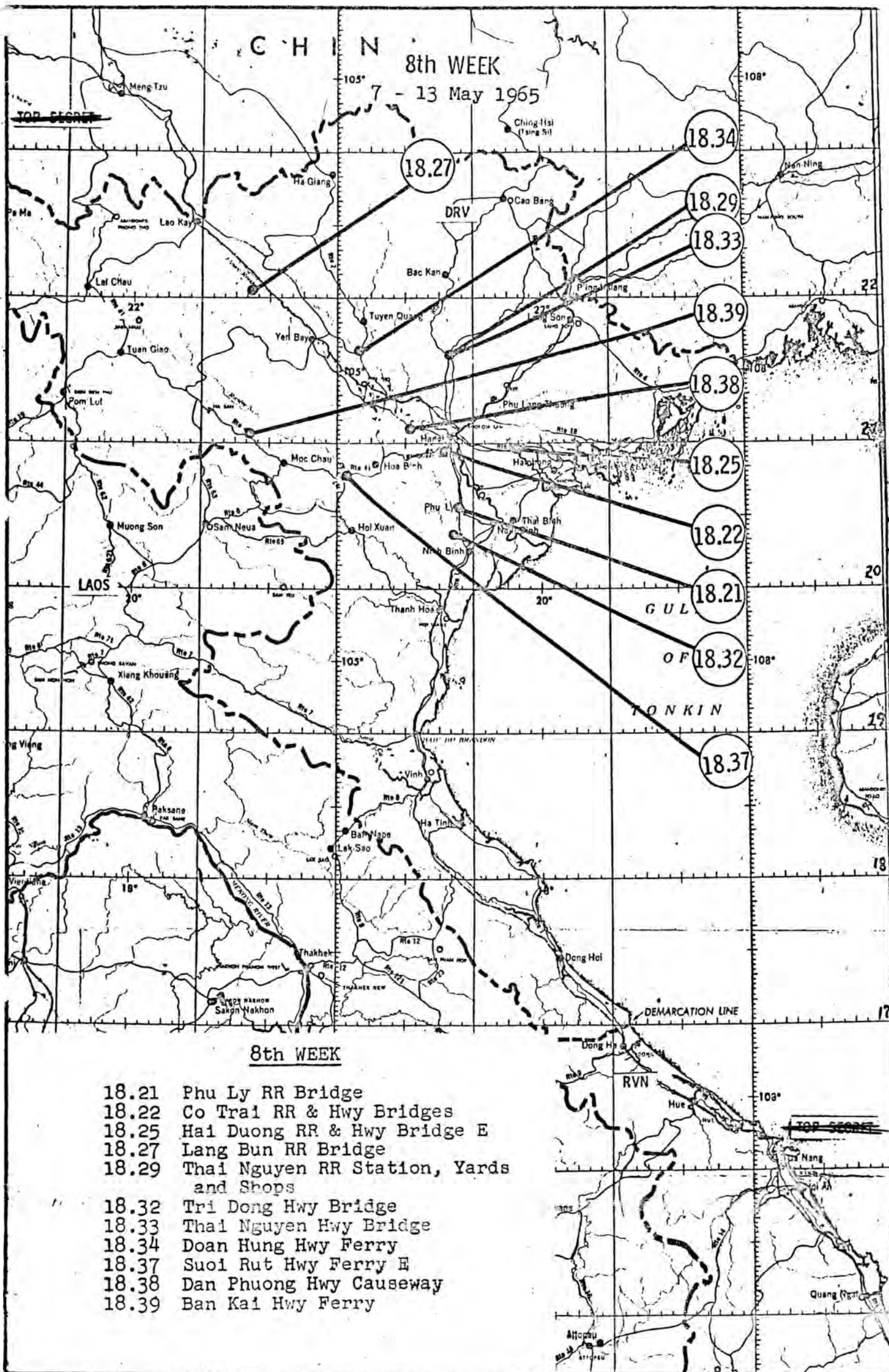




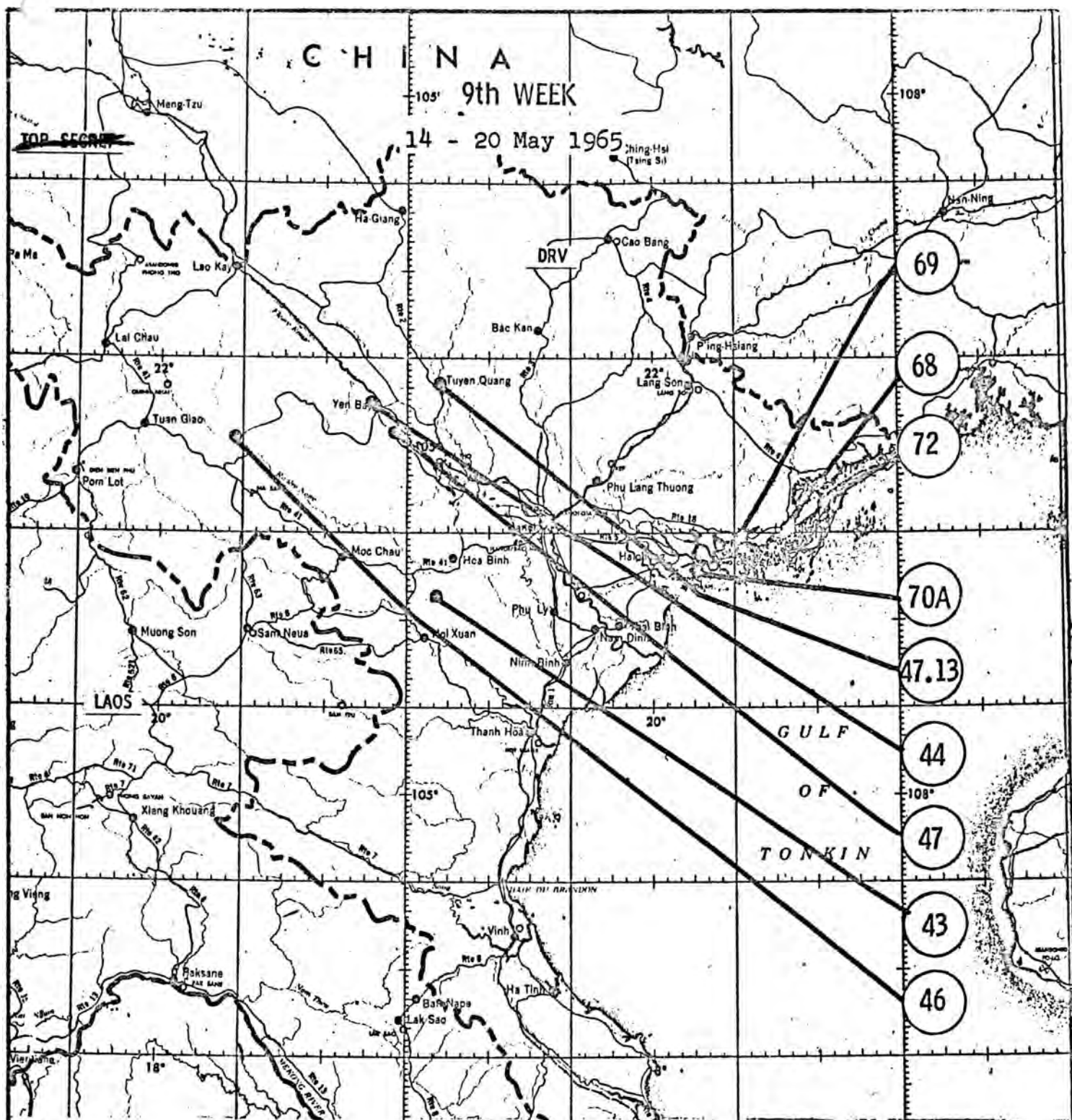






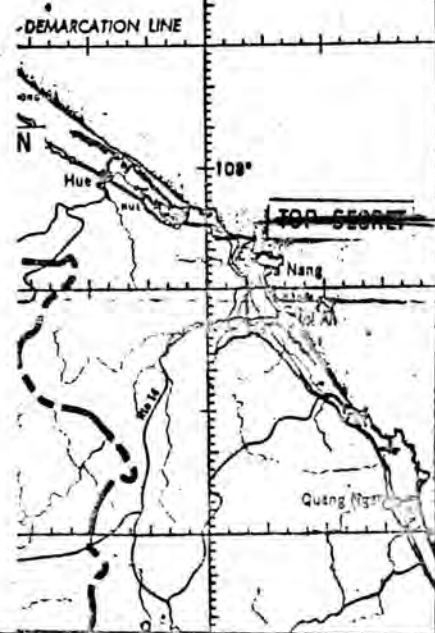


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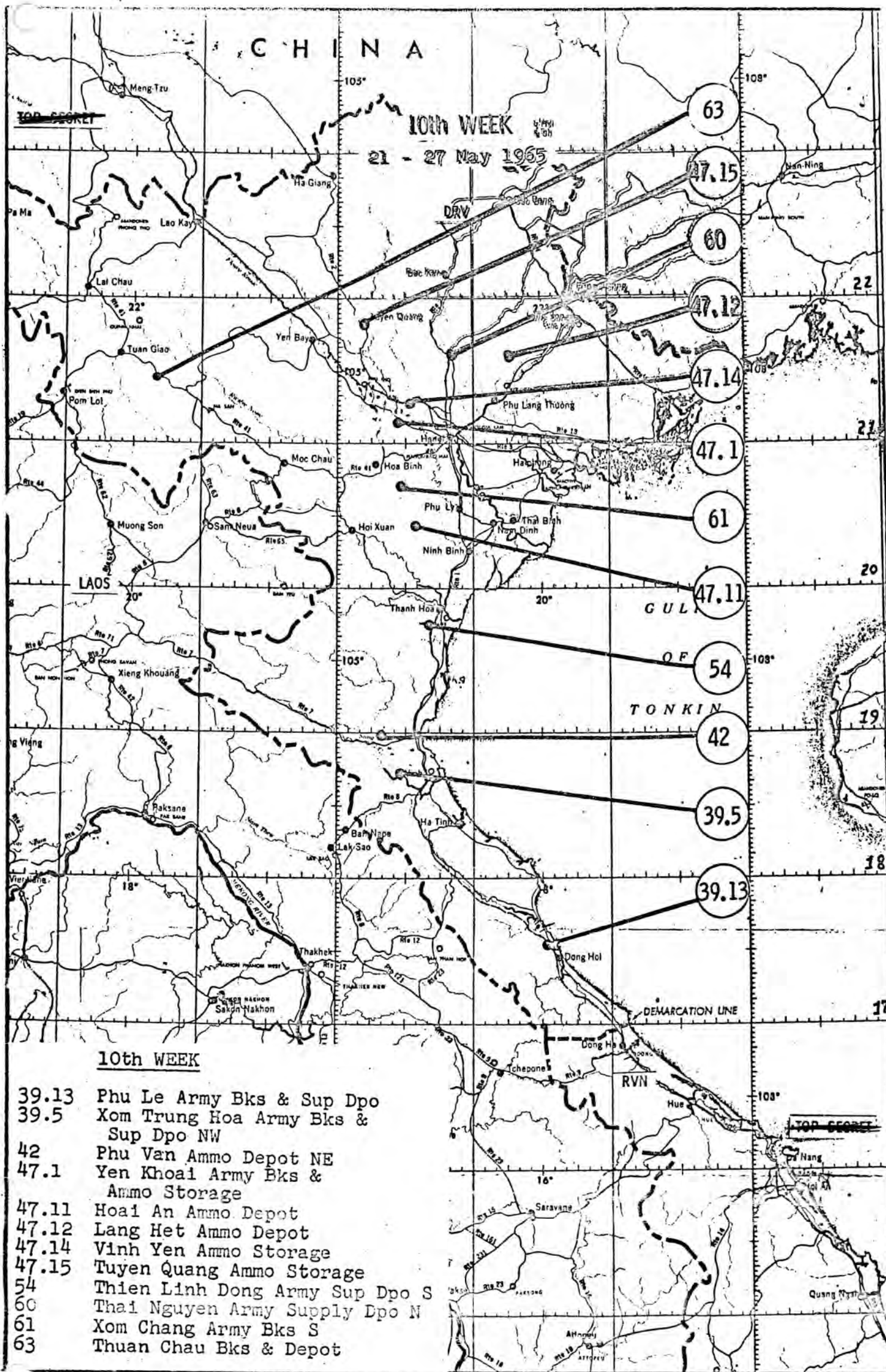
9th WEEK

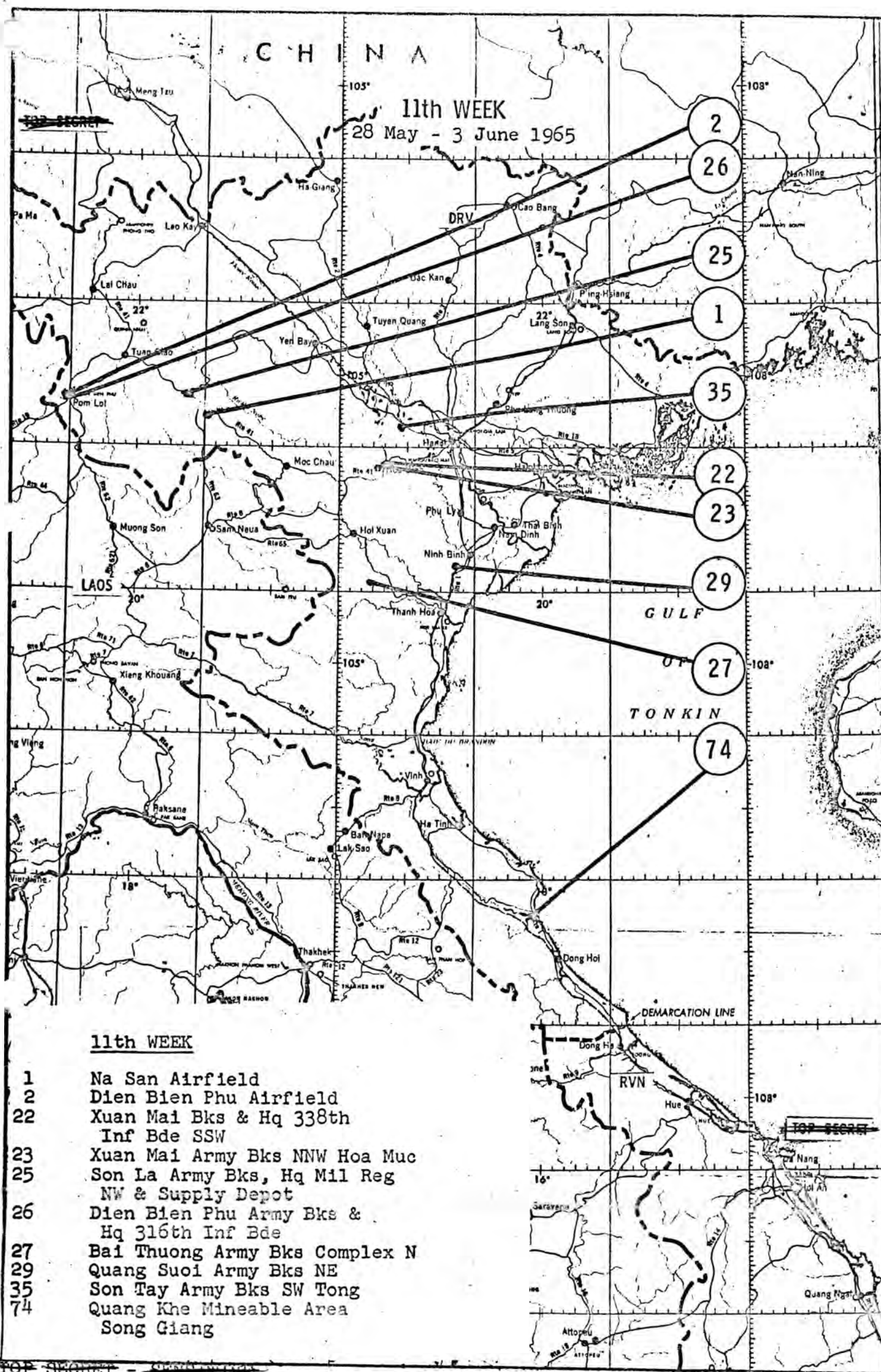
- 43 Qui Hau Ammo Depot W
- 44 Yen Bay Ord Depot
- 46 Ban Phiang Hay Ammo Depot
- 47 Yen Son Ammo Depot
- 47.13 Tai Xouan Ammo Depot SE
- 68 Cam Pha Port/Coal Treatment Facilities (including mining)
- 69 Hon Gay, including Bai Chai Port/Coal Treatment Facilities (includes mining)
- 70A Haiphong Port Approaches (mining)
- 72 Port Wallut Port Facilities (includes mining)



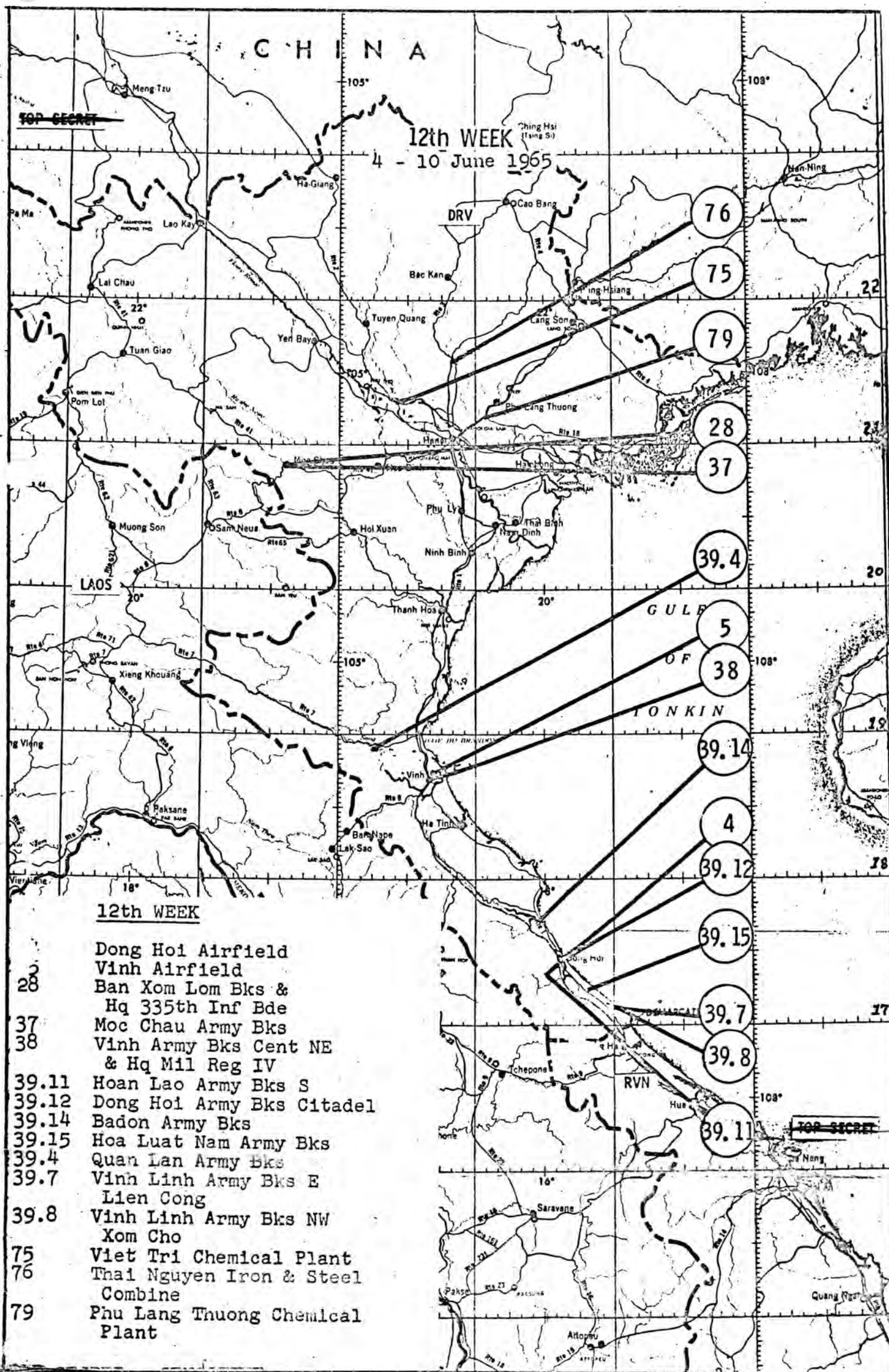
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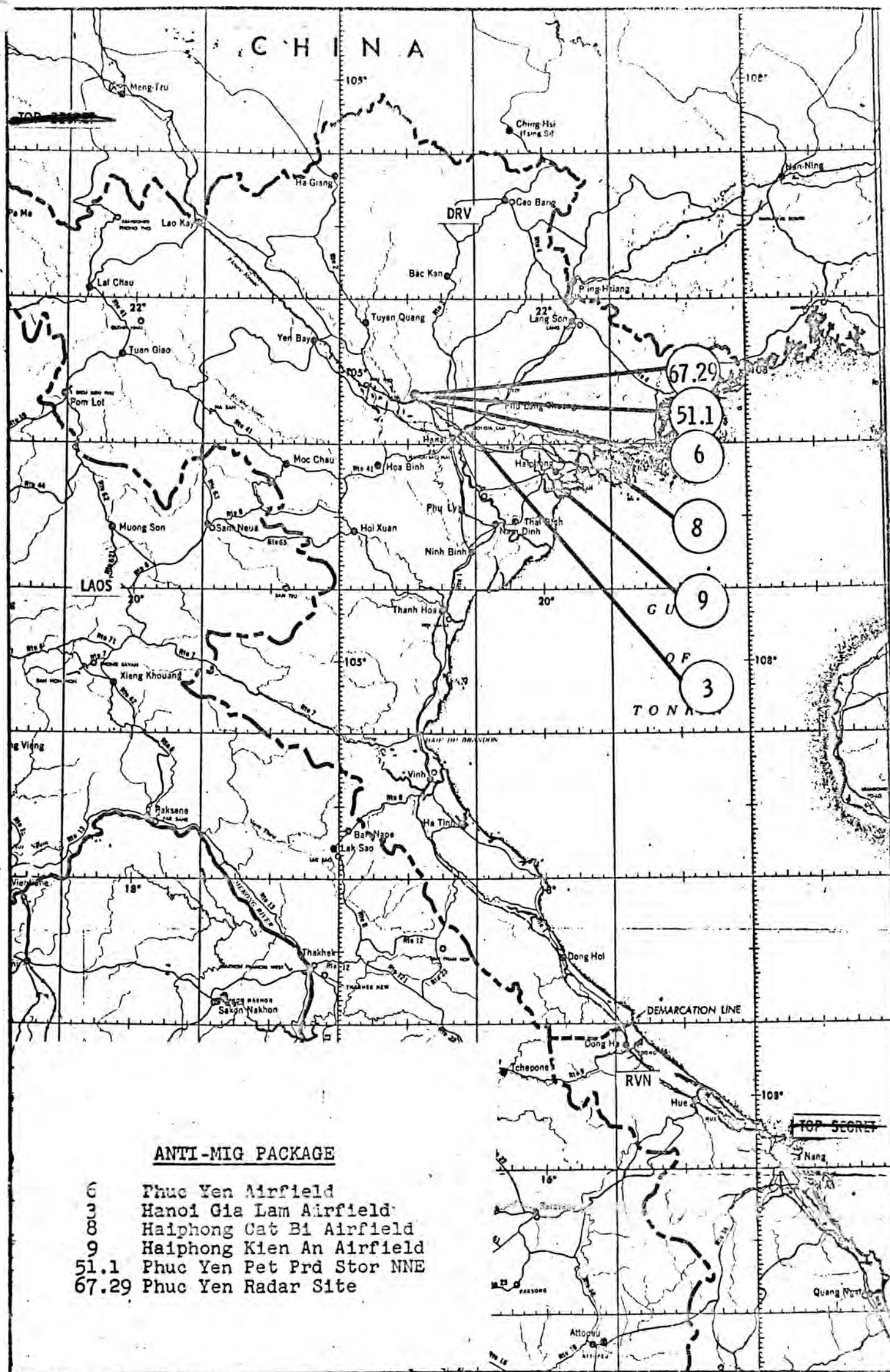












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126



# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: ☐ COLLECT  
☐ CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

Origin ACTION: AmEmbassy SEOUL 902 PRIORITY

Info:

MAR 27 5 20 PM '65

~~EXXIS~~ NODIS EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR

We continuing consider possibility introducing additional combat forces in SVN for possible variety of missions that might include some direct degree of indirect participation against VC but that would be designed primarily free GVN forces to fullest and meet apparently serious manpower shortage particularly in central and northern provinces. Current project under study would involve one US division, possible filling out of present Marine units, and one ROK division. Contingency planning would cover logistics, command, and mission problems in fullest detail.

We noted Lee's apparent receptiveness such ideas but also your own concern they might cause more political difficulty than Lee had either calculated or at least made clear during his visit. We now need fuller assessment probable ROK Government and popular attitudes such proposal and best methods we could use to make it clearly acceptable. We feel very strongly ROK contingent would be of key importance whole plan since we see no other major third country source for project although we would

Drafted by: FE: WPBundy/bmm 3/29

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:

The Secretary

Clearances:

White House - McGeorge Bundy (subs)  
DoD - Secy McNamara (subs)

S/S - Mr. Gordon

**SANITIZED**

Authority NOT 91-7  
By upla

NARA Date 4-9-74 (541)

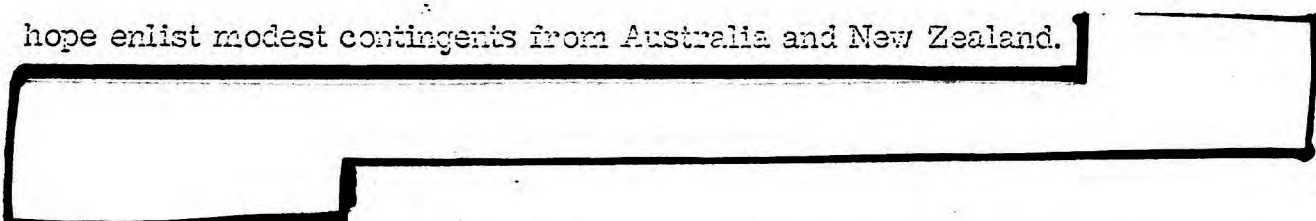
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Page 2 of telegram to Seoul~~TOP SECRET~~

hope enlist modest contingents from Australia and New Zealand.



Request your early comment spelling out all factors that in your judgment would influence ROK receptivity and full support. Our own tentative judgment here is that dispatch ROK division would not change what we now regard as low odds any Communist action against Korea itself but your response should cover degree of ROK concern this aspect as well as all others. Obviously you should not discuss with ROK in any way at this time.

GP-3.

END

RUSK

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Orig Bundy 3/29

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66a

March 28, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY RUSK  
SECRETARY McNAMARA  
MR. McGEORGE BUNDY

SUBJECT: Major Issues During Ambassador Taylor's Visit

I have gone over the principal papers that Ambassador Taylor has brought with him. They raise a number of matters that can be dealt with, at least in the first instance, by his appointments in State, DoD, AID, and USIA. However, I thought it would be useful for you to have a preliminary indication of the major issues and the positions that have been recommended to the Ambassador by the Mission elements.

I. Need for US Forces. MACV has not included third country forces, such as a ROK division, in its analysis. It has prepared a detailed "Commander's Estimate" which will be briefed to the DoD/JCS session Monday and which recommends the introduction of a US division and the filling out of the Marine units, for a total of approximately 33,000 combat personnel. I am not clear whether this includes all the supporting and logistics personnel incident to this additional deployment.

This combat deployment would be over and above recommended increases of approximately 18,000 in assorted units and logistics personnel separate from the combat deployment. The 18,000 figure breaks down into approximately 6,000 of increments to existing units, and 12,000 of new units, with the main element in the latter being about 7,000 for the "logistics command."

Our present strength in SVN is given as 28,669 so that we are dealing with recommendations that would bring it to the level of 30,000 or higher under both headings.

~~TOP SECRET - EYES ONLY~~

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Authority State Ex 7-12-75; OSD 10-4-75  
By *ip/ly*, NARA, Date 4-4-14

~~TOP SECRET - EYES ONLY~~

-2-

2. "Negotiating" Policy and Tactics. The Embassy has supplied excellent papers on this subject, which we will have copied and distributed Monday. They focus on much the same issues that we are touching on in the present draft pronouncement, and that are analyzed in more detail in my memorandum of March 19. I will inform the Ambassador Monday morning of the status of the pronouncement and give him a copy of our own analysis of March 19.

3. Tempo of Operations against the DRV. The Embassy staff is recommending an increase in tempo, including additional strikes above the 20th parallel. They are also recommending immediate introduction of a leaflet operation as part of the program.

The Mission has also supplied useful papers on the question of blockade or aerial mining of the ports. The staff conclusion is that these steps should be further studied, but not carried out for the time being.

4. Non-military Measures. A very lengthy Mission cable has already given preliminary responses to the list of 41 points, and we will break out these and isolate the key issues with Ambassador Taylor in our first State meeting Monday morning.

William P. Bundy

~~TOP SECRET - EYES ONLY~~



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128

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

W D 2 <sup>67a</sup>

CORRECTION ISSUED 3/30/65

~~TOP SECRET~~

9 pm aa

Action

CONTROL: 26535

Info

RECD: March 30, 1965  
9:04 a.m.

FROM: Seoul - CORRECTED PAGES 1 and 3

ACTION: Secstate 931

DATE: March 30, 7 PM (Section 1 of 3)

~~TOP SECRET~~

NODIS

Ref: DEPTTEL 902

Subject: ROK Combat Forces for Vietnam

1. Proposal to dispatch ROK combat division to Vietnam in present circumstances would present problem and involve considerations quite different from those surrounding dispatch of non-combat units. It involves factors which have probably not been fully presented to or even considered by Foreign Minister Lee Tong-Won.

2. Sending ROK division to Vietnam would require approval of National Assembly and wide and free-ranging public discussion at a time when ROKG is engaged in major struggle in effort to normalize relations with Japan. This struggle likely to continue for at least two months and possibly longer. It may involve very survival of the government in face of determined opposition effort to create turmoil. We can say with certainty based on recent experience that this proposal would arouse strong objections and require

great deal

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Authority FRUS, Vol. XXIX, #37  
By ny, NARA, Date 4-4-74

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NODIS

-2- 931, March 30 7 PM SECTION 4 of 3, CN 26535 fm SEOUL

GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION FROM A GOVT ALREADY HARASSED.

3. OPPOSITION POLITICIANS VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED DISPATCH OF 2,000 NON-COMBAT TROOPS TO VIETNAM. THEIR OPPOSITION TO THIS NEW PROPOSAL WILL BE EVEN STRONGER. OPPOSITION PRESS CAN BE COUNTED ON TO OPPOSE AND TO INTRODUCE STRONG ELEMENT OF DOUBT ABOUT WISDOM OF GREATER KOREAN PARTICIPATION IN VIETNAM. THIS HAS ALREADY BEGUN IN COMMENTS ON NEWS REPORT FROM WASHINGTON OF FOMIN'S REPORTED OFFER TO SECRETARY RUSK OF FURTHER TROOPS. STUDENTS, WHO WERE NOT ON CAMPUS AT TIME OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE OVER ROK IMAF LAST JANUARY, WILL INTERJECT THEMSELVES AND AT LEAST A VOCIFEROUS MINORITY AMONG THEM IS LIKELY TO OPPOSE. HUE AND CRY WILL BEWILDER GENERAL PUBLIC AND GENERATE UNEASINESS AND FEAR OF CONSEQUENCES OF GREATER KOREAN PARTICIPATION IN DISTANT UNDECLARED WAR WHEN KNOWN ENEMY IS NEARBY AND THEIR OWN DAILY PROBLEMS APPEAR SO DIFFICULT. ADDING CONTROVERSY OVER THIS ISSUE TO OTHER CURRENT CONTROVERSIES WOULD WEAKEN GOVERNMENT AT TIME WHEN MAXIMUM STRENGTH IS NEEDED FOR RATIFICATION ROK-JAPAN AGREEMENT. RESERVATIONS ABOUT TROOP DISPATCH EXPRESSED PREVIOUSLY BY ELEMENTS IN DRP WILL BE STRONGER AND THUS MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR GOVT TO OBTAIN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVAL FOR THE SETTLEMENT BY SIMPLE EXERCISE OF ITS MAJORITY.

4. TOP LEADERSHIP OF GOVT FEELS GREATER READINESS TO EXPAND KOREA'S CONTRIBUTION THAN ANY OTHER SECTOR OF KOREAN SOCIETY. PRESIDENT PAK, SOME CABINET OFFICERS, AND MAJORITY OF MILITARY LEADERSHIP ARE BOLD IN VISION AND WANT ROK TO PLAY GREATER ROLE IN EAST ASIA. THEY WOULD IN NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES PROBABLY BE QUITE PREPARED TO ACT PROVIDED THEIR CONDITIONS WERE SATISFIED. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE EVEN THIS LEADERSHIP WOULD HESITATE TO TAKE ON TASK OF SENDING COMBAT DIVISION TO VIETNAM AT THIS TIME. THEIR PLATE IS FULL AND BEFORE ANY MORE IS ADDED AT LEAST ROK-JAPAN ISSUE MUST BE OUT OF WAY.

5. WE THEREFORE CONCLUDE TIME IS NOT NOW PROPITIOUS.

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INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

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CONTROL: 26535  
CORRECTION ISSUED  
3/30/65 9 pm aa

-3- 931, March 30, 7 pm, from Seoul (SECTION 1 of 3)  
CORRECTED PAGE 3

6. It would moreover in our judgment be undesirable to take up question with ROKG before or during Pak visit to Washington if, as now seems likely, ROK-Japan settlement not yet ratified and visit viewed primarily as aid to ROKG in getting ratification. In addition to certainty that proposal would leak to press, problem of negotiating suitable package for Pak on that occasion would be greatly complicated by US request for combat troops, especially since if request were made initial response would probably be affirmative but be followed immediately by second thoughts and stipulation of long list of conditions on points covered below. We recognize that it might seem strange if request were presented to ROKG soon after Pak returned without having been discussed during Washington visit. Nevertheless, on balance we think it better to defer raising matter with ROKG until after ratification, recognizing that Washington's judgment on this will be made in light of relative importance attached in short term to ROK-Japan settlement on one hand and reenforcement in Vietnam on other. If by chance ratification already in hand, Pak visit would be logical time to raise matter with ROKG.

GP-1.

BROWN

aa/6

~~TOP SECRET~~



INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

#2

~~TOP SECRET~~

Action CONTROL: 26545

Info RECD: MARCH 30, 1965 9:17AM

FROM: SEOUL

ACTION: SECSTATE 931

DATE: MARCH 30, 7PM SECTION II OF III

~~TOP SECRET~~

NODIS

REF: DEPTTEL 902

SUBJECT: ROK COMBAT FORCES FOR VIETNAM

7. IN MORE NORMAL POLITICAL SITUATION THAT IS LIKELY TO OBTAIN AFTER RATIFICATION OF ROK-JAPAN SETTLEMENT, OUR PRESENT JUDGMENT IS THAT ROKG, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM PUBLIC, WOULD WITH TO RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY TO US REQUEST FOR COMBAT DIVISION FOR VIETNAM. WE EXPECT GOVT'S POSITION WILL BE STRENGTHENED BY SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION JAPANESE SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGH IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH WILL PROBABLY SEE CABINET SHAKEUP. KOREANS REMAIN FUNDAMENTALLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, WITH SOME PRIDE IN THEIR WILLINGNESS TO STAND AT SIDE OF A COUNTRY THREATENED BY COMMON ENEMY. IT IS NOT DIFFICULT FOR KOREANS TO RECOGNIZE ENEMY EVEN WHEN HE IS DISTANT AND THEY DO REMEMBER BEING HELPED IN THEIR OWN ADVERSITY. MANY VOLUNTEERS AMONG VETERANS OF ROK ARMY ARE READY TO COME FORWARD, PARTLY FROM A SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE AND PARTLY IN HOPE OF USEFUL EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCIAL GAIN. EVEN AFTER RATIFICATION OPPOSITION WOULD STILL OPPOSE, AS THEY DID LAST JANUARY, AND THERE WOULD BE NATIONWIDE DISCUSSION AND DEBATE, BUT WITH ASSURANCES AND HELP FROM US (EXTENT OF THESE WOULD BE VITALLY IMPORTANT), PROPER PREPARATION OF PUBLIC OPINION, AND GOOD MANAGEMENT, GOVT WOULD STAND SUFFICIENT CHANCE OF GETTING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVAL TO JUSTIFY THE EFFORT.

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NODIS

-2-, 931, MARCH 30, 7P.M., From Seoul, (SECTION II OF III)

8. IN OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC CONSIDERATION THIS ACTION, THERE WOULD BE CONCERN OVER POSSIBILITY OF GREATER DANGER ALONG DMZ, WHERE STATUS QUO WOULD APPEAR SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH KOREAN ENGAGEMENT IN OPEN CONFLICT AGAINST COMMUNIST ELEMENTS ELSEWHERE. WE AGREE WITH DEPTJS ESTIMATE THAT CHANCES OF ALL-OUT CONFLICT ON BORDER BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA ARE NOT GREAT. WE DO NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY OF NORTH KOREAN DEMONSTRATIONS ALONG DMZ (E.G. MORE FIRE FIGHTS, ARTILLERY FIRE ON PAENG YANG-DO OR EVEN LARGE-SCALE BOMBARDMENT) TO GENERATE FEAR, INSPIRE MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES, ETC. WHETHER DANGER IS ACTUALLY GREATER OR NOT, MANY KOREANS WOULD RAISE QUESTION WHETHER THEIR COUNTRY'S ACTIONS IN VIETNAM MIGHT NOT ENDANGER THEIR OWN COUNTRY'S PEACE.

9. THERE WOULD BE SOME CONCERN OVER LEGALITY SENDING COMBAT TROOPS TO VIETNAM IN ABSENCE TREATY OBLIGATION. THIS WAS RAISED BY OPPOSITION AND SOME NEWSPAPERS DURING DEBATE OVER SENDING NON-COMBAT TROOPS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE REPEATED WITH CALL FOR SOME FORM OF FORMAL TREATY RELATIONSHIP WHICH WOULD SANCTION SUCH INTERVENTION.

10. MANY KOREANS WOULD QUESTION THEIR ABILITY SHARE BURDEN OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY WHEN THEIR OWN PROBLEMS ARE GREAT AND THEIR PROGRESS IS SLOW. THEY WOULD QUESTION NEED FOR GREATER KOREAN ROLE, WHEN OTHER FREE NATIONS IN ASIA HAVE NOT YET MADE CONTRIBUTION EQUIVALENT TO THEIR OWN. THIS QUESTIONING WOULD BE DIRECTED PARTICULARLY AT JAPAN'S FAILURE TO HELP, AT THE WISDOM OF STERILIZING THE CHINESE NATIONALISTS, AT SLOWNESS OF PHILIPPINES TO ACT, AND AT THE RELATIVELY MODEST CONTRIBUTIONS OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. SOME RESPONSIBLE KOREAN MILITARY FIGURES MIGHT QUESTION PUBLICLY (AS THEY ALREADY HAVE PRIVATELY, E.G. COMMANDER OF ADVANCE PARTY FOR ROK IMAF AND GENERAL KIM CHONG-O) FEASIBILITY OF EMPLOYING KOREAN COMBAT UNITS IN GUERRILLA WAR IN FOREIGN ENVIRONMENT, UNDER DIFFICULT TACTICAL AND LOGISTICAL CONDITIONS.

11. MATERIAL ASPECTS WILL LOOM LARGE IN KOREAN CALCULATIONS, BOTH OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE. PERSUASION AND APPEALS TO RALLY TO COMMON CAUSE WILL BE USEFUL, BUT SPECIAL INDUCEMENTS ON LARGE SCALE WILL BE NECESSARY. PRESSURE WILL NOT WORK AND SHOULD NOT BE ATTEMPTED. VOLUNTEER ASPECT WOULD NEED TO BE STRESSED TO MINIMIZE COMPLAINTS THAT CONSCRIPTS BEING SENT ABROAD TO FIGHT IN UNDECLARED WAR.

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NODIS

-3-, 931, MARCH 30, 7 P.M., From Seoul, (SECTION II OF III)

12. ROKG WOULD SEEK FIRM ASSURANCES US FORCES IN KOREA WOULD NOT BE REDUCED AND REVISION OF US-ROK MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY TO SECURE US COMMITMENT ALONG LINES NATO FORMULA AS INSURANCE AGAINST ANY INCREASE IN THREAT FROM NORTH. ANY PROPOSAL THAT ONE US DIVISION BE SHIFTED FROM KOREA AS PART OF BUILD-UP IN VIETNAM WOULD BE VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED AND WOULD INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS OF OPPOSITION ARGUMENTS THAT KOREAN INTERESTS WERE BEING SACRIFICED.

13. ROKG WOULD EXPECT ALL EXPENSES OF OPERATION TO BE BORNE BY US. THIS WOULD INCLUDE TRANSPORTATION, LOGISTICAL REQUIREMENTS, SPECIAL OVERSEAS ALLOWANCES. AND ANY OTHER COST FACTORS INVOLVED. FOR FORCE OF SAY 21,000 MEN THIS WOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT. ROKG WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY ASK THAT DIVISION SENT TO VIETNAM BE REPLACED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BY ACTIVATING A NEW DIVISION AT US EXPENSE.

GP-1

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State* #2

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Action

CONTROL: 26536

Info

RECD: MARCH 30, 1965 9:11 AM

FROM: SEOUL

ACTION: SECSTATE 931 (SECTION THREE OF THREE)

DATE: MARCH 30, 7 PM

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NODIS

REF: DEPTTEL 902

SUBJECT: ROK COMBAT FORCES FOR VIETNAM

14. TO BOLSTER THEIR DEFENSES AGAINST WHAT THEY WOULD CONSIDER AS SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED RISK TO THEIR OWN SECURITY, ROKG WOULD VIGOROUSLY SEEK MORE MILITARY SUPPORT TO FILL BUDGETARY AND MILITARY DEFICIENCIES, INCLUDING SUSPENSION MAP TRANSFER, INCREASED MILITARY BUDGET SUPPORT, AND EXPANDED MAP LEVELS. ROKG WOULD EXPECT TO GET SUBSTANTIAL BENEFIT FROM SALE OF GOODS TO VIETNAM UNDER US AID FINANCED PROGRAMS, AND FROM MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICES WHICH KOREA CAN SUPPLY. THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN GETTING CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN ROKG EVER SINCE THEIR TROOPS WENT TO VIETNAM. ROKG WOULD ALSO EXPECT ITS ACTIVE ROLE IN VIETNAM TO BE REFLECTED IN US ECONOMIC AID LEVELS IN KOREA. THEIR ARGUMENT WOULD BE SOCHU -- IF KOREA IS TO HELP ABROAD IT NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED INTERNALLY. IT IS NOT YET READY TO BEAR EXTRA BURDENS.

15. TO SUM UP, WE SEE FORMIDABLE PROPOSAL AND LONG DRAWN-OUT DEBATE OVER PROPOSAL. PRESENT TIME IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT, BUT UNDER ANY FORESEEABLE CIRCUMSTANCES GOVT WILL HAVE TROUBLE AND PUBLIC OPINION IS CERTAIN TO BE DIVIDED. EXTENSIVE INDUCEMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED AND COST WILL BE GREAT. BUT IF APPROACHED AFTER ROK-JAPAN RATIFICATION AND WITH ASSURANCES OF GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM US, OUR PRESENT BEST JUDGMENT IS THAT GOVT RESPONSE IS LIKELY TO BE AFFIRMATIVE. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVAL CAN BE HOPED FOR BUT CANNOT BE ASSURED.

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INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

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CONTROL: 26536  
CORRECTION ISSUED 3/30/65 aa  
9 pm

-2- 931, March 30, 7 p.m., from Seoul (SECTION 3 OF 3)  
CORRECTED PAGE TWO

16. We believe that question also has implications for the long-run psychology of US-ROK relationship which we are examining and which may affect judgments expressed above pro or contra. For example public debate of this question may give Koreans greater feeling of equality and partnership with the US, helping to compensate for age-old inferiority complex and fear of Japan, and contribute to a new sense of national confidence. On other hand, many Koreans may begin to question whether US-ROK relationship evolving into one in which ROK becomes tool which US uses for own political and strategic purposes instead of independent object of US assistance and support. These possible effects involve larger question of how both we and Koreans envisage not only their relationship with the US but their own changing role in Asia and the speed of that transition.

17. GP-1.

BROWN

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68

129

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

March 31, 1965

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Your meeting with Max Taylor at 5:15 this afternoon

1. Max Taylor's visit this afternoon is the first of two. Today he comes privately. Tomorrow all the recommendations growing out of his visit will be available for formal presentation to you in the presence of the heads of the departments concerned. This will be quite a substantial meeting in numbers, but it is being kept off the record -- and if it leaks it will be billed simply as one more effort to make sure that we are doing everything we can to make our program more efficient and effective.

2. The three problems on Max's mind are these:

(1) The timing and direction of attack on the North

(2) The timing, size, and mission of any U. S. combat deployments to Vietnam; and

(3) The terms and conditions of a political resolution of the problem.

He has done more thinking on (1) and (2) than on (3) -- and so have we.

3. I think that on (1) he is in reasonable agreement with our outline plans for the next 2 or 3 weeks. But he is prepared to go toward Hanoi faster than McNamara. You may wish to probe him on this because I sense that you are leaning a little ahead of Bob on this one.

4. On U. S. deployments, I think Taylor and McNamara are very close together in the notion of a coastal deployment of the remaining battalions of the Marine Expeditionary Brigade and the effort to get a Korean Battle Group (Ambassador Brown warns from Seoul that he is very wary of this proposal and that the ground would have to be very carefully laid).

5. Max's work is still continuing on the proposed actions to beef up our work inside South Vietnam. Max is somewhat resistant to our pressures on this since he feels that his own time and energy should go into the absolutely top priority problems. What he puts at the head of the list is *small* troop strength in South Vietnam -- and I think he is probably right, at that.

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Authority State 11-9-78, NSC 9-4-79 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
By ing, NARS, Date 9-25-79

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-2-

March 31, 1965

*But* The other matters also count, and that is one more reason for my conviction that in the long pull we need a McNaughton-type in Saigon. John does see this point.

6. Finally, you and Taylor will certainly wish to talk over the guidelines for his meetings with Congressional Committees tomorrow and any backgrounding he may do with the press.

*McG. B.*  
McG. B.



70

130

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Second Draft  
W. P. Bundy/bmm  
March 31, 1965

KEY ELEMENTS IN STRATEGY FOR SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The Situation

Morale has improved in South Vietnam. The government has not really settled down, but seems to be hopeful both in its capacity and in its sense of political forces. The armed forces continue in reasonably good shape, though top leadership is not really effective and the ratio of armed forces to the VC buildup is not good enough.

The situation in many areas of the countryside continues to go in favor of the VC, although there is now a temporary lull. The threat is particularly serious in the central ~~and southern~~ provinces, and the VC forces may be re-grouping for major efforts there in the near future.

Hanoi has shown no signs of give, and Peiping has stiffened its position within the last week. We still believe that attacks near Hanoi might substantially raise the odds of Peiping coming in with air. Meanwhile, we expect Hanoi to continue and step up its infiltration both by land through Laos and by sea. There are clear indications of different viewpoints in Hanoi, Peiping, and Moscow (and even in the so-called Liberation Front), and continued sharp friction between

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Authority Shu 71778; OSD 10-4-78; CIA 8-77-80  
By inf/ly, NARA, Date 4-4-74

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-2-

Moscow and Peiping. However, neither such frictions nor the pressure of our present slowly ascending pace of air attack on North Vietnam can be expected to produce a real change in Hanoi's position for some time, probably 2-3 months, at best.

A key question for Hanoi is whether they continue to make real headway in the south, or whether the conflict there starts to move against them or at least appear increasingly tough. If the former, even a major step-up in our air attacks would probably not cause them to become much more reasonable; if the latter, the situation might begin to move on a political track -- but again in not less than 2-3 months in our present judgment.

## 2. Actions within South Vietnam

It remains crucial that we put every possible useful resource into the South. Specifically, the following programs should be carried out energetically in accordance with appropriate priorities:

### a. The 41-point program of non-military measures.

(A separate first status report on these measures has been prepared.)

The Mission, as well as all agencies in Washington, should develop additional points, and a major US program for the supply and distribution of food should be urgently considered. Mr. McCone's twelve suggestions for covert and other actions should be explored urgently.

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-3-

- b. The Rowan recommendations, with USIA in charge.
- c. The 21-point Johnson program of military actions, expanded to include every possible measure and effective use of US resources against sea infiltration. Such measures as a 17th parallel barrier and a restricted zone off the coast should be explored urgently.
- d. An 13,000 - 20,000 man increase in US forces, to fill out existing units and supply needed logistic personnel.
- e. The GVN manpower increase programs, using increased pay scales or any other inducement regardless of cost.

### 3. US and Third Country Combat Forces in South Vietnam

In view of the inadequate ratio of government forces to the likely pace of VC buildup during 1965, there is a special need for added forces to take on limited missions and to release government forces for wider use. On the other hand, the reaction of the GVN and the South Vietnamese people to any major US deployment is uncertain, as is the likely net effectiveness of US and third country combat forces in the Vietnamese environment. We need to go ahead in measured stages, testing the water as we go, and avoiding the impression, either in

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-4-

South Vietnam or in third countries, that we are taking over the war on the ground.

Balancing these factors, the immediate moves should be under an "offensive enclave/mobile combat reserve" concept, setting up a limited number of areas in which US forces would assure security and would be available for emergency needs in the vicinity of the area. Ambassador Taylor should explore these moves urgently with the GVN, in order to obtain their concurrence. Specifically:

- a. A third and possibly a fourth battalion should be added to the Marine force in Da Nang, and its mission revised to fit the concept. This would bring the Marine combat strength to \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Logistics bases to serve as offensive enclaves should be created for the introduction of similar forces in the Qui Nhon and Vung Tau/Bien Hoa areas, and possibly in the Nha Trang area.
- c. When the logistics bases have been set up (1-2 months), tailored forces similar in size to the Marine force should be introduced in each of these areas, with emphasis on engineer and other units to perform local construction and other operations as well as security and emergency reserve duty.

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-5-

Major third country participation would be a big asset to the program. We may get some small Australian and New Zealand participation, with staff talks going on this week. However, major forces could come only from South Korea. Defense thinks we should seek parallel Korean forces (in the form of a regimental combat team) perhaps under step a., certainly under step c. above. State feels the political situation in Korea is too touchy to make a request for such forces advisable, and that we should at least await a better reading on how the 2,000 Koreans now in South Vietnam are doing. There are also major logistic and command problems to handling a major Korean unit.

Whether or not Korean forces are sought in the initial trial program, we should defer any decision on any larger-scale program. However, detailed plans should be made for the logistics to support the possible later introduction of the remainder of the Marine Expeditionary Force (30,000 additional Marines), a US Army Division (30,000 men), a possible Korean force to total a division, and one Australian Battalion (1,000 men).

#### 4. Actions against North Vietnam and in Laos

We should continue roughly the present slowly ascending tempo of Rolling Thunder operations, being prepared to add strikes.

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-6-

in response to a higher rate of VC operations, or conceivably to slow the pace in the unlikely event VC action slacked off for what appeared to be more than a temporary operational lull.

The target systems should continue to avoid [the Haiphong area and] the effective GCI range of MIG's from Hanoi. We should continue to vary the types of targets, stepping up attacks on lines of communication in the near future, and possibly moving in a few weeks, to attacks on the rail lines north and northeast of Hanoi [and possibly to the Haiphong POL storage.]

Low-level reconnaissance subject to the same geographical limits, is needed to develop further targets north of the 19th and 20th parallels for possible eventual strikes. [To the greatest possible extent, we should seek to expand high-level reconnaissance for this purpose, but we also should carry out an early limited program of low-level sorties.]

Leaflet operations with warning and propaganda themes should be initiated to add to the psychological effect on the North Vietnamese population.

Blockade or aerial mining of North Vietnamese ports needs further study. It would have major political complications, especially in relation to the Soviets, but also offers many advantages.

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-7-

Air operation in Laos, particularly route blocking operations in the Panhandle area, should be stepped up.



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-8-

### 5. Political Track

We need to refine our own analysis of the possible steps to a settlement if Hanoi starts to give. Provisionally, we now see two stages -- the first geared to the stopping of our air attacks on the north, and the second designed to get Hanoi clean out of the south and prepare the way for a lasting solution. The first stage might come with only covert or indirect contact with Hanoi, and really through reciprocal actions; the second may require a formal conference.

In the first stage, we now visualize that we would have to be satisfied at least (a) that infiltration had ceased or virtually ceased, and (b) that major unit VC actions had stopped and VC terrorism and sabotage had been substantially reduced in the south. We should also consider calling for (c) a stoppage of military communications between North Vietnam and the south. Finally, we should have to include some condition affecting (d) the major VC units that would remain in the south; this might take the form of their removal, their surfacing and regroupment in stated areas, or an insistence that Hanoi come to the conference table at once to work out the withdrawal of its forces from the south, with our reserving the freedom to resume our attacks on the north if this was not brought about within a specified time limit.

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-9-

As inducements to Hanoi to accept this stiff position, we could offer (a) formal recognition of the regime (already mentioned by the South Vietnamese Foreign Minister), (b) our willingness to join in assurances (not guarantees) of North Vietnam's independence and territorial integrity -- as part of such assurances for all the successor states including South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, and (c) the suggestion that North Vietnam could share in regional economic programs developed within the area and could trade with South Vietnam. On the other hand, we would hold absolutely firm against North Vietnamese demands for legalizing the Liberation Front in the south, and would fend off any question of reunification of all Vietnam as an issue that could arise only after the south was freed.

As stated above, we do not expect any serious political track to get under way for 2 - 3 months. In the intervening period, we could use public statements to spell out some elements in detail and to enumerate others that might enter in some sequence. The object would be to hold our allies in line by a reasonable public position, and, we hope, also to appeal to possible waverers in Hanoi.

For this purpose, the idea of regional economic cooperation, and our readiness to contribute to it, should be developed and played

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-10-

to the maximum consistent with realistic expectations.

As for third party efforts, we should be neutral and not discouraging to such missions as Gordon Walker's or U Thant's possible trip. We should also not discourage the Soviets, French, or others.

As to the GVN, Ambassador Taylor should have a general discussion in this area on his return, indicating our tentative ideas on substance and timing. One purpose of such consultation would be to prevent independent GVN initiatives. Any public statement bearing on GVN interests, such as offering to recognize North Vietnam, must of course be cleared with Saigon.

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131



INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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FROM SAIGON APRIL 1, 8 PM

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E X D I S

I INFORMED QUAT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON THAT WASHINGTON SEEMED GENERALLY IN AGREEMENT THAT THE TEMPO AND THE RHYTHM OF ROLLING THUNDER BE RAISED BUT I WAS NOT YET IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS SPECIFICS. QUAT INDICATED GREAT SATISFACTION AND INQUIRED POINTEDLY WHETHER THIS MEANT THE FUTURE STRIKES WOULD STILL CFN 3178 1900 0111215Z QUAT NOT

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 53A ~~SECRET~~

BE LIMITED TO TARGETS BELOW THE 19TH PARALLEL. QUAT THEN WENT ON TO RAISE QUESTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AGAINST THE DRV. QUAT SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT THIS SUBJECT WAS UNDER STUDY BY GEN VIEN AND ZORTHIAN BUT HE MERELY WISHED TO UNDERLINE HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS WERE EXTERNELY IMPORTANT IN THE PRESENT CONTEXT. QUAT SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO CALL ON US FOR THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE IN THIS REGARD. I RESPONDED THAT AMBASSADOR TAYLOR INTENDED TO DISCUSS THIS QUESTION DURING HIS CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON. QUAT SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO A DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR TAYLOR UPON HIS RETURN. JOHNSON

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By ms/s NARA Date 4-4-14

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*Reid  
4/1/65  
4:40 p.m.*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*72a*

April 1, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

If you have a chance to read this memorandum before our meeting today, I think it will save time. I have deliberately put the political problems up near the front because they are the harder ones. The military and non-military action programs summarized in later parts of the memo do not seem as controversial or difficult today.

*McG. B.*

McG. B.

TOP SECRET ATTACHMENT

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

72b

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April 1, 1965

KEY ELEMENTS FOR DISCUSSION, THURSDAY, APRIL 1, at 5:30 PM

1. The Situation

Morale has improved in South Vietnam. The government has not really settled down, but seems to be hopeful both in its capacity and in its sense of political forces. The armed forces continue in reasonably good shape, though top leadership is not really effective and the ratio of armed forces to the VC buildup is not good enough.

The situation in many areas of the countryside continues to go in favor of the VC, although there is now a temporary lull. The threat is particularly serious in the central provinces, and the VC forces may be regrouping for major efforts there in the near future.

Hanoi has shown no signs of give, and Peiping has stiffened its position within the last week. We still believe that attacks near Hanoi might substantially raise the odds of Peiping coming in with air. Meanwhile, we expect Hanoi to continue and step up its infiltration both by land through Laos and by sea. There are clear indications of different viewpoints in Hanoi, Peiping, and Moscow (and even in the so-called Liberation Front), and continued sharp friction between Moscow and Peiping. However, neither such frictions nor the pressure of our present slowly ascending pace of air attack on North Vietnam can be expected to produce a real change in Hanoi's position for some time, probably 2 - 3 months, at best.

- A key question for Hanoi is whether they continue to make real headway in the south, or whether the conflict there starts to move against them or at least appear increasingly tough. If the former, even a major step-up in our air attacks would probably not cause them to become much more reasonable; if the latter, the situation might begin to move on a political track -- but again in not less than 2 - 3 months, in our present judgment.

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, NARS, Date

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-2-

## 2. Immediate International Moves

There are two initiatives from third parties which require US decisions. U Thant has proposed a three-month period in which there would be "a temporary cessation of all hostile military activity, whether overt or covert, across the 17th parallel in Vietnam." The 17 "neutrals" which met in Belgrade have proposed negotiations "without pre-conditions."

We think the U Thant proposal should be turned off. (Bunche tells us U Thant will not float it publicly if we reject it privately). It is not clear that the trade-off would be to our advantage, even if it could be arranged, and in any case, we prefer to use U Thant for private feelers rather than public proposals. We can tell U Thant that we have no objection on his sounding out Hanoi on this same point, however, and that if he gets a response, we would be glad to comment on it.

The 17 nation proposal is more attractive. We are inclined to propose to Quat that both South Vietnam and the US should accept it with a covering statement of our good, firm, clear objectives in any such negotiation. The President has already made it clear that he will go anywhere to talk with anyone, and we think the 17 nation proposal is one to which we can make a pretty clear response. Tactically, it will probably not lead to any early conference, because the position of Hanoi and Peking will be that they will not attend any meeting until our bombings stop. The Secretary of State will elaborate on these propositions.

## 3. More General Political Posture

The more general political question, which still needs refinement, is the order and content of the eventual tradeoff. We have three cards of some value: our bombing of North Vietnam, our military presence in South Vietnam, and the political and economic carrots that can be offered to Hanoi. We want to trade these cards for just as much as possible of the following: an end to infiltration of men and supplies, an end of Hanoi's direction, control, and encouragement of the Viet Cong, a removal of cadres under direct Hanoi control, and a dissolution of the organized Viet Cong military and political forces. We do not need to decide today just how we wish to mesh our high cards against Communist concessions. But we will need to be in such a position soon, if only to exchange views with Quat. On this more general point, we believe more exploratory conversation with the President is needed today.

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#### 4. Actions within South Vietnam

It remains crucial that the South Vietnamese and we put every possible useful resource into the effort in the South. Specifically, the promising elements of the following programs should be carried out energetically in accordance with appropriate priorities:

- a. The 41-point program of non-military measures. (A separate first status report on these measures has been prepared.) The Mission, as well as all agencies in Washington, should develop additional points, and a major US program for the supply and distribution of food should be urgently considered. Mr. McCone's twelve suggestions for covert and other actions should be explored urgently.
- b. The Rowan recommendations, with USIA in charge.
- c. The 21-point Johnson program of military actions, expanded to include every possible measure and effective use of US resources against sea infiltration.
- d. An 18,000 - 20,000 man increase in US military support forces to fill out existing units and supply needed logistic personnel.
- e. The GVN manpower increase programs, using increased pay scales or any other inducement regardless of monetary cost.

#### 5. US and Third Country Combat Forces in South Vietnam

In view of the inadequate ratio of government forces to the likely pace of VC buildup during 1965, consideration has been given to (and the JCS would recommend) the addition of 2 or 3 division forces to take on limited missions, to release government forces for wider use, and to deter large scale DRV attacks on South Vietnam. Deployment of the forces would proceed in a series of steps, the first of which would require sixty days and would involve the deployment of 2 additional Marine battalions, one Marine air squadron, and the logistical forces referred to in d above.

Because the reaction of the GVN and the South Vietnamese people to any major US combat deployment is uncertain, as is the likely net effectiveness of US and third country combat forces in the Vietnamese environment, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense recommend that action at this time be limited to approval of the first step. The second and remaining steps could be reviewed approximately 60 days from now.

(4/1/65)

Major third country participation would be a big asset to the program. We may get some small Australian and New Zealand participation, with staff talks going on this week. However, major forces could come only from South Korea. The Secretary of Defense thinks we should seek deployment of Korean "offensive enclave/mobile combat reserve" forces (in the form of a 3500-man regimental combat team) concurrently with deployment of additional US Marines. The Secretary of State points out that the political situation in Korea is touchy, but he believes that we can quietly explore with the Korean Government the possibility of bringing in Korean combat troops on a quiet basis to reinforce and support the 2,000 Koreans now in South Vietnam.

We should defer any decision on any larger-scale program. However, detailed plans should be made for the logistics to support the possible later introduction of the remainder of the Marine Expeditionary Force (30,000 additional Marines), a US Army Division (30,000 men, including logistics), a possible Korean force bringing their total to a division, and at least one Commonwealth Brigade.

#### 6. Actions Against North Vietnam and in Laos

We should continue roughly the present slowly ascending tempo of Rolling Thunder operations, being prepared to add strikes in response to a higher rate of VC operations, or conceivably to slow the pace in the unlikely event VC action slacked off sharply for what appeared to be more than a temporary operational lull.

The target systems should continue to avoid the effective GCI range of MIGs. We should continue to vary the types of targets, stepping up attacks on lines of communication in the near future, and possibly moving in a few weeks, to attacks on the rail lines north and northeast of Hanoi.

Leaflet operations with warning and propaganda themes should be initiated to add to the psychological effect on the North Vietnamese population.

Blockade or aerial mining of North Vietnamese ports need further study and should be considered for future operations. It would have major political complications, especially in relation to the Soviets and certain third countries, but also offers many advantages.

Air operation in Laos, particularly route blocking operations in the Panhandle area, should be stepped up to the maximum remunerative rate.



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-5-

(4/1/65)

7. A Regional Economic Initiative

If there is time, Mr. McGeorge Bundy will present briefly the current results of further steps on the President's Point 5 of last week.

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73

133

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JOINT MESSAGEFORM				RESERVED FOR COMMUNICATION CENTER			
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AMEMB SAIGON							
WHITE HOUSE							
STATE DEPARTMENT				<u>Coordination</u>			
TOP SECRET JCS 008387 JCS send Authority JCS Subj: MEB Deployment to Da Nang (U) Refs: a. CINCPAC DTG 192207Z Mar (NOTAL); b. CINCPAC DTG 292233Z Mar (NOTAL) 1. Following actions are to be accomplished earliest feasible after AMB Taylor obtains clearance from GVN (estimated to require a few days): * a. Expand the mission of Marine elements to in- clude engagement in counterinsurgency combat opns. b. Deploy one BLT to Hue-Phu Bai area and one BLT to Da Nang. c. Deploy one Marine F-4 sqdn to Da Nang.				State Dept			
				Mr. Unger			
				White House			
				Mr. Bundy			
				OSD/ISA			
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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION  
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PRECEDENCE	RELEASED BY	DRAFTED BY	PHONE
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d. Deploy necessary MEB, RLT, and MAG hqtrs control and support personnel as required.

2. Timing and mode of transportation of forces involved in above deployments to be determined by CINCPAC. Request furnish JCS your schedule of deployments using AMB Taylor's clearance day (C-day) as a base.

3. Request you advise the JCS of US/RVNAF command and concept arrangements/for counterinsurgency combat opns when developed and agreed upon.

4. No repeat no public statements are authorized except as directed by OASD (PA) through public info channels. If queried, this is a routine PACFLT movement.

GP-3

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74

134



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

F<sub>S</sub>  
74a

~~SECRET~~

January 27, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Re: Basic Policy in Vietnam

1. Bob McNamara and I have asked for the meeting with you at 11:30 in order to have a very private discussion of the basic situation in Vietnam. In a way it is unfortunate that we are meeting the morning after a minor coup, because that is not the present point. All of us agree with Alexis Johnson that nothing should be done on that until we have particular recommendations from Saigon (though at that point we may well want to urge Taylor and Johnson to make the best of the matter and not try to undo it).
2. What we want to say to you is that both of us are now pretty well convinced that our current policy can lead only to disastrous defeat. What we are doing now, essentially, is to wait and hope for a stable government. Our December directives make it very plain that wider action against the Communists will not take place unless we can get such a government. In the last six weeks that effort has been unsuccessful, and Bob and I are persuaded that there is no real hope of success in this area unless and until our own policy and priorities change.
3. The underlying difficulties in Saigon arise from the spreading conviction there that the future is without hope for anti-Communists. More and more the good men are covering their flanks and avoiding executive responsibility for firm anti-Communist policy. Our best friends have been somewhat discouraged by our own inactivity in the face of major attacks on our own installations. The Vietnamese know just as well as we do that the Viet Cong are gaining in the countryside. Meanwhile, they see the enormous power of the United States withheld, and they get little sense of firm and active U. S. policy. They feel that we are unwilling to take serious risks. In one sense, all of this is outrageous, in the light of all that we have done and all that we are ready to do if they will only pull up their socks. But it is a fact -- or at least so McNamara and I now think.

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Authority State 11-9-78, NSC 9-4-79  
By isg, NARS, Date 9-25-79

Deployment 7/65 Feb 10

4. The uncertainty and lack of direction which pervades the Vietnamese authorities are also increasingly visible among our own people, even the most loyal and determined. Overtones of this sentiment appear in our cables from Saigon, and one can feel them also among our most loyal staff officers here in Washington. The basic directive says that we will not go further until there is a stable government, and no one has much hope that there is going to be a stable government while we sit still. The result is that we are pinned into a policy of first aid to squabbling politicians and passive reaction to events we do not try to control. Or so it seems.

5. Bob and I believe that the worst course of action is to continue in this essentially passive role which can only lead to eventual defeat and an invitation to get out in humiliating circumstances.

6. We see two alternatives. The first is to use our military power in the Far East and to force a change of Communist policy. The second is to deploy all our resources along a track of negotiation, aimed at salvaging what little can be preserved with no major addition to our present military risks. Bob and I tend to favor the first course, but we believe that both should be carefully studied and that alternative programs should be argued out before you.

7. Both of us understand the very grave questions presented by any decision of this sort. We both recognize that the ultimate responsibility is not ours. Both of us have fully supported your unwillingness, in earlier months, to move out of the middle course. We both agree that every effort should still be made to improve our operations on the ground and to prop up the authorities in South Vietnam as best we can. But we are both convinced that none of this is enough, and that the time has come for harder choices.

8. You should know that Dean Rusk does not agree with us. He does not quarrel with our assertion that things are going very badly and that the situation is unraveling. He does not assert that this deterioration can be stopped. What he does say is that the consequences of both escalation and withdrawal are so bad that we simply must find a way of making our present policy work. This would be good if it was possible. Bob and I do not think it is.

9. A topic of this magnitude can only be opened for initial discussion this morning, but McNamara and I have reached the point where our obligations to you simply do not permit us to administer our present directives in silence and let you think we see real hope in them.

Inc. 1.

McG. B.

~~TOP SECRET~~

74c ✓

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

April — 1965

Dear Mr. President:

I remain concerned, as I have said before to you, Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara, over the limited scale of air action against North Vietnam which we envision for the next few months.

Specifically I feel that we must conduct our bombing attacks in a manner that will begin to hurt North Vietnam badly enough to cause the Hanoi regime to seek a political way out through negotiation rather than expose their economy to increasingly serious levels of destruction. By limiting our attacks to targets like bridges, military installations and lines of communication, in effect we signal to the Communists that our determination to win is significantly modified by our fear of widening the war.

In these circumstances the Communists are likely to feel they can afford to accept a considerable amount of bomb damage while they improve their air defenses and step up their insurgency in South Vietnam. If they take this line of action, in the next few months they can present us with an ever-increasing guerrilla war against the reinforced Viet Cong in terrain and circumstances favorable to the Communists.

If this situation develops and lasts several months or more, I feel world opinion will turn against us, Communist propaganda will become increasingly effective, and indeed domestic support of our policy may erode.

I therefore urge that as we deploy additional troops, which I believe necessary, we concurrently hit the north harder and inflict greater damage. In my opinion, we

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 11/9/77, CIA 7/21/77  
By MIE, NARS, Date 4/19/78

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~~TOP SECRET~~

should strike their petroleum supplies, electric power installations, and air defense installations (including the SAM sites which are now being built). I do not think we have to fear taking on the MIG's, which after all the ChiNats defeated in 1958 with F-86's and Sidewinders.

I am not talking about bombing centers of population or killing innocent people, though there will of course be some casualties. I am proposing to "tighten the tourniquet" on North Vietnam so as to make the Communists pause to weigh the losses they are taking against their prospects for gains. We should make it hard for the Viet Cong to win in the south and simultaneously hard for Hanoi to endure our attacks in the north.

I believe this course of action holds out the greatest promise we can hope for in our effort to attain our ultimate objective of finding a political solution to the Vietnam problem. This view follows logically, it seems to me, from our National Intelligence Estimate of 18 February 1965, which concludes that the Hanoi regime would be more likely than not to make an effort to "secure a respite" by some political move when and if, but not before, a sustained U.S. program of air attacks is damaging important economic or military assets in North Vietnam.

I attach a copy of my memorandum of April 2nd, which may not have come to your attention, since it argues this case in a little more detail.

Respectfully yours,

  
John A. McCone

Attachment

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

~~TOP SECRET~~



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~~TOP SECRET~~

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

2 April 1965

COPY

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense  
Special Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs  
Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor

I have been giving thought to the paper that we discussed in yesterday's meeting, which unfortunately I had little time to study, and also to the decision made to change the mission of our ground forces in South Vietnam from one of advice and static defense to one of active combat operations against the Viet Cong guerrillas.

I feel that the latter decision is correct only if our air strikes against the North are sufficiently heavy and damaging really to hurt the North Vietnamese. The paper we examined yesterday does not anticipate the type of air operation against the North necessary to force the NVN to reappraise their policy. On the contrary, it states, "We should continue roughly the present slowly ascending tempo of ROLLING THUNDER operations ----," and later, in outlining the types of targets, states, "The target systems should continue to avoid the effective GCI range of MIG's," and these conditions indicate restraints which will not be persuasive to the NVN and would probably be read as evidence of a U.S. desire to temporize.

I have reported that the strikes to date have not caused a change in the North Vietnamese policy of directing Viet Cong insurgency, infiltrating cadres and supplying material. If anything, the strikes to date have hardened their attitude.

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Authority State 11/9/77, CIA 9/21/77  
By MDE, NARS, Date 4/19/78

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COPY

I have now had a chance to examine the 12-week program referred to by General Wheeler and it is my personal opinion that this program is not sufficiently severe or damaging to the North Vietnamese to cause them to compromise their present policy.

On the other hand, we must look with care to our position under a program of slowly ascending tempo of air strikes. With the passage of each day and each week, we can expect increasing pressure to stop the bombing. This will come from various elements of the American public, from the press, the United Nations and world opinion. Therefore time will run against us in this operation and I think the North Vietnamese are counting on this.

Therefore I think what we are doing is starting on a track which involves ground force operations which, in all probability, will have limited effectiveness against guerrillas, although admittedly will restrain some VC advances. However, we can expect requirements for an ever-increasing commitment of U.S. personnel without materially improving the chances of victory. I support and agree with this decision but I must point out that in my judgment, forcing submission of the VC can only be brought about by a decision in Hanoi. Since the contemplated actions against the North are modest in scale, they will not impose unacceptable damage on it, nor will they threaten the DRV's vital interests. Hence, they will not present them with a situation with which they cannot live, though such actions will cause the DRV pain and inconvenience.

I believe our proposed track offers great danger of simply encouraging Chinese Communist and Soviet support of the DRV and VC cause if for no other reason than the risk for both will be minimum. I envision that the reaction of the NVN and Chinese Communists will be to deliberately, carefully, and probably gradually, build up the Viet Cong capabilities by covert infiltration of North Vietnamese and, possibly, Chinese cadres and thus bring an ever-increasing pressure on our forces. In effect,

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

COPY

we will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort that we cannot win, and from which we will have extreme difficulty in extracting ourselves.

Therefore it is my judgment that if we are to change the mission of the ground forces, we must also change the ground rules of the strikes against North Vietnam. We must hit them harder, more frequently, and inflict greater damage. Instead of avoiding the MIG's, we must go in and take them out. A bridge here and there will not do the job. We must strike their air fields, their petroleum resources, power stations and their military compounds. This, in my opinion, must be done promptly and with minimum restraint.

If we are unwilling to take this kind of a decision now, we must not take the actions concerning the mission of our ground forces for the reasons I have mentioned above.

JOHN A. McCONE

~~TOP SECRET~~



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# INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

NSC

5

Action

SS

Info

PP RUEHCR  
DE RUMJIR 87A 02/0745Z  
P 020735Z ZEA  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO RUHKA/CINCPAC  
STATE GRNC

BT

~~TOP SECRET~~

PRIORITY

01370

1965 APR 2 AM 4 46

32

ACTION PRIORITY DEPT 3184 INFO CINCPAC 1904 CITE 020735Z  
FROM SAIGON APRIL 2, 3 PM

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

L I N D I S

COMMANDER SEVENTH FLEET HAS REQUESTED THAT ARRANGEMENTS BE MADE SOONEST TO PROVIDE THAT SEVENTH FLEET SHIPS PARTICIPATING IN ANTI-INFILTRATION SURVEILLANCE EFFORT MAY ENTER RVN TERRITORIAL WATERS AT WILL AS REQUIRED IN CONNECTION WITH SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS OR IN HOT PURSUIT OF HOSTILE VESSEL.  
CFN 3184 1904 2 3PM RVN

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 87A-~~TOP SECRET~~  
CINCPAC MESSAGE DTG 152534Z AUGUST 1964 REFERS TO JCS 3796 DTG 270251Z MARCH 1964 AND STATES THAT JCS HAS AUTHORIZED DESTRUCTION OF HOSTILE AIRCRAFT AND SEABORNE FORCES BY US FORCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA UNDER RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WHICH INCLUDE FOLLOWING: HOT PURSUIT MAY BE CONDUCTED AS NECESSARY AND FEASIBLE INTO NORTH VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, SOUTH VIETNAM AND THAILAND.

REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON 1) WHETHER DEPARTMENT WISHES EMBASSY TO ESTABLISH BY FORMAL EXCHANGE OF NOTES GVN AGREEMENT FOR US NAVAL VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT TO CONDUCT HOT PURSUIT INTO SOUTH VIETNAM; 2) WHAT ACTION IS INTENDED IN THIS REGARD WITH RESPECT TO LAOS, CAMBODIA, AND THAILAND; 3) PROCEDURE WHICH DEPARTMENT WISHES TO FOLLOW TO OBTAIN GVN AGREEMENT FOR US NAVAL VESSELS TO CONDUCT SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS IN SVN TERRITORIAL WATERS. IN CONNECTION WITH 3) WOULD RECOMMEND THAT GVN SEND CIRCULAR NOTE TO EMBASSIES ACCREDITED TO SAIGON (AS WAS DONE IN CASE OF

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~~TOP SECRET~~

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Authority

By

state 172 1/4/78  
NARS, Date 4/19/78

~~TOP SECRET~~

-2- 3184, APRIL 2, 3 P.M., FROM SAIGON.

GVN'S MEKONG RIVER REGULATIONS) WHICH WOULD STATE THAT IN VIEW OF CONTINUED SUPPORT BEING PROVIDED VIET CONG THROUGH SEA INFILTRATION, GVN IS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE OF US NAVY VESSELS AND PERSONNEL IN SURVEILLANCE, BOARDING, INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF MEASURES INTENDED TO PREVENT SUCH ACTIVITY. GVN REQUESTS CFN 152334Z 1964 JCS 3796 270251Z 1964 JCS US 1) GVN US 2) 3) GVN GVN'S GVN US GVN

PAGE THREE RUMJIR 87A ~~TOP SECRET~~  
WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC AND ACCOMPANIED BY FORMAL US-GVN EXCHANGE OF NOTES ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED. IN VIEW OF NEED TO ESTABLISH ANTI-INFILTRATION PROCEDURES AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE WOULD APPRECIATE STATE-DEFENSE INSTRUCTIONS SOONEST

JOHNSON  
BT

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 5:30 A.M., 4/2/65.  
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA AT 5:40 A.M., 4/2/65.

~~TOP SECRET~~

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# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: ☐ COLLECT  
☐ CHARGE TO

~~SECRET~~

01777

88-82

Origin

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON - IMMEDIATE 2171

028

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FE  
Info:

APR 2 8 56 PM '65

SS

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G

Authority State 12-14-77, OSD 7-7-78

SP

By ing, NARS, Date 1-25-80

SAX

Your 3190.

L

NSC

INR

CIA

NSA

DOD

Further study indicates the need to broaden the authorization sought of the GVN to permit US Navy supplementation of coastal surveillance. We would like the GVN to take the following action:

1) Request the US to assist in maintaining the integrity her territorial waters.

2) Grant authority for US naval ships to stop and search any RVN vessel in international waters and to seize or, if necessary, destroy those found to be carrying arms or other supplies for the support of VC insurgency in the RVN.

3) Grant authority for US naval ships to stop and search any RVN, DRV, or private vessels of other nations within the territorial waters of the RVN and to seize or, if necessary, destroy those found to be carrying arms or other supplies for

Drafted by:

FE:MDTaylor:ves 4-2-65

Telegraphic transmission and

classification approved by:

FE-William F. Bundy

Clearances:

L - Carl Salans

~~SECRET~~

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FORM DS-322  
8-61

~~SECRET~~

for the support of VC insurgency in the RVN.

RVN

4) Provide ~~VN~~ personnel to be assigned to each US naval ship engaged in the Counter Infiltration Patrol for liaison and interrogation purposes.

Please include the foregoing points <sup>in</sup> ~~into~~ the draft reported in reftel as in preparation.

GP-3.

End

RUSS

~~SECRET~~

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DECLASSIFIED

Authority STATE letter JUN 26 1979

By ip, NARS, Date 2-1-80

~~TOP SECRET~~

3 April 1965

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION WITH GVN

Upon his return to Saigon, Ambassador Taylor should initiate discussions with the GVN for the following purposes:

A. To explain recent USC decisions and obtain GVN concurrence and cooperation as required.

A. Military Decisions

1. 21 point Johnson program
2. 18-20,000 U.S. personnel increase
3. Additional Marine deployments  
(2 battalions, one squadron)
4. Revised Marine Mission
5. Logistic development of certain coastal enclaves
6. Possible third-country contributors, Australia; NZ, Korea.
7. Route-blocking activities in Laos.
8. Increased naval surveillance

B. Non-military decisions (41 points) New Chancery

C. Rowan Program

D. Leaflet drops

B. To develop thinking of GVN with regard to possible political courses of action.

- A. 17 Nation proposal. Agreement of GVN should be obtained to a coordinated response.
- B. General attitude toward negotiations or communications with DRV.
- C. Possible procedures and timing of such communications.
- D. Possible elements of a negotiation package

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# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: ☐ COLLECT  
☐ CHARGE TO

~~TOP SECRET~~

01971

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✓ Bundy  
S

81

Origin  
SS  
Info

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON

IMMEDIATE 2184

INFO Amembassy VIENTIANE  
CINCPAC  
COMUSMACV  
Amembassy BANGKOK  
DOD

PRIORITY 868  
"  
" 1625  
"

APR 3 9 37 PM '65

DELIVER 9:00 A.M. SUNDAY.  
EXDIS  
Joint State-Defense Message.

High level decision made here to deploy following units to RVN.

One Marine BLT to Hue-Phu Bai area, 1 Marine BLT to Danang, 1 RLT Headquarters and required elements of MEB Headquarters to Danang, 1 USMC Fl Squadron with required elements MAG Headquarters to Danang, 1 RB-66 Recce Task Force to Tan Son Nhut and 1 Army LOG Command and 1 Army Eng Const. Group. Ambassador Taylor participated in discussions leading up to decision and will take up matter deployment of these forces with GVN upon his return Saigon.

Mission of Marine elements expanded to include engagement in counterinsurgency combat operations. Concept for employment of MEB forces in Danang-Hue-Phu Bai area to be developed in field ~~baseline~~ ~~experiment~~ in accord with high level Washington discussions to be communicated by Ambassador Taylor. In view military and political implications request report on mission of Marine elements be furnished Washington as soon as talks with GVN completed.

Drafted by  
FE:JFD Cleland:jd 4/3/65

Telegraphic transmission and  
classification approved by: FE - Leoard Unger

Clearances:

DOD - Mr. Friedman (draft)  
S/S - O: BGMays

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Authority OSD Hr 3/3/78  
By DCH/mie, NARS, Date 5-7-84  
NOT INITIALED OR DATED IN 1978

FORM DS-322

~~TOP SECRET~~

Pacing of deployments is of critical import as we do not repeat not desire give impression rapid massive build up but intent is to accomplish deployment of above Marine forces earliest feasible after Ambassador Taylor secures permission GVN. Desire indicate we continuing on course previously set and gradual build up proceeding according to plan. In keeping this policy deployments, other than Marines, will be spaced over period time with publicity re all deployments kept at lowest key possible.

GP- 1.

End

RUSK

RUSK

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# INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

47  
Action

~~SECRET~~

03017

28  
Info

VV MJA254JIA856

1965 APR 4 AM 9 15

PP RUEHCR  
DE RUMJIR 187A 04/1413Z  
P 041403Z ZEA  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC  
STATE GRNC  
BT

046

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority RAC 23377  
By 100/3, NARA, Date 4-4-14

~~SECRET~~ ACTION PRIORITY DEPT 3219 INFO PRIORITY CINCPAC  
1919 (041403Z) FROM SAIGON APRIL 4 - 10PM

WHEN SEEING QUAT, TOAN VAN DO AND BUI DIEM ON ANOTHER MATTER TODAY, I BRIEFED THEM ON THE STRIKES ON DRV LAST TWO DAYS EMPHASIZING HEAVY EFFORT AND US LOSSES INVOLVED IN DESTROYING BRIDGES. I ALSO EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF NOT SPECULATING ON POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO MIG ATTACKS.

THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY IMPRESSED AND ENTHUSIASTIC AT RESULTS, PARTICULARLY AT PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS THEY FELT WERE CERTAIN IN BOTH DRV AND SVN. QUAT APPEALED FOR US PROMPTLY TO RELEASE SOME PICTURES PARTICULARLY ON THESE THREE BRIDGES WHICH ARE CFN 3219 1919 041403 4 10 QUAT TOAN VAN DO BUI DIEM DRV US MIG DRV SVN QUAT

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 187A. ~~SECRET~~

SO WELL KNOWN THROUGHOUT VIETNAM. I SAID THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON.

DO, WITH AGREEMENT OF OTHERS, URGED THAT WE CONSIDER ATTACK ON GIA LONG BRIDGE AT HANOI WHICH HE SAID WAS MORE THAN ONE MILE LONG AND WHOSE DESTRUCTION WOULD HAVE DRAMATIC IMPACT ON ALL DRV. I SAID THIS WAS VERY CLOSE TO MIG BASE AND HEAVY ANTIAIRCRAFT AND THUS, APART FROM OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, COULD NOT BE LIGHTLY UNDERTAKEN.

I STRONGLY ENDORSE QUAT'S VIEW ON IMPORTANCE RELEASING HERE SOME PHOTOGRAPHY ON BRIDGES AS SOON AS WE HAVE ANY OF PROPER QUALITY. REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS. JOHNSON  
BT

CFN DO GIA LONG HANOI DRV MIG NOT QUAT

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 9:37 A.M. 4/4/65  
PASSED WH, DOD, CIA AT 9:55 A.M. 4/4/65

Handled LINDS per [signature]  
~~SECRET~~

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