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*131 Cong Rec S 2632***REFERENCE:** Vol. 131 No. 26**TITLE:** ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS;
VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT DECLASSIFIED**SPEAKER:** MR. GOLDWATER**TEXT:** Text that appears in UPPER CASE identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

MR. GOLDWATER. MR. PRESIDENT, U.S. MILITARY FORCES HAVE BEEN MUCH MALIGNED BY SOME PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY WHO BLAME THE MILITARY FOR WHAT THEY CALL THE LOSS OF THE WAR IN VIETNAM. HOWEVER, THE ARMED FORCES DID NOT SUFFER A MILITARY DEFEAT IN ANY SENSE OF THAT TERM. RATHER, IT WAS CIVILIAN MANAGERS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WHO DENIED OUR MILITARY FORCES A VICTORY BY IMPOSING A COMPLEX AND LENGTHY SET OF RESTRICTIONS ON WHAT THE MILITARY COULD AND COULD NOT DO IN SOUTH VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, LAOS, AND NORTH VIETNAM.

THESE LAYERS OF RESTRICTIONS, WHICH WERE CONSTANTLY CHANGING AND WERE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO MEMORIZE OR UNDERSTAND, ALTHOUGH IT WAS REQUIRED OF OUR PILOTS, GRANTED HUGE SANCTUARY AREAS TO THE ENEMY. WHEN CERTAIN LIMITS WOULD AT LAST BE REMOVED AFTER REPEATED APPEALS BY THE JOINT CHIEFS, THE REDUCTIONS WERE MADE ONLY IN GRADUAL STEPS AND SELDOM WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO SERVE OUR STRATEGIC ENDS. NUMEROUS PARTIAL AND TOTAL BOMBING HALTS INTERRUPTED THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLIER BOMBING CAMPAIGNS. OFTEN, WHEN LIMITED EXTENSIONS OF TARGET AREAS WERE GRANTED, THEY WERE UNEXPECTEDLY CANCELED AND WITHDRAWN SHORTLY AFTERWARD.

MR. PRESIDENT, IN THE INTEREST OF INFORMING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND ANY JOURNALISTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE TRUTH OF WHAT REALLY PREVENTED A MILITARY VICTORY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, I HAVE ASKED SEVERAL SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE TO DECLASSIFY THE PERTINENT RECORDS, THE ACTUAL TEXT OF THE RULES WHICH RESTRAINED MILITARY CONDUCT IN THE VIETNAM WAR. I AM DELIGHTED TO INFORM MY COLLEAGUES THAT SECRETARY WEINBERGER HAS NOW AGREED WITH ME THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO DECLASSIFY THE REMAINING VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT. HE AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY DEFENSE ARMITAGE RECENTLY PROVIDED ME WITH SEVERAL VOLUMES OF PAPERS WHICH WERE FORMERLY CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET BUT HAVE NOW BEEN DECLASSIFIED.

THESE NEWLY PUBLIC DOCUMENTS CLEARLY REVEAL THE EXCESSIVE RETRAINTS OUR MILITARY UNITS HAD TO OPERATE UNDER IN VIETNAM. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE RULE TOLD AMERICAN PILOTS THEY WERE NOT PERMITTED TO ATTACK A NORTH VIETNAM MIG SITTING ON THE RUNWAY. THE ONLY TIME IT COULD BE ATTACKED WAS AFTER IT WAS IN FLIGHT, WAS IDENTIFIED AND SHOWED HOSTILE INTENTIONS. EVEN THEN, ITS BASE COULD NOT BE BOMBED. THE SAME HOSTILE INTENTION RULE APPLIED TO TRUCK CONVOYS DRIVING ON HIGHWAYS IN LAOS AND NORTH VIETNAM. IN SOME REGIONS, ENEMY TRUCKS COULD EVADE ATTACK BY SIMPLY DRIVING OFF THE ROAD. MILITARY TRUCK PARKS LOCATED JUST OVER 200 YARDS AWAY FROM A ROAD COULD NOT BE DESTROYED.

ANOTHER RULE PROVIDED THAT SAM MISSILE SITES COULD NOT BE STRUCK WHILE THEY WERE UNDER CONSTRUCTION, BUT ONLY AFTER THEY BECAME OPERATIONAL.

MR. PRESIDENT, THE DECLASSIFIED MATERIAL I HAVE RECEIVED IS TOO LENGTHY TO MAKE AVAILABLE ALL AT ONE TIME IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. THEREFORE, I PLAN TO INSERT THESE DOCUMENTS AS A SERIES OF PUBLICATIONS OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. I WILL BEGIN TODAY WITH THE FIRST OF THREE STUDIES PREPARED BY THE AIR FORCE EXAMINING THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT GOVERNING USAF COMBAT OPERATIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA FROM THEIR BEGINNINGS IN 1960-65. I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE MEMBERS OF THIS BODY, THE PUBLIC, THE PRESS, AND MEDIA TO UNDERSTAND FULLY THE RESTRICTIONS THAT WERE PLACED UPON ALL OF OUR FORCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. IT IS UNBELIEVABLE THAT ANY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WOULD EVER PLACE SUCH RESTRAINTS ON OUR FORCES, AS SECRETARY MCNAMARA DID, OR THAT ANY PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE ALLOWED THIS TO HAPPEN, AND I HOPE THAT IF CIVILIAN OFFICIALS EVER DECIDE AGAIN THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE TO ENGAGE IN WAR, AND I PRAY THAT WE WILL NEVER HAVE TO DO SO, THAT SUCH DAMAGING RESTRICTIONS WILL NEVER BE APPLIED TO OUR FORCES.

MR. PRESIDENT, I ASK THAT THE DOCUMENT ENTITLED "PROJECT CHECKO REPORT," COVERING THE YEARS 1960-65, SHALL APPEAR AT THIS POINT IN THE RECORD.

THE DOCUMENT FOLLOWS:

PROJECT CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL EVALUATION FOR COMBAT OPERATIONS REPORT
EVOLUTION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA

IN A FUTILE ATTEMPT TO REVERSE THE COURSE OF EVENTS ENGULFING THE FRENCH IN INDOCHINA, THE U.S. AIR FORCE CONTRIBUTED 1,800 AIRLIFT SORTIES, COMPRISING 13,000 FLYING HOURS, DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1954. ON 7 MAY 1954, DIEN BIEN PHU FELL TO THE COMMUNIST VIET MINH, FOLLOWED ON 20 JULY BY THE GENEVA CONVENTION ON THE PARTITION OF VIETNAM. THE U.S. DECISION TO PLEDGE INCREASED AID TO THE GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM WAS MADE BY PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF 24 OCTOBER 1954. THIS BEGAN THE ROLE WHICH THE U.S. AIR FORCE WAS TO PLAY IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY WITHIN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AS SUPPLEMENTED BY THE POLICIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

BY SPRING OF 1960, THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY SITUATION IN RVN HAD OBVIOUSLY DETERIORATED. WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST OF THE U.S. SPECIAL FORCES TEAMS ON MAY 30, RVN RESISTANCE STIFFENED. THIS MONTH ALSO MARKED THE DELIVERY OF THE FIRST FULL SQUADRON OF 25 A-1H AIRCRAFT TO THE RVN. LATER, ON 1 OCTOBER 1961, PACAF DEPLOYED A CONTROL AND REPORTING POST (CRP) TO TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE:

"ITS PURPOSE WAS TO PROVIDE RADAR COVERAGE FOR THE SOUTHERN AREA OF SVN AND TO TRAIN THE VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE IN CONTROLLING AIR TRAFFIC, BOTH CIVIL AND MILITARY. WITHIN FOUR MONTHS, 63 VIETNAMESE PERSONNEL HAD BEEN TRAINED, THE CRP WAS EXPANDED INTO A CRC, AND IT BECAME PART OF THE TACTICAL AIR CONTROL SYSTEM WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN MID-JANUARY."

THE JCS, ON 14 NOVEMBER 1961, DIRECTED JUNGLE JIM FORCES TO BE DEPLOYED TO THE RVN. THIS DEPLOYMENT CONSISTED OF THE 1ST AIR COMMANDO GROUP (FORMERLY THE 4400TH CCTS), FOUR SC-47'S FOUR RB-26'S, AND EIGHT T-28'S — ALL CARRYING RVN AIR FORCE (VNAF) MARKINGS. WITHIN 48 HOURS, PRESIDENT KENNEDY ANNOUNCED THE DECISION TO BOLSTER RVN STRENGTH BUT NOT TO COMMIT U.S. COMBAT FORCES. ON 11 DECEMBER, TWO U.S. ARMY HELICOPTER COMPANIES ARRIVED IN RVN.

THE COMMITMENT, BY THE UNITED STATES, TO A POLICY OF UNLIMITED SUPPORT OF THE RVN, SHORT OF ACTUAL COMBAT FORCES, WAS SUBJECT TO MANY RESTRAINING INFLUENCES. IN ADDITION TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS OF 1954, WHICH THE U.S., ALTHOUGH NOT A SIGNATORY, HAD UNDERTAKEN TO SUPPORT, THERE WERE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS — THE POSSIBLE ALIENATION OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE; RELATIONS WITH CAMBODIA, LAOS, AND THAILAND; AND VULNERABILITY TO CHARGES, BY THE NVN AND COMMUNIST CHINA, OF AGGRESSION IN SOUTHEAST

ASIA. FURTHER, AND OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO THE U.S. ARMY AND AIR FORCE, WAS THE OPINION OF MR. MCNAMARA (DECEMBER 1961) THAT THE WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A GROUND WAR AND THAT ALTHOUGH "NAVAL AND AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS ARE DESIRABLE, THEY WON'T BE TOO EFFECTIVE." THE U.S. MILITARY STRUCTURE IN THE RVN AND THE ENSUING INTRA-COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS REFLECTED AN AWARENESS OF MCNAMARA'S VIEWS.

TWO SHORT QUOTATIONS FROM THE GENEVA ACCORDS OF 1954 SERVE TO ILLUSTRATE THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED. CHAPTER III, ARTICLE 16 (QUOTED IN PART): "WITH EFFECT FROM THE DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT, THE INTRODUCTION INTO VIETNAM OF ANY CHAPTER III, ARTICLE 17(A): 'WITH EFFECT FROM THE DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT, THE INTRODUCTION INTO VIETNAM OF ANY REINFORCEMENTS IN THE FORM OF ALL TYPES OF ARMS, MUNITIONS AND OTHER WAR MATERIAL, SUCH AS COMBAT AIRCRAFT, NAVAL CRAFT, PIECES OR ORDNANCE, JET ENGINES AND JET WEAPONS AND ARMORED VEHICLES, IS PROHIBITED.'"

THUS, THE U.S. DECISION TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY ITS AID TO THE RVN RAN HEAD ON INTO THE GENEVA ACCORDS AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMITTEE (ICC) ESTABLISHED TO OVERSEE ITS PROVISIONS.

ON OCTOBER 28, 1961, SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK SENT A MESSAGE TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN SAIGON REQUESTING CONCURRENCE ON GROUND RULES FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE USAF JUNGLE JIM UNIT INTO THE RVN. MR. RUSK PROPOSED THAT THE AIRCRAFT HAVE VIETNAMESE MARKINGS PAINTED ON THEM BEFORE BEING FLOWN IN OR BEING BROUGHT IN BY SURFACE TRANSPORTATION. MILITARY PERSONNEL, OTHER THAN AIRCREWS, WERE TO ARRIVE IN THE RVN IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES BUT COULD THEN WEAR THEIR UNIFORMS. SUCH WERE SOME OF THE EFFORTS TO CIRCUMVENT THE PROVISIONS OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS AND THE ICC.

THIS ISSUE WAS FINALLY SETTLED ON NOVEMBER 16, 1961 WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY FORMALLY ANNOUNCED THE U.S. DECISION TO AID THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM — SHORT OF INTRODUCING U.S. COMBAT FORCES. THE POSITION THAT U.S. COMBAT FORCES WERE NOT INVOLVED IN THE WAR WAS TO BE MAINTAINED FOR THE ENSUING TWO YEARS (UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 1963).

BY THE CLOSE OF 1961, THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY IN SOUTH VIETNAM HAD GROWN TO PROPORTIONS WHERE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WAS REQUIRED TO CONTAIN AND THEN DEFEAT THE THREAT. THIS SITUATION RESULTED IN A MODIFICATION OF OUR POLICY POSITION TO PROVIDE FOR U.S. ARMED AND MANNED HELICOPTERS TO "DEFEND THEMSELVES" AND TO RETURN FIRE FROM THE GROUND. (SUBSEQUENTLY, AUTHORITY WAS GRANTED TO INITIATE FIRE ON KNOWN VIET CONG TARGETS POSING A THREAT.)

THE IMMEDIATE U.S. OBJECTIVES, AT THIS TIME, WAS TO PROVIDE THE VNAF WITH SUCH TRAINING AS WOULD EVENTUALLY ENABLE THE VIETNAMESE TO PERFORM ALL REQUIRED MISSIONS. DETERMINED TO MEET THIS GOAL AND TO REALIZE THE "IMMEDIATE RESPONSE" REQUIREMENT, PACAF CONCEIVED THE COVERT FARM GATE OPERATION. FOLLOWING CINCPAC APPROVAL, THE FIRST OF THESE MISSIONS WAS FLOWN IN DECEMBER 1961.

THE CONCEPT OF EMPLOYMENT OF FARM GATE (PREVIOUSLY JUNGLE JIM) WAS TO UTILIZE THE FUNCTION OF TRAINING THE VNAF AS A COVER. THE AIRCRAFT AND PERSONNEL OF DETACHMENT 2, 4400TH CCTS TO ACTUALLY BE USED IN SUPPORT OF RVNAF ACTIONS AGAINST THE VIET CONG WITHIN THE BORDERS OF THE RVN. THE CONCEPT ENVISIONED, "ALL FEASIBLE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY," OVERT AND COVERT, AND WOULD BE IN ADDITION TO THE ADVISORY AND TRAINING FUNCTIONS.

IN AGREEING WITH THE FARM GATE CONCEPT, CINCPAC SAID:

" *** IN ADDITION (TO OPERATIONAL TESTS AND COMBAT SUPPORT FIGHTERS PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY JCS AND CINCPAC TO TRAIN THE VNAF), AS DECIDED AT THE SECDEF MEETING 16 DECEMBER, ALL KINDS OF CONVENTIONAL COMBAT AND COMBAT SUPPORT FLIGHTS CAN BE FLOWN IN SVN BY DETACHMENT 2, 4400TH CCTS PROVIDED A VIETNAMESE IS ON BOARD FOR PURPOSE OF RECEIVING COMBAT SUPPORT TRAINING."

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THIS WAS AMPLIFIED ON 26 DECEMBER WHEN THE JCS SAID THAT FARM GATE AIRCRAFT COULD BE EMPLOYED ON COMBAT MISSIONS ONLY WHEN THE VNAF DID NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY. THIS LATEST INSTRUCTION ALSO SAID THAT COMBAT TRAINING MISSIONS WITH JOINT CREWS WOULD BE CONDUCTED SO THE VIETNAMESE CREWS COULD TAKE OVER THE MISSIONS AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME. THE RULED DICTATED THAT THE AIRCRAFT BE BASED IN-COUNTRY AND BE OF THE SAME TYPE AS THE HOST COUNTRY, IF THE EFFORT WAS TO BE PLAUSIBLY DENIABLE. THESE LATTER DICTATES HAD BEEN A CONTINUING LIMITING FACTOR ON FARM GATE OPERATIONS IN THE RVN.

THE ISSUE OF U.S. PILOTS FLYING FARM GATE MISSIONS IN THE RVN CAME TO THE FORE EARLY IN 1962. ADMIRAL FELT'S OPINION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT RELEASE OF 9 MARCH 1962 WAS THAT IT EVADED THE ISSUE. HE RECOMMENDED INSTEAD, A "FACTUAL" STATEMENT:

"USAF PILOTS ARE FLYING IN TWO-SEATOR T-28'S AND RB-26'S WITH VNAF PILOTS. THE PURPOSE OF THESE MISSIONS IS TO TRAIN VANF PILOTS IN TACTICAL AIR STRIKES. ON SOME OF THESE TRAINING SORTIES, THE AIRCRAFT DELIVER ORDINANCE ON ACTUAL VIET CONG TARGETS. NO USAF PILOT HAS EVER FLOWN ON A TACTICAL MISSION EXCEPT IN THE ROLE OF TACTICAL INSTRUCTOR, AND VNAF PILOTS FLYING SINGLE-SEATER AD-6'S (A-1H'S) CONTINUE TO PERFORM MOST OF THE COMBAT AIR SORTIES."

IN A MESSAGE TO THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON IN FEBRUARY 1963, STATE EXPRESSED THE OBVIOUS AND UNEQUIVOCAL POSITION THAT THE FARM GATE ACTIVITY IN THE RVN WAS A "CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS."

THE VNAF HAD NO RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IN LATE 1961 EXCEPT TO AVOID OVERFLYING THE BOUNDARIES OF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. ONCE AN AIR STRIKE WAS APPROVED BY THE AOC OR HIGHER AUTHORITY, THE PILOT WAS FREE TO STRIKE THE TARGET. NEITHER WERE THERE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR AIR DEFENSE. UPON BEING ADVISED OF THIS, CINCPAC SUGGESTED TO CHMAAG-V THAT THE VNAF BE ASSISTED, IF THEY SO DESIRED, IN DEVELOPING RULES OF ENGAGEMENT — INITIALLY FOR AIR DEFENSE. ADMIRAL FELT THEN PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERCEPTION, IDENTIFICATION, AND DESTRUCTION OF HOSTILE AIRCRAFT INTRUDING INTO THE AIRSPACE OF THE RVN. VNAF ACCEPTED THE SUGGESTION AND DRAFTED RULES OF ENGAGEMENT. BY LATE APRIL 1962, THE JOINT GENERAL STAFF (JGS) HAD APPROVED THEM AND WAS IN THE PROCESS OF COORDINATING THEM WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES.

MACV DIRECTIVE NUMBER 62, 24 NOVEMBER 1962, ESTABLISHED OPERATIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON U.S. AIRCRAFT TO BE EMPLOYED ON COMBAT SUPPORT MISSIONS WHICH READ, IN EXTRACT, AS FOLLOWS:

"4. GENERAL POLICY:

"A. IN SOUTH VIETNAM ALL OPERATIONAL MISSIONS FLOWN BY U.S. PERSONNEL AND/OR AIRCRAFT ARE CLASSIFIED AS COMBAT SUPPORT. AS A GENERAL POLICY, NO MISSIONS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN UTILIZING U.S. PERSONNEL AND/OR AIRCRAFT UNLESS IT IS BEYOND THE CAPABILITY OF THE VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE (BECAUSE OF LACK OF TRAINING, EQUIPMENT, ETC.) TO PERFORM THE MISSION. EFFORTS WILL BE INTENSIFIED TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY TRAINING FOR GVN PERSONNEL SO THAT THE VNAF CAN PERFORM ALL REQUIRED MISSIONS AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME.

"B. U.S. AIRCREW PERSONNEL OPERATING UNDER THE TERMS OF THIS AND OTHER APPLICABLE DIRECTIVES ARE REMINDED THAT NOTHING SHALL INFRINGE UPON THE INHERENT RIGHT OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO PROTECT HIMSELF AGAINST HOSTILE ATTACK. IN EVENT OF SUCH AN ATTACK, THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED WILL TAKE IMMEDIATE AGGRESSIVE ACTION AGAINST THE ATTACKING FORCE WITH ANY MEANS AVAILABLE.

"5. SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS: THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS ARE APPLICABLE AND STRICT COMPLIANCE THEREWITH IS DIRECTED:

"A. FARMGATE: UTILIZATION OF FARMGATE AIRCRAFT FOR OPERATIONAL (COMBAT SUPPORT) MISSIONS WILL BE ONLY WITH A COMBINED U.S. AND VIETNAMESE CREW. FARMGATE U-10 AIRCRAFT

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WILL NOT BE EMPLOYED ON ARMED RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS. FARMGATE AIRCRAFT WILL CARRY VNAF MARKINGS.

"B. WATERGLASS: 2D AIR DIVISION WILL PREPARE REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO U.S. AIRCRAFT CONDUCTING AIR DEFENSE ORIENTATION TRAINING UNDER THE WATERGLASS CONCEPT. WATERGLASS RESTRICTIONS ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS DIRECTIVE DUE TO CLASSIFICATION.

"C. MULE TRAIN/RANCH HAND: C-123'S WILL BE U.S. MARKED. THEY WILL BE MANNED WITH A COMBINED U.S. AND VIETNAMESE CREW ON APPLICABLE COMBAT MISSIONS AS DEFINED *** ABOVE.

"D. U.S. ARMY CH-21C'S (SHAWNEE) AND USMC UH-34D'S (HUS): ARMAMENT MAY BE INSTALLED IN AND UTILIZED FROM TRANSPORT HELICOPTERS FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES ONLY. ARMAMENT IN SUCH AIRCRAFT WILL NOT BE UTILIZED TO INITIATE FIRES UPON ANY TARGET; HOWEVER, IF THE AIRCRAFT IS FIRED UPON, IT MAY RETURN THE FIRE. AIRCRAFT WILL BE U.S. MARKED AND MANNED.

"E. U.S. ARMY UH-1'S (IROQUOIS): THE U.S. ARMY ARMED UH-1 MAY BE USED DEFENSIVELY ONLY. IT MAY NOT BE UTILIZED TO INITIATE FIRES UPON ANY TARGET; HOWEVER, IF THE AIRCRAFT OR ANY AIRCRAFT WHICH IT IS ESCORTING IS FIRE[D] UPON, IT MAY RETURN THE FIRE. SUCH AIRCRAFT, WHEN EMPLOYED ON COMBAT SUPPORT MISSIONS, WILL BE U.S. MARKED AND MANNED WITH A COMBINED U.S. AND VIETNAMESE CREW.

"F. U.S. ARMY OV-1'S (MOHAWK): THE OV-1'S MAY BE UTILIZED IN AN ARMED CONFIGURATION (ONLY AS SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED BY COMUSMACV) FOR COMBAT SUPPORT MISSIONS; HOWEVER, SUCH ARMAMENT WILL BE UTILIZED ONLY DEFENSIVELY. THESE AIRCRAFT WILL NOT BE UTILIZED AS STRIKE AIRCRAFT. WHEN UTILIZED IN A COMBAT SUPPORT ROLE, THEY WILL BE U.S. MARKED AND MANNED WITH A COMBINED U.S. AND VIETNAMESE CREW.

"G. CAMBODIAN/SVN/DMZ BORDER: MACV LETTER, SUBJECT: AIR OPERATIONS, DATED 23 OCTOBER 1962, APPLIES TO OPERATIONS OF ALL U.S. AIRCRAFT. HOWEVER, THE GENERAL CONTENT OF THIS LETTER IS REPEATED IN THIS DIRECTIVE AND IS APPLICABLE TO ALL U.S. AIRCRAFT OPERATING IN SVN. DAY: NORMALLY NO U.S. AIRCRAFT WILL OPERATE CLOSER THAN THREE MILES TO THE CAMBODIAN BORDER AND THEN ONLY WHEN THE CEILING IS AT LEAST 1500 FEET AND VISIBILITY IS THREE MILES OR BETTER. WHEN THE BORDER IS CLEARLY DEFINED BY PHYSICAL LANDMARKS, OPERATIONAL MISSIONS MAY BE CONDUCTED TO A POINT NO CLOSER THAN ONE MILE TO THE BORDER; NON-OPERATIONAL FLIGHTS ARE RESTRICTED TO FIVE MILES FROM THE BORDER AND AT LEAST 2000 FEET ALTITUDE. NIGHT: U.S. AIRCRAFT WILL OPERATE CLOSER THAN THREE MILES TO THE CAMBODIAN BORDER DURING PERIODS OF REDUCED VISIBILITY AND ONLY THEN WHEN UNDER POSITIVE RADAR CONTROL. UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY THIS HEADQUARTERS, NO U.S. AIRCRAFT WILL CONDUCT COMBAT MISSIONS MORE THAN TWO MILES OFF THE COAST OF VIETNAM. WAIVERS TO THESE BORDER RESTRICTIONS (PARAGRAPH 3C, ABOVE CITED LETTER) WILL BE GRANTED WITH THE UTMOST DISCRETION AND THEN ONLY WHEN THE BORDER CAN BE UNMISTAKABLY DEFINED BY VISUAL REFERENCE."

THUS, THERE WERE AIRCRAFT OPERATING WITHIN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM WHICH HAD VNAF MARKINGS AND VIETNAMESE CREWS: VNAF MARKINGS AND U.S.-VIETNAMESE CREWS; U.S. MARKINGS AND U.S.-VIETNAMESE CREWS; AND U.S. MARKINGS WITH U.S. CREWS.

ADMIRAL FELT POINTED OUT TO GENERAL HARKINS THAT JCS MESSAGE NUMBER 5972 OF 6 SEPTEMBER 1962 HAD AUTHORIZED THE INITIATION OF FIRES BY ARMED AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN ESCORT:

"BY DEFINITION (JCS 5972) SUPPRESSIVE FIRES RESULTING FROM ESCORT MISSIONS ARE CONSIDERED DEFENSIVE FIRE. YOU SHOULD AMEND PARAGRAPHS 5D AND E OF (MACV DIRECTIVE 62) IN SUCH MANNER AS TO INDICATE ARMAMENT ON UH-1'S AND CH-21'S/UH-34'S MAY BE USED TO INITIATE FIRE PROVIDED ENEMY TARGET IS CLEARLY IDENTIFIED AND IS THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF THE HELICOPTER AND PASSENGERS."

MOREOVER, JCS MESSAGE 8678 OF FEBRUARY 1963 [HAD] AUTHORIZED AN AMENDMENT TO THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT, PERTAINING SPECIFICALLY TO U.S. HELICOPTERS IN THE RVN, TO ALLOW

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THEM TO ENGAGE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED VIET CONG FORCES CONSIDERED A THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF THE AIRCRAFT AND THEIR PASSENGERS. JCS STATED THAT, DURING A VISIT OF THEIR TEAM TO THE RVN, IT WAS FOUND THAT THE JCS MESSAGE OF SEPTEMBER 1962 CONCERNING RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR ARMED ARMY HELICOPTERS HAD BEEN ERRONEOUSLY INTERPRETED TO MEAN THAT THE HELICOPTER MUST WAIT TO BE FIRED UPON BEFORE INITIATING RETURN FIRE. "SUCH INTERPRETATION IS MORE RESTRICTIVE THAN WAS THE INTENT..." COMUSMACV AMENDED HIS RULES OF ENGAGEMENT ACCORDINGLY.

THE JET QUESTION, ALONG WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF FARM GATE APPEARED TO REMAIN ESSENTIALLY MOOT. THE PROBLEM OF JET ENGINES AND AIRCRAFT DID NOT SEEM RELEVANT IN REGARD TO THE INTRODUCTION OF U.S. ARMY HELICOPTERS. UH-1A'S AND UH-1B'S WERE BOTH INTRODUCED INTO THE RVN. THE FIRST FIVE OF THE TURBO-JET UH-1A IROQUOIS ARRIVING IN THE RVN ABOARD THE USNC CROATAN ON 20 APRIL 1962.

CERTAIN VIOLATIONS (OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS) HAD EVIDENTLY BEEN DEEMED ACCEPTABLE IN VIEW OF U.S. OBJECTIVES — OTHERS WERE NOT. THE BASES OF THE VALUE JUDGMENTS INVOLVED WERE NOT ALWAYS DEDUCTIBLE.

FROM THE INCEPTION OF JUNGLE JIM (FARM GATE) ACTIVITIES IN THE RVN IN LATE 1961, THE STATE DEPARTMENT EVIDENCED GROWING CONCERN THAT AIR OPERATIONS MIGHT BECOME COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE BY ALIENATING THE NON-COMBATANT POPULATION. EARLY IN 1962, THE VIETNAM TASK FORCE HAD PROPOSED SUSPENDING AIR OPERATIONS UNTIL THE SUBJECT COULD BE THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT SECDEF MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 19 FEBRUARY AT HEADQUARTERS CINCPAC.

ALTHOUGH THE DOD HAD NOT BEEN IN FAVOR OF SUSPENDING AIR OPERATIONS, THE ISSUE WAS PLACED ON THE FEBRUARY SECDEF CONFERENCE AGENDA. HEADQUARTERS USAF REQUESTED HEADQUARTERS PACAF TO PREPARE A THOROUGH BRIEFING ON THE "CONCEPT OF EMPLOYMENT OF AIR UNITS AND METHODS USED FOR TARGET SELECTION AND IDENTIFICATION TO INCLUDE MEASURES TAKEN TO INSURE MINIMUM IMPACT ON CIVILIAN POPULATION." * * * * *

DURING HIS VISIT, THESE PROCEDURES AND THE CONTROL STRUCTURE WHICH HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED WERE CLOSELY EXAMINED. THE CONCLUSION REACHED WAS THAT, CONSIDERING THE POLITICAL AND OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED, A "SOLID CONTROL STRUCTURE" EXISTED. TARGETS WERE SELECTED BY THE VN AND CLOSELY CHECKED BY THE JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER (JOC) AND THE AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS CENTER (ASOC). TARGETS WERE MARKED BY THE VN FORWARD AIR CONTROLLERS (FAC) FLYING IN LIAISON AIRCRAFT. THE REPORT ILLUSTRATED THE DEGREE OF CARE EXERCISED BY CITING A MISSION IN WHICH THE VN AIRBORNE CONTROLLER DID NOT ARRIVE TO MARK THE TARGET. THE USAF INSTRUCTOR PILOTS IN THE AIRCRAFT OBSERVED THAT A FIRE FIGHT WAS TAKING PLACE, AND SAW AN OFFICER IN A JEEP POINTING TO THE LOCATION OF THE ENEMY; "NEVERTHELESS, THE BOMBS WERE SALVOED IN THE OCEAN."

IN DECEMBER 1962, SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK INDICATED, IN A MESSAGE TO THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON, HIS VIEWS REGARDING BORDER RESTRICTIONS ON U.S. AIRCRAFT. LEADING TO A DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE PROPER MILITARY TACTICS TO DEFEAT THE VIET CONG, THE SECRETARY STATED:

"IT REMAINS THAT POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE AT PRESENT OF ANOTHER RKG (CAMBODIAN) BORDER INCIDENT CERTAINLY OUTWEIGHS PROBABLE MILITARY ADVANTAGES OF AIR OPERATIONS IN BORDER AREA... POLITICALLY, COUNT AGAINST US NOW TWO AND THREE-QUARTER STRIKES. MILITARILY, THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT SUCCESS LIES NOT IN DRAWING TIGHT CORDON SANITAIRE IN MAGINOT MANNER. ..."

THE IMPLICIT CONCERN REFLECTED IN THESE MESSAGES WAS PROMPTED BY MANY CHARGES OF BORDER VIOLATIONS LODGED BY CAMBODIA. THE CAMBODIAN (AND LAOTIAN) BORDER WAS UNMARKED, ILL-DEFINED, AND HOTLY IN DISPUTE. IN RESPONSE TO THIS CONCERN, ON 25 JANUARY 1963, THE COMMANDER OF THE 2ND ADVON RESTRICTED FARM GATE AIRCRAFT FROM CONDUCTING OPERATIONS WITHIN FIVE MILES OF INTERNATIONAL BORDERS DURING DAYLIGHT AND TEN MILES DURING DARKNESS. THE VNAF DID NOT HAVE THIS RESTRICTION.

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ON 15 NOVEMBER 1962, THE VN JGS PUBLISHED A MEMORANDUM ENTITLED 'LIMITATION OF AIR AND ARTILLERY SUPPORTS ALONG VIETNAM REPUBLIC BORDER CORRIDOR.' WHEREAS THE 2ND ADVON RESTRICTION OF 25 JANUARY PROVIDED FOR A FIVE MILE BUFFER DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS, WHICH WAS INCREASED TO TEN MILES AT NIGHT, THE JGS MEMORANDUM PLACED A CONSTANT 10 KM RESTRICTION ON AIR SUPPORT AND 15 KM ALONG THE SOUTH BANK OF THE BEN-HAI RIVER. UNDER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS, ACCORDING TO THE JGS, REQUESTS FOR WAIVER OF THE RESTRICTION WOULD BE CONSIDERED. WITH REGARD TO THE WAIVER AUTHORITY WHICH JGS HAD RESERVED TO ITSELF, CINCPAC ADVISED COMUSMACV, IN JANUARY 1963, THAT HE ALSO BE PREPARED TO WAIVE, WITH DISCRETION, RESTRICTIONS ON U.S. AIRCRAFT. "I EXPECT YOU TO EXERCISE THE SAME (JGS) WAIVER AUTHORITY FOR U.S. OPERATIONS ON CASE BY CASE BASIS WHEN DEEMED NECESSARY AND WHEN EXPECTED 'TAKE' IS WORTH RISK (OF BORDER VIOLATION) INVOLVED."

AT THIS TIME, AND TO THE NORMAL FARM GATE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE JCS, ANOTHER WAS ADDED BY THE 2D AIR DIVISION. THE CREWS COULD ONLY CONDUCT STRIKES UNDER A VNAF FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER. AN EXCEPTION WAS ESTABLISHED FOR NIGHT STRIKES PERMITTING FARM GATE CREWS TO STRIKE UNDER A C-47 FLAESHIP WHICH ESTABLISHED RADIO RELAY BETWEEN VN PERSONNEL UNDER ATTACK ON THE GROUND AND THE STRIKE AIRCREW. * * * * *

THESE RESTRICTIVE MEASURES CREATED MANY PROBLEMS, ONE EXAMPLE OF WHICH IS ILLUSTRATED BY THE VIET CONG ATTACK ON THE SOC TRANG AIRFIELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 1963. WITHIN FIVE MINUTES AFTER THE FIRST 81MM MORTAR HITS, FOUR USAF PILOTS WERE AIRBORNE. IN THE AIR, THEY NOTIFIED THE AOC OF THE ATTACK AND ASKED FOR A FLAESHIP AND ADDITIONAL FIGHTERS. THEY THEN EXPENDED ORDNANCE ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE THE VIET CONG MORTAR POSITIONS IDENTIFIED BY WHAT APPEARED TO BE MUZZLE FLASHES. THIS WAS DONE DURING ARVN RETALIATION WITH MORTAR AND OTHER FIRE. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE AIR ATTACK THE VIET CONG WITHDREW.

THE COMMANDER OF THE 34TH TACTICAL GROUP, WHOSE T-28'S WERE INVOLVED, COMMENDED THE AGGRESSIVE ACTION OF THE USAF PILOTS IN DEFENDING A BASE UNDER ATTACK. HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH AN ACTION WAS IN VIOLATION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT SINCE THERE WERE NO VNAF CREW MEMBERS ON BOARD, NO FAC, NO FLAESHIP, AND NO WAY OF POSITIVELY IDENTIFYING THE TARGET WHICH WAS IN AN ALLEGEDLY FRIENDLY AREA. IN MAKING THIS POINT, THE 34TH'S COMMANDER NOTED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY CERTAIN RULES HAD TO BE OBSERVED. IN A COIN ENVIRONMENT, HE SAID, THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT ARE NECESSARILY SENSITIVE SINCE THERE ARE USUALLY NO CLEARLY DEFINED BATTLE LINES. HE ADDED THAT THE WINNER OF A COIN WAR WOULD PROBABLY BE THE SIDE WHICH WINS OVER THE PEOPLE AND IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT VICTORY OVER A THOUSAND OF THE ENEMY COULD BE OFFSET BY THE UNINTENTIONAL DEATH OF ONE OF THE FRIENDLY FORCES. THE COMMANDER ALSO STATED:

"... WE MUST EXERCISE OUR MOST MATURE JUDGMENT AND RESTRAINT AT ALL TIMES AND ABIDE BY THE RULES OF THE GAME. THIS IS VITAL, EVEN THOUGH IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS, SUCH AS THIS CASE, IT MIGHT APPEAR THAT THE PROPER COURSE OF ACTION LIES ELSEWHERE. ... TAKE PRIDE IN ACCOMPLISHING A DIFFICULT JOB UNDER ADVERSE CONDITIONS IN A SANE AND PROFESSIONAL MANNER."

ANOTHER CASE OCCURRED ON 5 DECEMBER 1963, WHEN ARMY HELICOPTERS SUPPORTING A II CORPS OUTPOST AT NIGHT WERE REPORTED TO HAVE FIRED ON FRIENDLY FORCES IN AN ATTACK MADE WITHOUT POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION OF THE VIET CONG TARGET. THE COMMANDER, MACV, DIRECTED THAT CORRECTIVE ACTION BE TAKEN. HE ADDED:

"... IT IS ALSO OF CONCERN THAT A POSSIBILITY EXISTS IN WHICH U.S. PILOTS CONDUCTED INDISCREET FIRING AGAINST GROUND TARGETS WITHOUT ADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GROUND FORCE DISPOSITION, WITHOUT COMMUNICATIONS WITH GROUND FORCES OR THE AIR CONTROL SYSTEM, AND WITHOUT PRIOR ARRANGEMENT OR BRIEFING. ..."

THESE GENERAL CONDITIONS PREVAILED TO THE END OF 1963, AT WHICH TIME A TEST PLAN INVOLVING THE ARMING OF OV-1'S (MOHAWKS) WAS PROPOSED. TO PERMIT SUCH TESTING, GENERAL

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HARKINS ADVISED ADMIRAL FELT THAT THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED. (MACV DIRECTIVE PERMITTED THE MOHAWK TO BE USED OFFENSIVELY ONLY AFTER BEING FIRED UPON.) THE OV-1 TEST (IN THE ROLE OF AN ARMED ESCORT FOR TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT) WAS APPROVED AND THE RULES SUBSEQUENTLY MODIFIED.

DEFOLIATION (RANCH HAND) AND CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS CAME IN FOR THEIR SHARE OF DISCUSSION. IN MID-1963, CONTROL OF CROP DESTRUCTION WAS TIGHTLY HELD AT THE WASHINGTON LEVEL. ON 19 JUNE, THE EMBASSY SAIGON PROPOSED AN OPERATION WHICH INVOLVED ABOUT 3000 ACRES. "WE (GENERAL HARKINS AND MINISTER TRUEHART) URGENTLY REQUESTING THIS DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE DELAYS SO THAT GREATEST POSSIBLE CROP AREA COULD BE HIT BEFORE CONCLUSION OVERALL MILITARY OPERATION TOWARD MID-JULY." BOTH TRUEHART AND HARKINS WERE "SATISFIED THAT THIS AREA IS VIET CONG CONTROLLED, AND THAT VIET CONG DO NOT REPEAT DO NOT HAVE NEARBY ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FOOD."

THE USE OF NAPALM WAS ALSO THE CENTER OF CONTROVERSY; HOWEVER, IT WAS SOMEWHAT MORE LOOSELY CONTROLLED THAN WAS CROP DESTRUCTION. STATE FELT THAT "POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WOULD SUGGEST LIMITING USE NAPALM TO HIGH PRIORITY TARGETS WHICH (ARE) CLEARLY VIET CONG INSTALLATIONS."

IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY FROM THE EMBASSY SAIGON, STATE RESPONDED:

"CONCUR DISCRETION IN USE NAPALM. TO EXTENT CONTROL CAN BE EXERCISED, (IT) SHOULD BE LEFT WITH TASK FORCE SAIGON. HOWEVER, AS YOU ARE WELL AWARE THERE ARE SPECIAL POLITICAL ASPECTS IN ITS USE.

"REQUEST STATE AND DEFENSE BE ADVISED IN TIME TO APPROVE IN ADVANCE ANY OPERATIONS WHICH IN YOUR JUDGMENT ARE OF SIZE OR TYPE LIKELY (TO) HAVE SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS."

THE VNAF HAD OBSERVED THE RESULTS WHICH COULD BE OBTAINED FROM NAPALM AND HAD ARRIVED AT THE CONCLUSION THAT IT WAS AN EFFECTIVE WEAPON. WHILE SOME ELEMENTS IN THE U.S. REMAINED UNCONVINCED AS TO THE DESIRABILITY AND ESSENTIALITY OF ITS USE VIS-A-VIS U.S. POLITICAL INTERESTS, THE VNAF OFFICIALLY "... REQUESTED THAT THIS TYPE OF WEAPON BE FULLY USED WHENEVER IT SEEMS TO BE NECESSARY FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATIONAL MISSIONS."

THE CONTINUING AND EVER-CHANGING RESTRAINTS CONTINUED TO PLAGUE THE USAF/VNAF EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. PARTICULARLY, THE VARIOUS EVENTS WITHIN THE RVN, AND THE ATTITUDES OF ITS GOVERNMENT AND ITS PEOPLE INFLUENCED THE PROSECUTION OF THE WAR AGAINST THE COMMUNIST INSURGENTS. SUCH INCIDENTS AS THE BOMBING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE IN FEBRUARY 1962; THE MATURING OF THE BUDDHIST UNREST IN THE LATE SUMMER OF 1963; AND THE COUP OF 1 NOVEMBER 1963, WHICH DEPOSED THE DIEM GOVERNMENT, BROUGHT THE JOINT AIR OPERATIONS TO A TEMPORARY BUT DISRUPTIVE HALT.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BOMBING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, (27 FEBRUARY 1962) IN WHAT WAS EVENTUALLY INTERPRETED AS AN ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT DIEM, THE VNAF WAS GROUNDED. ONLY FARM GATE AIRCRAFT WERE AVAILABLE TO RESPOND TO CALLS FOR HELP AGAINST VIET CONG ATTACK. TWO DAYS LATER THE VNAF A-1H SQUADRONS WERE RELEASED FOR OPERATIONS BUT WERE ALLOWED TO CARRY ORDNANCE NO HEAVIER THAN 20MM. SUBSEQUENTLY, COLONEL VINH INFORMED GENERAL ANTHIS THAT ALL RESTRICTION ON VNAF STRIKE AIRCRAFT WOULD PROBABLY BE REMOVED BY 5 MARCH.

THE ALLEGED REPRESSION AND PERSECUTION OF THE BUDDHISTS DURING AUGUST OF 1963 FURTHER CONFUSED THE ISSUES AND DETRACTED THE RVN MILITARY EFFORTS. THE U.S. EMBASSY REPORTED A CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL KHIEM, CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF 21 AUGUST. "IN ANSWER TO A SPECIFIC QUESTION, KHIEM SAID THAT ALL GENERAL OFFICERS, IN UNISON, HAD LATELY BECOME CONVINCED THAT IF SITUATION (BUDDHIST PROBLEM) WERE TO CONTINUE FEW WEEKS LONGER, MORALE OF ARMY WOULD SERIOUSLY DETERIORATE...."

ADDING RELIGIOUS OBJECTIVES TO THE MILITARY OBJECTIVE — PROGRESS TOWARD WHICH WAS,

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AT BEST, NOT GOING WELL — INCREASED THE SCOPE AND COMPLEXITIES OF THE JOINT RVN/US PROBLEM AND, IN EFFECT, OPENED A "SECOND FRONT" FOR THE GVN. THE GVN WAS THEN FACED WITH AN INTERNAL POLITICAL CONFLICT AS WELL AS AN EXTERNAL MILITARY CONFLICT.

THE COUP OF 1 NOVEMBER DIRECTLY RESULTED FROM THE PRECEDING EVENTS. THE VNAF, UNDER COLONEL KY WHO HAD ASSUMED COMMAND, FULLY SUPPORTED THE COUP. THE U.S. AIR ATTACHE NOTED, "MOST VNAF PILOTS NOW BEDDED DOWN IN ALERT ROOM. T-28'S AT TAN SON NHUT BOMBED AND READY TO GO. FARM GATE STANDING BY FOR VIET CONG OUTPOST ATTACKS. ..."

PLANS WRITTEN IN 1962 TO SATURATE THE COUNTRYSIDE WITH AIR-GROUND ACTIONS TO SEEK, DESTROY AND FRAGMENT THE VIET CONG EFFORT, WERE APPROVED BY THE DIEM GOVERNMENT IN FEBRUARY 1963. THESE PLANS WERE INITIATED 1 JULY AND BUILT UP TO APPROXIMATELY 15,000 ACTIONS DURING AUGUST. WITH THE DETERIORATION OF THE RVN POLITICAL SITUATION, EMPHASIS WAS TURNED FROM OFFENSIVE MILITARY ACTION TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN EXISTENCE. THE COUP WROTE "FINIS" TO THESE PLANS. THIS COMPLETE AND DANGEROUS DIVERSION OF VNAF/USAF OBJECTIVES WAS ACCENTUATED BY THE POTENTIAL EXPLOITATION OF THE SITUATION BY THE DRV.

AT THE START OF THE COUP, THE VNAF HAD ASSUMED CONTROL OF ALL AIRCRAFT INCLUDING USAF AIRCRAFT. HOWEVER, AS OF 0900L, ON 2 NOVEMBER, THE AIR ATTACHE LEARNED THAT THE VNAF "HAD RELINQUISHED CONTROL OF ALL USAF AIRCRAFT AND HAD, IN FACT, ASKED USAF TO MAINTAIN AND SUPPORT THE BATTLE AGAINST THE VIET CONG TO MAXIMUM OF THEIR CAPABILITY AS THEY WERE ALL ON ALERT STATUS IN SUPPORT OF COUP OPERATION." AT 1655L, ON 1 NOVEMBER, AOC (JOINT VN/USAF MANNED) ADVISED THE COC, 2D AIR DIVISION, OF INSTRUCTION FROM COLONEL KY THAT U.S. AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO TAKEOFF UNLESS ON APPROVED RESCUE OR OPERATIONAL NECESSITY MISSIONS. FORTY MINUTES LATER, AT 1735L, GROUNDING OF USAF AIRCRAFT WAS LIFTED.

WITH THE FALL OF THE DIEM REGIME, GENERAL HARKINS, IN A MESSAGE TO JCS, STATED:

"... THE BIG JOB NOW, AND THE ENTIRE INTEREST OF MY PEOPLE AND ME, IS TO GET THE NEW TEAM FOCUSED ON THE VIET CONG IMMEDIATELY. WE BUCKLE DOWN TO THIS AT ONCE."

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION REMAINED UNANSWERED AT THE END OF 1963. WOULD THIS RADICAL PROCEDURE FOR EFFECTING GOVERNMENTAL CHANGE CORRECT THE DEBILITATING DISEASE WHICH HAD AFFLICTED RVN'S PROSECUTION OF THE WAR — OR WOULD IT MERELY EXCHANGE ONE SYNDROME FOR ANOTHER, LEAVING THE DISEASE UNCHECKED?

THE BEGINNING OF 1964 SAW THE STAGE SET FOR FURTHER RESTRICTIONS, RELAXATIONS, ADDITIONS, AND CHANGES TO THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IN EFFORTS TO MEET THE EXIGENCIES OF CHANGING POLITICAL AND MILITARY POLICIES. COMPLIANCE WITH THESE POLICIES AND RULES WAS NOT ENHANCED BY ACTIVITIES OF THE FOURTH ESTATE.

WHILE VIOLATION OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS DID NOT BECOME A SERIOUS PRESS ISSUE, THE ISSUE OF THE USAF FLYING COMBAT MISSIONS WAS RAISED — MANY TIMES. THE OFFICIAL U.S. POSITION STIPULATED THAT A VIETNAMESE CREW MEMBER HAD TO BE ABOARD; THAT ALL FLIGHTS WERE CONDUCTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRAINING THE VNAF; AND, THAT COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING SOMETIMES INVOLVED COMBAT MISSIONS — WITH THE USAF AIRMAN IN AN INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE.

CERTAIN REPORTERS HAD RECEIVED INFORMATION, ALLEGEDLY FROM A U.S. MILITARY SOURCE (AND SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED BY VN ARMED FORCES SOURCES) THAT FARM GATE AIRCRAFT, IN MANY CASES, SPEARHEADED GROUND OPERATIONS WITH BOMBING MISSIONS AGAINST THE VIET CONG. ALSO, IT HAD BEEN REPORTED TO THEM THAT THERE WERE NOW TWO AIR FORCES OPERATING IN THE RVN AGAINST THE VIET CONG., "THE GVN AIR FORCE AND, SECONDLY, AMERICAN UNITS (FARM GATE) CONTROLLED AND OPERATED BY USAF." n48 AMBASSADOR NOLTING REPLIED THAT IT WAS INCORRECT TO SAY THE U.S. WAS "SPEARHEADING" THE GRAND ASSAULT. "IN TRAINING THE VN AIR FORCE IN OPERATION OF T-28'S, A NEW PLANE TO THEM, WE ARE GIVING ON-THE-SPOT TRAINING WHICH OFTEN INVOLVES TRAINING UNDER COMBAT CONDITIONS, BUT THAT IN NO CASE DO U.S.

PILOTS OPERATE ALONE; PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES BEING THE TRAINING OF GVN PILOTS IN COMBAT OPERATIONS." NOLTING LABELED AS "FAKE" THE CHARGE THAT THERE WERE TWO AIR FORCES IN THE RVN. THE REPORTERS INDICATED THAT THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH THESE RESPONSES AND THE DISCUSSION MADE THE REPORTS CONSIDERABLY LESS "SENSATIONAL."

COUNTERING THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY IN THE RVN HAD PROVEN TO BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, COMPLEX AND VEXING. A COMPOSITE OF DIVERSE INFLUENCES EXISTED — POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY. THE INTERACTION OF THESE VARIABLES HAD DETERMINED THE RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS — OR INEFFECTIVENESS — OF JOINT RVN/U.S. EFFORTS. HOWEVER, CHANGE — AN IMMUTABLE CHARACTERISTIC OF PROGRESS — CONTINUED.

ON 5 MARCH 1964, THE CHIEF OF STAFF, USAF, DIRECTED TAC TO DEPLOY FOUR T-28'S AND NECESSARY PERSONNEL TO UDORN FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS, ON TDY BASIS. PRIOR TO THEIR ARRIVAL, AMBASSADOR UNGER HAD RECOMMENDED THAT THE RESTRAINTS IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES ON THE USE OF AIRCRAFT AND BOMBS BY THE RLAF BE RELAXED AND GREATER DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY GIVEN. HE PROPOSED THEIR USE FOR REPRISAL AGAINST AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS AND FOR INTERDICTION OF BUILD-UPS FOR ATTACK. THE JCS SUPPORTED AMBASSADOR UNGER'S PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDED EVEN STRONGER ACTION. THEY RECOMMENDED THAT:

1. MISSIONS ASSIGNED SHOULD BE OFFENSIVE AS WELL AS DEFENSIVE.
2. RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF NAPALM SHOULD BE REMOVED.
3. FIRST PRIORITY ON INTERDICTION MISSIONS SHOULD BE INBOUND CONVOYS.
4. CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO USE OF UNITED STATES AND THIRD COUNTRY FORCES TO PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT IN LAOS.
5. U.S. AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE COULD CONTRIBUTE MUCH IN VIEW OF THE LIMITED CAPABILITY OF THE RLAF.
6. THE SAW DETACHMENT BEING DEPLOYED TO SEA COULD PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE IN TRAINING AND ADVICE TO THE RLAF.

THESE VIEWS WERE FORWARDED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT. ON 20 MARCH, THE STATE DEPARTMENT ADVISED AMBASSADOR UNGER THAT A LIMITED NUMBER OF BOMB FUSES COULD BE RELEASED TO THE RLAF, SINCE THE PROPOSED USE OF BOMBS COULD BE CONSIDERED IN SUPPORT OF "RESPONSIVE COUNTER-ATTACKS TO REGAIN GROUND LOST TO THE PATHET LAO AND AS REPRISAL IN RESPONSE TO PATHET LAO ATTACK." THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME THE RLAF HAD BEEN PERMITTED TO MAINTAIN CUSTODY OF ANY BOMB FUSES.

IN MARCH 1964, SEVERAL MODIFICATIONS WERE MADE TO THE MACV DIRECTIVE 62. VIETNAMESE CREWS WERE NO LONGER REQUIRED ON MISSIONS FLOWN BY U.S. MARKED, UNARMED RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT, ALTHOUGH THEY COULD BE USED ON ANY MISSION WHICH MIGHT BE FACILITATED BY THE USE OF VN OBSERVERS.

WITH REFERENCE TO BORDER FLIGHTS, AIRCRAFT WERE NOT AUTHORIZED TO CROSS RVN BORDERS "WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE OBTAINED THROUGH THE AIR ATTACHE, AMERICAN EMBASSY, OR THE EMBASSY OF THE COUNTRY CONCERNED," AND EVEN THEN AIRCRAFT WERE NOT AUTHORIZED TO FIRE ON OR ACROSS THE BORDERS. AIR SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR BORDER OUTPOSTS (FIRE SUPPORT, RECONNAISSANCE, TRANSPORTATION EVALUATION, SUPPLY, ETC.) WAS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE SAME CONDITIONS.

THE DISTANCES FROM THE BORDERS AT WHICH AIRCRAFT COULD NORMALLY OPERATE WERE ALSO CHANGED. WHERE THE BORDER WAS DETERMINED BY A RIVER OR VEHICLE ROUTE, OR IF A RIVER OR VEHICLE ROUTE WAS INSIDE AND ALONG THE BORDER AND LOCATED WITHIN 1000 METERS OF THE BORDER, THE MAXIMUM OPERATING LIMIT OF THE AIRCRAFT WAS THE RIVER OR VEHICLE ROUTE. IN OTHER AREAS, AIRCRAFT WERE LIMITED TO 2000 METERS FROM THE BORDER WHEN AIRCRAFT WERE DIRECTED BY A FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER (FAC) AND 5000 METERS WHEN NOT SO DIRECTED. ALL AIRCRAFT WERE REQUIRED TO REMAIN SOUTH OF AN IMAGINARY LINE

PARALLEL WITH AND 5000 METERS SOUTH OF THE BEN HAI RIVER SEPARATING NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM. RESTRICTIONS ON VISUAL AND PHOTOGRAPHIC MISSION AIRCRAFT COULD BE WAIVED UNDER CERTAIN MACV PROVISIONS. HOWEVER, THE JCS AUTHORIZED THE AIR FORCE TO FLY ARMED F-100 MISSIONS UP TO AND ALONG THE MEKONG RIVER WHERE IT CONSTITUTED THE THAI-LAOTIAN BORDER. AUTHORITY WAS NOT GRANTED TO MAKE INCURSIONS INTO LAOS.

F-100 PILOTS WERE INSTRUCTED THAT AIRCRAFT WOULD BE ARMED DURING ALL OPERATIONS EXCEPT AIR REFUELING TRAINING, BUT THAT A SAFETY PIN WOULD BE RETAINED IN THE TRIGGER AND THE TRIGGER SAFETY SWITCH KEPT OFF TO PREVENT INADVERTENT FIRING. ALTHOUGH SPECIFIC RULES OF ENGAGEMENT HAD NOT YET BEEN APPROVED FOR THESE OPERATIONS, PILOTS WERE INSTRUCTED THAT THEY RETAINED THEIR INHERENT RIGHT OF SELFDEFENSE AND WERE AUTHORIZED TO TAKE SUCH MEASURES AS WERE NECESSARY TO PROTECT THEMSELVES SHOULD THEY BE SUBJECTED TO HOSTILE ACTION.

ON 17 MAY 1964, COMMUNIST FORCES TURNED AGAINST THE NEUTRALISTS WHO WERE CO-LOCATED ON THE PLAINE DES JARRES (PDJ). AN OVERT INTERVENTION DECISION WAS MADE BY THE UNITED STATES TO BOLSTER THE NEUTRALIST FORCES AND TO SERVE NOTICE TO THE COMMUNISTS THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS DETERMINED TO BACK THE LEGAL GOVERNMENT. IT WAS DECIDED THAT A RECONNAISSANCE EFFORT MIGHT PROVIDE A MEANS OF PROVING THAT VIET MINH AND CHINESE COMMUNISTS WERE ASSISTING THE INDIGENOUS PATHET LAO. SUCH EVIDENCE COULD BE PRESENTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION.

THE FIRST ACTION IN THE BUILDUP OF THIS U.S. RECONNAISSANCE EFFORT WAS A CINCPAC ALERT TO CARRIER TASK GROUP (CTG) 77.4 ON 18 MAY, TO BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT A SHOW OF FORCE AND RECONNAISSANCE OVER LAOS. AIR FORCE ELEMENTS WERE ALREADY PRESENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. A RECONNAISSANCE TASK FORCE (RTF), NICKNAMED ABLE MABLE, WAS IN PLACE AT TAN SON NHUT AB, VIETNAM. F-100 SUPERSABRES WERE LOCATED AT CLARK AB, PHILIPPINES, * * *

ON 18 MAY, THE JCS AUTHORIZED THE FIRST MISSIONS, WHICH WERE FLOWN BY USN AIRCRAFT. THE USAF FLEW ITS FIRST MISSION "DURING THE DAYLIGHT HOURS" OF THE NEXT DAY. THE PROPOSAL THAT LOW-LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS BE INITIATED WITH TWO DAYLIGHT AND ONE NIGHT MISSION TO BE FLOWN EACH WEEK WAS MADE BY MACV. A FURTHER RECOMMENDATION WAS THAT STRIKES AGAINST ANY TARGETS DISCOVERED AS A RESULT OF THESE RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS WOULD BE MADE BY UNMARKED VNAF OR RLAF T-28'S. THE NEXT OPTION WAS STRIKES BY MARKED USAF AND FARM GATE AIRCRAFT, FOLLOWED BY A FINAL OPTION OF USAF/USN STRIKES. THE RECONNAISSANCE EFFORT WAS FORMALLY CHRISTENED ON 22 MAY 1964 WHEN JCS ASSIGNED THE NICKNAME YANKEE TEAM TO IT.

UNTIL THE MAY ATTACK AGAINST THE NEUTRALISTS, THE RLAF POSSESSED ONLY FOUR T-28'S, PLUS A FEW NON-TACTICAL AIRCRAFT, AND ITS AIRCRAFT WERE RESTRICTED TO THE USE OF ROCKETS AND GUNS. ON 17 MAY, WITH THE PDJ ATTACK IN ITS SECOND DAY, AMERICAN AMBASSADOR LEONARD UNGER (THEN AMBASSADOR TO LAOS) AUTHORIZED THE USE OF 100 AND 500-POUND BOMBS AGAINST THE ATTACKING FORCES.

THE INITIAL EFFORTS OF T-28 OR OTHER AIRCRAFT OPERATING OVER LAOS WERE CONFINED TO PREPLANNED MISSIONS, BASED ON THE BEST INTELLIGENCE AND A SYSTEM WHICH WOULD ALLOW THE AIR FORCE TO REACT TO FIELD REQUESTS. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND AUTHORITY TO STRIKE HAD TO BE RESOLVED AT THE EARLIEST POINT IF THE AIR FORCE EFFORT WAS TO BE EFFECTIVE.

A CONTINUOUS PROGRAM OF RECONNAISSANCE IN LAOS WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE JCS IN A MESSAGE TO CINCPAC ON 25 MAY. THE JOINT CHIEFS ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT OVERFLIGHT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM WAS ABSOLUTELY NOT AUTHORIZED. CINCPAC ADDED THAT THE YANKEE TEAM PROGRAM HAD TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE U.S. TEAM IN LAOS, COMUSMACV, CINCPAC, THE JCS AND HIGHER AUTHORITY. THAI BASES WERE NOT TO BE USED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES AND COORDINATION BETWEEN THE OPERATING FORCES WAS TO BE EFFECTED LOCALLY. COMUSMACV DESIGNATED THE COMMANDER, 2D AIR DIVISION (MAJOR GENERAL JOSEPH MOORE), AS COORDINATOR BETWEEN THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY. GENERAL MOORE

WAS GIVEN THE AUTHORITY TO SUGGEST BUT NOT TO COMPEL NAVY ACTIONS. HE ASSIGNED THE NAVY ALL TARGETS ON THE MACV TARGET LIST LOCATED NORTH OF 18 DEGREES 30 MINUTES FOR PLANNING PURPOSES.

THE QUESTION OF JOINT US/VN CREWS ON FARM GATE AIRCRAFT WAS RAISED IN MAY 1964, WHEN 2D AIR DIVISION WAS ASKED BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF, USAF, TO EXPLAIN ITS USE OF VNAF PILOTS ON FARM GATE MISSIONS. THE 2D AIR DIVISION REPLIED THAT, SINCE NOVEMBER 1962, VNAF PILOTS HAD NOT FLOWN ON FARM GATE AIRCRAFT BUT THAT BASIC VNAF AIRMEN WERE USED FOR THE TASK. A VNAF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER HAD THE JOB OF SCHEDULING AND CONTROLLING BASIC AIRMEN WHO STOOD ALERT IN THE READY ROOM ADJACENT TO THE 1ST AIR COMMANDO SQUADRON OPERATIONS ROOM. THERE WERE "INFREQUENT" OCCASIONS WHEN THE NON-AVAILABILITY OF VNAF AIRMEN REQUIRED THE CANCELLATION OR DELAY OF A MISSION. THE 2D AIR DIVISION POINTED OUT THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE 1ST AIR COMMANDO SQUADRON HAD CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO VNAF EFFECTIVENESS BY SETTING AN EXAMPLE FOR THE VNAF IN THE NUMBER OF SORTIES FLOWN, FLYING HOURS, AND IN THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE SQUADRON ITSELF.

ON 20 MAY 1964, THE JCS, IN A MESSAGE TO CINCPAC, REAFFIRMED THAT THE U.S. POLICY IN VIETNAM WAS THAT THE U.S. MILITARY WOULD NOT TAKE PART IN COMBAT. AN EXCEPTION WAS MADE IN THE CASE OF FARM GATE AIRCRAFT, ALTHOUGH THESE COULD ONLY BE USED TO FLY BONAFIDE OPERATIONAL TRAINING MISSIONS AGAINST HOSTILE TARGETS IN ORDER TO PREPARE VNAF PERSONNEL FOR AN EVENTUAL "TAKE OVER" FROM THE USAF.

THE JCS ALSO STATED THAT HELICOPTERS IN THE THEATER WERE FOR USE AS TRANSPORT ONLY AND THEIR WEAPONS WERE FOR THE PROTECTION OF VEHICLES OR PASSENGERS. U.S. ARMY HELICOPTERS WOULD NOT BE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CLOSE SUPPORT AIR STRIKES. U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED AS ADVISORS WOULD BE EXPOSED TO COMBAT CONDITIONS ONLY AS REQUIRED IN THE EXECUTION OF THEIR ADVISORY DUTIES. THIS STATEMENT OF THE JCS ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF FARM GATE AIRCRAFT AND U.S. ARMY HELICOPTERS WAS ONE OF SEVERAL ACTIONS DURING 1964 WHICH HELPED RESOLVE THE QUESTION OF A PROPER MIX OF U.S. ARMY AND USAF AIRCRAFT IN THE THEATER. DURING 1962-63, THE ABSENCE OF CLEAR-CUT DIRECTIVES IN THIS AREA SERVED AS A LIMITATION UPON USAF ACTIVITIES IN VIETNAM.

ON THE 29TH OF MAY, GENERAL MOORE SENT A MESSAGE TO PACAF REQUESTING THAT HE BE GIVEN AUTHORITY TO EMPLOY U.S. AIRCRAFT AND CREWS FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) AS HE "DEEMED NECESSARY IN THE EVENT U.S. AIRCRAFT WERE DOWNED OVER LAOS (YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS)." HE DID NOT RECEIVE A REPLY UNTIL 6 JUNE WHEN A NAVY AIRCRAFT WAS SHOT DOWN. THE PILOT EJECTED SUCCESSFULLY. ACCORDING TO COLONEL ROBERT F. TYRELL, THE AIR ATTACHE IN VIENTIANE, THREE REQUESTS WERE FORWARDED TO THE AMBASSADOR ASKING THE U.S. PILOTS BE SENT IN TO PROVIDE CLOSE SUPPORT FOR THE RESCUE HELICOPTERS. BY THE TIME AUTHORIZATION CAME THROUGH, THE RESCUE HELICOPTERS HAD BOTH BEEN SHOT UP AND NAVY LIEUTENANT CHARLES KLUSSMAN WAS A PRISONER OF THE PATHET LAO.

ON 4 JUNE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE REQUESTED THAT THE FREQUENCY OF YANKEE TEAM FLIGHTS BE CUT BACK TO ONE OR TWO DAYS PER WEEK, SUPPLEMENTED BY DEMAND FLIGHTS RELATED TO SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES. CINCPAC AGREED WITH THIS REQUEST BUT ADDED THAT, IN HIS ESTIMATION, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF YANKEE TEAM WAS TO PROVIDE THE INTELLIGENCE VITAL TO DECISION MAKING. IN THE SOUTH, RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS WERE NEEDED TO KEEP TABS ON COMMUNIST SUPPLY ROUTES FROM THE DRV INTO SOUTH VIETNAM THROUGH LAOS.

SCORING HIGHER IN THE WORLD'S ATTENTION THAT THIS UNDERCURRENT OF DEBATE WAS THE HARSH REALITY OF LT. KLUSSMAN'S MISHAP AND, ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE LOSS OF ANOTHER NAVY AIRCRAFT. ON 6 JUNE, THE DAY BEFORE THE MISHAP, THE JCS DIRECTED CINCPAC TO:

"...BE PREPARED TO FLY TWO LOW-LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE SORTIES AS A SINGLE FLIGHT OVER LAOS ON THE PLAINE DES JARRES AREA ON 7 JUNE. SCHEDULE EIGHT FIGHTER BOMBER AIRCRAFT AS ESCORT WITH OPTIMUM MIX OF WEAPONS FOR AAA SUPPRESSION. ESCORT AIRCRAFT ARE AUTHORIZED TO EMPLOY APPROPRIATE RETALIATORY FIRE AGAINST ANY SOURCE OF ANTI-

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AIRCRAFT FIRE AGAINST RECCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT. REFERENCE AMEMB VIENTIANE 061121Z, COORDINATE TIMING OF OPERATION AND AREA TO BE COVERED BY RECCE OPERATION UNDERWAY 7 JUNE. SUGGEST KITTY HAWK RESOURCES BE EMPLOYED IF OPERATIONALLY FEASIBLE. MISSION SHOULD NOT OVERFLY KHANG KHAY OR XIENG KHOUANG..." IT WAS ONE OF THESE ESCORT AIRCRAFT WHICH WAS SHOT DOWN. THIS PILOT WAS RECOVERED.

LATER THAT DAY, THE JCS TOLD CINCPAC THAT IT WAS NECESSARY THAT THE COMMUNISTS BE TAUGHT THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS GOING TO CONDUCT THIS RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM, AND USE FORCE IF NECESSARY. THEREFORE, A STRIKE FORCE OF EIGHT F-100'S STAGING FROM TAN SON NHUT WAS TO STRIKE THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT INSTALLATIONS AT XIENG KHOUANG ON 9 JUNE. AFTER THE STRIKE, PILOTS REPORTED DIRECT HITS ON THE TARGET.

CINCPACFLT REINFORCED THIS DETERMINATION WITH A MESSAGE TO UNITS UNDER HIS COMMAND DIRECTING THAT THERE BE A MINIMUM OF TWO ESCORTS PER RECCE AIRCRAFT. CINCPAC WAS STILL NOT ABLE UNDER THE PREVAILING RULE TO GO ALL THE WAY IN DETERRING THE ENEMY. HE DIRECTED, ON 18 JUNE, THAT THERE BE NO USE OF EITHER NAPALM OR CLUSTER BOMB UNITS (CBU).

YANKEE TEAM FLIGHTS WERE AN "ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN" PROPOSITION DURING THESE EARLY DAYS. ON 12 JUNE, AMBASSADOR UNGER REPORTED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT THAT PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA HAD AGREED TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE FLIGHTS. SOUVANNA REQUESTED THAT NOTHING BE SAID TO THE PRESS ABOUT THIS OR THE FACT THAT ESCORTS WERE BEING USED. AMBASSADOR UNGER PRESENTED TWO "COMPELLING" ARGUMENTS FOR PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGING USE OF ESCORTS: (1) TO ASSURE CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC OPINION THAT RECON PLANES BE ADEQUATELY PROTECTED AND (2) BY PUBLIC MENTION OF ESCORTS TO FORCEFULLY SIGNAL HANOI AND PEKING WHICH WOULD NOT BE NEARLY AS EFFECTIVE IF WE APPEARED TO BE TRYING TO SUPPRESS THIS INFORMATION. SOUVANNA THEN VOLUNTEERED THAT HE WANTED MAXIMUM USE MADE OF THE RLAFF T-28'S TO INTERDICT SUPPLY ROUTES AND DESTROY, ON THE GROUND, THOSE SUPPLIES ALREADY IN PLACE. THE AMBASSADOR REPORTED, "THERE IS NO QUESTION IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S MIND THAT VIOLATIONS BY PATHET LAO/VIET MINH JUSTIFY ACTIONS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND PERHAPS MORE, BUT HE INSISTS, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, THAT WE MUST AVOID GOING ON RECORD ACKNOWLEDGING ACTION AND THUS GIVING COMMUNISTS BOTH PROPAGANDA FUEL AND PRETENSE." HE CONCLUDED THE MESSAGE BY STATING: "WE HAVE TO ASSUME ALWAYS THAT RLG FORCES INCAPABLE OF STANDING UP TO PL/VM IF LATTER REALLY MEANT TO PUSH THROUGH, CONCEIVABLY WITH AIR SUPPORT (THERE IS, OF COURSE, ALWAYS RISK THAT COMMUNISTS WILL ALSO INTRODUCE AIRCRAFT).

FIVE MESSAGES CONCERNING ESCORTS, DURING THIS PERIOD, WERE SIGNIFICANT. FIRST WAS A 16 JUNE JCS MESSAGE WHICH AUTHORIZED WEATHER RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS PRIOR TO THE ACTUAL YANKEE TEAM PHOTO MISSION. IT ALSO AUTHORIZED FLAK SUPPRESSION BY THE FIGHTERS, LOW LEVEL ONLY, IN ADVANCE OF THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT. COMMANDER OF TFG 77.6 ASKED CINCPAC ON 18 JUNE IF HE WAS RIGHT IN THE ASSUMPTION THAT "ESCORT" INCLUDED ANY AVAILABLE ATTACK ON FIGHTER AIRCRAFT. CINCPAC REPLIED THAT HE WAS CORRECT. GENERAL MOORE SENT A DIRECTIVE TO THE 33D TACTICAL FIGHTER WING ELEMENT AT DA NANG ON 18 JUNE ORDERING THAT TWO F-100'S BE MAINTAINED ON ALERT AT ALL TIMES AND TO BE PREPARED TO PUT TWO MORE ON 15 MINUTE AND FOUR ON ONE HOUR ALERT. THE FINAL OF THE FIVE MESSAGES WAS A CINCPACFLT DECISION TO ALLOW NAVY FORCES TO USE THE "SNAKE EYE" BOMB.

PACAF ANNOUNCED ON 20 JUNE THAT THAILAND BASED USAF ASSETS COULD BE USED FOR SAR. TWO DAYS LATER THE PACIFIC AIR RESCUE CENTER AT TAN SON NHUT INFORMED PACAF THAT THE PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATING RESCUE RESOURCES HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED. THE H-34'S COULD BE SCRAMBLED THROUGH THE AIR ATTACHE'S OFFICE IN VIENTIANE OR BY THE HU-16 AIRCRAFT THAT WAS ALWAYS IN THE AREA WHENEVER U.S. AIRCRAFT WERE OPERATING IN LAOS.

THE NAVY HAD EA-3B AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE FOR ELECTRONIC INTELLIGENCE GATHERING (ELINT) MISSIONS. CINCPACFLT PUT A HOLD ON THEIR USE ON 26 JUNE UNTIL INTELLIGENCE SOURCES COULD VERIFY WHETHER FIRE CONTROL RADAR WAS PRESENT IN LAOS. JCS FINALLY GAVE THE EXECUTE ORDER ON THEIR USE ON 30 JUNE.

A FEW DAYS LATER, CINCPAC SPELLED OUT THE JCS POLICY ON RULES OF ENGAGEMENT:

- A. WHEN WEATHER PERMITS, RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT WILL UTILIZE MEDIUM ALTITUDE LEVELS ABOVE EFFECTIVE HOSTILE GROUND FIRE.
- B. ROUTE RECONNAISSANCE WILL NORMALLY BE CONDUCTED AT MEDIUM ALTITUDE.
- C. LOW LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE WILL BE AUTHORIZED WHEN MEDIUM LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE WILL NOT GIVE SATISFACTORY RESULTS. AREAS OF KNOWN STRONG ANTI-AIRCRAFT WILL BE AVOIDED.
- D. LOW LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE AGAINST AREAS OF STRONG ANTI-AIRCRAFT WILL BE AUTHORIZED ONLY FOR SPECIFIC COGENT REASONS, ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS WHEN THE REQUIREMENTS ARE OF SUFFICIENT PRIORITY TO WARRANT THE RISKS INVOLVED.
- E. IN CASES OF MISSIONS FLOWN AT MEDIUM ALTITUDES, RETALIATORY FIRE IS AUTHORIZED IF THE RECONNAISSANCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT ARE ENDANGERED BY GROUND FIRE.
- F. IN CASES OF MISSIONS FLOWN AT LOW LEVEL AND THE RECONNAISSANCE OR ESCORT ARE FIRED UPON, RETALIATORY FIRE IS AUTHORIZED EITHER ON THE FIRST PASS WITH THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT OR BY CIRCLING BACK AND CONDUCTING SUBSEQUENT PASSES.
- G. IN CASES OF MISSIONS FLOWN AT LOW LEVEL AGAINST AREAS OF STRONG ANTI-AIRCRAFT, FLIGHTS WILL BE ESCORTED AND ESCORTS ARE AUTHORIZED TO EMPLOY BEST OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES TO MINIMIZE RISK, WHICH, WHEN AUTHORIZED BY JCS, MAY INCLUDE ATTACK OF KNOWN ANTI-AIRCRAFT POSITIONS IN ADVANCE OF THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT WHERE SUPPRESSION OF GROUND FIRE IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR THE SAFETY OF THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT.

USING THE POLICY SET FORTH BY JCS, CINCPAC WENT ON TO PROVIDE FURTHER GUIDANCE:

- A. OPERATIONAL MISSIONS SHOULD BE PLANNED AND CONDUCTED TO EMPHASIZE MINIMUM RISK TO PLANES AND CREWS CONSISTENT WITH THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DESIRED OBJECTIVES.
- B. AS A GENERAL RULE, RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED AT MEDIUM LEVEL. MEDIUM LEVEL IS DEFINED AS AN ALTITUDE ABOVE THE LEVEL OF EXPECTED HOSTILE GROUND FIRE.
- C. A DIFFERENTIATION MUST BE MADE BETWEEN ROUTINE AND PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS. THE DETERMINATION OF PRIORITY SHOULD BE MADE BY AMBASSADOR VIENTIANE OR BY COMUSMACV BASED ON INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS. COMUSMACV MUST EVALUATE THE URGENCY OF THE REQUIREMENT AGAINST THE KNOWN RISKS OF WEATHER, TERRAIN AND HOSTILE FIRE THAT MUST BE ACCEPTED IN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE MISSIONS. THIS URGENCY OR LACK OF URGENCY SHOULD BE INDICATED FOR EACH REQUIREMENT SUBMITTED TO CINCPAC AND WILL ALSO DICTATE THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE MISSION.
- D. IN LAOS THERE ARE AREAS THAT ARE FREE OF HOSTILE GROUND FIRE AND OTHER AREAS WHERE HOSTILE GROUND FIRE WILL BE EXPECTED. MOST OF THESE AREAS ARE KNOWN TO YOU. IN SCHEDULING MISSIONS OVER AREAS WHERE HOSTILE GROUND FIRE IS NOT EXPECTED, LOW-LEVEL COVERAGE CAN BE CONDUCTED IF WEATHER PRECLUDES COVERAGE AT MEDIUM LEVELS AND IF RISKS INVOLVED WITH THE HAZARDS OF WEATHER AND TERRAIN AT LOW ALTITUDE ARE ACCEPTABLE. HOWEVER, WHEN MISSIONS ARE TO FLY OVER AREAS WHERE EFFECTIVE HOSTILE GROUND FIRE CAN BE EXPECTED, SCHEDULE THE MISSION AT MEDIUM LEVEL. IN THOSE CASES DUE CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO REQUESTING USE OF PRESUPPRESSIVE FIRE IF CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL TO THE SAFETY OF THE MISSION.

THE AIR FORCE WANTED GREATER FREEDOM TO SCHEDULE LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS, AS REQUIRED. CINCPACAF RECOMMENDED THE REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIONS TO PERMIT SUCH FLIGHTS. ALTHOUGH CINCPAC AGREED WITH CINCPACAF AS TO THE NEED FOR LOW-LEVEL MISSIONS, HE DID NOT FEEL THE TIME WAS RIGHT TO ASK FOR FULL AUTHORITY TO FLY THEM. HE BELIEVED OVERALL AUTHORITY

COULD BE WON IN TIME, BUT NOT UNTIL AUTHORITIES AT HIGHER LEVELS WERE CONVINCED OF THE ADVANTAGE OF LOW-LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE. UNTIL THEN, PERMISSION TO FLY AT LOW-LEVEL WOULD HAVE TO BE OBTAINED SEPARATELY FOR EACH MISSION.

THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF THE VIET CONG IN SOUTH VIETNAM, THE SUCCESSFUL PATHET LAO/VIET MINH OFFENSIVE ON THE PLAINE DES JARRES, AND THE CRITICAL POLITICAL CONDITIONS WHICH EXISTED IN BOTH THE RVN AND LAOS PAINTED A GRIM PICTURE OF THE U.S. EFFORT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN MID-1964. THE U.S. COIN EFFORT IN SOUTH VIETNAM WAS NOT ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVES. THE INSURGENTS INCREASED IN NUMBERS AND CAPABILITY AND EXTENDED THEIR CONTROL OF THE SOUTH VIETNAM COUNTRYSIDE, LARGELY DUE TO SUCCESSFUL INFILTRATION FROM NVN INTO THE RVN. IN LAOS, THE ENEMY HAD TAKEN OVER PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE PDJ BY THE END OF MAY AND THREATENED MUONG SOU, WHERE THE BULK OF THE NEUTRALIST FORCES WERE LOCATED WITH NO AVENUE FOR ORDERLY WITHDRAWAL. THE ROYAL LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT HAD LITTLE POPULAR SUPPORT AND OWED ITS EXISTENCE, PRIMARILY, TO U.S. BACKING. THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM WAS FACED WITH POPULAR DISCONTENT, STEMMING MAINLY FROM BUDDHIST DISSIDENTS AND A PEOPLE TIRED OF YEARS OF WAR.

DESPITE U.S. MILITARY EFFORTS, THE CONTINUING INFLUX OF COMMUNIST PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL INTO LAOS AND SOUTH VIETNAM BROUGHT CONDITIONS IN THESE TWO COUNTRIES TO A DANGEROUS IMBALANCE. SINCE 1959, AN ESTIMATED 20,000 OFFICERS, MEN AND TECHNICIANS WERE KNOWN TO HAVE INFILTRATED INTO SOUTH VIETNAM AND ANOTHER 17,000 PROBABLY CAME IN ACCORDING TO THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT.

THE COMMUNIST FORCES IN LAOS WERE STOPPED FROM EXPANDING THEIR AREA OF CONTROL BEYOND WHAT IT WAS IN MAY 1964. YANKEE TEAM RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER LAOS AND AIR STRIKES BY RLAF T-28'S (AND, LATER, BY USAF JET AIRCRAFT) WERE THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN CURBING ENEMY ACTIVITIES.

IN SOUTH VIETNAM, THE MID-1964 SITUATION WAS ALSO GRIM. FIGHTING UNDER PRACTICALLY THE SAME RULES AS WERE IN EFFECT WHEN THE UNITED STATES STEPPED UP ITS ASSISTANCE IN 1961, THE GOVERNMENT WAS MAKING LITTLE PROGRESS AGAINST THE VIET CONG. THE DIEM COUP IN NOVEMBER 1963, AND THE KHANH COUP IN JANUARY 1964, LEFT AN AFTERMATH OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY THAT PRACTICALLY STOPPED PURSUIT OF PACIFICATION PROGRAMS ELEBAORATELY DRAWN EARLY IN THE YEAR. THE USAF, WHICH, IN THE SPRING HAD GROUNDED ITS B-26'S AND T-28'S, WAS IN THE PROGRESS OF RECEIVING A-1E AIRCRAFT AND ONLY A HANDFUL WERE AVAILABLE FOR COMBAT IN JUNE AND JULY. THE MONTH OF JULY WAS THE WORST AND BLOODIEST OF THE WAR — FOR BOTH U.S. AND VIETNAMESE FORCES — AS THE VIET CONG PUSHED THEIR CAMPAIGN TO PEAK INTENSITY, APPARENTLY TO COINCIDE WITH THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS.

THE HONOLULU HIGH LEVEL STRATEGY MEETING, IN EARLY JUNE, TO LINE UP A NEW APPROACH TO THE WAR, THE CHANGE IN COMMAND OF BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE U.S. EFFORT, AND TOUGH DIPLOMATIC WARNINGS TO NORTH VIETNAM ALL SIGNIFIED THE OPENING OF A NEW PHASE OF U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR.

PLANS FOR THE STEPPING UP OF U.S. EFFORTS DOMINATED MACV ACTIVITY DURING JULY TO THE POINT WHERE THE MACV STAFF WAS SIGNIFICANTLY DETRACTED FROM ITS VITAL PACIFICATION MISSION IN THE RVN. GENERAL WESTMORELAND, ON 12 JULY, URGENTLY REQUESTED A TDY AUGMENTATION WHICH WOULD PERMIT MANNING OF AN OPERATIONS WAR ROOM 24 HOURS A DAY.

YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS IN THE MUONG SOU AND PDJ AREAS, IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION TRIANGLE WERE AUTHORIZED BY THE JCS ON 20 JULY. THE AIRCRAFT COULD FLY AT MEDIUM LEVEL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE WHICH COULD GO AT LOW ALTITUDE IF WEATHER PERMITTED. THE ESCORT AIRCRAFT COULD RETALIATE IF EITHER THE RECCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT WERE ENDANGERED BY HOSTILE FIRE. ON THE LOW-LEVEL FLIGHT, THE AIRCRAFT COULD RETALIATE ON THE FIRST PASS, IF FIRED UPON, AND THEN CIRCLE AND STRIKE AGAIN.

TOWARD THE END OF THE MONTH, PACAF AND CINCPACFLT BOTH EXPRESSED CONCERN TO

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CINCPAC ABOUT SUPPRESSIVE FIRE. PACAF CONSIDERED USE OF SUPPRESSIVE FIRE BY YANKEE TEAM AIRCRAFT MOST DESIRABLE. THE MESSAGE SUGGESTED THAT A COMBINATION OF COUNTERBATTERY AND PREPLANNED INTERDICTION STRIKES BE USED AGAINST THE "IMPROVING" COMMUNIST ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE. CINCPACFLT SAID THAT SUPPRESSIVE FIRE WAS NEEDED FOR LOW ALTITUDE MISSIONS, AND WHILE NOT 100 PERCENT EFFECTIVE, IT WOULD KEEP GUN CREWS FROM FIRING WITH IMPUNITY. IT WAS ALSO FELT THAT THE AUTHORITY TO ORDER SUPPRESSIVE FIRE SHOULD BE LEFT WITH THE "ON-THE-SCENE" COMMANDER.

ALTHOUGH YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS OVER LAOS AND USAF SUPPORT OF THE RLAFF T-28 OPERATIONS SIGNIFIED AN ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE EVENTS OF EARLY AUGUST, IN THE GULF OF TONKIN, TRIGGERED A SUDDEN UPSURGE IN AIR ACTIVITY. THE ATTACK ON THE U.S. DESTROYERS MADDUX AND TURNER JOY (AUGUST 2 AND 4) AND THE SUBSEQUENT U.S. NAVY STRIKES ON FOUR NVN INSTALLATIONS (AUGUST 5) HELPED A LOT OF PIECES FALL INTO PLACE IN THE COMPLEX PLANS FOR DEFENDING SOUTHEAST ASIA. FIRST, THE MOVEMENT OF USAF JETS INTO THE RVN WAS CARRIED OUT WITH JUSTIFICATION.

A SYSTEM FOR U.S. CONTROL OF AIR DEFENSE AND THE EMPLOYMENT OF AIR IN OUT-OF-COUNTRY OPERATIONS GOT APPROVAL FROM THE RVN GOVERNMENT.

FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE, THE TONKIN GULF INCIDENTS WERE THE START OF A NEW EMPHASIS ON AIR POWER IN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY STRUGGLE.

MORE SIGNIFICANT, PERHAPS, THAN THE RETALIATORY STRIKES, WAS THE DEPLOYMENT OF USAF STRENGTH TO SOUTHEAST ASIA FOLLOWING THE TONKIN ATTACKS. PACAF WAS ALERTED TO DISPATCH TWO SQUADRONS OF B-57'S FROM CLARK TO BIEN HOA ON AUGUST 5. AT THE SAME TIME, IT WAS TO ALERT ONE F-105 SQUADRON TO MOVE FROM YOKOTA.

IT WAS ALSO TOLD TO ALERT ONE RTF OF SIX F-101'S TO DEPLOY FROM WESTPAC TO TAN SON NHUT. DEPLOYMENT ALERT ORDERS WENT OUT ALSO TO OTHER CINCPAC UNITS, INVOLVING THE MARINES AND THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE.

ON THE MORNING OF THE 5TH, GENERAL KHANH, IN A MEETING WITH GENERAL WESTMORELAND, AGREED TO ALLOW THE B-57'S AND F-102'S INTO THE RVN. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE VNAF, ALONG WITH ALL VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES, WAS ON ALERT STATUS. HE SAID THAT 25 PERCENT COULD BE OFF THE GROUND IN 30 MINUTES AND THE REST IN 45 MINUTES. THE RVNAF WAS READY TO ATTACK NORTH VIETNAM IF THEY ATTACKED THE SOUTH, AND THEY WOULD ALSO ATTACK CAMBODIA UNDER SIMILAR CONDITIONS.

ACTIONS WERE TAKEN IN SEVERAL OTHER AREAS TO PREPARE FOR THE NEW SITUATION. WITH THE INCREASED POSSIBILITY THAT A RETALIATORY ATTACK BY NVN IN SOUTH VIETNAM MIGHT FOLLOW. CINCPAC ASKED ITS COMMANDS TO STUDY THE AIR DEFENSE NEEDS. IT NOTED THAT THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT HAD TWO VOIDS: (1) NO RULES FOR INTERCEPT, PURSUIT, OR DESTRUCTION OF HOSTILE AIRCRAFT OVER THAILAND AND, (2) NO RULE FOR ALLOWING AIRCRAFT INTERCEPTED OVER VIETNAM TO BE FOLLOWED OUTSIDE THE RVN.

TO PREPARE FOR A POSSIBLE MOVEMENT OF COMMUNIST TROOPS ACROSS THE 17TH PARALLEL, OR INTO LAOS, COMUSMACV RECOMMENDED, ON 6 AUGUST, THAT MEDIUM-LEVEL AND LOW-LEVEL PHOTO RECCE FLIGHTS BEGIN OVER NVN.

CINCPAC AMPLIFIED HIS RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IN MID-AUGUST 1964. HE SAID:

1. IN VIEW OF FIGHTERS IN NORTH VIETNAM, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO ARM YANKEE TEAM ESCORT AIRCRAFT FOR AIR-TO-AIR COMBAT, ESPECIALLY IN AREAS WHERE DRV AIRCRAFT COULD BE EXPECTED TO CROSS THE LAOTIAN BORDER.

2. NUMBER, TYPE, ORDINANCE LOAD AND TACTICS OF ESCORT AIRCRAFT WILL CONTINUE TO BE DETERMINED ON INDIVIDUAL MISSION BASIS. THIS INFORMATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE INCLUDED IN OP-00 REPORTS FOR LONG-RANGE PLANS AND OP-1 REPORTS FOR INDIVIDUAL MISSION APPROVAL. THE FOLLOWING RULES OF ENGAGEMENT APPLY FOR YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS IN LAOS.

A. IF THE RECONNAISSANCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT ARE FIRED UPON BY GROUND FIRE, RETALIATORY FIRE IS AUTHORIZED EITHER ON THE FIRST PASS WITH THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT OR BY CIRCLING SUBSEQUENT PASSES BY ESCORTS.

B. IF THE RECONNAISSANCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT ARE ATTACKED BY HOSTILE AIRCRAFT, IMMEDIATE AND AGGRESSIVE MEASURES ARE AUTHORIZED INCLUDING HOT PURSUANT, BUT ONLY TO THE DRV/LAOS BORDER.

C. WHEN AUTHORIZED BY JCS ON INDIVIDUAL MISSION BASIS, ATTACKS TO KNOWN ANTI-AIRCRAFT POSITIONS IN ADVANCE OF THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT IS AUTHORIZED WHERE SUPPRESSION OF GROUND FIRE IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR THE SAFETY OF THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT.

CINCPAC WENT FURTHER INTO RULES OF ENGAGEMENT ON 21 AUGUST WHEN HE INFORMED TACTICAL COMMANDERS THAT AUTHORITY TO LAUNCH YANKEE TEAM WEATHER RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS HAD BEEN DELEGATED AND DID NOT REQUIRE APPROVAL FROM HIGHER HEADQUARTERS. WEATHER RECCE MISSIONS WERE AUTHORIZED AS REQUIRED, PROVIDED THEY WERE FLOWN AT ALTITUDES AND IN AREAS WHERE THEY WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO HOSTILE GROUND FIRE. NO PHOTOGRAPHY WAS PERMITTED ON THESE FLIGHTS.

REGARDING THE OP PROCEDURAL MESSAGES, CINCPAC TOLD HIS SUBORDINATES THAT, UNDER CURRENT GROUND RULES, MISSIONS REQUIRED APPROVAL BY STATE, DEFENSE AND JCS. MISSIONS HAD TO BE FLOWN EXACTLY AS LISTED IN THE OP-00 AND APPROVED BY JCS/CINCPAC. IF DEVIATIONS WERE DESIRED, THEY HAD TO BE SUBMITTED AS AN OP-00 MOD AND THE MISSION WAS NOT TO BE FLOWN UNTIL THE REQUEST FOR DEVIATION WAS ACTED UPON.

SHALLOW, UNESCORTED PHOTO PENETRATION INTO LAOTIAN BORDER AREAS WERE APPROVED BY THE JCS ON 25 AUGUST. THESE MISSIONS WERE TO BE FLOWN AT MEDIUM ALTITUDES TO OBTAIN COVERAGE OF SPECIFIC TARGETS OF INTEREST TO MACV AND WERE NOT TO EXCEED ONE MISSION EVERY 48 HOURS. ON 15 OCTOBER, PERMISSION WAS GIVEN BY THE JCS TO FLY A MAXIMUM OF TWO MISSIONS PER DAY DURING THE PERIOD 15-31 OCTOBER, IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE TERRAIN STUDY. MISSIONS WERE FLOWN UNESCORTED AND AT MEDIUM OR HIGH-LEVEL ALTITUDES, WITH THE 2D AIR DIVISION PROVIDING SAR SUPPORT.

RELAXATION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT TO ALLOW NORMAL FARM GATE OPERATIONS WITH EITHER A VNAF STUDENT PILOT OR VNAF OBSERVER ABOARD WAS AGREED TO BY SEC DEF ON 25 SEPTEMBER. THIS WAS IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FROM THE JCS TO CHANGE SEVERAL FARM GATE RULES. THE JCS, IN ADDITION TO ASKING FOR "OBSERVERS," SOUGHT A CHANGE OF THE FARM GATE MISSION TO INCLUDE COMBAT SUPPORT AS WELL AS TRAINING, AUTHORIZATION FOR SCRAMBLING FARM GATE AIRCRAFT FOR IMMEDIATE REQUESTS WITH ONLY THE U.S. CREW ABOARD, AND CHANGING THE MARKINGS ON FARM GATE AIRCRAFT FROM VNAF TO USAF. THE SECDEF AUTHORIZED ONLY THE USE OF "OBSERVERS" CONSIDERING THE OTHER CHANGES AS "NOT BEING IN THE BEST INTEREST AT THE TIME."

NEAR THE END OF SEPT. 1964, *** GAVE THE RLAF APPROVAL FOR USE FOR ITS T-28'S IN THE PROPOSED INTERDICTION STRIKES ALONG ROUTE 7. THESE AIRCRAFT WERE AUTHORIZED FOR USE IN HIGH-COVER SUPPORT, FLAK SUPPRESSION ROLES AND SAR OPERATIONS. ARMED YANKEE TEAM RECON MISSIONS WERE ALSO AUTHORIZED TO STRIKE TARGETS BEYOND THE CAPABILITIES OF THE RLAF T-28'S.

IN AN EMBASSY TELECON FROM THE AMBASSADOR IN BANGKOK TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT (OCTOBER 5TH), THE AMBASSADOR SUMMARIZED GUIDE LINES FOR USING THAI-BASED USAF ASSETS. BRIEFLY, THEY INCLUDED PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE OVER LAOS; ARMED ESCORT FOR PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE OVER LAOS; SAR OPERATIONS IN LAOS; ARMED ESCORT AND SUPPRESSIVE FIRE FOR LAOTIAN SAR; AIR DEFENSE OF THAI AIRSPACE WITH HOT PURSUIT OVER NEIGHBORING BORDERS AUTHORIZED; AND, IN THE EVENT OF DIRECT CHINESE COMMUNIST INTERVENTION, ANY USE OF THAI-BASED AIR POWER AS NEEDED.

A FINAL PLANNING MEETING FOR AIR STRIKES AGAINST TARGETS IN THE PANHANDLE WAS HELD

AT MACV HEADQUARTERS ON 9 OCTOBER. REPRESENTATIVES FROM 2D AIR DIVISION, MACV, U.S. EMBASSY VIENTIANE, AND 7TH FLEET ATTENDED. AT THIS MEETING, THE AIR ATTACHE, VIENTIANE, SAID THERLAF WOULD GO AGAINST 13 TARGETS, INCLUDING MU GIA PASS ON 14 OCTOBER 1964. THIS WOULD BE DONE WHETHER OR NOT THE U.S. PROVIDED ANY REQUESTED CAP OR YANKEE TEAM STRIKES. THE TERM YANKEE TEAM IN RELATION TO STRIKES AGAINST TARGETS WAS A CINCPAC ACTION OF THE YANKEE TEAM MISSION WHICH CONSIDERED THE ARMED IN ARMED RACE ATTACKS AS PART OF THE OVERALL PACKAGE. ITS AUTHORITY WAS NOT GRANTED FOR CAP AIRCRAFT TO FLY OVER LAOS, SUCH COVER WOULD BE PROVIDED BY AIRCRAFT ORBITING OVER THE BVN AND THAILAND. THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE AUTOMATIC LAUNCH OF U.S. JETS FROM THAILAND OR SOUTH VIETNAM IN SUPPORT OF SAR OPERATIONS OR AIR IN AN ORDINANCE WITH THE NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT.

CINCPAC REPORTED THAT U.S. CLOSE AIR SUPPORT FOR RLAF OPERATIONS IN LAOS WAS AUTHORIZED, USING FORCES NAMED IN VIETNAM OR ABOARD AIRCRAFT CARRIERS. THE AMBASSADOR TO LAOS APPROVED YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS NORTH OF 20 DEGREES AND EAST OF THE NAM HOU AND NAM HOUP RIVERS ON 28 OCTOBER.

IN LATE OCTOBER, RENEWED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL OF YANKEE TEAM STRIKES AGAINST ROUTE 7 WERE MADE AND THE FIRST USAF INTERDICTION MISSION WAS FINALLY APPROVED AND FLOWN. THESE INTERDICTION MISSIONS, LATER TERMED BARREL ROLL, WERE NOT AUTHORIZED ALTERNATE TARGETS WHEN FLOWN AT NIGHT.

SHORTLY AFTER THE VIET CONG MORNING ATTACK ON BIEN HOA, ON 1 NOVEMBER AMBASSADOR TAYLOR, CONCURRING WITH THE ICS PLANS FOR COUNTERACTIONS, AND WITH AN ENDORSEMENT FROM COMUSMACV, STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT RETALIATORY AIR STRIKES BE UNDERTAKEN JOINTLY WITH THE RVN. COMUSMACV WIRED THAT HE KNEW OF NO SPECIFIC VIET CONG TARGET IN THE RVN WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE AN APPROPRIATE REPRISAL. WHILE THERE WAS A CONSTANT SEARCH FOR SUCH A TARGET, AND WITH SOME LIMITED SUCCESS, NONE WERE FOUND JUSTIFYING A MASS AIR ATTACK.

WHILE THERE WERE ENOUGH VNAF/FARM GATE AIRCRAFT IN THE RVN TO LAUNCH REPRISAL ATTACKS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, COMUSMACV CONSIDERED IT "HIGHLY DESIRABLE" THAT HE HAVE IN-HAND AUTHORITY TO USE USAF AUGMENTATION FORCES WHEN AND IF REQUIRED. TO REDUCE CONGESTION OF BASES IN THE RVN AND IMPROVE THE U.S. POSTURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, OSD IN EARLY NOVEMBER 1964 WAS CONSIDERING AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF U.S. AIRCRAFT BASED IN THAILAND. AMBASSADOR MARTIN, IN BANGKOK, WAS ASKED BY OSD ON 2 NOVEMBER TO GET THAI GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE MOVEMENT OF AIRCRAFT IN AND OUT OF THAI BASES AS CINCPAC MAY DESIRE AND FOR INCREASED USE OF THAI AIRCRAFT ON YANKEE TEAM ESCORT MISSIONS. HOWEVER, ON 7 NOVEMBER, SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK ADVISED THAT THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT WAS NOT TO BE APPROACHED ON THE USE OF THAI-BASED AIRCRAFT UNTIL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS WERE ISSUED.

FOLLOWING THE DOWNING OF TWO USAF AIRCRAFT IN A THREE-DAY PERIOD (18-21 NOVEMBER) THE RULES OF YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS WERE CHANGED AGAIN. AS A RESULT OF THE CRASHES, THE JCS IMMEDIATELY SET 10,000 FEET AS THE NEW MINIMUM FOR YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS. AUTHORITY FOR LOW-LEVEL MISSIONS HAD TO BE APPROVED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. THE U.S. AMBASSADOR IN LAOS WAS GRATIFIED BY THIS DECISION AND RECOMMENDED THAT ANY FLIGHT AUTHORIZED FOR LOW-LEVEL BE INDIVIDUALLY APPROVED BY THE EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE.

CINCPACAF CONSIDERED THAT JCS RESTRICTION OF FLIGHT TO 10,000 FEET WOULD ONLY RESULT IN SIGNIFICANTLY LESS EFFECTIVE RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS IN LAOS AND WOULD DENY U.S. AGENCIES THE INTELLIGENCE NECESSARY FOR BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL PLANNING. ANY ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS, IF APPLIED TO TACTICAL OPERATIONS, HE SAID, WOULD FURTHER DECREASE THE CAPABILITY FOR TIMELY RESPONSE TO PRIORITY VISUAL AND PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE REQUIREMENTS.

AS THE YANKEE TEAM EFFORT CUT DOWN ENEMY DAYLIGHT ACTIVITY AND INCREASED NIGHT

MOVEMENTS, THERE WAS A NEED FOR A NIGHT PHOTO-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT WHICH COULD KEEP THE ENEMY OFF BALANCE AND CRIMP HIS NOCTURNAL ACTIVITY. THERE WERE TWO RB-57'S IN VIETNAM AND TWO MORE ENROUTE IN DECEMBER WHICH WERE IR CONFIGURED AND CAPABLE OF NIGHT WORK. THE RF-101'S HAD A LIMITED NIGHT CAPABILITY USING A POD FOR CARRYING FLASH CARTRIDGES, BUT POSSESSED NO SELF-CONTAINED NAVIGATION SYSTEM. ALL THE YANKEE TEAM NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE DAY-AND-NIGHT ELINT RECCE OPERATIONS HAD EMPLOYED CARRIER BASED RA-3B'S, RF-8'S, AND EA-3B AIRCRAFT. THESE AIRCRAFT WERE RESTRICTED TO MINIMUM ALTITUDES OF 15,000 FEET USING FLASH BOMBS INSTEAD OF FLASH CARTRIDGES. THIS RESTRICTED THE NIGHT PHOTO RECCE TO AIRCRAFT WITH BOMB BAYS AND ELIMINATED THE RF-TYPE AIRCRAFT FOR NIGHT OPERATIONS SINCE FLASH BOMBS COULD NOT BE CARRIED EXTERNALLY DUE TO THEIR SENSITIVITY. IN VIEW OF THESE DEFICIENCIES IN THE NIGHT RECCE CAPABILITY, CINCPAC ASKED THE JCS FOR AN AIR FORCE STRIKE RTF PACKAGE OF FOUR RB-66B'S AND TWO RB-66C'S TO BE DEPLOYED TO CLARK TO AUGMENT THE YANKEE TEAM FORCES IN SEA. THESE AIRCRAFT COULD OPERATE UNDER THE RULES THEN IN EFFECT.

ON 20 NOVEMBER, CINCPACFLT GRANTED AUTHORITY TO COMSEVENTHFLEET TO SCHEDULE RA-5C AIRCRAFT FOR DAY AS WELL AS NIGHT YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS. GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT WAS A LIST OF SPECIFIC "DO NOTS." "DO NOT SCHEDULE MISSIONS AGAINST HEAVILY DEFENDED TARGETS UNLESS SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED TO DO SO. DO NOT SCHEDULE THE RA-5C FOR WEATHER RECCE MISSIONS. SELECT ALTITUDES GIVING A REASONABLE MARGIN OF SAFETY ABOVE GROUND FIRE ENVELOPES."

AMBASSADOR UNGER (VIENTIANE) WAS OBVIOUSLY UNIMPRESSED BY THE AIR FORCE'S ARGUMENTS CONCERNING ALTITUDES AND APPROVAL FOR YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS. IN A 27 NOVEMBER MESSAGE HE SAID THAT VARIOUS SENSOR SYSTEMS ALLOW AIRCRAFT TO OPERATE JUST AS EFFECTIVELY AT MEDIUM ALTITUDE LEVELS AS THEY OPERATE AT LOW, PROVIDING PERIODS OF WEATHER PROMISE GOOD CEILING AND VISIBILITY. THE MESSAGE CONCLUDED, "EMBASSY RESERVES RIGHT TO COMMENT ON ALL YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS."

ON 14 DEC 1964, THE FIRST OF THE BARREL ROLL MISSIONS WAS FLOWN, RESULTING IN STRIKES AGAINST A BRIDGE AND A GROUP OF BUILDINGS ON THE EAST APPROACH. AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN (LAOS) WIRED THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 18 DECEMBER THAT HE WAS DISTURBED BY TWO ASPECTS OF THIS MISSION. FIRST, IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE BRIDGE WAS NOT A TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY UNLESS ENEMY FORCES WERE MOVING ON IT. THIS WAS A RLAF TARGET AND COULD HAVE BEEN HIT BY RLAF T-28'S THAT DAY. THE AMBASSADOR FELT THIS POINTED UP THE NEED FOR MORE COORDINATION. SECONDLY, ACCORDING TO THE AMBASSADOR, PHOTOS SHOWED HOUSES DESTROYED ON THE EAST APPROACH TO THE BRIDGE WHICH COULD WELL HAVE BEEN CIVILIAN DWELLINGS. HE ADDED:

... EITHER I HAVE A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING OF RULES OF THE GAME FOR THESE BARREL ROLL MISSIONS OR ELSE THERE HAS BEEN A SERIOUS FAILURE IN COORDINATION OF A TYPE WHICH COULD CAUSE US SOME SIGNIFICANT HEADACHE...

CINCPAC WIRED THE JCS THE NEXT DAY THAT HE CONCURRED WITH AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN'S VIEWS THAT THE BRIDGE, PER SE, WAS NOT A TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY UNLESS ENEMY FORCES WERE MOVING ON IT. THE POSSIBLE CIVILIAN HOUSES, HE ADDED, APPEARED TO BE RLAF TARGET NO. 25, WHICH WAS A MILITARY INSTALLATION. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT CONSIDER THIS A TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY OBSERVED PL/VM ACTIVITY. TO AVOID FUTURE MISUNDERSTANDINGS, BE REPORTED, HE WAS INSTRUCTING HIS OPERATIONAL COMMANDERS THAT TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY WERE CONFINED TO UNMISTAKABLE MILITARY ACTIVITY OF A TRANSIENT OR MOBILE NATURE AND THAT FIXED INSTALLATIONS WERE TO BE STRUCK ONLY IN CONNECTION WITH ATTACKS ON CLEARLY IDENTIFIED MILITARY CONVOYS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL OR WHEN PRE-BRIEFED AS A SECONDARY TARGET. YANKEE TEAM PROCEDURES WERE TO BE USED FOR ALL FUTURE OPERATIONS.

PRIOR TO THE SECOND SERIES OF BARREL ROLL FLIGHTS, 2D AIR DIVISION REQUESTED AND RECEIVED APPROVAL TO FLY RECCE AIRCRAFT WITH THE STRIKE GROUP WITH THE RECCE AIRCRAFT

AUTHORIZED TO FLY BELOW 10,000 FEET AT OPTIMUM ALTITUDE TO GET PHOTOS OF THE TYPE AND QUALITY NECESSARY TO ASSESS IMMEDIATE STRIKE RESULTS. IF THE RECCE AIRCRAFT HAD TO DESCEND, ESCORT OF CAP AIRCRAFT WOULD SUPPORT THEM. LIKE THE FIRST MISSION, NAPALM WAS NOT AUTHORIZED ON THESE FLIGHTS, NOR WERE STRIKE AIRCRAFT TO BE LAUNCHED FROM THAILAND BASES.

ON 15 DECEMBER, AC-47 AIRCRAFT WERE INTRODUCED TO COMBAT, WHICH WAS TO RESULT IN ADDITIONAL RULES OF ENGAGEMENT TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR UTILIZATION.

ANOTHER REQUEST BY MACV FOR THE USE OF TWO THAI-BASED F-105'S TO ESCORT STRIKE RECCE AIRCRAFT ON THE SECOND SERIES OF BARREL ROLL MISSIONS WAS DISAPPROVED BY CINCPAC ON 22 DECEMBER. CINCPAC SAID THAT THE INTENT OF BARREL ROLL WAS TO LIMIT STRIKE FORCES OF OUR AIRCRAFT FOR OTHER THAN THAILAND BASES. THE ADDITION OF THE TWO F-105'S WOULD RAISE THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT TO SIX AND WOULD NOT COMPLY WITH THE GROUND RULES LAID DOWN BY "HIGHER AUTHORITY."

AT THE CLOSE OF 1964, 2D AIR DIVISION PUBLISHED A COMPILATION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT SUMMARIZING PROHIBITIVE AND PERMISSIVE AIR ACTIONS IN FORCE AT THAT TIME:

ANNEX 1 – INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND AIRSPACE OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS

1. U.S. FORCES ARE AUTHORIZED TO ATTACK AND DESTROY ANY VESSEL OR AIRCRAFT WHICH ATTACKS.

2. HOT PURSUIT INTO TERRITORIAL WATERS AND AIRSPACE AS MAY BE NECESSARY AND FEASIBLE IS AUTHORIZED.

3. HOSTILE FORCES AND INSTALLATIONS, OTHER THAN THOSE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES, WHICH ARE ENCOUNTERED OUTSIDE THE CONFINES OF RVN AND THAILAND WILL NOT BE ATTACKED EXCEPT AS NECESSARY FOR SELF DEFENSE AND ONLY TO THAT EXTENT.

4. TO PURSUIT IS AUTHORIZED INTO CHICOM TERRITORIAL WATERS AND AIRSPACE.

ANNEX 2 – REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (RVN)

1. U.S. FORCES ARE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE AND DESTROY HOSTILE AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF RVN.

2. HOT PURSUIT MAY BE CONDUCTED AS NECESSARY AND FEASIBLE INTO NORTH VIETNAM (DRV), LAOS, CAMBODIA, AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL WATERS NOT TO INCLUDE CHICOM TERRITORY OR TERRITORIAL WATERS.

3. HOSTILE FORCES OR INSTALLATIONS, OTHER THAN THOSE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES, WHICH ARE ENCOUNTERED OUTSIDE THE CONFINES OF RVN, WILL NOT BE ATTACKED EXCEPT AS NECESSARY FOR SELF DEFENSE AND ONLY TO THAT EXTENT.

ANNEX 4A – AIR DEFENSE OF LAOS

1. U.S. FORCES POSITIONED IN RVN MAY BE USED FOR AIR DEFENSE IN LAOS WHEN AUTHORIZED BY THE COMMANDER 2AD OR HIS AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.

A. INFORMATION ON ANY ACTION TAKEN UNDER THIS AUTHORITY WILL BE PROVIDED TO JCS BY FLASH PRECEDENCE MESSAGE.

2. U.S. AIR DEFENSE FORCES ARE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE AND DESTROY HOSTILE AIRCRAFT IN LAOS. HOT PURSUIT MAY BE NECESSARY AND FEASIBLE OVER RVN

A. HOT PURSUIT INTO NORTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA IS NOT AUTHORIZED EXCEPT WHEN ACTUALLY ENGAGED IN COMBAT.

3. UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED, U.S. AIR DEFENSE FORCES ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO ATTACK HOSTILE FORCES OR INSTALLATIONS, OTHER THAN THOSE COMMITTED AGAINST, UNLESS

ATTACK FIRST, AND THEN ONLY TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY FOR SELF DEFENSE.

4. DEFINITIONS OF A HOSTILE AIRCRAFT AND HOSTILE ACTS ARE THE SAME AS THOSE DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 4 (BASIC ATTACHMENT) WITH THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONS:

A. A HOSTILE AIRCRAFT IS ONE WHICH IS VISUALLY IDENTIFIED, OR DESIGNATED BY THE U.S. DIRECTOR OF AN AOC OR HIS AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE, AS A COMMUNIST BLOC OR CAMBODIAN AIRCRAFT OVERFLYING LAOS TERRITORY AND COMMITTING A HOSTILE ACT.

ANNEX 4B — YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS — LAOS

1. MEDIUM LEVEL ESCORT: RETALIATORY FIRE IS AUTHORIZED IF RECONNAISSANCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT ARE ENDANGERED BY GROUND FIRE.

2. LOW LEVEL ESCORT: IF RECONNAISSANCE OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT ARE FIRED UPON, RETALIATORY FIRE IS AUTHORIZED EITHER ON THE FIRST PASS WITH THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT, OR BY CIRCLING BACK AND CONDUCTING SUBSEQUENT PASSES.

3. LOW LEVEL ESCORT AGAINST AREAS HAVING STRONG AAA: ESCORTS ARE AUTHORIZED TO EMPLOY THE BEST OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUE AVAILABLE TO MINIMIZE RISK WHICH, WHEN AUTHORIZED BY JCS, MAY INCLUDE ATTACK ON KNOWN AAA POSITIONS IN ADVANCE OF RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT WHERE SUPPRESSION OF GROUND FIRE IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR SAFETY OF THE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT.

ANNEX 4C — RESCAP OPERATIONS — LAOS

1. RESCAP AIRCRAFT WILL NOT ENTER THE AREA OF THE DISTRESSED CREW MEMBER(S) UNLESS REQUESTED BY THE RESCUE "ON-SCENE-COMMANDER" OR RESCUE CONTROL.

2. IF RESCUE HELICOPTERS ARE FIRED UPON, RESCAP AIRCRAFT WILL TAKE ACTION TO SUPPRESS GROUND FIRE AFTER THE HELICOPTER(S) DEPARTS THE AREA OF GROUND FIRE.

A. IF GROUND FIRE IS COMING FROM THE VICINITY OF THE DISTRESSED CREW MEMBER(S), RESCAP AIRCRAFT WILL INSURE THAT RETURN FIRE WILL NOT ENDANGER FRIENDLIES ON THE GROUND.

B. IF THE CREW ON THE GROUND CAN BE SEEN AND GROUND FIRE IS PREVENTING HELICOPTERS FROM APPROACHING CLOSE ENOUGH FOR PICK-UP, RESCAP AIRCRAFT BETWEEN THE ENEMY POSITIONS AND THE DISTRESSED CREW MEMBER (S) AS A SCREENING ACTION FOR THE HELICOPTERS.

ANNEX 4D — AIR DEFENSE CAP LAOS IN CONJUNCTION WITH RLAFF STRIKE/BDA

1. WHEN REQUESTED BY THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO LAOS, CAP IS AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE TOP COVER FOR RLAFF T-28 STRIKES IN LAOS BY CINCPAC TS MESSAGE 140843Z OCT 64, "CORRIDOR OPS LAOS", AND IAW JCS 9117, "DEFINITIVE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT APPLYING TO LAOS." THIS APPLIES ONLY TO AUTHORIZED PRE-BRIEFED TARGETS IN LAOS AND TO THE PROVISION OF NAVIGATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO RLAFF T-28'S AND YANKEE TEAM AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED TO OBTAIN BDA OF ATTACKED TARGETS. JCS 9117, "DEFINITIVE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT APPLYING TO LAOS" APPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTION: SUPPRESSIVE OR RETALIATORY FIRE AGAINST AAA IS NOT AUTHORIZED.

2. SHOULD CAP AIRCRAFT BE DIVERTED FOR RESCAP, CURRENT SAR RULES WILL APPLY.

THE PROBLEM OF FINDING TARGETS VISUALLY AFTER DARK PRESENTED ANOTHER FACTOR LEADING TO SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS COMPOUNDED IN THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT. THIS SITUATION WAS AMPLY ILLUSTRATED IN THE UNFORTUNATE BOMBING OF THE VILLAGE OF BAN TANG VAI, SEVERAL MILES WEST OF ROUTE 23 AND JUST SOUTH OF ROUTE 9 IN THE CENTRAL PANHANDLE OF LAOS. ALTHOUGH ACTUAL DAMAGE TO THE VILLAGE WAS SLIGHT, AND THERE WAS EVIDENCE THAT HIGH SPEED AIRCRAFT NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE BARREL ROLL MISSION HAD ATTACKED THE VILLAGE PRIOR TO THE NAVY STRIKE, THE INCIDENT CAUSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN IN VIENTIANE AND WASHINGTON.

ALTHOUGH GENERAL MA, RLAFF COMMANDER, REPRESENTING THE LAO GOVERNMENT, ACCEPTED APOLOGIES FROM AMERICAN OFFICIALS, HE WAS INSISTENT THAT NEW LIMITATIONS BE PLACED

ON FUTURE BARREL ROLL MISSIONS, BOTH DAY AND NIGHT, AND THAT TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY BE RESTRICTED TO VEHICLE AND TROOP MOVEMENTS SPOTTED ON OR NEAR AUTHORIZED RECON ROUTES. FUTURE BARREL ROLL OPERATIONS WERE TO BE THE EXCLUSIVE PRESERVE OF THE RLAF.

SEVERAL RESTRICTIONS WERE PLACED ON EARLY BARREL ROLL MISSIONS, COMMENCING 12 FEBRUARY 1965, WHICH DO DOUBT SERVED TO OFFSET THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM SOMEWHAT. EARLY MISSIONS WERE LIMITED TO SMALL NUMBER OF STRIKE AIRCRAFT AND WERE SPARSELY SPACED. A PERIOD OF 72 HOURS WAS INITIALLY REQUIRED BETWEEN ARMED RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS (LATER REDUCED TO 48 HOURS), AND THE USE OF NAPALM AS A WEAPON WAS PROHIBITED, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE ADVOCATES FOR ITS USE. OVERFLIGHT OF NVN WAS NOT PERMITTED AND A TWO-MILE BUFFER ZONE WAS ESTABLISHED ALONG THE LAOS/NORTH VIETNAM BORDER. IN FEBRUARY, MACV RECOMMENDED THAT ALL SUCH RESTRAINTS BE CLOSELY MONITORED SINCE THEY CREATED UNNECESSARY RESTRICTIONS FOR THE TACTICAL COMMANDER RESPONSIBLE FOR MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT.

THE STERILE INTERVAL REQUIRED BETWEEN MISSIONS IN THE EARLY MONTHS, ALTHOUGH REDUCED FROM 72 TO 48 HOURS, RESULTED IN MISSION DELAYS AND CREATED SCHEDULING PROBLEMS. THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE JCS GIVE FINAL APPROVAL OF ALL BARREL ROLL MISSIONS ALSO LIMITED THE SCOPE OF THE EARLY BARREL ROLL PROGRAM. FLEETING OR MOBILE TARGETS, PINPOINTED BY SUCH INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AS FAR AND MEO FORCES, ROAD WATCH TEAMS AND HAD TO BE LEFT TO THE RLAF T-28'S UNTIL THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BANGO/WHIPLASH MISSIONS IN MID-1965.

A LACK OF LOW-LEVEL PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE PHOTOGRAPHY OVER LAOS WAS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF EARLY RESTRICTIONS AFFECTING AIR OPERATIONS. CINCPAC CONSIDERED LOW-LEVEL OBLIQUE AND VERTICAL PHOTOGRAPHY ESSENTIAL IN LOCATING AND CONFIRMING DISPERSED AND CONCEALED TARGETS. HE RECOMMENDED LOW-LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE, BY YANKEE TEAM AIRCRAFT, TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED INTELLIGENCE. REFLIGHTS BY STEEL TIGER/BARREL ROLL AIRCRAFT, MERELY TO OBTAIN BDA, ALSO HAD TO BE APPROVED BY HIGHER AUTHORITY. MACV FELT THAT THE THREE-DAY WAITING PERIOD FOR APPROVAL OF REFLIGHTS GAVE THE ENEMY AMPLE TIME TO REMOVE THE EVIDENCE, ESPECIALLY WHERE MOBILE TARGETS WERE CONCERNED. MACV WANTED PROVISIONS MADE IN THE ORIGINAL OPERATIONS ORDER TO ALLOW REFLIGHTS TO OBTAIN BDA WHEN NECESSARY, WITHOUT THE NECESSITY FOR OBTAINING FURTHER APPROVAL.

THE LONG-WAITED APPROVAL FOR THE USE OF NAPALM IN NORTH VIETNAM WAS FINALLY GRANTED AND USED IN THE 15 MARCH STRIKE AGAINST THE PHU QUI AMMUNITION DEPOT. THE FOLLOWING DAY (16 MARCH 1965), TO PROVIDE OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY ON FUTURE STRIKES, THE JCS AUTHORIZED STRIKE MISSIONS AGAINST THE NVN ON A WEEKLY BASIS, WITH STRIKES TO BE EXECUTED AT ANY TIME DURING A SEVEN-DAY PERIOD. THOSE TARGETS NOT STRUCK DURING THE PERIOD COULD BE CARRIER OVER INTO SUBSEQUENT WEEKS.

CINCPAC FURTHER RELAXED THE GROUND RULES FOR THE FOUR-WEEK ROLLING THUNDER PROGRAM, 17 MARCH-13 APRIL 1965. THAI-BASED PLANES COULD NOW BE USED. U.S. FORCES COULD FILL OUT VNAF REQUIREMENTS. ENOUGH AIRCRAFT COULD BE USED TO ACHIEVE A HIGH DAMAGE LEVEL. RANDOM ARMED RECCE MISSIONS, EMPLOYING 4-8 AIRCRAFT, PLUS SUITABLE CAP AND FLAK SUPPORT WERE AUTHORIZED. U.S. STRIKES WERE NOT REQUIRED IN ASSOCIATION WITH VNAF MISSIONS. ARMED RECCE OF HIGHWAYS AND RAILWAYS TO STRIKE ROLLING STOCK WAS AUTHORIZED AFTER STRIKES. FLAK AND CAP AIRCRAFT COULD EXPEND ON ROLLING STOCK AND MILITARY VEHICLES. LOW-LEVEL AND MEDIUM ALTITUDE BDA RECCE WAS ALSO AUTHORIZED.

IN LATE MARCH, ACCORDING TO CINCPAC, THE U.S. WAS TRANSITING BETWEEN A SITUATION WHERE THE U.S. WAS NOT INVOLVED IN A LARGE WAR WITH THE NVN AND/OR CHICOMS AND A SITUATION WHERE LARGE U.S. FORCES WERE ACTUALLY ENGAGED IN COMBAT. IN THIS LATTER CASE, U.S. MILITARY * * * * DAILY MISSIONS; LARGER NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT WERE ASSIGNED TO INDIVIDUAL TARGETS; THE USE OF NAPALM PERMITTED WHEN APPROVED BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO LAOS; REMOVAL OF THE TWO-MILE BUFFER ZONE; LOW-LEVEL PHOTOGRAPHY AND MORE FLEXIBLE TARGET ASSIGNMENTS WERE PROVIDED FOR. HOWEVER, MANY OLD LIMITATIONS

WERE REPLACED WITH NEW ONES AND POLITICAL RESTRAINTS WERE A NEVER-ENDING PROBLEM IN THE LAOS INTERDICTION OPERATIONS.

OTHER PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE PROBLEMS WERE RAISED BY THE AUGUST 1964 PROHIBITION OF ACCOMPLISHING PHOTOGRAPHIC RECONNAISSANCE ON WEATHER FLIGHTS. SECOND AIR DIVISION SAID THAT SUCH A RESTRICTION DID NOT PERMIT THE BEST USE OF ITS AIRCRAFT ASSETS. THE DIVISION ADDED THAT THE JCS WERE UNAWARE OF THE RESTRICTIONS AND THOUGHT IT MIGHT NOT BE IN LINE WITH THE LATTER'S THINKING. IN LATE JANUARY, 2D AIR DIVISION INFORMED 13AF OF FAILURE IN PAST EFFORTS TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FROM MACV AND OTHER AGENCIES UP THE LINE OF AUTHORITY. THE DIVISION THEN ASKED 13AF TO SEEK PERMISSION TO PHOTOGRAPH TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY DURING YANKEE TEAM WEATHER MISSIONS. IT WAS NOT UNTIL SEPTEMBER THAT CINCPAC NOTIFIED COMUSMACV THAT THE RULES BARRING PHOTOGRAPHY HAD BEEN WAIVED AND PHOTOS COULD BE TAKEN.

FOLLOWING SEVERAL WEEKS OF COMMAND AND CONTROL DISCUSSIONS AMONG CINCPAC, CINCPACFLT AND COMUSMACV, THE ARGUMENTS WERE CLOSED BY CINCPAC WHEN, IN A MESSAGE TO COMUSMACV, IT WAS STATED THAT THE CONTROLLING AGENCY FOR YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS WOULD BE CINCPAC. CONTAINED IN THIS DECISION WAS CINCPAC'S STATEMENT OF YANKEE TEAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: "RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS MAY BE CONDUCTED AT MEDIUM OR LOW-LEVEL...RETALIATORY FIRE BY ESCORTS AUTHORIZED EXCEPT AGAINST THE TOWNS OF SAM NEUA, KHANG KHAY OR XIENG KNOUANG. USE OF SUPPRESSIVE FIRE NOT AUTHORIZED UNLESS AMEMB VIENTIANE COORDINATES AND JCS APPROVAL IS OBTAINED...THE AIR FORCE CONTINUED TO PRESS FOR FREEDOM IN APPLYING SUPPRESSIVE FIRE AHEAD OF RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS INTO HEAVILY DEFENDED AREAS.

BY SEPTEMBER, THE POLICY HAD CHANGED ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT APPROVAL CAME FROM THE U.S. AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE AND CINCPAC.

ANOTHER RESTRICTION WHICH WAS DETRIMENTAL TO YANKEE TEAM WAS THE PROHIBITION AGAINST USE OF NAPALM ON ESCORTS. SECOND AIR DIVISION OPERATIONS PERSONNEL CONSIDERED THIS TO BE AN OUTSTANDING WEAPON FOR USE AGAINST AAA POSITIONS, BUT ITS USE WAS SPECIFICALLY DISAPPROVED. (USE OF CBU-2A MUNITIONS WAS AUTHORIZED BY JCS 8899/AUGUST 64.)

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT APPEARED TO BE QUIXOTIC — TRUCKS SIGHTED BY ESCORTS ON YANKEE TEAM MISSIONS WERE IMMUNED TO ATTACK, WHILE THOSE SAME TRUCKS, SIGHTED BY BARREL ROLL AIRCRAFT, COULD BE DESTROYED. * * * * *

STEEL TIGER MISSIONS, BEGUN 3 APRIL 1965, WERE TO BE CONDUCTED UNDER THE SAME GENERAL GROUND RULES AS BARREL ROLL WITH A NOTABLE EXCEPTION — NAPALM COULD NOW BE USED WHEN AUTHORIZED BY THE AMBASSADOR TO LAOS.

APPROXIMATELY TWO MONTHS AFTER THE STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS BEGAN, COMUSMACV CLARIFIED AND CONSOLIDATED PREVIOUS MESSAGE TRAFFIC ON BARREL ROLL/STEEL TIGER GROUND RULES FOR OPERATING UNITS. ONE OF THE RESTRICTIONS, THE OBSERVANCE OF THE TWO-MILE BUFFER ZONE, WAS LIFTED BY THE AMBASSADOR TO LAOS A FEW DAYS LATER. THE MESSAGE SPELLED OUT THE FOLLOWING OPERATING PROCEDURES:

BARREL ROLL:

1. CHOKE POINT MISSIONS WERE AUTHORIZED TO CONDUCT ARMED ROUTE RECONNAISSANCE AND ATTACK TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY ALONG ALL APPROVED ROUTES IN BOTH BR AND SL AREAS, IN ADDITION TO THEIR PRIMARY MISSIONS.

2. DAY RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS COULD CRATER ROADS ALONG ALL APPROVED RLAFF ROUTE SEGMENTS IN BOTH AREAS — THIS INCLUDED ALL CHOKE POINTS — TO DISPOSE OF ORDNANCE IN THE EVENT WEATHER OR OTHER OPERATIONAL FACTOR PREVENTED STRIKES AGAINST PRE-BRIEFED TARGETS.

STEEL TIGER:

1. NOT ALLOWED TO PENETRATE BR AREAS IN SEARCH OF TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY.
2. CHOKE POINT MISSIONS COULD CONDUCT ARMED RECONNAISSANCE OR STRIKES AGAINST TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY ALONG APPROVED ROUTES IN THE SL AREA IN LIEU OF PRIMARY TARGETS.
3. COULD CRATER APPROVED ROADS AND CHOKE POINTS, WITHIN THE AREA, TO DISPOSE OF ORDNANCE.

BARRELL ROLL/STEEL TIGER:

1. WHEN OPERATING IN THE SL AREA BOTH WERE DIRECTED TO COMPLY WITH STRICT RADAR FLIGHT-FOLLOWING AND NAVIGATIONAL PROCEDURES.
3. ALL BRIDGES LOCATED WITHIN ROUTE SEGMENTS AUTHORIZED FOR ROAD CRATERING COULD BE HIT, BUT BRIDGES OUTSIDE OF THESE SEGMENTS COULD NOT UNLESS THEY WERE ASSIGNED AS PRIMARY TARGETS.
4. SECONDARY TARGETS COULD BE STRUCK BEFORE ATTACKING THE PRIMARY.
5. APPROVED AREAS COULD BE USED TO DUMP ORDNANCE. (HOWEVER, THERE WERE NO AUTHORIZED JETTISON AREAS IN LAOS EXCEPT APPROVED TARGET AREAS SUCH AS ROADS AUTHORIZED TO BE CRATERED AND ESTABLISHED CHOKE POINTS.) IF EMERGENCY REQUIRED JETTISON IN OTHER THAN A TARGET LOCATION, A "SAFE" SITE WOULD BE SELECTED AND THE JETTISON REPORTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

AS THE AIR STRIKES WORKED NORTHWARD IN NVN, A REQUEST WAS MADE FOR STRIKES ABOVE 20 DEGREES. THIS REQUEST WAS APPROVED COMMENCING WITH THE 11-17 JUNE 1965 ROLLING THUNDER OPERATIONS.

ON 1 OCTOBER 1965, ALL STEEL TIGER MISSIONS WERE ORDERED TO BE DISCONTINUED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE BY THE AIR ATTACHE IN VIENTIANE. THE BAN ON STEEL TIGER MISSIONS ALSO APPLIED TO ROLLING THUNDER FLIGHTS WITH ALTERNATE TARGETS IN THE SL AREA. BARREL ROLL MISSIONS IN NORTHERN LAOS WERE NOT AFFECTED. THIS STRINGENT ACTION FOLLOWED ON THE HEELS OF AN UNINTENTIONAL STRIKE IN AN RLG-CONTROLLED AREA. A FLIGHT OF SL AIRCRAFT, DUE TO A NAVIGATIONAL ERROR, STRAFED A FISH TRAP AND A BRIDGE, DAMAGING BOTH AND WOUNDING TWO CIVILIANS AND FOUR SOLDIERS.

INTERDICTION OPERATIONS WERE CURTAILED SHARPLY DURING OCTOBER. SECOND AIR DIVISION POINTED OUT THAT DIFFICULTY ENCOUNTERED IN POSITIVELY IDENTIFYING TARGETS AND ARMED RECONNAISSANCE ROUTES, AND SUGGESTED THE POSSIBLE USE OF RLAFF FORWARD AIR CONTROLLERS IN FUTURE STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS, SIMILAR TO PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED IN THE SUCCESSFUL BANGO/WHIPLASH CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PROGRAM. EARLY IN NOVEMBER, THE AIR ATTACHE IN VIENTIANE INFORMED CINCPAC THAT HE WAS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO GET GENERAL MA TO REMOVE THE RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON STEEL TIGER BY CONVINCING HIM THAT THE WEIGHT OF EFFORT NEEDED ALONG ROUTE 92, EAST OF SARAVANE, WAS BEYOND RLAFF CAPABILITY. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT HE HESITATED TO PREDICT WHEN SL MISSIONS COULD BE RESUMED.

THE RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON STEEL TIGER OPERATIONS WERE LIFTED LATER IN NOVEMBER. ON THE 22ND OF THAT MONTH, 2D AIR DIVISION, AFTER RECOUNTING SEVERAL MINOR INFRACTIONS OF THE SL GROUND RULES, DIRECTED THE TACTICAL FIGHTER WINGS INVOLVED TO MAKE AN IMMEDIATE REVIEW OF TARGETING FOR THE HEAVY SCHEDULE FOR 22 NOVEMBER. BRIGADIER GENERAL GEORGE P. SIMLER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, 2D AIR DIVISION, TOLD RESPONSIBLE COMMANDERS, "... AIR OPERATIONS IN LAOS ARE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE. IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT YOUR AIRCREWS DO NOT EXPEND MUNITIONS OUTSIDE OF APPROVED AREAS. THERE HAVE BEEN SIX INSTANCES SINCE 20 NOVEMBER THAT VIOLATED THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT. LAOS IS BEING UTILIZED AS A STAGING BASE FOR NVN (NORTH VIETNAM) MILITARY PERSONNEL AND SUPPLIES INTO SVN (SOUTH VIETNAM). CONTINUED VIOLATIONS WILL JEOPARDIZE U.S. AUTHORITY TO ATTACK ENEMY FORCES BEFORE THEY CAN ENGAGE OUR GROUND FORCES. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE

CONDUCT OF YOUR STRIKE CREWS AND THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH (THE) RULES OF ENGAGEMENT. THERE IS NO EXCUSE THAT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR ANY ATTACK OUTSIDE AN APPROVED AREA..."

SAR OPERATIONS, AT THIS TIME, WERE ALSO AFFECTED BY RESTRICTIONS ON SUPPRESSIVE FIRE. IF A PILOT OF AN SAR AIRCRAFT FLYING LOW COVER BELIEVED THAT A DOWNED AIRMAN WAS ENDANGERED BY GROUND ACTIVITY HE HAD AUTHORITY TO ATTACK. HE COULD ALSO ATTACK AAA POSITIONS, IN A FLAK SUPPRESSION ROLE, WHILE HELICOPTERS WERE ATTEMPTING RECOVERY. NO OTHER AUTHORITY FOR SUPPRESSIVE FIRE WAS INDICATED.

AT THIS TIME, THE SOUTHERN HALF OF THE STEEL TIGER AREA WAS RECONSTITUTED AS TIGER HOUND IN AN EFFORT TO SPEED UP THE VALIDATION OF TARGETS SIGHTED IN THAT REGION.

A SPECIAL SET OF RULES APPLYING TO BARREL ROLL/STEEL TIGER, SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THOSE OPERATIONS, WERE EXTENDED TO TIGER HOUND. AIRCRAFT EMPLOYED ON THESE MISSIONS WERE PERMITTED UNLIMITED ARMED RECONNAISSANCE ALONG ALL MOTORABLE ROADS WITHIN A SPECIFIED AREA OF THE LAOS PANHANDLE BUT ONLY TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY WITHIN 200 YARDS OF THE ROAD COULD BE STRUCK. TARGETS BEYOND THIS 200 YARDS LIMIT OR ANYWHERE OUTSIDE THE SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHICAL AREA COULD ONLY BE STRUCK IF THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN APPROVED RLAFF TARGETS, OR WERE TARGETS MARKED BY RLAFF FAC'S. INFILTRATION TRAILS OR WAY-STATIONS COULD NOT BE ATTACKED AND NAPALM COULD NOT BE EMPLOYED.

AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN (LAOS) MADE IT CLEAR THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RELAXATION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND PROPOSED TO CONFINE EFFORTS TO THE SPECIAL ZONE EAST OF ALINE FROM THE INTERSECTION OF CAMBODIA, LAOS, AND SOUTH VIETNAM TO UTM COORDINATE XD 8716.

THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND THE RESTRICTIONS ON TARGETS IN THE TIGER HOUND, STEEL TIGER, AND BARREL ROLL PROGRAMS WERE SLOWLY BEING MODERATED, AS INDICATED BY A JCS MESSAGE OF 3 DECEMBER IN WHICH THE JOINT CHIEFS STATED THAT WASHINGTON'S APPROVAL WAS NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR PREPLANNED MISSIONS.

AS THINGS STOOD, HOWEVER, ALL PLANNED TARGETS HAD TO BE COORDINATED AND VALIDATED BY AMEMB/USAIRA VIENTIANE AND PLACED IN ONE OF THREE CATEGORIES: PRIORITY ALPHA — ALL TARGETS HAVING SOME RESIDUAL VALUE THAT MAY BE ATTACKED WITHOUT FURTHER VIENTIANE COORDINATION EXCEPT INCLUSION IN THE DAILY OPREP 1; PRIORITY BRAVO — INACTIVE STATUS, THOSE TARGETS ALREADY DESTROYED, ABANDONED OR HAVING VERY LOW RESIDUAL VALUE; PRIORITY CHARLIE — HOLD STATUS, THOSE TARGETS THAT MAY NOT BE STRUCK FOR POLITICAL OR MILITARY REASONS.

ALTHOUGH TIGER HOUND AIRCRAFT WERE ALLOWED TO PERFORM UNLIMITED ARMED RECONNAISSANCE ALONG THE ROADS AND MOTORABLE TRAILS WITHIN THE TAOR, THEY COULD NOT HIT VILLAGES OR BUILT UP AREAS, REGARDLESS OF MILITARY VALUE, WITHOUT HAVING THAT TARGET VALIDATED BY VIENTIANE OR THE RLAFF. EVEN WITH THE ELABORATE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT ABOARD THE ABCCC, INCLUDING THE SINGLE SIDE-BAND RADIO, TARGET VALIDATION TOOK AN AGONIZINGLY LONG TIME. IN EARLY DECEMBER, IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE SYSTEM BE STREAMLINED. AUTHORITY WAS OBTAINED TO HAVE TWO RLAFF OFFICERS ATTACHED TO THE TIGER HOUND TASK FORCE, TO RIDE IN THE C-130 ABCCC AND ACT AS OBSERVERS, WITH ON-THE-SPOT APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR ANY TARGETS DETECTED. COLONEL GROOM SAID:

"... THIS HAS WORKED OUT VERY SUCCESSFULLY TO DATE — MUCH BETTER THAN WE THOUGHT AT FIRST. IF THE LAO OBSERVER IS IN DOUBT WHETHER TO STRIKE THE TARGET OR NOT, HE HAS A SINGLE SIDE-BAND RADIO CAPABILITY AND CAN CALL THE LAOTIAN AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS AND HAVE THEM MAKE THE DECISION. WHEN WE FIRST STARTED THE PROGRAM, THIS HAPPENED MANY TIMES, BUT SINCE WE HAVE BEEN WORKING SOME MONTHS IN THE AREA AND THE PEOPLE HAVE BECOME MORE ACQUAINTED WITH THE AREA, WE HAVE RECEIVED APPROVALS ALMOST IMMEDIATELY..."

IN THE CLOSING MONTHS OF 1965, THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT GOVERNING STRIKE OPERATIONS IN NORTH VIETNAM (ROLLING THUNDER) INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

A. JCS TARGETS PREVIOUSLY STRUCK COULD BE RE-STRUCK WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

(EXCLUDING LOCKS, DAMS, AND THAT PORTION OF TARGET 52 WHICH WAS FORMERLY TARGET 38).

B. STRIKE SORTIES WERE LIMITED TO 1200 FOR EACH 14-DAY CYCLE, WITH ADDITIONAL SORTIES AUTHORIZED IF NECESSARY TO DESTROY SAM INSTALLATIONS, TRUCKS, RAIL STOCK OR NVN NAVAL CRAFT.

C. MILITARY TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY, IN THE VICINITY OF TARGET AREAS (AND CRAFTS OR UNITS FIRING UPON AIRCRAFT ENROUTE TO OR FROM MISSIONS) TO BE DESTROYED.

D. TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY SITUATED OUTSIDE THE ARMED RECONNAISSANCE AREA WERE NOT TO BE STRUCK IF WITHIN 25NM OF CHINA BORDER, 30NM FROM THE CENTER OF HANOI, OR 10NM FROM THE CENTER OF HAIPHONG.

E. THOSE JCS TARGETS AUTHORIZED IN PARAGRAPH "A", ABOVE (AND WITH THE SAME EXCLUSIONS), COULD BE ATTACKED BY AIRCRAFT RETURNING FROM MISSIONS (INCLUDING BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER AIRCRAFT OVERFLYING NVNO IF THOSE TARGETS LAY IN THE ARMED RECONNAISSANCE AREA AND WERE SUITABLE AS JETTISON AREAS.

F. AIRCRAFT OVERFLYING LAOS WERE AUTHORIZED ATTACK ON RLAFF TARGETED ROAD SEGMENTS IN LAOS.

G. PRE-STRIKE, CONCURRENT AND POST-STRIKE RECONNAISSANCE AUTHORIZED.

H. MIGCAP, SCREEN AIRCRAFT, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ELEMENTS WERE DIRECTED TO ENGAGE IN COMBAT (INCLUDING SAM SUPPRESSION) WHEN REQUIRED TO PROTECT STRIKE FORCES.

I. WHEN ENGAGED IN IMMEDIATE PURSUIT, U.S. WERE NOT AUTHORIZED TO ATTACK NVN AIR BASES FROM WHICH ENEMY AIRCRAFT WERE OPERATING.

J. ATTACKS ON POPULATED AREAS TO BE AVOIDED DURING STRIKES AGAINST ANY TARGET (INCLUDING THOSE DEVELOPED BY ARMED ROUTE RECONNAISSANCE).

K. FLIGHT PATHS OF STRIKE AND ARMED RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS TO BE PLANNED SO AS TO PRECLUDE APPROACHING CLOSER THAN 20NM TO THE CHINA BORDER.

L. CINPAC WAS AUTHORIZED TO ASSIGN ALTERNATE MISSIONS TO BARREL ROLL AND STEEL TIGER AIRCRAFT IN THE ROLLING THUNDER AREA.

EPILOGUE

U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE BEEN MARKED BY A VARIETY OF POLITICAL AND OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS. SELF-IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON THE APPLICATION OF MILITARY POWER IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO REMAIN AN ESSENTIAL FEATURE OF OUR NATIONAL POLICY. THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE POLICY OBJECTIVE OF CONVEYING TO THE ENEMY THE LIMITED NATURE OF OUR RESPONSE, EVEN WHILE WE CONDUCT AIR STRIKES ON HIS TERRITORY, REQUIRE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE RESTRICTIONS TO BE ADOPTED. A CONSTRAINTS POLICY MUST BE FASHIONED WHICH WILL MINIMIZE THE RISK OF MAJOR ESCALATION BUT WHICH ALSO WILL PERMIT USE OF ENOUGH MEASURED FORCE TO ASSURE ATTAINMENT OF OUR OBJECTIVES — TO CHECK NVN SUPPORT OF INSURGENCY IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND LAOS.

THE RULES ESTABLISHED FOR CONDUCT OF AIR OPERATIONS TO DATE HAVE TAKEN A NUMBER OF FORMS. THESE HAVE INCLUDED GEOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL RESTRAINTS; LIMITATIONS ON THE SIZE, FREQUENCY AND ALTITUDE OF FLIGHTS; AND RESTRICTIONS ON WEAPON TYPES EMPLOYED. IN COMBINATION, THEY HAVE POSED A CHALLENGING, SOMETIMES FRUSTRATING SUCCESSION OF PROBLEMS FOR THE COMMANDERS AND STAFF OFFICERS CHARGED WITH THE PLANNING AND CONDUCT OF AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN. GRADUAL MODIFICATION OF THE CONSTRAINTS POLICY HAS OCCURRED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD AND SOME OF THE MORE RESTRICTIVE RULES WHICH APPLIED TO EARLIER ARMED RECCE AND STRIKE MISSIONS HAVE BEEN RELAXED. SEVERAL OF THE CONSTRAINTS THAT STILL EXIST, HOWEVER, LIMIT THE CAPABILITY OF OUR FORCES TO CONDUCT A CAMPAIGN THAT WILL ACHIEVE THE DESIRED OBJECTIVE. THE REPEATED DISCUSSIONS AND EXCHANGES WHICH HAVE BEEN GENERATED AT ALL LEVELS BY THESE CONSTRAINTS HAVE

CENTERED MAINLY ON THE SPECIFIC PROSCRIPTIONS RATHER THAN ON THE FUNDAMENTAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS WHICH UNDERLIE THEM.

GLOSSARY

AAA — ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY.

ABCC — AIRBORNE COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER.

ACG — AIR COMMANDO GROUP.

ACS — AIR COMMANDO SQUADRON.

ACW — AIR COMMANDO WING.

AD — AIR DIVISION.

ADVON — ADVANCED ECHELON.

AIRA — AIR ATTACHE.

AMEMB — AMERICAN EMBASSY.

AOC — AIR OPERATIONS CENTER.

ARVN — ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM.

ASOC — AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS CENTER.

BDA — BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT.

BR — BARREL ROLL MISSION.

CAP — COMBAT AIR PATROL.

CBU — CLUSTER BOMB UNIT.

CHICOM — CHINESE COMMUNIST.

CHMAAG — CHIEF, MILITARY ADVISORY AND ASSISTANCE GROUP.

CINPAC — COMMANDER IN CHIEF, PACIFIC AREA.

CINCPACAF — COMMANDER IN CHIEF, PACIFIC AIR FORCES.

CINCPACFLT — COMMANDER IN CHIEF, PACIFIC FLEET.

COIN — COUNTERINSURGENCY.

COMUSMACTHAI — MILITARY ADVISORY CHIEF, THAILAND (MACTHAI).

COMUSMACV — MILITARY ADVISORY CHIEF, SOUTH VIETNAM (MACV).

CRP — CONTROL AND REPORTING POST (CRC — CONTROL AND REPORTING CENTER).

DOD — DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

DRV — DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (NORTH VIETNAM, NVN).

ELINT — ELECTRONIC INTELLIGENCE.

FAC — FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER.

FAR — LAOTIAN GROUND FORCES.

GVN — GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN).

ICC — INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION.

JCS — JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF.

JGS — JOINT GENERAL STAFF (SOUTH VIETNAM).

JOC — JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER.

MACTHAI — SEE COMUSMACTHAI.

MACV — SEE COMUSMACV

MIGCAP — MIG DEFENSE COMBAT PATROL.

NAVAID — NAVIGATIONAL AID.

NVN — NORTH VIETNAM.

OPREP — OPERATIONS REPORT.

PACAF — HEADQUARTERS, PACIFIC AIR FORCES.

PDJ — PLAINE DES JARRES (PLAIN OF JARS, LAOS).

PL — PATHET LAO.

RA — RECONNAISSANCE/ATTACK.

RB — RECONNAISSANCE/BOMBER.

RESCAP — RESCUE COMBAT PATROL.

RF — RECONNAISSANCE/FIGHTER.

RKG — ROYAL CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT.

RLAF — ROYAL LAOTIAN AIR FORCE.

RTF — RECONNAISSANCE TASK FORCE.

RVN — REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM.

SAM — SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE.

SAR — SEARCH AND RESCUE.

SEA — SOUTHEAST ASIA.

SL — STEEL TIGER MISSION.

TAOR — TACTICAL AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.

TFG — TASK FORCE GROUP (NAVAL CARRIER).

TSN — TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE, SOUTH VIETNAM.

VC — VIET CONG.

VM — VIET MINH.

VNAF — SOUTH VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE.

SUBJECT: REBELLION & INSURGENCY (90%);