

DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL RECORD [NIXON PROJECT]

DOCUMENT NUMBER	DOCUMENT TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE OR CORRESPONDENTS	DATE	RESTRICTION
1	MEMO W/ATTACH	HELMS TO KISSINGER	1/28/71	B
2	REPORT	STATUS OF... UNITS ...	1/28/71	B
3	MEMO W/ATTACH	ELIOT TO HAIG	1/28/71	B
4	TELEGRAM	ZCZCKAB 068	1/27/71	B
5	MEMO W/ATTACH	KARAMESSINES TO HAIG	1/27/71	B

FILE GROUP TITLE

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL FILES : VIETNAM SUBJECT FILES

BOX NUMBER

80

FOLDER TITLE

VIETNAM OPERATIONS IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA VOL. II (FOLDER 2 OF 2) ①

RESTRICTION CODES

- A. Release would violate a Federal statute or Agency Policy.
- B. National security classified information.
- C. Pending or approved claim that release would violate an individual's rights.
- D. Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy or a libel of a living person.

- E. Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information.
- F. Release would disclose investigatory information compiled for law enforcement purposes.
- G. Withdrawn and return private and personal material.
- H. Withdrawn and returned non-historical material.

DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL RECORD [NIXON PROJECT]

DOCUMENT NUMBER	DOCUMENT TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE OR CORRESPONDENTS	DATE	RESTRICTION
6	MEMO W/ATTACH	HAIG TO KARAMESSINES	1/27/71	B
7	MEMO	KARAMESSINES TO HAIG	1/26/71	B
8	MEMO	HAIG TO GODLEY	1/26/71	B
9	MAP	VIETNAM 510573 (5 COPIES)	N/D	B
10	MAP	VIETNAM 500117 (2 COPIES)	N/D	B

FILE GROUP TITLE

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80

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VIETNAM OPERATIONS IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA VOL. II (FOLDER 2 OF 2) 2

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NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS PROJECT
DOCUMENT CONTROL RECORD

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27 1207Z JAN 73

TO BE DELIVERED TO GENERAL HAIG FROM AMBASSADOR GODLEY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

FROM: AMBASSADOR

FOR: GENERAL HAIG

SUBJECT: OPERATION GOLD

I HAVE JUST TRANSMITTED TOP SECRET EMBTEL 485

NODIS/ASHAU WHICH FOLLOWS:

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

VIENTIANE 485

T O P S E C R E T

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

RE STATE 013902

1. AT 1530 LOCAL I CALLED ON THE PRIME MINISTER AND WENT OVER THE POINTS RAISED REFTEL BUT MADE NO REPEAT NO ALLUSION TO DATES PROPOSED. HE TOOK IT ALL IN GOOD STRIDE BUT WHEN I CAME TO THE QUESTION OF THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION HE FROWNED, EVEN WHEN I HASTILY RETREATED TO THE SIX WEEKS MINIMUM. I THEN WENT ON TO INDICATE OUR

HOPE THAT WHEN SOUVANNA PROTESTS, WITHDRAWAL OF BOTH NORTH VIETNAMESE AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS SHOULD BE CALLED FOR. HE SAID THAT HE OBVIOUSLY WOULD INCLUDE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

2. SOUVANNA HAS BEEN GIVING THIS MATTER MUCH THOUGHT AND SAID HE HAD CONCLUDED THAT HE MUST CONSULT THE KING. FOR THIS PURPOSE HE PLANS TO GO TO LUANG PRABANG ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 31. HE IS TOTALLY BOOKED UP UNTIL THEN. I DID NOT REPEAT NOT DEMUR BUT ASKED IF HE WISHED ME TO BE IN LUANG PRABANG AT THAT TIME. HE OFFERED TO TAKE ME WITH HIM BUT I SAID I DID NOT THINK THAT WAS WISE. HE SAID HE WOULD THINK THIS OVER AND MIGHT WANT ME TO BE DISCREETLY IN LUANG PRABANG.

THIS CAN EASILY BE ARRANGED FOR THE LAST TIME I WAS THERE I HAD TOLD THE AREA COORDINATOR I HOPED TO BE BACK SOON TO VISIT WITH THE SWISS MEDICAL TEAM, ETC.

3. ONE QUESTION THAT STILL REMAINS UNANSWERED IS THAT RAISED IN PARA 6 OF VIENTIANE 470, I.E., WHETHER SOUTH VIETNAMESE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP THE OPERATION SECRET FOR A FEW DAYS. I THINK THE ANSWER

IS OBVIOUSLY THAT THIS IS OUT OF THE QUESTION, GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE FORCES INVOLVED, BUT IT GIVES ME A CHANCE TO GO BACK TO SOUVANNA PRIOR TO HIS GOING TO LUANG PRABANG.

4. SOUVANNA THIS AFTERNOON WAS AS RESOLUTE AS HE WAS YESTERDAY. I FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT AS HE CONTINUES TO MULL OVER THIS PROBLEM HE WILL BE WORRIED OVER THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION. I HAVE NEVER MENTIONED OUR PRESIDENT WITH REGARD TO THIS OPERATION. I THINK THAT THE TIME MIGHT NOW BE RIGHT FOR A PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE, PARTICULARLY AS THE KING HAS GONE OUT OF HIS WAY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO EXPRESS HIS ADMIRATION FOR OUR PRESIDENT AND HIS RESOLUTION AND STEADFASTNESS IN CARRYING OUT HIS INTENTIONS. SUCH A MESSAGE MIGHT BE ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

"YOUR HIGHNESS:
I FULLY APPRECIATE THE DIFFICULT DECISION YOU'RE FACED WITH IN CONNECTION WITH THE FORTHCOMING ACTION IN THE TCHEPONE AREA. I HAVE BEEN GIVING

THIS OPERATION MY PERSONAL ATTENTION FOR I BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO REDUCE THE ENEMY'S PRESSURE AND HIS CAPABILITIES IN SOUTHERN LAOS AND CAMBODIA. WHILE YOUR TROOPS HAVE BEEN GALLANTLY DEFENDING THE BOLOVENS, I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH THE BUILDUP OF THE ENEMY'S FORCES IN SOUTHERN MILITARY REGION III AND IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF MILITARY REGION IV.

"I HAVE CONSIDERED WITH PRESIDENT THIEU THE POSSIBILITY OF KEEPING THIS OPERATION SECRET AT LEAST FOR A WHILE. THIS, HOWEVER, WE FIND IMPOSSIBLE GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES REQUIRED TO EXECUTE IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER THE OPERATION.

"IT ALSO HAS BEEN MY HOPE THAT THE OPERATION MIGHT BE OF A SHORT DURATION. HERE AGAIN, DETAILED STUDIES THAT WE HAVE MADE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE ENEMY PRESENCE IN THE TCHEPONE AREA AND THE COMPLEXITY OF HIS BASE STRUCTURE THERE LEADS ME TO CONCLUDE THAT TO BE EFFECTIVE, THE OPERATION SHOULD LAST THROUGH THE DRY SEASON. IF THIS IS ABSOLUTELY

OUT OF THE QUESTION, A MINIMUM TIME THAT WOULD BE
REQUIRED FOR SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES WOULD BE SIX
WEEKS.

"I WISH TO TAKE THIS OCCASION TO ASSURE YOUR
HIGHNESS THAT NO U.S. GROUND FORCES
WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION BUT WE WILL
SUPPORT OUR SOUTH VIETNAMESE ALLIES IN EVERY
OTHER POSSIBLE MANNER, I.E., IN THE AIR AND WITH
ARTILLERY BASED IN SOUTH VIETNAM. I ALSO WISH TO
ASSURE YOUR HIGHNESS THAT PRESIDENT THIEU HAS
GUARANTEED ME THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES
WILL BE WITHDRAWN AS SOON AS THEIR MISSION IS
ACCOMPLISHED."

GP-1GODLEY"

T O P S E C R E T

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TOP SECRET//SENSITIVE

SCENARIO FOR PHASE II

(D-DAY is the day when GVN units cross the border and is calculated on basis of Washington time and calendar)

DATE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
D-3 days	(1) Inform President Then that US is pre- pared to provide support which will permit operation to proceed to phase II. Work out exact time- table with him for both military and public relations moves. Advise him against any con- firmation of fact Souvanna had been previously con- sulted.	State	(2) Inform Souvanna that operation will pro- ceed to phase II and that border crossing will occur within 72 hours. Tell him the public position we and GVN will take. Obtain from him exact formu- lation he will use and assure him we will not reveal our prior consultation.			
	(1) Press stories from Salgon concerning US and RVNAF troop move- ments in MRL have caused much speculation concerning possible move into south Laos					

TOP SECRET//SENSITIVE

2/4/71

SCENARIO FOR PHASE II

-2-

DATE	ACTION DIPLOMATIC	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION CONGRESSIONAL	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION PUBLIC RELATIONS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
D-2 days			(1) Consult with Senator Stennis concerning proposed operation.	State DOD		
D-1 day H-36 hours	(3) Send cables to our Ambassadors in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Cambodia, Korea, and the UK to be pre-positioned for subsequent action. (Texts being prepared) These Ambassadors will inform their respective governments between H-16 and H-12 hours of the contents of the cables.	State			(2) Press officers will continue to confirm our concern over NVN buildup in Laos pan-handle, but will say they have nothing to add to the briefings coming from Saigon. No officials, either in Washington, Saigon, or Vientiane will hold press conferences or backgrounders.	White House State DOD
H-26 hours			(2) Consult with Senator Scott and Congressman Ford.	State DOD		

DATE	ACTION DIPLOMATIC	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION CONGRESSIONAL	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION PUBLIC RELATIONS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
D-day H-16 hrs to H-12 hrs	(4) Ambassadors with pre positioned cables carry out their instructions.	State				
H-5 hours			(3) Consult with Senator Mansfield and Congressmen Hebert and Mahon.	State DOD		
H-4 hours	(5) Japanese and Canadian Ambassadors in Washington are informed of action.	State				
H-2 hours	(6) Circular cable to all US Missions is sent, explaining our action and instructing our officials on position to be taken publicly. (7) Inform representatives of other selected friendly nations in Washington as follows: Germany, Norway, Italy, Netherlands, Mexico, China, India, Belgium, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia.	State	(4) Consult with Senators Aiken, ^{Byrd} Cooper, Ellender, Fulbright, Griffin, Smith, Young, and Congressmen Albert, Arends, Boggs, Bow, Byrd , Griffin, Mailliard, Minshall, Morgan	State DOD		

SCENARIO FOR PHASE II

-4-

DATE	ACTION DIPLOMATIC	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION CONGRESSIONAL	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION PUBLIC RELATIONS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
H-hour					(3) RVNAF (probably Gen. Lam) holds press briefing at MR-I press headquarters, shortly after cross-border operations are launched. Gen. Sutherland should be present to answer questions concerning US participation.	DOD
H+2 hours	(8) Souvanna issues statement which previously agreed with us. (9) GVN observer in New York delivers letter to President of Security Council explaining action taken; copies sent to Geneva co-chairmen and ICC members.	State State	(5) Senate Foreign Relations Committee informed that Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense will appear following day in executive session.	State DOD	(4) USIA begins broadcasting US explanation for action taken in world-wide, all-language coverage.	USIA
H+2 1/2 hours	(10) US Ambassador to UN delivers letter to President of Security Council explaining action; copies to Geneva co-chairmen and ICC	State				

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

SCENARIO FOR PHASE II

-5-

DATE	ACTION DIPLOMATIC	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION CONGRESSIONAL	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION PUBLIC RELATIONS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
H+3 hours					(5) Release texts of all US and GVN letters to President of Security Council.	State
D+1 day	(11) Brief NATO, SEATO Councils on operations and explain rationale.	State	(6) Secretaries of State and Defense appear [in executive session] of Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Texts of their prepared statements released to press immediately after the session.	State DOD	(6) Press spokesmen announce that Secretaries of State and Defense will appear before Senate Foreign Relations Committee. (7) Texts of prepared statements of two Secretaries distributed.	State DOD State DOD

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

SCENARIO FOR PHASE II

-6-

DATE	ACTION DIPLOMATIC	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION CONGRESSIONAL	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	ACTION PUBLIC RELATIONS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
D+2 day					(8) DOD and MACV spokesmen explain nature of operation, and stress fact that operation is essentially GVN, with limited US support. GVN spokesman confines himself to bare details of action, citing security reasons for his failure to elaborate further.	DOD MACV
					(9) State spokesman gives political-diplomatic rationale for action. He answers "no comment" to question whether Souvanna was consulted and directs press attention to RLG statement.	State

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

MACV's Proposed Handling of the Press in Conjunction
with Phase I of Tchepone Operation (LAMSON 719)

1. (TS) Estimate of Press Reaction.

a. The United States press have for several months speculated with each significant westward movement of troops in Military Region 1 as an indication of an intent of incursion into Laos to block the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Troop movements of 30 January will revive the speculation with the inevitable charges of widening the war, exceeding Congressional limitation, violating the neutrality of Laos, etc.

2. (TS) Press Accessibility.

a. The press will learn about the operation before or shortly after it is initiated from informants or troop movements. Commanders may restrict the press from their area of operations as a temporary measure if the tactical situation warrants, however, this will not prevent them from reporting the story from other sources unless embargoed by MACV.

b. US and TCN press are accredited to MACV on condition that ground rules pertaining to release of military information are observed. Future or ongoing operations cannot be reported until officially released by MACV on pain of suspension or loss of accreditation. Vietnamese press, who may break a MACV embargo with impunity as they are not MACV accredited, must be controlled by the GVN through existing suspension procedures.

c. We can expect the press to make every effort to cover the operation from any available source unless an embargo is imposed. Restricting them from the area will accomplish no useful purpose and will only lead to more speculation. By imposing an embargo, we will permit the press to cover the ongoing story until the embargo is lifted at which time they can file their stories. This time lag in filing may permit the story to settle down and be placed somewhat in perspective.

d. While the embargo is still on, it would be useful to achieve as much press objectivity as is possible by conducting daily, an exclusive background briefing in Saigon on the ongoing operation to describe its purposes and limited objectives. I would propose that these briefings, for a selected group of newsmen would cover only the combat activities of the previous day and the limited objectives of the operation, i.e., establishing a stronger

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defensive posture in MR 1 and interrupting the enemy's supply lines into RVN. Information presented at these briefings would not be releasable until the embargo is lifted.

e. I would also propose to discourage the press from accompanying the operation. But the relatively easy access by road from Danang and availability of charter and commercial aircraft will make restriction from the area difficult. Press pools will be used where necessary.

3. (TS) XXIV Corps information personnel, which also operate the Danang Press Center, will be supplemented by MACV information officers so as to provide escorts for all press whenever possible. No information concerning the operation would be released until the embargo is lifted by MACV.

4. (TS) Therefore, I plan to embargo Operation LAMSON 719 on 29 January and coordinate with the RVNAF to extend the embargo to the Vietnamese Press.

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Reference your message concerning LAMSON 719 and the press plan it proposes, your approach designed to obtain as much security as possible while keeping the press informed is well conceived and has our concurrence. We recognize that there will be need for flexibility, but the basic thrust of the MACV concept for handling press briefings, visits to the field, embargoes, coordination with the GVN public information people, etc., has our endorsement. We would expect, of course, that MACV would keep us fully and currently informed as to all public affairs activities related to this operation.

We need particularly the date and time of the initial briefing and immediately after its conclusion a run-down on what happened.

We would suggest that you invite newsmen for a gathering, without indicating its purpose in advance. They could well think that it is a coffee or refreshment hour, depending upon the time of the day.

Looking to the future, we believe you should handle the CHUP operation with a separate briefing at a time you deem appropriate.

The overall press guidance for the CHUP operation as now seen should parallel that of the Kompong Cham operation, with initial announcement of this RVNAF operation in Cambodia to be made by the RVN. This announcement would stress that the operation is being conducted in full consultation and cooperation with the Government of Cambodia. It should highlight that this is an RVNAF operation and that maximum use of VNAF helicopters and other resources will be made to transport RVN troops for action against NVA and VC invaders, in order to prevent re-establishment of sanctuaries.

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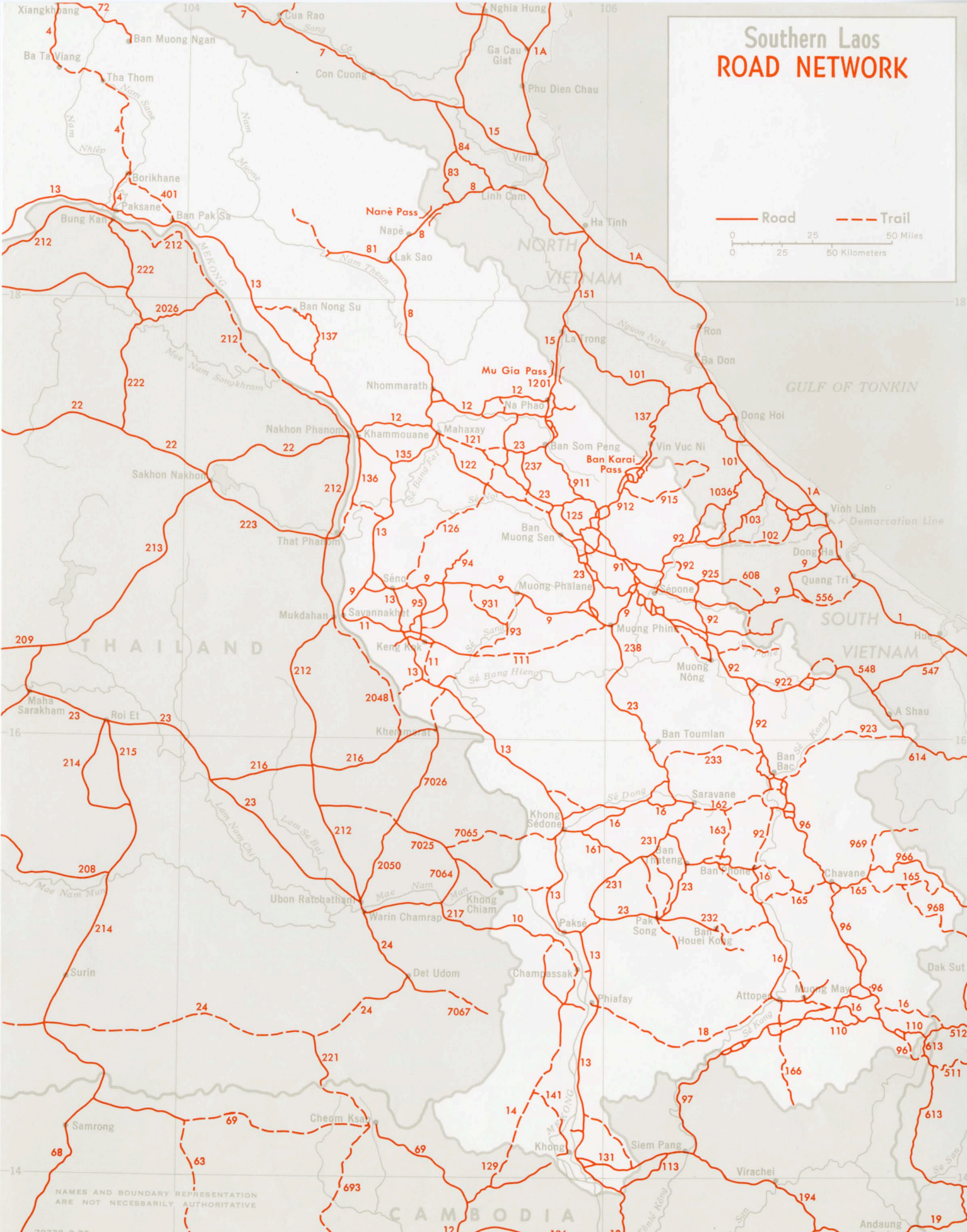
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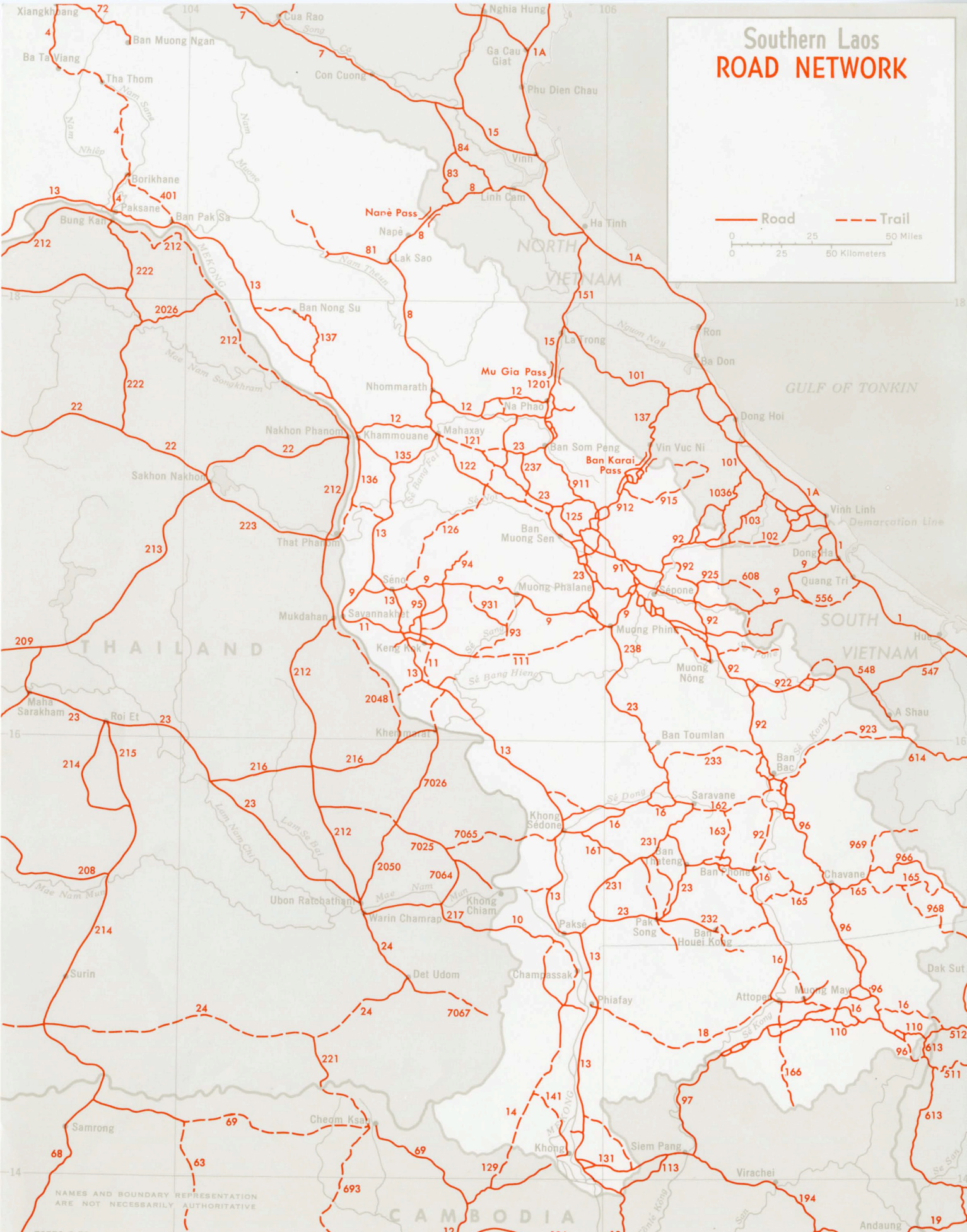
Southern Laos ROAD NETWORK



NAMES AND BOUNDARY REPRESENTATION ARE NOT NECESSARILY AUTHORITATIVE

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 605
BT
TOP SECRET SAIGON 1401

8 0 3 0 Q

30 JAN 1971
11 36Z

NODIS/ASHAU

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BUNKER

REF: A. VIENTIANE 522
B. VIENTIANE 550

1. ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL ABRAMS, I MET THIS MORNING WITH PRESIDENT THIEU TO INFORM HIM OF AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S CONVERSATION WITH SOUVANNA REPORTED REFTEL B. I EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT AMBASSADOR GODLEY HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO SOUVANNA (REF A) THAT THE INFORMATION HE HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN HIM REGARDING THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION, I.E., "FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DRY SEASON OR AT LEAST SIX WEEKS", AND THAT THE SIZE WOULD BE TWO DIVISIONS PLUS, WAS ACCURATE.
2. THIEU SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A REPORT FROM HIS AMBASSADOR WHICH COINCIDED FULLY WITH AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S REPORT. SOUVANNA TOLD THE GVN AMBASSADOR THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE POSITION HE HAD NOT REQUESTED THE OPERATION AND HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED ABOUT IT. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO DELAY ANY DECLARATION FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. IF HE DOES MAKE A STATEMENT, HE SAID, HE WOULD NOT GO BEYOND ASKING BOTH SIDES TO WITHDRAW NOR WOULD HE ACCUSE SOUTH VIET-NAM OF AN INVASION OF LAO TERRITORY. HE WOULD ALSO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT NORTH VIET-NAM HAS OCCUPIED A PART OF LAOS WHICH THE RLG CANNOT CONTROL.
3. THE REMAINDER OF THE CONVERSATION WAS LARGELY TAKEN UP WITH THIEU'S COMMENTS ABOUT THE OPERATION AND QUESTIONS PUT TO GENERAL ABRAMS. THIEU SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTED GENERAL VIEN NOT TO GET TIED DOWN IN A DEFENSIVE POSTURE AT TCHEPONE AS HAPPENED AT KHE SANH AND DIEN BIEN PHU, BUT TO KEEP MOBILE; THAT AFTER THE TCHEPONE AREA HAD BEEN CLEARED, EFFORTS COULD BE DIRECTED AT CLEARING THE AREA SOUTH AND WEST TOWARD ASHAU. GENERAL ABRAMS AGREED.
4. THIEU COMMENTED THAT HE HAD LESS CONCERN FOR THE ENEMY'S GROUND FORCES THAN FOR ITS ANTI-AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES. GENERAL ABRAMS ALSO AGREED AND EXPLAINED WHAT WE HAD BEEN DOING IN THE WAY OF SUPPRESSION.

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-2- SAIGON 1401, 301051Z JAN, (NODIS/ASHAU)

5. THIEU THEN ASKED WHAT GENERAL ABRAMS THOUGHT THE ENEMY REACTION WOULD BE, SAY AFTER THREE WEEKS. GENERAL ABRAMS SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD PROBABLY MOVE SOME FORCES DOWN TO CONTEST THE AREA, BUT DOUBTED THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO IN THREE WEEKS. HE GAVE PRESIDENT THIEU AN INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING ON LOCATIONV OF ENEMY UNITS. HE ADDED THAT INTELLIGENCE SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE ENEMY IS PUZZLED AND DOES NOT KNOW WHAT WE ARE UP TO.
6. THIEU ASKED GENERAL ABRAMS WHAT HE THOUGHT THE ENEMY WOULD ATTEMPT TO DO IN NORTHERN MR 1, AND GENERAL ABRAMS REPLIED THAT THEY WILL TRY TO DO WHAT THEY CAN WITH THE 22 BATTALIONS NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE DMZ AND ACTIVATE LOCAL UNITS IN MR 1. BUT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THEY CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVE IN MR 1.
7. THIEU THEN INQUIRED WHETHER WE THOUGHT THE ENEMY WOULD ATTEMPT TO EXERT PRESSURE ON OTHER AREAS OF LAOS, SUCH AS THE PLAINE DES JARRES OR LUANG PRABANG. GENERAL ABRAMS THOUGHT THEY MIGHT DO SO, BUT WE WOULD PROVIDE VERY STRONG AIR SUPPORT AGAINST ANY EFFORTS OF THIS KIND. HE EXPLAINED THAT 70 PERCENT OF ALL TACTICAL AIR WAS NOW BEING APPLIED IN THE LAO PANHANDLE, THAT 95 PERCENT OF THE B-52 EFFORT WAS ALSO BEING APPLIED THERE.
8. AFTER THE MEETING, THIEU TOOK ME ASIDE TO SAY THAT HIS AMBASSADOR HAD REPORTED THAT SOUVANNA WAS IN FACT PLEASED BY THE OPERATION. I PRESUME THIS WAS INTENDED TO CONVEY AN INTIMATION THAT SOUVANNA HAD NOT BEEN DISPLEASED BY THE GVN APPROACH AND IN RESPONSE TO WHAT I SAID TO HIM YESTERDAY ABOUT LEAVING THE DISCUSSIONS IN AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S HANDS.
9. THIEU SEEMS TO BE FULLY ON BOARD FOR BOTH PHASE I AND PHASE II PENDING OUR DECISION ON THE LATTER.

BUNKER

BT

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Department of State

FBI TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

HAIG ONLY

R 131830Z FEB 71 ZFF-3
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1448
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 893

4 9 0 4 Q

14 FEB 1971
14 45Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

1. IN ABSENCE AMBASSADOR UP-COUNTRY DCM AND ARMA SAW PRIMIN THIS MORNING (FEB 13) TO BRIEF HIM ON MILITARY SITUATION. SOUVANNA'S REACTIONS WERE SUBDUED BUT ATTENTIVE. ON LAMSON 719 HE ASKED WHETHER GVN AND US WERE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE NVA STRIKE INTO FRIENDLY FLANK ACROSS DMZ. HE WAS REASSURED TO HEAR THAT THIS THREAT HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED IN SAIGON AND BLOCKING FORCE WAS IN POSITION.
2. WHEN TOLD THAT ONLY ONE SIGNIFICANT ARMS CACHE HAD BEEN DISCOVERED THUS FAR IN OPERATION SOUVANNA OBSERVED THAT MAIN NVA SUPPLY DEPOTS WERE PROBABLY FARTHER WEST. HE POINTED TO MUANG PHINE (XD0928) ON MAP AND SAID IT WAS NECESSARY FOR SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES TO MOVE INTO THIS AREA AFTER TCHEPONE.
3. SOUVANNA ALSO WONDERED WHETHER ARVN WOULD LINK UP WITH SGU'S CONDUCTING OPERATIONS DESERT RAT AND OKLAHOMA ON RT 23 SOUTH OF MUANG PHINE. DCM REPLIED THAT FOR BOTH OPERATIONAL AND POLITICAL REASONS THIS WAS PROBABLY NOT FEASIBLE, BUT OPERATIONS WOULD BE COORDINATED THROUGH GWSPGBIVE* HEADQUARTERS. SOUVANNA NODDED AGREEMENT AND EMPHASIZED THAT FRIENDLY INTERDICTION OF RT 23 WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND WOULD BECOME MORE SO AS ARVN PUSHED ENEMY LOC'S FURTHER WEST. GP-1. GODLEY
BT

(*) AS RECEIVED CORRECTION TO FOLLOW:

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Department of State

#4
TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 300605Z JAN 71 ZFF-3
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1263
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 553

INCN: 7974Q
JAN 30, 1971
0638Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY EYES ONLY

REF: VIENTIANE 550 JAN 29

1. AFTER THINKING ABOUT PUBLIC ATTITUDE SOUVANNA COULD ADOPT TO ROUTE 9 OPERATION, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT OBJECT TO HIS PROTESTING SOUTH VIETNAMESE INCURSION INTO LAOS IF HE ALSO MAKES CLEAR HIS OPPOSITION TO PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE. IN FACT, HE SOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DISSOCIATE HIMSELF PUBLICLY FROM ROUTE 9 OPERATION AND PUT HIMSELF ON RECORD AS WANTING ALL FOREIGN TROOPS OUT OF LAOS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
2. ANY LESS CATEGORIC POSITION THAN THIS WOULD DAMAGE SOUVANNA'S STANDING AS A NEUTRALIST ALMOST BEYOND REPAIR. I ASSUME THAT WHEN WASHINGTON SPOKESMEN ARE ASKED WHETHER SOUVANNA WAS CONSULTED ABOUT OPERATION IN ADVANCE THEY WILL RESPOND WITH "NO COMMENT" RATHER THAN FLAT DENIAL. THIS WILL LEAD JOURNALISTS IRRESTABLY TO CONCLUSION THAT SOUVANNA WAS NOT ONLY CONSULTED IN ADVANCE BUT GAVE COVERT APPROVAL TO OPERATION. EVEN IF WE ARE ABLE TO HOLD THE LINE IN WASHINGTON, I DOUBT THAT FICTION OF NO ADVANCE CONSULTATION WITH RLG COULD LONG BE MAINTAINED IN SAIGON.
3. FOR THESE REASONS, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD DO OUR UTMOST TO PROTECT SOUVANNA AND REMAINING FABRIC OF THE 1962 GENEVA ACCORDS BY ENCOURAGING HIM TO MAKE CLEAR, AS HE HAS BEFORE, THAT RLG DOES NOT WANT VIETNAMESE WAR FOUGHT IN LAOS. HE COULD ALSO SAY THAT HE RECOGNIZES NORTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATION OF LAO SOVEREIGNTY CAME FIRST AND PROVOKED SOUTH

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TOP SECRET

-2- VIENTIANE 553, JANUARY 30.

INCN: 7974Q

VIETNAMESE REACTION, BUT HE WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT HE WAS OPPOSED TO ANY FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE IN LAOS AND HAD ORDERED LAO MILITARY FORCES TO SET UP DEFENSIVE SCREEN WEST OF AREA OF OPERATIONS ON ROUTE 9. IMPLICATION OF LATTER REMARK WOULD OF COURSE BE THAT RLG WAS DETERMINED TO SEE THAT AREA OF OPERATIONS FOR SOUTH VIETNAMESE WOULD NOT EXPAND INTO WESTERN PANHANDLE. PRACTICAL EFFECT OF SETTING UP SUCH A SCREEN WOULD BE TO INHIBIT WESTWARD MOVEMENT OF NORTH VIETNAMESE.

GP-1.

GODLEY

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TOP SECRET

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TOP SECRET

Classification

Department of State

TELEGRAM

INDICATE:

- COLLECT
- CHARGE TO

DISTRIBUTION

ACTION: Amembassy SAIGON IMMEDIATE 7

INFO: Amembassy VIENTIANE PRIORITY

STATE _____

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR AMBASSADORS BUNKER AND GODLEY ONLY ✓

- REF: A. Vientiane 470
 B. Vientiane 485
 C. State _____
 D. Saigon 1330

1. You should arrange to see President Thieu soonest to inform him of conversations which Godley has had with and latest instructions to Godley (Refs A, B and C). Souvanna/ (~~Refs A and B~~). You should explain that ~~we do not~~ final decision on Phase II has to await fuller explanation of Lao views ~~/repeat not, however, expect to have definitive Lao position~~ after ~~until~~/Souvanna returns from visit with King on or about 1 February.
2. You should then propose to President Thieu that he agree, now ~~/in any event~~, to execute first phase of Operation Ashau and that scheduled redeployments of RVNAF forces to Military

DRAFTED BY:

EA:WHSullivan:mw

DRAFTING DATE

1/28/71

TEL. EXT.

20272

APPROVED BY:

The Secretary

CLEARANCES:

Page 2 of telegram to Amembassy SAIGON

TOP SECRET
Classification

View is here that troop movements can be
Region I take place as planned. ~~You should state clearly that this be~~
justified on grounds of increasing threat to MR I from Panhandle.

~~done with the full realization that border crossing phase of this~~
~~operation may not, repeat not, be subsequently authorized.~~

3. ~~If Thieu agrees with this proposal, this will mean that Abrams~~
~~and Vien will have to agree upon alternate plans for the gainful~~
~~employment of the operational forces within country. It also means~~
~~that no, repeat no, precise date can be fixed at this time for~~
~~putative execution of second phase of this operation.~~

4. You should also tell Thieu of our intention to inform Souvanna
of manner in which we are proceeding and of fact that ^{decision on} second phase
execution order being held in abeyance ^{pending his reaction.} ~~at this time and may not,~~
~~repeat not be authorized.~~ You and he should agree on appropriate
public line to take if, in your judgment, public attention to this
first phase requires official comment. We will appreciate opportunity to com-
ment on proposed line to assure our public position and yours will be consistent.

5. Report soonest the results of your conversation so that we may
^{further}
formulate appropriate/instructions to Godley - per Ref. C.

End.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE AND SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
TO: AMBASSADOR BERGER, U.S. EMBASSY SAIGON
INFO: AMBASSADOR GODLEY
GENERAL ABRAMS

Highest authority has approved execution of Phase II of Tchepone operation and authorized employment of U.S. Tacair, arc light, fixed and rotary wing gunships and airlift in Laos in support of operation. General Abrams has already been provided execute authority via military channels. It is requested that you and General Abrams inform Thieu as soon as possible of U.S. decision to proceed with Phase II commencing February 8 Saigon time. In your discussion with President Thieu, you should emphasize the importance of portraying Phase II as all Vietnamese operation, supplemented by necessary U.S. air support. In this regard, it is important that decision to enter Laos also be portrayed as Vietnamese decision. U.S. has agreed to give air support which may be needed.

Please advise soonest of outcome of discussions with President Thieu. Additional instructions covering coordination of U.S., GVN and Laotian official and public statements on Phase II will follow.

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TOP SECRET

Z 080601Z FEB 71 ZFFG
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 1354
INFO RUMJIR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON FLASH 5530
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 731

INCN: 2 5 5 3Q
FEBRUARY 8, 1971
0624Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

REF: (A) STATE 021021
(B) VIENTIANE 720

LAO NATIONAL RADIO HAS JUST BROADCAST IN NAME OF LAO
GOVERNMENT THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT AS TRANSMITTED
TO DEPARTMENT IN REF B.
GP-1.

GODLEY
BT

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

P' 080525Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2938
BT
T O P S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 544

INCN: 2 5 5 5Q
FEBRUARY 8, 1971
0646Z

NODIS

SUBJECT: KHMER REACTION TO OPERATION LAMSON 719

REF: (A) STATE 20982
(B) STATE 21006
(C) STATE 21017
(D) VIENTIANE 563

1. LON NOL RECEIVED ME AT MY REQUEST EARLY EVENING FEBRUARY 7 BEFORE RECEIPT REF (B).
2. HE FULLY APPROVES ARVN OPERATIONS INTO LAOS, AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, AND SAID THAT GKR WILL COMMENT POSITIVELY ON THEM.
3. HE THEN VOLUNTEERED THAT BOUN OUM AND SISOUK HAD REQUESTED KHMER MANPOWER FOR US IN SOUTHERN LAOS. HE SAID HE WISHES TO MOVE AS RAPIDLY AS SISOUK SUGGESTED TO AMBASSADOR GODLEY (REF D, PARA 2). WE WILL TRY TO ASCERTAIN WHERE THIS PROJECT STANDS, OUR PRESENT UNDERSTANDING BEING THAT MEN WILL BE ASSEMBLED ON VOLUNTARY BASIS FOR VARIOUS UNITS AND THAT NO MAP-EQUIPPAE BATTALION (OR MAP EQUIPMENT) WILL BE INVOLVED PER SE.
4. DEPARTMENT PASS VIENTIANE IF DESIRED.

SWANK

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TOP SECRET

O 080516Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6702
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021034

OUTCN: 0 2 5 3 10
8 FEB 71 0539Z

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: SAIGON 1829

DO NOT REPEAT NOT GIVE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT TO GVN UNTIL
YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

ROGERS

BT

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DRAFTED BY: S/S - MR. ELIOT APPROVED BY: S/S - MR. ELIOT

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O 030430Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6917
BT
T O P S E C R E T TOKYO 1106

2 5 5 2 Q
RECVD: 08 FEB 71
1:12AM

NODIS

SUBJ: THIEU ANNOUNCEMENT

REF: STATE 021020

1. DUE TO ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR BUT AT AMBASSADOR'S DIRECTION POL COUNSELOR SOUGHT APPOINTMENT WITH XIICE MINISTER FOREIGN AFFAIRS MORI TO CONVEY INFORMATION REFTEL. AT TIME OF APPOINTMENT, HOWEVER, MORI WAS SUDDENLY CALLED TO PRIMIN OFFICE AND INFORMATION WAS PASSED INSTEAD TO DIRGEN AMERICAN AFFAIRS YOSHINO ON UNDERSTANDING THAT INFORMATION WOULD BE RELAYED IMMEDIATELY TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER.

2. YOSHINO LISTENED CAREFULLY TO PRESENTATION TAKING FULL NOTES, EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION OF JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AT ADVANCE NOTIFICATION AND SAID HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY CONVEY SUBSTANCE TO FONMIN AICHI.

3. POL COUNSELOR EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOJ WOULD ENDEAVOR COMMENTS SYMPATHETICALLY. YOSHINO REPLIED THAT HE WAS SURE SENIOR AUTHORITIES OF GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE FULL ATTENTION TO POINTS MADE IN THIS REPRESENTATION.

MEYER

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

Z 080410Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 880
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1829

2527Q

FEB 7, 11:41 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU.

REF: STATE 021021

UNLESS I HEAR TO CONTRARY FROM DEPT, AT 1800 HOURS SAIGON TIME
TODAY I WILL GIVE NHA FOR THIEU TEXT OF STATEMENT DEPT PLANS TO
ISSUE 0930 HOURS WASHINGTON TIME FEBRUARY 8. IF ANY CHANGES
PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

BERGER

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2524Q

FEB 7, 11:21 PM 1971

Z 080355Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 879
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1827

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 021027

MACV STATEMENT MADE.

BERGER

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TELEGRAM

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Z 080338Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 878
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1826

2522Q

FEB 7, 11:07 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

FOREIGN MINISTRY CALLED ICC REPS TO A MEETING AT 1045 HOURS. AMBASSADOR PHUONG GAVE US TEXTS OF BROADCAST, SAID ICC REPS HERE AND CO-CHAIRMEN BEING SUPPLIED TEXTS AFTER BROADCAST. HE SAID RUSSIANS WOULD BE SUPPLIED TEXT BY THE VIETNAMESE EMBASSY IN PARIS. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADOR, HE SAID WE COULD ASSUME LAO GOVERNMENT INFORMED OF BROADCAST IN ADVANCE.

BERGER

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2520Q

FEB 7, 9:42 PM 1971

Z 080242Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ANEMBASSY SAIGON FLASH 6701
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021027

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: SAIGON 1823

1. CONCUR IN YOUR SENDING TEXT THIEU STATEMENT FLASH AND IN CLEAR UPON COMPLETION BROADCAST FOR DEPARTMENT TO RETRANSMIT TO ALL POSTS.
2. ALSO, ADVISE FLASH WHEN MACV STATEMENT MADE PER STATE 20978 SO THAT DEPARTMENT CAN TRANSMIT IT TO ALL POSTS. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: S/S - Mr. Eliot
Cleared by: USIA - Mr. Towery
EA - Mr. Sullivan
Approved by: S/S - Mr. Eliot

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

2513Q

Feb 7, 8:28 PM 1971

Z 080105Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 875
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1823

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 21019

1. COMMUNICATIONS CHIEF AND NICKEL INFORM ME THAT FASTEST AND MOST PRACTICAL WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS IS TO SEND TEXT IN CLEAR TO DEPT FOR RETRANSMISSION AS CIRTEL ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS. WE WILL HAVE CABLE PREPARED IN ADVANCE AND SENT FLASH ON COMPLETION OF BROADCAST.
2. THE MESSAGE WE WOULD SEND DEPT WOULD READ: PLEASE RETRANSMIT AS IMMEDIATE CIRCULAR TEL ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS. FOLLOWING IS OFFICIAL ENGLISH TEXT OF STATEMENT BROADCAST BY PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU AT (BLANK) HOURS SAIGON TIME FEBRUARY 8.
3. PLEASE CONFIRM.

BERGER

BT

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Z 080050Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 874
BT
TOP SECRET SAIGON 1822

2512Q

FEB 7, 8:06 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 21014

IMMEDIATELY AFTER BROADCAST ICC REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE INFORMED BY FOREIGN MINISTER LAM AND GIVEN STATEMENT. POLISH ICC REP WILL ALSO BE GIVEN STATEMENT TO PASS TO SOVIET UNION. BRITISH AMBASSADOR WILL BE ASKED TO INFORM UK.

BT

BERGER

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Department of State

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

P 080005Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4089
BT
TOP SECRET WELLINGTON 203

2507Q

FEB 7, 7:37 PM 1971

NODIS

REF: STATE 021018

1. IN ABSENCE AMBASSADOR AND PRIME MINISTER DCM INFORMED LAKING WHO HAS SINCE FULLY BRIEFED PRIME MINISTER. LAKING SAYS PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION IS SAME AS GORTON'S AND HE WILL MAKE PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSED STATEMENT AVAILABLE WHEN IT IS READY. PRIME MINISTER TIED UP ALL DAY IN IMPORTANT CABINET MEETING (ON WAGES AND PRICES). DCM TOLD LAKING HE WAS AVAILABLE TO PRIME MINISTER AT ANY TIME.

2. LAKING SAYS GNZ FULLY UNDERSTANDS NECESSITY THIS OPERATION IN THIS AREA. GP-1. FRANZHEIM
BT

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O 072040Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6699
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 8575
BT
TOP SECRET STATE 021021

2488Q

FEB 7, 3:40 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

STRICTLY FOR AMBASSADORS BERGER AND GODLEY

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT DEPARTMENT PLANS TO ISSUE 0930 WASHINGTON TIME FEBRUARY 8. FIRST SENTENCE PARA 8 WILL OF COURSE BE OMITTED IF SOUVANNA HAS NOT ISSUED HIS STATEMENT BY THEN. HOWEVER, WE COULD WAIT UNTIL AS LATE AS 1100 TO INCLUDE OUR SENTENCE IF SOUVANNA MAKES STATEMENT BY THEN. VIENTIANE PLEASE FLASH NECESSARY INFO.

QUOTE LAST EVENING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM ANNOUNCED IN SAIGON THAT ELEMENTS OF ITS ARMED FORCES HAVE CROSSED INTO ENEMY OCCUPIED TERRITORY OF LAOS TO ATTACK NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES AND MILITARY SUPPLIES WHICH HAVE BEEN ASSEMBLED IN SANCTUARIES CLOSE TO THE BORDER OF SOUTH VIET-NAM. THESE SANCTUARIES LIE BETWEEN THE 16TH AND 17TH PARALLELS AND COMPRISE CONCENTRATIONS WHICH ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL SYSTEM. OUR MILITARY COMMAND IN VIET-NAM HAS ANNOUNCED THE LIMITS OF THE U.S. MILITARY PARTICIPATION.

THE DECISION OF THE UNITED STATES TO ASSIST IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

1. NO AMERICAN GROUND COMBAT FORCES OR ADVISORS WILL CROSS INTO LAOS.
2. THE OPERATION WILL BE A LIMITED ONE BOTH AS TO TIME AND AREA. THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT ITS OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO DISRUPT THOSE FORCES WHICH HAVE BEEN CONCENTRATED IN THIS REGION FOR USE AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAMESE AND UNITED STATES FORCES LOCATED IN THE NORTHERN MILITARY REGIONS OF SOUTH VIET-NAM, AND TO INTERCEPT OR CHOK OFF THE FLOW OF SUPPLIES AND MEN DURING THE DRY SEASON WHICH ARE DESIGNED FOR USE FURTHER SOUTH ON THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA.
3. THE OPERATION WILL PROMOTE THE SECURITY AND SAFETY OF

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-2- STATE 021021, FEB 7, 1971.

AMERICAN AND ALLIED FORCES IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND IS CONSISTENT WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS. IT WILL MAKE THE ENEMY LESS ABLE TO MOUNT OFFENSIVES AND STRENGTHEN SOUTH VIET-NAM'S ABILITY TO DEFEND ITSELF AS U.S. FORCES ARE WITHDRAWN FROM SOUTH VIET-NAM. IT WILL PROTECT AMERICAN LIVES.

4. THIS GROUND OPERATION BY THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AGAINST THE SANCTUARIES THUS WILL AID IN THE VIETNAMIZATION PROGRAM. THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN FORCES FROM VIET-NAM WILL CONTINUE. DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL THE PRESIDENT WILL ANNOUNCE FURTHER WITHDRAWALS.

5. THE MEASURES OF SELF-DEFENSE BEING TAKEN BY THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM ARE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW. A REPORT TO THIS EFFECT HAS BEEN MADE BY THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, TO THE GENEVA CO-CHAIRMAN, AND TO THE GOVERNMENTS WHICH COMPRISE THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION.

6. THIS LIMITED OPERATION IS NOT AN ENLARGEMENT OF THE WAR. THE TERRITORY INVOLVED HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF COMBAT SINCE 1965. THE PRINCIPAL NEW FACTOR IS THAT SOUTH VIET-NAM FORCES WILL MOVE AGAINST THE ENEMY ON THE GROUND TO DENY HIM THE SANCTUARIES AND DISRUPT THE MAIN ARTERY OF SUPPLIES WHICH HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO USE SO EFFECTIVELY AGAINST AMERICAN AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES IN THE PAST.

7. THE UNITED STATES HAS CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT TO END THE CONFLICT IN INDOCHINA THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS. PRESIDENT NIXON SPECIFICALLY PROPOSED LAST OCTOBER THAT THERE BE (A) A CEASE-FIRE THROUGHOUT INDOCHINA, (B) A NEGOTIATED TIMETABLE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FORCES, (C) IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ALL PRISONERS OF WAR, (D) AN INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE FOR ALL OF INDOCHINA, AND (E) A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. THIS CONTINUES TO BE THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.

8. THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT, WHICH, WHILE CRITICAL OF THE CURRENT MILITARY ACTION POINTS OUT THAT THE "PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE FOR THEIR SCORNFUL VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE VIOLATION OF THE NEUTRALITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE KINGDOM." THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO FAVOR THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS AND THE RESTORATION OF THE SITUATION CONTEMPLATED BY THE 1962 GENEVA ACCORDS IN WHICH ALL FOREIGN FORCES WOULD BE WITHDRAWN FROM LAO TERRITORY. A NEW INDOCHINA CONFERENCE AS PROPOSED BY PRESIDENT NIXON COULD ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE. UNQUOTE
ROGERS

BT

Drafted by: J - U A Johnson
Cleared by: S/S - T L Eliot
Approved by: J - U Alexis Johnson

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 072039Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 2157
BT
TOP SECRET STATE 021020

2487Q
FEB 7, 3:39 PM 1971

NODIS

TO BE DECRYPTED ONLY BE SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR

1. AT ABOUT 1000 HOURS SAIGON TIME FEBRUARY 8, PRESIDENT THIEU WILL ANNOUNCE THAT SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES WILL CROSS INTO ENEMY OCCUPIED TERRITORY OF LAOS TO ATTACK SANCTUARIES CLOSE TO THE BORDER OF SOUTH VIET-NAM BETWEEN THE 16TH AND 17TH PARALLELS. THIS ACTION WILL BE OF LIMITED DURATION AND IS INTENDED TO DISRUPT THE FLOW OF SUPPLIES AND MEN FURTHER SOUTH DOWN THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL INTO SOUTH VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA, AND THEREBY TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AS THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO WITHDRAW ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL AS PART OF THE VIETNAMIZATION PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, BY THIS ACTION THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE EXPECT TO DISRUPT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE BASES, ARMS AND SUPPLIES WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCUMULATED IN THIS REGION FOR USE AGAINST THE TERRITORY OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AS WELL AS THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AND UNITED STATES FORCES LOCATED IN SOUTH VIET-NAM.

2. NO RPT NO UNITED STATES GROUND TROOPS OR ADVISERS WILL CROSS INTO LAO TERRITORY. THE UNITED STATES WILL, HOWEVER, ASSIST BY PROVIDING WHATEVER AIR POWER--COMBAT, LOGISTICS, AND MEDEVAC, EITHER FIXED WING OR HELICOPTERS--IS REQUIRED TO AUGMENT THE CAPABILITIES OF THE RVNAF, AND BY THE USE OF ARTILLERY FIRING FROM POSITIONS EXCLUSIVELY WITHIN THE TERRITORY OF SOUTH VIET-NAM; THUS, EXCEPT FOR THAT ARTILLERY AND SOME TROOP AND LOGISTIC LIFT FOR ARVN FORCES, US OPERATIONS IN LAOS WILL NOT BE ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE CARRIED ON IN THE PAST.

3. IT SHOULD BE STRESSED THAT THE TERRITORY IN WHICH THIS CURRENT MILITARY ACTION IS TAKING PLACE HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN THE WAR FOR MANY YEARS AND HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO ATTACK BY UNITED STATES AIR POWER SINCE 1965. THIS IS, THEREFORE, NOT A NEW THEATER OF MILITARY OPERATIONS BUT RATHER ONE WHICH HAS BECOME MORE

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TOP SECRET

-2- STATE 021020, FEB 7, 1971

CRITICAL SINCE THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT CLOSED THE PORT OF KOMPONG SOM (SIHANOUKVILLE) TO COMMUNIST LOGISTICS OPERATIONS. NORTH VIET-NAM'S AGGRESSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS OUTSIDE ITS FRONTIERS DIRECTED AGAINST SOUTH VIET-NAM, CAMBODIA, AND SOUTHERN LAOS, HAVE BEEN ALMOST ENTIRELY MOUNTED FROM AND THROUGH THESE ILLEGAL SANCTUARIES IN THE SOUTHEASTERN TERRITORIES OF LAOS.

4. AS SOUVANNA HAS POINTED OUT, THE TERRITORY OF LAOS ON WHICH THIS ACTION WILL TAKE PLACE HAS BEEN INVADED AND CONTROLLED BY NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES FOR MANY YEARS IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE MOST SOLEMN OBLIGATIONS UNDERTAKEN BY NORTH VIET-NAM IN THE 1954 AND 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENTS. THE ORIGINAL LAO CIVILIAN POPULATION HAS LONG SINCE FLED FROM THE AREA, WHICH IS TOTALLY OCCUPIED BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES. THE LAO GOVERNMENT HAS ACKNOWLEDGED ITS INABILITY TO EXERT ITS CONTROL OVER THE AREA OR TO EXPEL THE NORTH VIETNAMESE INVADERS.

5. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CURRENT DRY SEASON, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE SHARPLY INCREASED THE AMOUNT OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES WHICH THEY HAVE INTRODUCED INTO THIS AREA. THEY HAVE ALSO SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED THE ARMED FORCES THEY HAVE DEPLOYED THERE. DESPITE REPEATED AIR ATTACKS BY UNITED STATES AIRCRAFT ATTEMPTING TO INTERDICT THIS DEVELOPMENT, THEY SEEM INTENT UPON AUGMENTING THEIR PRESENCE AND INCREASING THE THREAT TO GVN AND U.S. FORCES IN SOUTH VIET-NAM.

6. THE MEASURES OF SELF-DEFENSE BEING TAKEN BY THE GVN, ASSISTED BY THE UNITED STATES, ARE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW. THEY ARE BEING SO REPORTED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS BY THE GVN GOVERNMENT. COPIES OF THIS LETTER WILL BE SENT TO THE GENEVA CO-CHAIRMAN, AND TO THE ICC GOVERNMENTS.

7. SINCE THESE ACTIONS RAISE ISSUES WITH RESPECT TO THE GENEVA ACCORDS OF 1962, WE WOULD EXPECT RLG PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA TO PROTEST THEM AND TO ASK FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES. WE UNDERSTAND HIS POSITION, CONTINUE TO RESPECT THE RLG DESIRE FOR NEUTRALITY AND TO RETURN THE 1962 ACCORDS TO THE RESPECT OF ALL SIGNATORIES. HOWEVER, WE AND THE GVN WILL EMPHASIZE THAT IT IS THE VIOLATION OF THESE ACCORDS BY THE DRV WHICH HAS MADE THIS OPERATION NECESSARY.

8. IN GENERAL, WE WISH TO STRESS THE FACT THAT THIS ACTION IS PRIMARILY THE RESULT OF A GVN DECISION, IS OF LIMITED SCOPE AND DURATION, AND TO WHICH WE ARE PROVIDING

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-3- STATE 021020, FEB 7, 1971

LIMITED ASSISTANCE. WE CONSIDER IT FULLY JUSTIFIED IN INTERNATIONAL LAW. THERE WILL BE NO RPT NO OCCUPATION OF LAO TERRITORY. AS THE GVN WILL MAKE CLEAR, THE GVN FORCES WILL RETIRE WHEN THEIR MISSION IS ACCOMPLISHED.

9. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED CONFIDENTIALLY TO INFORM GOJ OF FOREGOING AT HIGHEST APPROPRIATE AND AVAILABLE LEVEL NOT MORE THAN THREE HOURS PRIOR TO THIEU'S STATEMENT: THAT IS, 1000 HOURS FEBRUARY 8, SAIGON TIME. YOU MAY INFORM GOJ THAT THEY ARE BEING GIVEN THIS ADVANCE AND SENSITIVE INFORMATION BECAUSE OF USG SPECIAL CONCERN THAT THEY BE KEPT INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AREA. WE WOULD NATURALLY WELCOME WHATEVER GOJ MAY FEEL ABLE TO SAY IN SUPPORT. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: J - U A Johnson
Cleared by: S/S - T L Eliot
Approved by: Under Secretary Johnson

TOP SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6845
BT
S E C R E T PARIS 1978

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY ROGERS

REFERENCE: PARIS 1977

JUST TALKED WITH PRIME MINISTER CHABAN DELMAS WHO CAME BACK FROM BORDEAUX EARLY TO SEE ME EVEN THOUGH I OFFERED TO FLY DOWN THERE TO CONSULT WITH HIM. I WENT OVER 8 POINTS OF STATE 020982 WITH HIM. HE WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN INFORMED AHEAD OF TIME ON THIS IMPORTANT MATTER BUT SAID HE COULD NOT COMMENT ON CONTENTS OF MESSAGE. HE ASSURED ME HE WOULD SEND INFO TO PRESIDENT POMPIDOU AND WOULD MAINTAIN SECRECY.

WATSON

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Department of State

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

P 071936Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY 6698
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021019

2 4 8 4 Q
7 FEB 71 Z19 36

NODIS/ASHAU

STRICTLY FOR AMBASSADOR BERGER

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THIEU'S STATEMENT IS IMMEDIATELY
RELEASED BY USIS IN TEXTUALLY ACCURATE FORM, WE LEAVE IT TO
EMBASSY TO CIRCULATE TEXT TO ALL USIS POSTS IMMEDIATELY
AFTER DELIVERY. THEREAFTER USIA WILL BE ISSUING GUIDANCE
TO ALL POSTS RE OPERATION. ROGERS

DRAFTED BY:
EA:MGreen:mw

APPROVED BY:
J: U Alexis Johnson

CLEARANCES:
USIA -Mr. Towery

S/S-TLEliot

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T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1821

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7 FEB 71 Z20 09

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 021016

WILL OBTAIN INFO FROM NHA AT 0800 HOURS.

BERGER

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Department of State

4
TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

Z 071759Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE FLASH 8572
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON 6696
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021016

2 4 7 4 Q
7 FEB-71 Z17 59

NODIS/ASHAU

STRICTLY FOR AMBASSADORS GODLEY AND BERGER

REF: A) VIENTIANE 720
B) SAIGON 1800
C) DEPTTEL 21006

1. IN VIEW OF DELAY OF THIEU'S STATEMENT, ASSUME SOUVANNA WILL ALSO DELAY HIS STATEMENT. REQUEST VIENTIANE FLASH DEPARTMENT WHEN SOUVANNA MAKES HIS STATEMENT AND WHETHER ANY CHANGE IN TEXT CONTAINED REFTTEL A.
2. ALSO REQUEST SAIGON XLASH VIENTIANE WHEN THIEU BROADCAST STARTS. ROGERS

DRAFTED BY:
J:UAJohnson:mw

APPROVED BY:
J:U. Alexis Johnson

CLEARANCES:
S/S - TLEliot

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 060040Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6584
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 8530
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 19872

CONTROL: 1700Q
FEB 4, 1971-7:40 P.M.

NODIS/ASHAU

LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADORS BERGER AND GODLEY

1. FOLLOWING IS OUR SUGGESTED DRAFT OF GVN NOTIFICATION TO PRESIDENT OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON SELF-DEFENSE MEASURES TAKEN BY ARMED FORCES OF REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, ASSISTED BY U.S. AIR POWER. THIS DRAFT IS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH ANY VIETNAMESE OR LAO OFFICIALS, BUT WE WISH TO HAVE YOUR COMMENTS NO LATER THAN 7:00 AM FEBRUARY 5 WASHINGTON TIME FOR CONSIDERATION AT HIGH-LEVEL MEETING MORNING FEBRUARY 5.

BEGIN QUOTE: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

"I HAVE THE HONOR TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL FURTHER ACTS OF AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM WHICH HAVE REQUIRED APPROPRIATE MEASURES OF COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

"YOU WILL RECALL THAT NORTH VIET-NAM HAS CONTINUED FOR MANY YEARS TO CARRY OUT AN ARMED ATTACK AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. IN THIS CONNECTION I WOULD REFER TO THE LETTERS OF FEBRUARY 7 AND 27, 1965, FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL CONCERNING MEASURES OF COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE REQUIRED TO MEET THAT ATTACK. I WOULD ALSO REFER TO THE LETTER OF MAY 5, 1970, FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL CONCERNING ACTIONS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES IN CAMBODIA WHICH REQUIRED LIMITED DEFENSIVE COUNTERMEASURES BY THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AND THE UNITED STATES.

"AS A RESULT OF THE DEFENSIVE MEASURES TAKEN IN CAMBODIA BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AND THE UNITED STATES AND THE ARMED RESISTANCE BY THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE INVADERS, THE IMPORTANT LINE OF SUPPLY TO THE INVADING TROOPS THROUGH THE GULF OF SIAM HAS BEEN CLOSED AND THE CONTINUANCE OF AGGRESSION HAS THEREBY BEEN MADE MORE DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, WITH THE BEGINNING OF THE DRY SEASON

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TOP SECRET

IN LAOS, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE GREATLY INCREASED THE FLOW OF MEN AND SUPPLIES SOUTHWARD THROUGH THAT NEUTRAL COUNTRY TO FUEL THEIR WAR OF AGGRESSION IN CAMBODIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. IN PARTICULAR, VAST QUANTITIES OF MUNITIONS AND OTHER WAR SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN SENT SOUTH, DIRECTED TO OR THROUGH A CONCENTRATION OF ROUTES AND SUPPLY DEPOTS IN AREAS KNOWN AS BASE AREAS 604 AND 611 LOCATED BETWEEN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH PARALLELS AND ADJACENT TO THE BORDER OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. THE LAO CIVILIAN POPULATION OF THIS AREA FLED SOME YEARS AGO IN THE FACE OF ITS EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION AND USE BY NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. THE PRESENCE OF THIS LARGE SANCTUARY AREA, WHICH INCLUDES MANY THOUSANDS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS, POSES A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, PARTICULARLY TO THE FIRST MILITARY REGION. THE THREAT INCREASES DAILY AND MUST BE DEALT WITH QUICKLY AND DIRECTLY.

" TO THAT END THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM HAS DETERMINED TO TAKE ACTION IN THIS SANCTUARY AREA OF LAOS AS REQUIRED FOR SELF-DEFENSE. THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, ASSISTED BY U.S. AIR POWER AND BY U.S. ARTILLERY FIRING FROM POSITIONS EXCLUSIVELY WITHIN THE TERRITORY OF SOUTH VIET-NAM, HAVE BEGUN TO CHOK OFF THIS ARTERY OF AGGRESSION BY DISRUPTING THE NORTH VIETNAMESE SUPPLY LINES AND DESTROYING THE BASES, ARMS AND OTHER MILITARY SUPPLIES IN THIS AREA OF LAOS. WHEN THIS TASK IS ACCOMPLISHED, THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM WILL WITHDRAW; NO OCCUPATION OF LAOTIAN TERRITORY WILL OCCUR.

"YOU WILL RECALL THAT THE 1962 AGREEMENT ON THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS REQUIRED NORTH VIET-NAM TO WITHDRAW ALL ITS ARMED FORCES FROM LAOS AND PROHIBITED THEIR REINTRODUCTION AND THE USE OF THE TERRITORY OF LAOS FOR INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. NORTH VIET-NAM NEVER LIVED UP TO THOSE COMMITMENTS AND HAS CONTINUED TO OCCUPY MUCH OF THE TERRITORY OF LAOS AND TO WAGE WAR AGAINST THE ROYAL LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT. THE SUPPLY LINES AND BASES IN SOUTHERN LAOS HAVE BEEN USED CONTINUALLY SINCE 1962, IN VIOLATION OF LAOTIAN NEUTRALITY AND THE GENEVA AGREEMENT, FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. IN VIEW OF THIS HISTORY AND IN THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES AS PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED, THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM IS FULLY JUSTIFIED IN TEMPORARILY SETTING ASIDE COMPLIANCE WITH THOSE PROVISIONS OF THE 1962 AGREEMENT THAT WOULD PROHIBIT THE DEFENSIVE MEASURES IT IS NOW TAKING IN THE TERRITORY OF LAOS.

"THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM REITERATES ITS RESPECT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY, INDEPENDENCE, NEUTRALITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE KINGDOM OF LAOS AND ITS FIDELITY TO THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS. COMPLIANCE BY NORTH VIET-NAM WITH ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THAT AGREEMENT WOULD MAKE UNNECESSARY THE DEFENSIVE MEASURES I HAVE DESCRIBED AND WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR ALL OF SOUTHEAST ASIA TO BEGIN TO ENJOY THE PEACE AND RECONSTRUCTION IT HAS SOUGHT FOR SO LONG.

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TOP SECRET

-3-STATE 19872, FEB 4

"I WOULD REQUEST THAT MY LETTER BE CIRCULATED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

"ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.
SIGNED: "BLANK" FOR THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. END QUOTE
ROGERS
BT

DRAFTED BY: Marshall Green:EA
APPROVED BY: Under Secretary Johnson
CLEARANCES: TLEliot:S/S

TOP SECRET

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TELEGRAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY 0740
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 4794
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5296
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 2990
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 1846
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2918
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 6636
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 8573
RUEHCR/USDEL FRANCE 5747
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021017

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TO BE DECRYPTED ONLY BY SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY PRESIDENT THIEU AT OR SOON AFTER 1100 RPT 1100 HOURS FEBRUARY 8 SAIGON TIME:

QUOTE

MESSAGE OF HIS EXCELLENCY NGUYEN VAN THIEU, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, TO ALL THE PEOPLE, SOLDIERS, AND CADRES ON THE OPERATIONS IN THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

1. TODAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1971, I HAVE ORDERED THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM TO ATTACK THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE BASES OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY ALONG THE VIETNAM-LAOS BORDER IN MILITARY REGION I.

2. THIS OPERATION IS CALLED OPERATION LAMSON 719.

3. THIS IS AN OPERATION LIMITED IN TIME AS WELL AS IN SPACE, WITH THE CLEAR AND UNIQUE OBJECTIVE OF DISRUPTING THE SUPPLY AND INFILTRATION NETWORK OF THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS LYING IN THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY, AND WHICH FOR MANY YEARS WAS OCCUPIED BY THE COMMUNIST NORTH

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TOP SECRET

-2- STATE 21017, FEB 7, NODIS

VIETNAMESE FORCES AND USED TO LAUNCH ATTACKS AGAINST OUR COUNTRY.

4. TODAY I SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM ALWAYS RESPECTS THE INDEPENDENCE, NEUTRALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS.

5. I ALSO SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM DOES NOT HAVE ANY TERRITORIAL AMBITION WHATSOEVER AND NEVER INTERFERES IN THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS. I ALSO PLEDGE THAT WHEN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED LIMITED OPERATION ENDS, THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM WILL WITHDRAW COMPLETELY FROM THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY.

6. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, WE ALL KNOW THAT SINCE MANY YEARS THE COMMUNIST VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES HAD OPENLY VIOLATED THE NEUTRALITY AND THE TERRITORY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS, AND BLATANTLY VIOLATED THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON LAOS JUST AS THEY HAD BLATANTLY VIOLATED THE 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON INDOCHINA IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

7. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WE ALL DO ALSO KNOW THAT THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD OPENLY OCCUPIED ONE IMPORTANT PART OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY, HAD BUILT THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL THERE IN ORDER TO MOVE COUNTLESS SOLDIERS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITIONS AND MILITARY MATERIEL INTO THE SOUTH, AND HAD ESTABLISHED IN THAT PART OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY GREAT MILITARY AND LOGISTIC BASES IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

8. IF THIS SITUATION PREVAILS, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE WILL STUBBORNLY CONTINUE THEIR WAR OF AGGRESSION THROUGHOUT VIETNAM, LAOS, AND THE KHMER REPUBLIC.

9. IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, WHILE WE SHOW MAXIMUM GOOD WILL AT THE PARIS TALKS IN ORDER TO SOLVE THIS WAR THROUGH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND THROUGH SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE THE ALLIED NATIONS HAVE WITHDRAWN A GREAT PART OF THEIR TROOPS AND CONTINUE TO WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM, ON THE CONTRARY, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE STILL CONTINUE TO INFILTRATE TROOPS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITIONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND ARE GETTING READY TO LAUNCH NEW ATTACKS IN THE FORTHCOMING MONTHS.

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TOP SECRET

-3- STATE 21017, FEB 7, NODIS

10. FOR THESE REASONS, THE ATTACKS OF OUR ARMED FORCES AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ALONG THE BORDERS ON THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ACT OF BELLIGERENCE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, BUT ARE SOLELY AN ACT OF LEGITIMATE SELF-DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSORS.

11. THIS IS NOT AN ACT OF AGGRESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AGAINST THE FRIENDLY NATION OF LAOS, ON THE CONTRARY, THIS CONSTITUTES AN ACT DESIGNED TO STOP THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE FROM EXPANDING AND MAINTAINING THEIR AGGRESSION POTENTIAL.

12. THIS IS NOT EITHER A WAR UNDERTAKEN BY THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM; ON THE CONTRARY, THIS IS AN ACT TO HELP SOON END THE WAR AND RESTORE PEACE IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.
UNQUOTE. ROGERS

DRAFTED BY:
J- JIGetzELM

APPROVED BY
J- Ambassador Johnson

CLEARANCES:
S/S-TLEliot

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REFERENCE: DEPTTEL 20999

FOR SECRETARY ROGERS FROM AMBASSADOR WATSON

WILL MEET WITH PRIME MINISTER CHABAN-DELMAS AT 20:00
PARIS TIME SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7.

WATSON

BT

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TELEGRAM

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5295
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7 FEB 71 Z17 12

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TO BE DECRYPTED BY SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
LITERALLY FOR AMBASSADOR ONLY

AMBASSADOR CROMER AND MINISTER MILLARD CALLED AT
GREEN'S OFFICE AT 11:15 TODAY (WASHINGTON TIME) WHERE
THEY RECEIVED BRIEFING ON LAOS OPERATION. THEY MOST
APPRECIATIVE OF UKG'S THUS KEPT INFORMED, ESPECIALLY IN
VIEW OF UK'S CO-CHAIRMANSHIP ROLE. ROGERS

DRAFTED BY:
EA: MGreen:mw

APPROVED BY:
J:John I. Getz

CLEARANCES:
S/S- TLEliot

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Department of State

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TELEGRAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON FLASH 6695
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021014

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7 FEB 71 Z 17 12

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR AMBASSADOR BERGER ONLY

ADVISE WHEN AND WHERE GVN WILL INFORM ICC AND GENEVA
CO-CHAIRMEN. ROGERS

DRAFTED BY:

EA:Marshall Green:elm

APPROVED BY

S/S-TLEliot

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TO BE DECRYPTED ONLY BY SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR YOST

FOLLOWING IS DRAFT TEXT OF THIEU STATEMENT:

QUOTE

MESSAGE OF HIS EXCELLENCY NGUYEN VAN THIEU, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, TO ALL THE PEOPLE, SOLDIERS, AND CADRES ON THE OPERATIONS IN THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

1. TODAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1971, I HAVE ORDERED THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM TO ATTACK THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE BASES OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY ALONG THE VIETNAM-LAOS BORDER IN MILITARY REGION I.
2. THIS OPERATION IS CALLED OPERATION LAMSON 719.
3. THIS IS AN OPERATION LIMITED IN TIME AS WELL AS IN SPACE, WITH THE CLEAR AND UNIQUE OBJECTIVE OF DISRUPTING THE SUPPLY AND INFILTRATION NETWORK OF THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS LYING IN THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY, AND WHICH FOR MANY YEARS WAS OCCUPIED BY THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES AND USED TO LAUNCH ATTACKS AGAINST OUR COUNTRY.
4. TODAY I SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM ALWAYS RESPECTS THE INDEPENDENCE, NEUTRALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS.
5. I ALSO SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM DOES NOT HAVE ANY TERRITORIAL AMBITION WHATSOEVER AND NEVER INTERFERES IN THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS. I ALSO PLEDGE THAT WHEN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED LIMITED OPERATION ENDS, THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM WILL WITHDRAW COMPLETELY FROM THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY.

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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-2- STATE 21013, FEB 7, NODIS

6. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, WE ALL KNOW THAT SINCE MANY YEARS THE COMMUNIST VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES HAD OPENLY VIOLATED THE NEUTRALITY AND THE TERRITORY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS, AND BLATANTLY VIOLATED THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON LAOS JUST AS THEY HAD BLATANTLY VIOLATED THE 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON INDOCHINA IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

7. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WE ALL DO ALSO KNOW THAT THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD OPENLY OCCUPIED ONE IMPORTANT PART OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY, HAD BUILT THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL THERE IN ORDER TO MOVE COUNTLESS SOLDIERS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITIONS AND MILITARY MATERIEL INTO THE SOUTH, AND HAD ESTABLISHED IN THAT PART OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY GREAT MILITARY AND LOGISTIC BASES IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

8. IF THIS SITUATION PREVAILS, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE WILL STUBBORNLY CONTINUE THEIR WAR OF AGGRESSION THROUGHOUT VIETNAM, LAOS, AND THE KHMER REPUBLIC.

9. IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, WHILE WE SHOW MAXIMUM GOOD WILL AT THE PARIS TALKS IN ORDER TO SOLVE THIS WAR THROUGH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND THROUGH SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE THE ALLIED NATIONS HAVE WITHDRAWN A GREAT PART OF THEIR TROOPS AND CONTINUE TO WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM, ON THE CONTRARY, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE STILL CONTINUE TO INFILTRATE TROOPS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITIONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND ARE GETTING READY TO LAUNCH NEW ATTACKS IN THE FORTHCOMING MONTHS.

10. FOR THESE REASONS, THE ATTACKS OF OUR ARMED FORCES AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ALONG THE BORDERS ON THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ACT OF BELLIGERENCE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, BUT ARE SOLELY AN ACT OF LEGITIMATE SELF-DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSORS.

11. THIS IS NOT AN ACT OF AGGRESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AGAINST THE FRIENDLY NATION OF LAOS, ON THE CONTRARY, THIS CONSTITUTES AN ACT DESIGNED TO STOP THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE FROM EXPANDING AND MAINTAINING THEIR AGGRESSION POTENTIAL.

12. THIS IS NOT EITHER A WAR UNDERTAKEN BY THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM; ON THE CONTRARY, THIS IS AN ACT TO HELP SOON END THE WAR AND RESTORE PEACE IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.
UNQUOTE. ROGERS

DRAFTED BY: JIGetz:mw

APPROVED BY:
J: John I. Getz

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TOP SECRET

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TELEGRAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK FLASH 0739
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 4793
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5294
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 2989
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 1845
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2917
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 6635
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 8565
RUEHCR/USDEL FRANCE 5746
RUEHCR/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5947
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 021006

2457Q
071527Z

NODIS

TO BE DECRYPTED ONLY BY SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE

REF: STATE 20982

1. THIEU'S BROADCAST WILL NOT BE MADE UNTIL 1100, REPEAT 1100 HOURS FEBRUARY 8 SAIGON TIME AND ACTUAL START MAY BE FIFTEEN TO THIRTY MINUTES LATER. REALIZE MOST POSTS HAVE ALREADY MADE APPROACH AS INSTRUCTED. THUS HOST GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BE ASKED CONTINUE MAINTAIN COMPLETE SECURITY UNTIL CONFIRMATION BY PRESS TICKER OR OTHERWISE THAT THIEU HAS ACTUALLY BROADCAST.
2. TEXT OF THIEU'S STATEMENT AS NOW KNOWN BEING TRANSMITTED SEPTEL. ROGERS
BT

DRAFTED BY: J:UAJOHNSON
APPROVED BY: J:U. ALEXIS JOHNSON
CLEARANCES: S/S-

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

R 071335Z FEB 71
FM ANEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6636
BT
T O P S E C R E T CANBERRA 0676

2 4 5 5 Q
7 FEB 71 Z14 06

NODIS

INDEX: EXPO, MIOP/TOPS/RPLY/MAS, AXX.

REFERENCE: STATE 020982

1. AMBASSADOR HAS GONE OVER REFTEL IN CAREFUL DETAIL WITH PRIME MINISTER GORTON WHO APPRECIATED BEING INFORMED. PM SAID HE WOULD CONSULT APPROPRIATE MINISTERS, WITH NECESSARY SECRECY, TO PREPARE PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT TO BE MADE AFTER GVN ANNOUNCEMENT. AMBASSADOR TOLD HIM THIS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY WELCOME FROM AUSTRALIAN PARTNER.
2. GORTON'S PRIVATE REACTION WAS HIGHLY FAVORABLE AND HAWKISH. HE WELCOMED THE ACTION AND THOUGHT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE LONG AGO. NOTING LIMITED SCOPE AND DURATION OF OPERATION, AND CIRCUMSCRIBED ROLE OF US FORCES, HE SAID WHEN WE FIGHT WE OUGHT TO FIGHT TO WIN. GORTON THOUGHT IT WISE THAT TERMINAL DATE HAD NOT BEEN SPECIFIED AS IN CAMBODIAN CASE. ON POINT ABOUT NO OCCUPATION OF LAOS HE SUGGESTED WISHFULLY IT MIGHT BE HARD TO GET ARVN OUT ONCE THEY WERE IN.
3. HAVING LAMENTED LIMITATIONS PM WENT ON TO SHOW CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF OUR POLICIES AND PURPOSE AND OF POLITICAL REALITIES IN US. HE ANTICIPATED NEGATIVE REACTION FROM USUAL US CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS BUT BELIEVED PUBLIC EMOTION ON INDOCHINA HAS CALMED DOWN MARKEDLY. HE REMARKED CAMBODIAN OPERATION PROVED TO BE GREAT THING.
4. PM DID NOT DISSENT ON ANY POINT AND HIS REACTION WAS TOTALLY FAVORABLE. WE CAN AGAIN COUNT ON HIS BACKING.

RICE

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TOP SECRET

O 061535Z FEB 71 ZFF -4
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1348
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 723

2 3 7 6 Q
6 FEB 71 Z16 33

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

REF: EMB TELS 720, 721

1. KAMPHAN PANYA CAME TO EMBASSY AT 1300 TO ASCERTAIN MY PERSONAL REACTIONS TO RLG STATEMENT. I TOLD HIM I HAD TELEGRAPHED TEXT TO YOU BUT THAT PERSONALLY I THOUGHT IT WAS ADEQUATE.
2. I ASKED HIM IF HE WAS AWARE THAT ARVN GROUP MIGHT ARRIVE HERE TOMORROW. HE WAS IGNORANT OF THIS AND SAID IT WOULD BE DISASTROUS. HE ASKED IF I WOULD DISCUSS THIS WITH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR. I REFUSED. HE WENT TO SEE SOUVANNA.
3. AT 1930 KHAMPHAN PANYA SAID AFTER CONSULTING WITH SOUVANNA HE CONTACTED SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR AND TOLD HIM ARVN GROUP SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT PROCEED VIENTIANE TOMORROW. RLG WOULD INFORM HIM WHEN THEY WOULD BE WELCOME.
4. CURRENT RLG PLANS ARE:
 - A. IF PRESIDENT THIEU MAKES STATEMENT AT 0800 SAGION TIME FEB 8 (0700 VIENTIANE TIME) LAO RADIO WILL AT 1000 LOCAL CARRY THIEU'S STATEMENT AND SAY THAT: RLG DECLARATION IS BEING PREPARED AND INVITE LISTENERS TO STAY ON STATION.
 - B. AT ABOUT 1030 LOCAL RLG DECLARATION WILL BE CARRIED BY LAO RADIO.
 - C. SUBSEQUENTLY EITHER IN MORNING OR EARLY AFTERNOON FEB 8 SOUVANNA WILL MEET WITH PRESS AND WILL EMPHASIZE NVA VIOLATION GENEVA AGREEMENTS, LONG TIME OCCUPANCY HO CHI MINH TRAIL AREA AND FACT THAT RLG NOT REPEAT NOT CONSULATED RE OPERATION. HE MIGHT ALSO ADD THAT RLG POSITIONING TROOPS WEST OF MOUNG PHALANE IN SELF DEFENSE, RLG APPEALING TO ICC ETC. GP-1. GODLEY

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Department of State

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1347
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 721

2 3 4 2 Q
6 FEB 71 Z12 26

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

REF: LAST SENTENCE VIENTIANE 704

THIS AFTERNOON PRIME MINISTER AND I ATTENDED CEREMONY OF ANNUAL LAO-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION MEETING. I ASKED HIM IF SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMB HAD ANYTHING TO ADD TO WHAT I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THIS MORNING. PRIME MINISTER SAID AMB HAD INFORMED HIM THAT A SOUTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY DELEGATION IS ARRIVING HERE TOMORROW TO DISCUSS MILITARY MATTERS WITH THE LAO GENERAL STAFF. PRIME MINISTER HAS DIRECTED HIS SON MAJOR MANGKALA TO ARRANGE FOR THEIR RECEPTION ON THE MILITARY SIDE OF THE AIRFIELD WHERE THEIR ARRIVAL SHOULD PASS UNNOTICED. GVN'S DISREGARD FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION HERE IS SHOCKING. ONCE IT IS KNOWN THAT A SOUTH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION ARRIVED HERE PRIOR TO THE INITIATION OF THE OPERATION IT WILL DESTROY THE PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION THAT HE HAS NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN CONSULTED. THE ARRIVAL OF THIS DELEGATION WILL ALSO PUT THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE MERCY OF THE LAO MILITARY WHO AT ANYTIME CAN THREATEN TO REVEAL THAT THE PRIME MINISTER APPROVED THE ARRIVAL OF THIS DELEGATION, WHICH COULD BE CITED BY MANY AS HIS RENUNCIATION OF LAO NEUTRALITY.

GP-1.

GODLEY

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TOP SECRET



Department of State

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 061100Z FEB 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1345
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 5526
BT
TOP SECRET VIENTIANE 720

2 3 4 3 Q
6 FEB 71 Z 12 31

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

REF: (A) STATE 020170
(B) VIENTIANE 704

1. DELEGATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS KHAMPHAN PANYA CONVOKED DCM THIS AFTERNOON TO DISCUSS STATEMENT LAO GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 8. KHAMPHAN HAD JUST LEFT PRIME MINISTER WHO HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO CONSULT WITH US ABOUT EXACT WORDING OF STATEMENT. FOLLOWING IS PROPOSED TEXT, BOTH IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH, WHICH WE CONSIDER STRIKES A GOOD BALANCE AND PROTECTS RLG'S POSITION AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT UNDULY EMBARRASSING GVN.

2. BEGIN ENGLISH TEXT. (UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION)
QUOTE DECLARATION OF ROYAL GOVERNMENT.
SEVERAL DAYS AGO NEWS APPEARED IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS SPEAKING OF THE POSSIBILITY OF AN IMPORTANT CONFRONTATION ON THE TERRITORY OF THE KINGDOM BETWEEN NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES ON THE ONE HAND AND ON THE OTHER SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES WITH AMERICAN LOGISTIC SUPPORT, SPECIFICALLY ON THE ILLEGAL ACCESS AND INFILTRATION ROUTE CALLED THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL WHICH HAS BEEN USED FOR YEARS, DESPITE THE CONTINUAL PROTESTS AND DENUNCIATIONS OF THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT, TO TRANSPORT NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS AND WAR MATERIEL TOWARD CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM.

"THESE NEWS STORIES ARE TODAY UNFORTUNATELY CONFIRMED.

"THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT DEPLORES ONCE AGAIN THAT FOREIGN TROOPS BELONGING TO COUNTRIES AND GOVERNMENTS WHICH HAVE COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO GUARANTEE AND DEFEND THE SOVEREIGNTY, NEUTRALITY AND INVIOABILITY OF LAOS HAVE DELIBERATELY CHOSEN ITS TERRITORY AS A BATTLEFIELD.

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"CERTAINLY THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM WHO, SCORNFUL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, AS REPRESENTED BY THE ACCORDS SOLEMNLY CONCLUDED IN GENEVA IN 1962 BEGAN AND CONTINUES TO VIOLATE THE NEUTRALITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE KINGDOM. BUT THIS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ANY JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ENTRY OF OTHER FORCES INTO LAOS.

" IN ANY CASE, THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT DEMANDS THAT ALL FOREIGN FORCES WITHDRAW IMMEDIATELY FROM THE TERRITORY OF THE KINGDOM AND REQUESTS THE POWERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFEGUARDING THE STIPULATIONS OF THE GENEVA ACCORD ON LAOS TO UNDERTAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO CAUSE ALL THE SIGNATORIES TO RESPECT THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF THIS ACCORD, TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF LAOS REMAIN DEVOTED. END QUOTE.

3. BEGIN FRENCH TEXT. QUOTE DECLARATION DU GOUVERNEMENT ROYAL.

" IL Y A QUELQUES JORS DES NOUVELLES PARUES DANS LA PRESSE INTERNATIONALE FAISAIENT ETAT DE L'EVENTUALITE D'UN AFFRONTMENT IMPORTANT SUR LE TERRITOIRE DU ROYAUME, ENTRE LES FORCES NORD-VIETNAMIENNES D'UNE PART, ET LES FORCES SUD-VIETNAMIENNES AVEC LE SOUTIEN LOGISTIQUE AMERICAIN D'AUTRE PART, PRECISEMENT SUR LA VOIE ILLEGALE D'ACCES ET D'INFILTRATION DENOMMEE "PISTE HO CHI MIN ", QU'EMPRUNTENT DEPUIS DES ANNEES, MALGRE LES INCESSANTES PROTESTATIONS ET DENONCIATIONS DU GOUVERNEMENT ROYAL, LES TROUPES ET LE MATERIEL DE GUERRE NORD-VIETNAMIENS POUR SE RENDRE AU CAMBODGE AND AU SUD-VIETNAM.

"CES NOUVELLES SONT AUJOURD'HUI MALHEUREUSEMENT CONFIRMEES.

"LE GOUVERNEMENT ROYAL DEPLORE, UNE FOIS DE PLUS, QUE DES TROUPES ETRANGERES QUI APPARTIENNENT A DES PAYS ET DES GOUVERNEMENTS AYANT TOUS SOUSCRIT DE GARANTIR ET DEFENDRE LA SOUVERAINETE, LA NEUTRALITE ET L'INVIOABILITE DU LAOS, AIENT CHOISI, DE PROPOS DELIBERE, SON TERRITOIRE COMME CHAMP DE BATAILLE.

"CERTES, LA RESPONSABILITE PREMIERE INCOMBE A LA REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU VIETNAM QUI, AU MEPRIS DU DROIT INTERNATIONAL COMME DES ACCORDS SOLENNELLEMENT CONCLUS A GENEVE EN 1962, A COMMENCE ET CONTINUE DE VIOLER LA NEUTRALITE ET L'INTEGRITE TERRITORIALE DU ROYAUME. MAIS, CELA NE PEUT NON PLUS CONSTITUER UNE JUSTIFICATION A L'ENTREE DES AUTRES TROUPES ETRANGERES DE SE

TOP SECRET

-3- VIENTIANE 720, FEB 6, NODIS/ASHAU.

RETIRER IMMEDIATEMENT DU TERRITOIRE DU ROYAUME,
ET PRIE LES PUISSANCES QUI ONT LA RESPONSABILITE DE
FAIRE RESPECTER LES STIPULATION DE L'ACCORD DE
GENEVE SUR LE LAOS DE PRENDRE LES MESURES NECESSAIRES
POUR FAIRE RESPECTER PAR TOUS LES SIGNATAIRES L'ESPRIT
ET LA LETTRE DE CET ACCORD AUQUEL DEMEURENT
ATTACHES LE GOUVERNEMENT ET LE PEUPLE LAO.

4. KHAMPHAN SAID PRIMIN WOULD PROBABLY CALL IN PRESS
MORNING FEB 8 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING RELEASE OF
STATEMENT AND IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS WOULD
OUTLINE ACTIONS RLG WAS TAKING OR PROPOSED TO TAKE
TO BRING ABOUT DEPARTURE OF FOREIGN TROOPS FROM
LAOS. THESE WOULD INCLUDE APPEAL TO CO-PRESIDENTS,
ICC AND POSSIBLY TO UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL
OBSERVERS IN REGION OF HO CHI MINH TRAIL.
GP-1.

GODLEY

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Department of State

TELEGRAM 4

TOP SECRET

O 060607Z FEB 71 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 855
BT
TOP SECRET SAIGON 1786

CN-2280
6 Feb 71
0713Z

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: SAIGON 1785

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT:

1. I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT TODAY, FEBRUARY (BLANK), 1971, I HAVE ORDERED THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO ATTACK THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE BASES ON THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY ALONG THE VIETNAM-LAOS BORDER IN MILITARY REGION I.
2. THIS IS AN OPERATION LIMITED IN TIME AS WELL AS IN SPACE, WITH THE CLEAR AND UNIQUE OBJECTIVE OF DISRUPTING THE SUPPLY AND INFILTRATION NETWORK OF THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS LYING IN THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY, AND WHICH FOR MANY YEARS WAS USED TO LAUNCH ATTACKS AGAINST OUR COUNTRY.
3. I SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE RVN ALWAYS RESPECTS THE INDEPENDENCE, NEUTRALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS.
4. I ALSO SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE RVN DOES NOT HAVE ANY TERRITORIAL AMBITION WHATSOEVER AND NEVER INTERFERES IN THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS. I ALSO PLEDGE THAT WHEN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED LIMITED OPERATION ENDS, THE ARVN WILL WITHDRAW COMPLETELY FROM THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY.
5. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, WE ALL KNOW THAT SINCE MANY YEARS THE COMMUNIST VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES HAD OPENLY VIOLATED THE NEUTRALITY AND THE TERRITORY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS, AND BLATANTLY VIOLATED THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON LAOS JUST AS THEY HAD BLATANTLY VIOLATED THE 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON INDOCHINA IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE RVN.
6. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WE ALL DO ALSO KNOW THAT THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD OPENLY OCCUPIED ONE PART OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY, HAD BUILT THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL THERE IN ORDER TO MOVE COUNTLESS SOLDIERS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITIONS AND MILITARY MATERIEL INTO THE SOUTH, AND HAD ESTABLISHED IN THAT PART OF THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY GREAT MILITARY AND SUPPLY BASES IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE RVN.

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-2- SAIGON 1786, 6 FEB 71, CN-2280

7. IF THIS SITUATION PREVAILS, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE WILL STUBBORNLY MAINTAIN THEIR WAR OF AGGRESSION IN VIETNAM, LAOS, AND THE KHMER REPUBLIC.

8. IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF THE RVN, WHILE WE SHOW MAXIMUM GOOD WILL AT THE PARIS TALKS IN ORDER TO SOLVE THIS WAR THROUGH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND THROUGH SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE THE ALLIED NATIONS HAVE WITHDRAWN A GREAT PART OF THEIR TROOPS AND CONTINUE TO WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM, ON THE CONTRARY, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE STILL CONTINUE TO INFILTRATE TROOPS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITIONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND ARE GETTING READY TO LAUNCH NEW ATTACKS IN THE FORTHCOMING MONTHS.

9. FOR THESE REASONS, THE ATTACKS OF OUR ARMED FORCES AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ALONG THE BORDERS ON THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ACT OF BELLIGERENCE FROM THE RVN, BUT ARE SOLELY AN ACT OF LEGITIMATE AND NECESSARY SELF-DEFENSE OF THE RVN AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSORS.

10. THIS IS NOT AN ACT OF AGGRESSION OF THE RVN AGAINST THE FRIENDLY NATION OF LAOS, ON THE CONTRARY, THIS CONSTITUTES AN ACT DESIGNED TO STOP THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE FROM EXPANDING THEIR AGGRESSION POTENTIAL.

11. THIS IS NOT EITHER AN EXPANSION OF THE WAR OF THE RVN; ON THE CONTRARY, THIS IS AN ACT TO HELP SOON END THE WAR AND RESTORE PEACE IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. END TEXT.

BERGER

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Department of State TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

2271Q

O 060606Z FEB 71 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 854
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1785

6 FEB 1971, 0642Z

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 020549

1. WHEN I SAW NHA HE GAVE ME SLIGHTLY REVISED TEXT, WHICH I AM SENDING SEPTTEL IN FULL. THEY HAVE ACCEPTED OUR SUGGESTIONS. TIMING IS NOW 0700 HOURS FEBRUARY 8, WHEN VN RADIO GOES ON AIR.
2. PRESIDENT THIEU HAD ALREADY PLANNED TO SEND STATEMENT TO THEIR UN REP FOR TRANSMISSION TO THE UNSC PRESIDENT AT TIME OF RELEASE HERE, AND FOR RELEASE TO PRESS. THEY WILL USE THEIR OWN FACILITIES.
3. THEY ALREADY PLANNED FOR FOREIGN MINISTER TO SEND STATEMENTS TO CO-CHAIRMEN AND TO ICC GOVERNMENTS:
4. NHA SAID THIEU DOES NOT RPT NOT WISH TO HAVE ANY PRESS BRIEFING DONE HERE ON IN MR I ON THE FIRST DAY. (I ASKED HIM TO CONVEY OUR RECOMMENDATION TO THIEU AND HE SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS STILL THIEU'S VIEW.) THIEU PLANS TO HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE EITHER IN SAIGON OR MR I ON FEBRUARY 9. THIS SUGGESTS THAT MACV WOULD ISSUE STATEMENT ON US ROLE, IMMEDIATELY AFTER PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT IS READ.
5. IN INTERESTS OF SECRECY OF OPERATIONS (AND PRESUMABLY THEIR SAFETY), THIEU WILL KEEP PRESS OUT OF LAOS UNTIL AFTER HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, AFTER WHICH ARVN WILL PROVIDE TRANSPORT AND FACILITIES FOR PRESS. AT PRESENT GENERAL ABRAMS AND I THINK THIS MAKES SENSE.
6. THIEU WISHES TO KNOW IF PRESIDENT NIXON OR WHITE HOUSE WILL MAKE STATEMENT AT ANY TIME, AND IF SO WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IN ADVANCE TEXT AND TIMING.

BERGER

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 060603Z FEB 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1339
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 704

CN-2273Q
6 Feb 71
0655Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

REF: STATE 020170

1. DCM AND I SAW SOUVANNA AT 1230 LOCAL. TOLD HIM OF TIME THAT OPERATION WILL COMMENCE AND THAT WE HOPED PRESIDENT THIEU WOULD MAKE A STATEMENT AT THAT TIME. READ HIM THE DRAFT OF THIEU'S STATEMENT ON WHICH HE MADE NO COMMENT. SUGGESTED THAT HE MAKE A STATEMENT AT TEN AM AND ASKED THAT HE GIVE ME AN ADVANCE COPY. HE AGREED AND SAID HE WOULD GET WORKING IMMEDIATELY. I ALSO TOLD HIM OF OUR PLANS RE UN AND HE NODDED. I SUGGESTED THAT HIS STATEMENT INCLUDE FACT THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED WHICH WE COULD REFER TO IF EVER QUERIED ON THIS POINT. HE SAID "OF COURSE, I WILL SAY THAT." OUR CONVERSATION WAS BRIEF. THE PRIME MINISTER LISTENED IMPASSIVELY TO WHAT I SAID AND MADE NO REPEAT NO COMMENT ON THIEU'S DRAFT. I EMPHASIZED THAT THE TIMING OF THIEU'S STATEMENT HAD NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN AGREED TO. AS WE LEFT PRIMIN'S RESIDENCE WE CROSSED WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR WHO WAS CALLIN ON THE PRIMIN.

GP-1.

GODLEY

BT

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T. ELIOT

TOP SECRET

Z 060540Z FEB 71
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON FLASH
BT
TOP SECRET SERVICE NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 020549, SAIGON 1780.

1. RE PARA 2 0300 SAIGON TIME FEBRUARY 8 IS 1900 HOURS SUNDAY.
OUR TEL SHOULD READ 7:00 P.M., 1900 HRS.

2. RE BALANCE OF SENTENCE. WE COULD EXPECT THE VN REP TO
INFORM PRESIDENT BUT SINCE U.S. IS PRESIDENT OF THE S.C. FOR
MONTH OF FEBRUARY WE WOULD ALSO EXPECT TO PARTICIPATE IN PRESS
HANDLING.

3. DO NOT DELAY CARRYING OUT ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS. FORMAL
FOLLOW-UP TO THIS SERVICE FORTHCOMING LATER IN DAY. ROGERS
BT

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TOP SECRET

A. Sackmann

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

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Z 060420Z FEB 71 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 0850
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1780

CN-2247
Feb. 6, 1971
0402Z

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 020549

1. RE PARA 2, 0800 SAIGON TIME FEBRUARY 8 IS 1900 HOURS SUNDAY NEW YORK TIME. URTEL READS 9:00 P.M. I ASSUME THIS SHOULD BE 1900 HOURS. ALSO, RE BALANCE OF THIS SENTENCE, ASSUME YOU MEAN VN REPRESENTATIVE WOULD INFORM PRESS THAT HE HAD GIVEN STATEMENT TO UNSC PRESIDENT. PLEASE CONFIRM.

2. I AM SEEING NHA AT 1230 HOURS AND WILL ASK TO SEE THIEU THIS AFTERNOON ON THIS MESSAGE.

BERGER

BT

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This document has been reviewed pursuant to Executive Order 13526 and has been determined to be declassified.

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Department of State

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 052343Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6641
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 8542
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 020549

2170Q

NODIS/ASHAU

FEB 5, 6:43 PM 1971

FOR AMBASSADORS BERGER AND GODLEY ONLY

REFS: A. SAIGON 1750, B. DEPTTEL 20170.

1. AS INDICATED REFTTEL B, DRAFT THIEU STATEMENT TRANSMITTED REFTTEL A SEEMS TO US EXCELLENT ALMOST EVERY RESPECT. WE CONCUR WITH CHANGES THAT YOU HAVE SUGGESTED PARA 5 REFTTEL A. ONLY FURTHER SUGGESTION WE HAVE IS TO SUBSTITUTE "DISRUPT" FOR "DESTROY" IN PARA (2) OF DRAFT TEXT, AS WE THINK IT PREFERABLE NOT TO OVERSTATE OBJECTIVES LIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED.
2. WE STRONGLY FEEL AND URGE THAT THIEU ISSUE STATEMENT AT 0800 SAIGON TIME FEBRUARY 8, RATHER THAN WAITING FOR EVENING TIME, SO THAT HIS EXCELLENT STATEMENT CONSTITUTES FIRST AND AUTHORITATIVE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF AND INFORMATION ON OPERATION. (HE COULD, OF COURSE, REPEAT IT IN EVENING DURING PRIME TV AND RADIO PERIOD IN VIET-NAM.) ALSO RELEASE AT THAT HOUR WILL PERMIT STATEMENT TO BE SUBMITTED TO UNSC PRESIDENT AT SAME HOUR (9:00 PM SUNDAY, NEW YORK TIME) AND IMMEDIATELY BE MADE AVAILABLE TO PRESS HERE. PLEASE CONFIRM SOONEST WHETHER THIEU IS AGREEABLE.
3. OUR RECOMMENDATION HERE IS THAT THIEU'S STATEMENT BE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED, PERHAPS AT 8:30 A.M. BY ARVN PRESS BRIEFING IN SAIGON ON OPERATION. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS BRIEFING SHOULD BE CAREFULLY DONE, SO AS TO BE ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH THIEU'S STATEMENT. IT SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE A "JOINT" BRIEFING WITH MACV, BUT A RELATIVELY JUNIOR AMERICAN OFFICER SHOULD BE PRESENT TO MAKE STATEMENT SOLELY ON U.S. ROLE IN OPERATION. TEXT OF SUCH STATEMENT BEING TRANSMITTED SEPTTEL. FOLLOWING THIEU'S STATEMENT AND ARVN BRIEFING, WOULD PRESUME THAT AT SOME STAGE THERE WOULD BE ARVN BRIEFING IN MRI.
4. UNDER THIS SCENARIO, WE WOULD PLAN NO USG STATEMENTS OR SPECIAL BRIEFINGS IN WASHINGTON THROUGH MONDAY WASHINGTON TIME, SO THAT PUBLIC ATTENTION CAN BE FOCUSED ON THIEU'S

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-2- STATE 020549, FEB 5, 1971

STATEMENT AND STORY FROM SAIGON. FYI WE WILL HAVE BRIEFED A FEW SELECTED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND ON MONDAY WOULD HOPE FOR FAVORABLE STATEMENTS FROM AT LEAST SOME OF THEM. WE ARE TENTATIVELY THINKING OF SECRETARY ROGERS' AND SECRETARY LAIRD'S APPEARING AT EXECUTIVE SESSIONS OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEES RESPECTIVELY ON TUESDAY MORNING, FOLLOWING WHICH PUBLIC STATEMENTS WOULD BE RELEASED BY THEM. END FYI.

5. IN CONNECTION WITH PRESS MATTERS, WOULD APPRECIATE THOUGHTS YOU AND GENERAL ABRAMS MAY HAVE WITH RESPECT TO HANDLING REQUESTS BY U.S. CORRESPONDENTS IN VIET-NAM TO ACCOMPANY ARVN FORCES INTO LAOS AND/OR TRANSPORTATION ON U.S. AIRCRAFT OR HELICOPTERS ENTERING LAOS.

6. AS NOTED ABOVE, WE PLAN TO DROP OUR PROPOSED TEXT (STATE 19872) AND WOULD LIKE TO USE THIEU'S STATEMENT AS DOCUMENT TO BE TRANSMITTED TO PRESIDENT OF UNSC (AMBASSADOR YOST THIS MONTH) UNDER COVER OF BRIEF TRANSMITTAL LETTER FROM GVN REPRESENTATIVE AT UN. WE DO NOT RPT NOT PLAN TO TRANSMIT ANY U.S. STATEMENT TO UNSC PRESIDENT.

7. AMBASSADOR YOST HAS MADE DISCREET ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THAT GVN REPRESENTATIVE AND SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE ARE AVILABLE AFTERNOON OF SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7. IF THIEU IS AGREEABLE TO FOREGOING ACTION IN UNSC AND SO DESIRES, WE WOULD BE GLAD TO TRANSMIT HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO GVN REPRESENTATIVE AT NEW YORK FOR HANDLING THIS MATTER.

8. IN ORDER TO HANDLE QUESTION OF GENEVA ACCORDS 1954 AND 1962 WE FEEL GVN FOREIGN MINISTER SHOULD PROMPTLY AND FORMALLY TRANSMIT TEXT OF THIEU'S STATEMENT TO THE CO-CHAIRMAN BY LETTER OR CABLE AND TO THE ICC GOVERNMENTS EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH ICC COMMISSIONERS IN SAIGON.

GP-1. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: J - Under Secretary Johnson
Cleared by: S/S - T L Eliot
 S/PRS - Mr. McCloskey
Approved by: Under Secretary Johnson

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TOP SECRET

0 051122Z FEB 71 ZFFA
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 838
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1750

1 8 8 8'Q
5 FEB 71 Z13 29

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: SAIGON 1708

1. NHA HAS JUST GIVEN ME DRAFT TEXT OF STATEMENT TO BE MADE ON "D-DAY," AND HAS ASKED FOR OUR COMMENTS.
2. HE SAID PRESIDENT THIEU STILL UNDECIDED WHETHER TO ISSUE STATEMENT FROM THE PALACE OR PUT IT OUT AS A MESSAGE TO THE NATION. PRESENT THINKING WAS TO DO THIS AT PEAK RADIO AND TV TIME AT 2000 HOURS ON FEBRUARY 8, BUT THIS STILL OPEN. I POINTED OUT THAT IF OPERATION LAUNCHED THAT MORNING EARLY PRESS WOULD SOON FLASH THE NEWS, THERE WOULD BE LONG GAP BETWEEN FLASH AND STATEMENT, AND THAT MUCH EARLIER TIME MIGHT BE ADVISABLE. NHA SAID THEY WERE OPEN-MINDED ON THIS AND IT COULD BE DONE AT NOON OR EVEN EARLIER.
3. NHA SAID THIEU IS THINKING OF GOING TO MR I TWO OR THREE DAYS AFTER COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS TO HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE.

4. FOLLOWING IS TEXT:

QTE: 1). I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT TODAY, FEBRUARY (BLANK), 1971, I HAVE ORDERED THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO ATTACK THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE'S BASES ON THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY ALONG THE VN-LAOS BORDER IN MILITARY REGION I.

2) THIS IS ONLY AN OPERATION LIMITED IN TIME AS WELL AS SPACE, WITH THE CLEAR AND UNIQUE OBJECTIVE TO DESTROY THE SUPPLY AND INFILTRATION NETWORK OF THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS LYING ALONG THE BORDER OF THE RVN.

3) I SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE RVN ALWAYS RESPECTS THE INDEPENDENCE, NEUTRALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS.

4) I ALSO SOLEMNLY CONFIRM THAT THE RVN NEVER INTERFERES IN THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS, AND I PLEDGE THAT WHEN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED LIMITED OPERATION ENDS, THE ARVN WILL WITHDRAW COMPLETELY FROM THE LAOTIAN TERRITORY.

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-2- SAIGON 1750, FEB 5, NODIS/ASHAU

- 5) NOBODY IN THE WORLD CAN EVER DISPUTE THE FACT THAT IT WAS THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE WHO VIOLATED THE 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON INDOCHINA AND BLATANTLY WAGED THE AGGRESSION AGAINST OUR NATION.
- 6) NOBODY IN THE WORLD CAN EVER DISPUTE THE FACT THAT IT WAS ALSO THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE WHO VIOLATED THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON LAOS, WHO BLATANTLY OCCUPIED BY FORCE THE TERRITORY OF THIS COUNTRY SINCE MANY YEARS AND USED IT TO SET UP THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL TO MOVE COUNTLESS TROOPS, WEAPONS, AMMUNITION AND FOOD FROM THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH, AND ESTABLISHED A NETWORK OF GREAT BASES IN THE TERRITORY OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC AND LAOS IN ORDER TO WAGE THE AGGRESSIONS AGAINST THE RVN.
- 7) IF THIS SITUATION PREVAILS, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE NOT ONLY WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THEIR WAR OF AGGRESSION IN VIETNAM, LAOS, AND THE KHMER REPUBLIC, BUT WILL ALSO FEEL ENCOURAGED TO EXPAND THEIR AGGRESSION IN THIS ENTIRE AREA OF THE WORLD.
- 8) IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF THE RVN, WHILE WE SHOW MAXIMUM GOOD WILL AT THE PARIS TALKS IN ORDER TO SOLVE THIS WAS THROUGH A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION AND THROUGH SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE THE ALLIED NATIONS HAVE WITHDRAWN A GREAT PART OF THEIR TROOPS AND CONTINUE TO WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM; ON THE CONTRARY, THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE AGAIN STEPPED UP THE INFILTRATION OF TROOPS, WEAPONS, AND MILITARY MATERIEL IN RECENT MONTHS AT A FASTER RATE THAN EVER BEFORE, AND ARE GETTING READY TO ESCALATE THE WAR IN THE RVN AND THE KHMER REPUBLIC MORE VIOLENTLY THAN EVER BEFORE.
- 9) FOR THESE REASONS, THE ATTACKS OF THE ARVN AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ALONG THE BORDERS ON THE TERRITORY OF LAOS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ACT OF AGGRESSION AGAINST THE FRIENDLY NATION OF LAOS, BUT ARE SOLELY AN ACT OF LEGITIMATE AND NECESSARY SELF-DEFENSE OF THE RVN AGAINST THE COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSORS.
- 10) THIS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN EXPANSION OF THE WAR UNDERTAKEN BY THE RVN; ON THE CONTRARY THIS CONSTITUTES AN ACT DESIGNED TO STOP THE BELLICIST COMMUNIST NORTH VIETNAMESE FROM EXPANDING AND MAINTAINING THEIR AGGRESSION POTENTIAL.
- 11) THIS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE EITHER AN ACT OF BELLIGERENCE FROM US; ON THE CONTRARY, THIS CONSTITUTES AN ACT TO HELP SOON END THE WAR AND RESTORE PEACE IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. UNQUOTE.

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-3- SAIGON 1750, FEB 5, NODIS/ASHAU

5. I GAVE HIM FOLLOWING PERSONAL COMMENTS:

A. IN PARA 7 DELETE "NOT ONLY," AND ALL THE WORDS AFTER "KHMER REPUBLIC." I SAID MANY PEOPLE MIGHT QUESTION THE VALIDITY OF THE FINAL CLAUSE, BUT THEY COULD NOT DENY THE FIRST PART OF THE SENTENCE, AND IT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE POINT.

B. IN PARA 8 I SUGGESTED DELETION OF THE WORDS "AT A FASTER RATE THAN EVER BEFORE" AND INSERTION OF THE WORD "AGAIN" BETWEEN "HAVE" AND "STEPPED." I SAID THE STATEMENT WAS FACTUALLY WRONG, SINCE THE INFILTRATION RATES DO NOT COMPARE TO 1968, AND THE PRESENT WORDS WOULD BE CHALLENGED BY THE WORLD PRESS.

6. NHA IS STANDING BY TOMORROW AND SUNDAY TO WORK WITH ME ON THE TEXT, AND HE SAID THIEU WAS IN TOWN AND AVAILABLE OVER THE WEEKEND.

BERGER

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Department of State TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

1803Q

O 050713Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 801
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1709

5 FEB 1971, 0750Z

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 019872

1. FOLLOWING ARE MY COMMENTS ON DRAFT:

A. SECOND PARA: THIEU MAY FEEL THAT THERE OUGHT TO BE SOME REFERENCE TO GVN COMMUNICATIONS TO UN AS WELL. EXCLUSIVE REFERENCE TO US COMMUNICATIONS MAY GIVE HIM TROUBLE.

B. THIRD PARA: THIEU HAS SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT WE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT MENTION TCHEPONE OR OTHER OBJECTIVES IN ANY INITIAL STATEMENTS WE MAKE. I KNOW GENERAL ABRAMS SHARES THAT VIEW. SENTENCE BEGINNING "IN PARTICULAR," INDICATES PRECISE OBJECTIVES, AND THIEU MAY BALK AT THAT.

C. LAST SENTENCE PARA 4: THIEU TOLD GENERAL ABRAMS AND ME THIS MORNING HE VISUALIZES HIS PUBLIC STATEMENT AS MAKING CLEAR THIS WILL BE A LIMITED OPERATION, WITH LIMITED OBJECTIVES, AND WITHIN LIMITED TIME. HE MAY WANT TO ADD WORDS ALONG THESE LINES.

D. LAST SENTENCE FIFTH PARA: ADMISSION THAT GVN TEMPORARILY SETTING ASIDE COMPLIANCE WITH 1962 AGREEMENT MAY GIVE THIEU SOME TROUBLE. THIEU MAY PREFER ALTERNATE WORDING THAT GVN DEEPLY REGRETS THE NECESSITY FOR THIS CROSS-BORDER OPERATION, BUT REFUSAL OF HANOI TO NEGOTIATE WITH GVN, AND ITS CONTINUOUS AGGRESSION AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAM LEAVES GVN NO ALTERNATIVE EXCEPT TO TAKE THESE MEASURES IN SELF-DEFENSE.

E. ONLY OTHER THOUGHT I HAVE IS THAT SOME REFERENCE TO US-GVN OFFER AT PARIS FOR CEASE-FIRE IN INDOCHINA FOLLOWED BY SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS MAY HAVE SOME PUBLIC RELATIONS VALUE AND HELP SHOW THAT GVN STILL FAVORS NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

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5 FEB 1971, 0750Z

O 050712Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 800
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1708

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 019640

1. GENERAL ABRAMS AND I SAW PRESIDENT THIEU AT 1000 HOURS TO CONVEY MESSAGE IN REFTEL.
2. HE SAID HIS ASSISTANT NHA WILL WORK UP DRAFT STATEMENT TO BE ISSUED BY PALACE AND WILL WORK WITH ME ON COORDINATION OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS. HOPES TO HAVE DRAFT FOR ME TOMORROW MORNING.

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TOP SECRET

Classification

Department of State

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INDICATE:

- COLLECT
- CHARGE TO

DISTRIBUTION

ACTION: Amembassy VIENTIANE
Amembassy SAIGON

IMMEDIATE
IMMEDIATE

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STATE _____

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR BERGER AND GODLEY ONLY

- REFS: A. State 19640
B. State 19872
C. Saigon 1750

1. As you are aware from reftels, GVN operation into Base Areas 604 and 611 will begin at 0800 Saigon time February 8. You are authorized now to provide Souvanna with this info.
2. We will naturally expect Souvanna to hold his advance knowledge of these facts extremely closely, and Godley may assure him that we will respect his desire that we refrain from any indications that he was consulted in advance. We would, in fact, expect him to issue a public statement about 1000 hours Saigon time February 8 in which he will exculpate himself from any complicity in this operation.

DRAFTED BY: EA:WHSullivan:ms:elm

DRAFTING DATE: 2/5/71

TEL. EXT.: 20272

APPROVED BY: The Secretary

CLEARANCES:

S/S-TLEliot

XXX White House/Dr. Kissinger

TOP SECRET
Classification

3. In order prepare ourselves and GVN to handle queries concerning Souvanna's position on this action, we will want to have advance text of statement he intends to make Monday as soon as possible. We have sent you by septel draft of statement Thieu is intending to make on February 8. While we will be making a few suggestions for small changes in Thieu's draft, in general it appears excellent to us and you are authorized to show it to Souvanna as draft subject to some change. We will urge that Thieu make statement Monday morning Saigon time. // We are dropping our draft of a GVN letter to SC (Reftel B) and instead will propose that GVN rep at New York transmit text Thieu's statement to President of SC, repeated to Geneva co-chairmen and ICG governments. FYI we are not planning any USG statement until Monday Washington time. Guidance being sent our missions being repeated to you septel.

4. With specific respect to questions concerning advance consultation with Souvanna, we are contemplating a position which would state, in effect, that current action is really a matter between GVN and RLG. Role of U.S. air power is same as it has previously been and therefore no rpt no new type of U.S. action is involved. By thus referring the consultation question to Saigon and Vientiane, we would expect both GVN and RLG to stand fast by their denials of any such coordination between their two governments.

GP-1

END



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O 050520Z FEB 71 ZFF-3
 FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
 TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1320
 INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 5523

INCN: 1 7 7 8Q
 FEBRUARY 5, 1971
 0552Z

BT
 T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 674

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

SAIGON FOR AMBASSADOR BERGER

REF: STATE 19872

1. I HAVE CAREFULLY REVIEWED THE SUGGESTED DRAFT AND MY SUGGESTIONS RELATE MORE TO TONE THAN SUBSTANCE. I THINK IN PARTICULAR THAT GVN SHOULD RELATE ITS OPERATIONS EXCLUSIVELY TO NEED TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION AND SHOULD POINT OUT MORE CLEARLY THAN DOES PRESENT DRAFT THAT EASTERN PANHANDLE HAS NOT BEEN NEUTRAL FOR MANY YEARS. FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE KEYED TO INDIVIDUAL PARAGRAPHS OF TEXT.

2. PARA 1. ALTHOUGH THIS IS AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S BUSINESS MORE THAN MINE, WORDING OF FIRST SENTENCE IS SOMEWHAT MISLEADING SINCE SUBSEQUENT PARAGRAPHS DO NOT DESCRIBE "FURTHER" ACTS OF AGGRESSION. A MORE EFFECTIVE OPENING MIGHT BE TO SAY "I HAVE THE HONOR TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL THE CIRCUMSTANCES

THAT HAVE REQUIRED APPROPRIATE MEASURES OF COLLECTIVE SELF DEFENSE BY ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

3. PARA 2. I SEEM TO RECALL THAT CAMBODIA HAS ALSO APPEALED TO THE UNITED NATIONS ABOUT VIOLATIONS OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY BY NORTH VIETNAM. IF SO, REFERENCE TO THE CAMBODIAN COMPLAINT WOULD STRENGTHEN THIS PARAGRAPH.

4. PARA 3. I WOULD OMIT THE SENTENCE ABOUT THE LAO POPULATION OF THE AREA OF OPERATIONS HAVING FLED. WHILE THIS AREA IS CERTAINLY VERY THINLY POPULATED, LARGE SCALE GROUND OPERATIONS WILL INEVITABLY GENERATE REFUGEES. THE SENTENCE IN QUESTION ADDS LITTLE TO THE FORCE OF THE PARAGRAPH.

TOP SECRET

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-2- VIENTIANE 674, FEBRUARY 5.

INCN: 1 7 7 8

5. PARA 6. I SUGGEST THAT THIS PARAGRAPH BE COMPLETELY REWRITTEN TO READ AS FOLLOWS: "YOU WILL RECALL THAT THE 1962 AGREEMENT ON THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS REQUIRED NORTH VIETNAM TO WITHDRAW ALL ITS ARMED FORCES FROM LAOS AND PROHIBITED THEIR REINTRODUCTION AND THE USE OF THE TERRITORY OF LAOS FOR INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. NORTH VIETNAM NEVER LIVED UP TO THOSE COMMITMENTS AND HAS CONTINUED TO USE AND EXPAND ITS SUPPLY LINES AND BASES IN SOUTHERN LAOS TO ATTACK THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM. THE ACTIONS THAT MY GOVERNMENT IS TAKING ARISE DIRECTLY FROM THE NEED OF SOUTH VIETNAM TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST NORTH VIETNAMESE ATTACKS FROM LAOTIAN SOIL. IT IS MY GOVERNMENT'S HOPE AND WISH THAT THESE ACTIONS NOT WEAKEN BUT RESTORE THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS IN AREAS ADJACENT TO SOUTH VIETNAM WHICH FOR MANY YEARS HAVE BEEN ILLEGALLY OCCUPIED BY NORTH VIETNAM TO SUPPORT ITS WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST MY COUNTRY".

6. FOREGOING ARE MY ONLY COMMENTS ON DRAFT AS SUBMITTED REFTEL.

GP-1. GODLEY

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04 1600Z Feb 71

TO BE DELIVERED TO TO GENERAL HAIG FROM AMBASSADOR GODLEY
T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVE EYES ONLY
FROM: AMBASSADOR GODLEY
TO: GENERAL HAIG
UBJECT: OPERATION GOLD

I HAVE JUST TRANSMITTED TOP SECRET EMBTEL 668
NODIS/ASHAU WHICH FOLLOWS:

"ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
VIENTIANE 668
NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

1. PRIME MINISTER SAID THIS EVENING THAT SOVIET AMB
MININ CALLED LATE THIS AFTERNOON TO INDICATE, UNDER
INSTRUCTIONS, MOSCOW'S PREOCCUPATIONS RE POSSIBLE
SOUTH VIETNAMESE ATTACK AGAINST SOUTHERN LAOS.
MININ INQUIRED WHETHER ATTACK HAD TAKEN PLACE
AND INDICATED THAT SOVIETS WOULD CONSIDER SUCH AN
ATTACK A GROSS VIOLATION OF GENEVA 1962 AGREEMENTS.
PRIMIN SAID HE HAD NOTED PRESS REPORTS BUT HAD NO
REPEAT NO INDICATION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE INCURSION

INTO SOUTHERN LAOS. IF SUCH ACTION SHOULD TAKE PLACE, RLG WOULD MAKE AN APPROPRIATE DECLARATION AT THAT TIME. MININ SAID SOVIETS WOULD REGRET LAOS BECOMING ANOTHER CAMBODIA. PRIME MINISTER MADE NO COMMENT. MININ THEN REQUESTED AUDIENCE WITH KING. PRIMIN REPLIED THAT HE WOULD TRANSMIT REQUEST TOMORROW VIA KING'S HALF BROTHER NOW IN VIENTIANE. PRIMIN DID NOT REPEAT NOT OFFER ANY INDICATION WHEN AUDIENCE MIGHT BE GRANTED. PRIMIN OPIINED TO ME THAT HE DID NOT THINK HIS MAJESTY WOULD BE IN ANY PARTICULAR HURRY TO RECEIVE MININ AND THAT REQUEST WOULD PROBABLY GO FORWARD TOMORROW VIA AIRCRAFT TO LUANG PRABANG.

2. IN RESPONSE TO MY INQUIRY, PRIME MINISTER SAID MININ DID NOT REPEAT NOT MAKE ANY THREATS NOR DID HE INDICATE THAT SOVS MIGHT WITHDRAW MISSION FROM VIENTIANE, ETC. PRIMIN DID NOT REPEAT NOT EXPRESS ANY CONCERN RE SOV DEMARCHE AND HE APPEARED COMPLETELY RELAXED AND RESOLUTE. HE ADDED IN A SLIGHTLY JOCLAR VEIN THAT HE DOUBTED

THAT KING WOULD BE PARTICULARLY RECEPTIVE TO
SOVIET DEMARCHE AND EXPRESSED NO REPEAT NO CONCERN
RE FORTHCOMING MEETING "IF HIS MAJESTY RECEIVES THE
SOVIET AMBASSADOR."

3. IN A MORE SERIOUS VEIN PRIME MINISTER ASKED IF WE
HAD ANY REACTION FROM PEKING OTHER THAN THE
FBIS REPORTS OF WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER WAS AWARE.
I TOLD HIM I COULD ADD NOTHING TO WHAT RADIO PEKING
HAD BEEN SAYING AND HE NODDED, ADDING RAPIDLY
"THEY ARE THE ONES THAT WORRY ME." HE NOTED
THAT LAOS, UNLIKE CAMBODIA, HAS A COMMON FRONTIER
WITH PEKING AND INQUIRED WHAT WOULD BE OUR REACTION
IF PEKING WERE TO INVADE LAOS. I TOLD HIM I WOULD
HAVE TO REFER THIS QUESTION TO WASHINGTON. HE
LAUGHED. GP-1 GODLEY "TOP SECRET SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVE EYES ONLY"

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

CONTROL: 1663Q
FEB 4, 1971-6:24 P.M.

O 042324Z FEB 71 ZFFG
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6572
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE 8528
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 019640

NODIS/ASHAU

STRICTLY EYES ONLY AMBASSADORS BERGER AND GODLEY

JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE

1. PRESIDENT HAS APPROVED EXECUTION OF PHASE II OF ICHEPONE OPERATION AND AUTHORIZED EMPLOYMENT OF U.S. TACAIR, ARC LIGHT, FIXED AND ROTARY WING GUNSHIPS AND AIRLIFT IN LAOS IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION. GENERAL ABRAMS HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVIDED EXECUTE AUTHORITY VIA MILITARY CHANNELS. IT IS REQUESTED THAT YOU AND GENERAL ABRAMS INFORM THIEU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OF US DECISION TO PROCEED WITH PHASE II COMMENCING FEBRUARY 8 SAIGON TIME. IN YOUR DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT THIEU, YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING IT CLEAR THAT PHASE II IS A VIETNAMESE OPERATION, SUPPLEMENTED BY US AIR POWER. IN THIS REGARD, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT IT BE POINTED OUT THAT DECISION TO ENTER LAOS IS A VIETNAMESE DECISION. IT IS HOPED THAT SECURITY PHASE II CAN BE CLOSELY MAINTAINED UNTIL OPERATION IS LAUNCHED AND COORDINATED PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM WORKED OUT. (WE HOPE TO AVOID CONTINUATION OF PRESS SPECULATION FROM SAIGON THAT GVN AWAITING US PRESIDENT'S DECISION.)

2. IN THIS REGARD, ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS COVERING COORDINATION OF US, GVN AND LAOTIAN OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON PHASE II WILL FILLow. ROGERS
BT

DRAFTED BY: Washington Special Actions Group
APPROVED BY: The Secretary
CLEARANCES: TLEliot:S/S

TOP SECRET

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

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Z 040918Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 1307
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 649

CN-1328Q
Feb. 4, 1971
0934Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

DEPT PASS THE WHITE HOUSE

1. PRIME MINISTER AT 1600 LOCAL TELEPHONED ME TO SAY HE HAD JUST SEEN TILLMAN DURDIN, NEW YORK TIMES CORRESPONDENT. DURDIN TOLD PRIME MINISTER THAT HE HAD A REPORT FROM NEW YORK THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER REGARDING MILITARY OPERATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD DURDIN THAT THIS WAS TOTALLY FALSE.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER WISHED US TO KNOW THE FOREGOING IN THAT HE WAS RECEIVING SOVIET AMBASSADOR SHORTLY. I SHALL BE SEEING THE PRIME MINISTER THIS EVENING AND BELIEVE I SHALL ASCERTAIN THE TENOR OF THE SOVIET AMB'S INTERVIEW.

GP-1. GODLEY
BT

NOTE: NOT PASSED WHITE HOUSE BY OC/T.

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Department of State

#4
TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

922Q

3 FEB 1971, 1114Z

O 031041Z FEB 71 ZFF-1
FM ANEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 735
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1598

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 18205

1. WHEN I SAW PRES THIEU AT 1730 HOURS ON CHHUP OPERATION, HE ASKED IF ANY WORD FROM WASHINGTON ON LAO OPERATION. I SAID FEB 2 MEETING SHIFTED TO FEB 4. HE SAID TO LET HIM KNOW AS SOON AS I HAD ANY INFO.
2. HE THEN SAID SOUVANNA AND LAO GENERALS HAD JUST HAD DISCUSSION WITH HIS AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE IN WHICH THEY SAID THEY WOULD WELCOME ANY AID IN FORM OF WEAPONS, MUNITIONS OR OTHER ITEMS WHICH GVN COULD PROVIDE AND THAT THEY WISHED SEND MILITARY DELEGATION TO SAIGON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS THIS. HE HAD SENT BACK WORD THAT LAO SHOULD SEND DELEGATION IN TWO OR THREE WEEKS, MEANTIME HE WOULD BE STUDYING THEIR REQUEST.
3. THIEU ADDED THAT IN 1964 OR 1965, WHEN HE WAS ON GENERAL STAFF, GVN HAD PROVIDED SOME CLOTHING, SHOES, SPARE PARTS FROM OLD FRENCH ARMoured CARS, AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS TO LAO, BUT HE NOT SURE WHAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO NOW. HE ASKED WHAT WE WERE SUPPLYING LAO MILITARY FORCES. I SAID I DID NOT HAVE DETAILS AND WOULD GET THE ANSWER FOR HIM.
4. DEPARTMENT PASS VIENTIANE.

BERGER

BT

TOP SECRET

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Department of State TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

858Q

O 030545Z FEB 71 ZFF-3
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1291
BT
TOP SECRET VIENTIANE 614

1971 FEB 3 0621Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

1. IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT OF STATE 81205 I GAVE ITS GIST TO SISOUK. HE WAS MOST APPRECIATIVE OF PROMPT WASHINGTON REACTION BUT WAS DISTURBED THAT FRENCH PRESS AGENCY REPORTED TODAY THAT FAR OFFICERS WOULD BE VISITING SAIGON SOON. HE IS AT 1130 THIS MORNING DENYING THIS REPORT AND AGREED WITH ME TO POSTPONE THE DEPARTURE OF THE FAR OFFICERS UNTIL AT LEAST FEBRUARY 5 REPEAT 5.

2. NEW BUT RELATED SUBJECT. SISOUK ALSO LET ME GLANCE AT THE RLG'S DRAFT DECLARATION TO BE ISSUED AFTER THE OPERATION AGAINST TCHEPONE BEGINS. IT DOES NOT REPEAT NOT PROTEST THE ACTION BUT ATTACKS ALL FOREIGN TROOPS IN LAOS. IT NOTES, HOWEVER, THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE BEEN HERE FOR SOME TIME AND THAT THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL IS THEIR MAIN SUPPLY ROUTE TO SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA. IT REAFFIRMS LAO SOVEREIGNTY, NEUTRALITY AND INDEPENDENCE AND WILL REFER TO THE 1962 AGREEMENTS.

3. SUBSEQUENT TO FOREGOING I SAW THE PRIME MINISTER AND WENT OVER STATE 18205 WITH HIM. HE AGREED COMPLETELY, PARTICULARLY ON THE NECESSITY FOR DISCRETION BUT SAID HE WONDERS IF WE CAN KEEP ANYTHING SECRET. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT RATHER THAN MEETING IN SAIGON THE ARVN AND FAR OFFICERS MIGHT CONFER IN SOME MORE DISCREET PLACE SUCH AS DALAT OR BAN ME THOUT.
GP-1. GODLEY

BT

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TELEGRAM

O P 030200Z FEB 71 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE 8511
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY 6489
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 018205

810Q

FEB 2, 9:00 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR AMBASSADORS GODLEY AND BERGER ONLY
REF: VIENTIANE 587

1. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE PROBLEMS INHERENT IN PROPOSED VISIT BY FAR MILITARY TO SAIGON, WE BELIEVE THEY ARE MANAGEABLE IF VISITORS CONDUCT THEMSELVES DISCREETLY. THIS WOULD MEAN SUCH PRECAUTIONS AS CIVILIAN CLOTHES, UNMARKED AIRCRAFT, ETC.
2. HOWEVER, WE THINK SISOUK WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO DELAY THEIR DEPARTURE UNTIL DECISIONS ON EXECUTION PHASE II OF THIS OPERATION ARE TAKEN IN WASHINGTON. MEETING THIS SUBJECT, WHICH ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 2, HAS NOW BEEN SCHEDULED FEBRUARY 4, REPEAT 4.
3. GODLEY SHOULD THEREFORE INFORM SISOUK THAT FAR OFFICERS CAN BE BRIEFED IN SAIGON ON ESSENTIALS OF OPERATION AND SUGGEST THEY GET IN TOUCH WITH GENERAL VIEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH ABOVE TIMETABLE. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: EA: W H Sullivan
Cleared by: S/S - Mr. Eliot
White House - Mr. Kissinger
Approved by: The Secretary

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 020610Z FEB 71 ZFF6
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1279
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 5512
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 587

INCN: 4 5 6Q
FEBRUARY 2, 1971
0841Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

EYES ONLY FOR AMB BUNKER

1. FOLLOWING PRESS SPECULATION OF WEEKEND, PRIME MINISTER HAS TOLD SISOUK AND OUAN OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOUTH VIETNAMESE PROBE AGAINST TCHEPONE. LAST EVENING I LEARNED THAT SISOUK IS SENDING GENERAL ETAM, FAR G-2, GENERAL OUDONE SANANIKONE, FAR CHIEF OF STAFF, COL. CHAO SINH, FAR GENERAL STAFF (OUAN'S BRAINS) AND COL. THAO LY, MR III DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF (ALSO BOUNPONE'S BRAINS AND THE COORDINATOR WITH CAS OF ALL MR III OPERATIONS TO SAIGON TOMORROW TO CONFER WITH THEIR VIETNAMESE OPPOSITE NUMBERS. I HAVE JUST SEEN SISOUK AND HAVE ASKED ABOUT THIS TRIP AND WHAT ARE ITS OBJECTIVES. SISOUK SAYS THAT NONE OF THESE FOUR OFFICERS ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THE OPERATION UNDER CONSIDERATION. THE PRIME MINISTER, HOWEVER, FELT THAT HE MUST TAKE SOME ACTION IN VIEW OF THE PRESS STORIES AND HAS TOLD SISOUK TO SEND THESE MEN. SISOUK, WHO IS PERSONALLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE ACTION UNDER CONSIDERATION, SAYS IF IT DOES OCCUR FAR SHOULD BE READY TO PLAY ITS ROLE AND COORDINATION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN FORTHWITH. HE RECOGNIZES THE NECESSITY FOR SECRECY AND SPECIFICALLY DID NOT REPEAT NOT ASK THAT THESE MEN BE MADE KNOWLEDGEABLE BY THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE. HE OFFERED TO DELAY THEIR DEPARTURE FOR 24, 48 OR 72 HOURS AND ASKED MY ADVICE. I TOLD SISOUK THAT I WAS QUITE CERTAIN THAT NO REPEAT NO SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS HAD ENTERED LAOTIAN TERRITORY. I ALSO TOLD HIM THAT I ASSUMED FROM HANOI BROADCASTS THAT SOME TROOPS HAD ARRIVED AT THE KHE SANH JUMPING OFF SPOT. I EMPHASIZED TO SISOUK THAT THERE WAS STILL A DECISION TO BE TAKEN IN WASHINGTON ON WHETHER WE WOULD SUPPORT AN ARVN ACTION AGAINST TCHEPONE. A WASHINGTON DECISION WOULD BE OVERRIDING IN

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TOP SECRET

-2- VIENTIANE 587, FEBRUARY 2.

INCM: 456Q

THAT THE ARVN PROBABLY WOULD NOT ACT WITHOUT OUR SUPPORT. I ALSO TOLD HIM THAT I HAD NO REPEAT NO IDEA WHEN THE WASHINGTON DECISION MIGHT BE MADE OR WHEN THE ACTION MIGHT OCCUR.

2. SISOUK DID NOT REPEAT NOT KNOW WHOM THE FOUR OFFICERS WOULD BE MEETING WITH IN SAIGON. HE MERELY SAID "THEIR OPPOSITE NUMBERS". THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR TRIP TO SAIGON AND THEIR RECEPTION THERE ARE BEING MADE BY A VIETNAMESE LIAISON OFFICER WHO IS ATTACHED TO THE FIFTH MILITARY REGION, I.E., NOT REPEAT NOT THE SPECIAL EMISSARY WHOM PRESIDENT THIEU SENT HERE AND WHO, I UNDERSTAND, IS STILL IN VIENTIANE.. SOUTH VIETNAMESE LIAISON OFFICERS (AS DISTINCT FROM ARMY ATTACHES) IN VIENTIANE ARE NEW TO ME AND WHEN I ASKED SISOUK ABOUT THIS HE SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN "FOR SOME TIME NOW" SOUTH VIETNAMESE LIAISON OFFICERS IN MR V, MR III AND MR IV. ACCORDING TO SISOUK, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE LIAISON OFFICER HERE HAS NO REPEAT NO INFORMATION ON ANY SOUTH VIETNAMESE PLANS.

3. WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER RETURNED FROM LUANG PRABANG, HE TOLD ME THAT IN HIS MEETING WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR HE DID NOT REPEAT NOT INDICATE THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE TCHEPONE OPERATION WITH ME. I HAVE NOT REPEAT NOT DISCUSSED ANYTHING WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR AND HE HAS NOT SAID ANYTHING TO ME. I DO NOT INTEND TO SPEAK TO MY SOUTH VIETNAMESE COLLEAGUE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

4. THERE MIGHT BE SOME ADVANTAGE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF SOUVANNA'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HIS COUNTRY IN SENDING THIS GROUP TO SAIGON, I.E., THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS HAS REPORTED THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INVASION FROM SOUTH VIETNAM AND THE LAO PUBLIC, INCLUDING THE GENERAL STAFF, DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER THERE ARE ACTUALLY SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ON LAOTIAN TERRITORY. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOUVANNA'S SENDING THIS TROUP TO SAIGON WOULD INDICATE, IF THE OPERATION OCCURS, THAT THE FAR HAD COORDINATED WITH THE ARVN. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE RLG HAD REJECTED NEUTRALITY; FURTHER ERODS SOUVANNA'S POSITION AND THE ALREADY TOTTERING FRAMEWORK OF THE 62 AGREEMENTS.

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-3- VIENTIANE 587, FEBRUARY 2.

INCN: 456Q

5. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, I RECOMMEND THAT I BE AUTHORIZED TO TELL SISOUK THAT WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MOST UNWISE TO SEND THIS DELEGATION TO SAIGON AT THIS TIME.

6. AS I RECALL, THERE IS A HIGH-LEVEL MEETING IN WASHINGTON TODAY AND AS AMB BUNKER MIGHT WELL WISH TO HAVE HIS VIEWS ON THE FOREGOING AVAILABLE TO YOU BEFORE THAT MEETING, I AM TAKING THE LIBERTY OF REPEATING THIS MESSAGE TO HIM FOR HIS EYES ONLY. GP-1.

GODLEY

BT

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TOP SECRET



Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

4.

R 011740Z FEB 71 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON 6421
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 8501
BT
TOP SECRET STATE 016706

NODIS/ASHAU

STRICTLY FOR AMBASSADORS BERGER AND GODLEY FROM SECRETARY

1. VIENTIANE'S 561 BEING REPEATED SAIGON.
2. I REALIZE THAT TARGET AREA FOR OPERATION ASHAU HAS ALMOST NO LOCAL POPULACE, BUT BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT ARVN BE UNDER STRICT ORDERS TO TREAT POPULACE WITH RESPECT AND HUMANITY. THIS DOUBLY IMPORTANT IN VIEW OF SOUVANNA'S REQUEST.
3. LEAVE THIS TO YOUR DISCRETION TO HANDLE WITH PRESIDENT THIEU. IT POSSIBLE SUCH ORDERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONTEMPLATED FOR ISSUE TO TROOPS WHEN AND IF PHASE II IS ACTIVATED. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: Marshall Green
Approved by: The Secretary
Clearances: TLEliotn Jr.

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Department of State

TELEGRAM



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R 310550Z JAN 71 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1265
BT
TOP SECRET VIENTIANE 561

8153Q
310810Z Jan

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

1. PRIME MINISTER CONVOKED ME THIS MORNING TO SAY HE HAD JUST HAD VISIT FROM LOCAL AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE REPORTER WHO READ HIM AFP DISPATCH FROM WASHINGTON INDICATING THAT "LOCAL OBSERVERS OF INDOCHINA" PREDICT AMERICAN/SOUTH VIETNAMESE ATTACK AGAINST SOUTHERN LAOS, TO OCCUR DURING THE COMING WEEK. PRIMIN TOLD AFP REPORTER THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT SUCH A POSSIBILITY AND THAT IF IT DID OCCUR HE WOULD MAKE A STATEMENT AND TELL SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO GO FIGHT ELSEWHERE. PRIMIN WAS OBVIOUSLY MOST DISTRESSED.

2. DCM JUST INFORMED ME THAT LOCAL REUTERS REPORTER AND TAMMAY ARBUCKLE OF THE WASHINGTON STAR BOTH SPOKE TO HIM LAST NIGHT BASED ON INQUIRIES THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM HOME OFFICES. REUTERS INQUIRY INDICATED SIZE OF FORCE INVOLVED TO BE TWO DIVISIONS PLUS. DCM TOLD NEWSMEN HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT BUT THAT SUCH A RASH OF STORIES DID NOT SURPRISE HIM IN THAT POLISH ICC REP HAD ASKED HIM JAN 27 ABOUT SUCH RUMORS.

3. NEW BUT RELATED SUBJECT. EARLY THIS MORNING ON TENNIS COURT PRIME MINISTER SAID HE HAD JUST HEARD RADIO REPORTS ABOUT FIGHTING BETWEEN ARVN AND KHMER UNITS IN CAMBODIA. HE SAID HE HOPES ARVN SOLDIERS WHEN THEY COME INTO LAOS WILL HAVE KIP SO THAT THEY CAN PAY FOR WHAT THEY BUY. HE ASKED ME TO BE SURE TO TRANSMIT THIS SUGGESTION TO YOU FOR HE IS WORRIED ABOUT THE ARVN BEHAVIOR. I TOLD HIM I WOULD REPORT HIS SUGGESTION BUT THAT IT SEEMED TO ME VERY DIFFICULT FOR SECURITY AND OTHER REASONS TO ISSUE KIP TO ARVN TROOPERS. I SAID I WAS CERTAIN THAT THE MEN WOULD BE WELL BEHAVED AND THAT THEY WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO BEHAVE WITH GREATEST COURTESY VIS-A-VIS THE LOCAL POPULACE.

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TOP SECRET

PAGE TWO VIENTIANE 561

I AM REPORTING THIS SUGGESTION MERELY AS
INDICATION OF PRIMIN'S CURRENT STATE OF MIND
BUT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE COURTEOUS IF I WERE
AUTHORIZED TO INFORM HIM THAT WE HAD THOUGHT OF
THIS PROBLEM AND HAVE ASKED PRESIDENT THIEU
TO ISSUE ORDERS THAT ARVN TREAT CIVILIANS WITH
UTMOST RESPECT.

GP-1. GODLEY

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

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O 301051Z JAN 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 605
BT
TOP SECRET SAIGON 1401

8 0 3 0 Q

30 JAN 1971
11 36Z

NODIS/ASHAU

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BUNKER

REF: A. VIENTIANE 522
B. VIENTIANE 550

1. ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL ABRAMS, I MET THIS MORNING WITH PRESIDENT THIEU TO INFORM HIM OF AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S CONVERSATION WITH SOUVANNA REPORTED REFTEL B. I EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT AMBASSADOR GODLEY HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO SOUVANNA (REF A) THAT THE INFORMATION HE HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN HIM REGARDING THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION, I.E., "FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DRY SEASON OR AT LEAST SIX WEEKS", AND THAT THE SIZE WOULD BE TWO DIVISIONS PLUS, WAS ACCURATE.
2. THIEU SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A REPORT FROM HIS AMBASSADOR WHICH COINCIDED FULLY WITH AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S REPORT. SOUVANNA TOLD THE GVN AMBASSADOR THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE POSITION HE HAD NOT REQUESTED THE OPERATION AND HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED ABOUT IT. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO DELAY ANY DECLARATION FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. IF HE DOES MAKE A STATEMENT, HE SAID, HE WOULD NOT GO BEYOND ASKING BOTH SIDES TO WITHDRAW NOR WOULD HE ACCUSE SOUTH VIET-NAM OF AN INVASION OF LAO TERRITORY. HE WOULD ALSO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT NORTH VIET-NAM HAS OCCUPIED A PART OF LAOS WHICH THE RLG CANNOT CONTROL.
3. THE REMAINDER OF THE CONVERSATION WAS LARGELY TAKEN UP WITH THIEU'S COMMENTS ABOUT THE OPERATION AND QUESTIONS PUT TO GENERAL ABRAMS. THIEU SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTED GENERAL VIEN NOT TO GET TIED DOWN IN A DEFENSIVE POSTURE AT TCHEPONE AS HAPPENED AT KHE SANH AND DIEN BIEN PHU, BUT TO KEEP MOBILE; THAT AFTER THE TCHEPONE AREA HAD BEEN CLEARED, EFFORTS COULD BE DIRECTED AT CLEARING THE AREA SOUTH AND WEST TOWARD ASHAU. GENERAL ABRAMS AGREED.
4. THIEU COMMENTED THAT HE HAD LESS CONCERN FOR THE ENEMY'S GROUND FORCES THAN FOR ITS ANTI-AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES. GENERAL ABRAMS ALSO AGREED AND EXPLAINED WHAT WE HAD BEEN DOING IN THE WAY OF SUPPRESSION.

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5. THIEU THEN ASKED WHAT GENERAL ABRAMS THOUGHT THE ENEMY REACTION WOULD BE, SAY AFTER THREE WEEKS. GENERAL ABRAMS SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD PROBABLY MOVE SOME FORCES DOWN TO CONTEST THE AREA, BUT DOUBTED THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO IN THREE WEEKS. HE GAVE PRESIDENT THIEU AN INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING ON LOCATIONV OF ENEMY UNITS. HE ADDED THAT INTELLIGENCE SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE ENEMY IS PUZZLED AND DOES NOT KNOW WHAT WE ARE UP TO.
6. THIEU ASKED GENERAL ABRAMS WHAT HE THOUGHT THE ENEMY WOULD ATTEMPT TO DO IN NORTHERN MR 1, AND GENERAL ABRAMS REPLIED THAT THEY WILL TRY TO 'DO WHAT' THEY CAN WITH THE 22 BATTALIONS NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE DMZ AND ACTIVATE LOCAL UNITS IN MR 1. BUT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THEY CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVE IN MR 1.
7. THIEU THEN INQUIRED WHETHER WE THOUGHT THE ENEMY WOULD ATTEMPT TO EXERT PRESSURE ON OTHER AREAS OF LAOS, SUCH AS THE PLAINE DES JARRES OR LUANG PRABANG. GENERAL ABRAMS THOUGHT THEY MIGHT DO SO, BUT WE WOULD PROVIDE VERY STRONG AIR SUPPORT AGAINST ANY EFFORTS OF THIS KIND. HE EXPLAINED THAT 70 PERCENT OF ALL TACTICAL AIR WAS NOW BEING APPLIED IN THE LAO PANHANDLE, THAT 95 PERCENT OF THE B-52 EFFORT WAS ALSO BEING APPLIED THERE.
8. AFTER THE MEETING, THIEU TOOK ME ASIDE TO SAY THAT HIS AMBASSADOR HAD REPORTED THAT SOUVANNA WAS IN FACT PLEASED BY THE OPERATION. I PRESUME THIS WAS INTENDED TO CONVEY AN INTIMATION THAT SOUVANNA HAD NOT BEEN DISPLEASED BY THE GVN APPROACH AND IN RESPONSE TO WHAT I SAID TO HIM YESTERDAY ABOUT LEAVING THE DISCUSSIONS IN AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S HANDS.
9. THIEU SEEMS TO BE FULLY ON BOARD FOR BOTH PHASE I AND PHASE II PENDING OUR DECISION ON THE LATTER.

BUNKER

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 300605Z JAN 71 ZFF-3
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1263
BT
TOP SECRET VIENTIANE 553

INCN: 7974Q
JAN 30, 1971
0638Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY EYES ONLY

REF: VIENTIANE 550 JAN 29

1. AFTER THINKING ABOUT PUBLIC ATTITUDE SOUVANNA COULD ADOPT TO ROUTE 9 OPERATION, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT OBJECT TO HIS PROTESTING SOUTH VIETNAMESE INCURSION INTO LAOS IF HE ALSO MAKES CLEAR HIS OPPOSITION TO PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE. IN FACT, HE SOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DISSOCIATE HIMSELF PUBLICLY FROM ROUTE 9 OPERATION AND PUT HIMSELF ON RECORD AS WANTING ALL FOREIGN TROOPS OUT OF LAOS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
2. ANY LESS CATEGORIC POSITION THAN THIS WOULD DAMAGE SOUVANNA'S STANDING AS A NEUTRALIST ALMOST BEYOND REPAIR. I ASSUME THAT WHEN WASHINGTON SPOKESMEN ARE ASKED WHETHER SOUVANNA WAS CONSULTED ABOUT OPERATION IN ADVANCE THEY WILL RESPOND WITH "NO COMMENT" RATHER THAN FLAT DENIAL. THIS WILL LEAD JOURNALISTS IRRESTABLY TO CONCLUSION THAT SOUVANNA WAS NOT ONLY CONSULTED IN ADVANCE BUT GAVE COVERT APPROVAL TO OPERATION. EVEN IF WE ARE ABLE TO HOLD THE LINE IN WASHINGTON, I DOUBT THAT FICTION OF NO ADVANCE CONSULTATION WITH RLG COULD LONG BE MAINTAINED IN SAIGON.
3. FOR THESE REASONS, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD DO OUR UTMOST TO PROTECT SOUVANNA AND REMAINING FABRIC OF THE 1962 GENEVA ACCORDS BY ENCOURAGING HIM TO MAKE CLEAR, AS HE HAS BEFORE, THAT RLG DOES NOT WANT VIETNAMESE WAR FOUGHT IN LAOS. HE COULD ALSO SAY THAT HE RECOGNIZES NORTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATION OF LAO SOVEREIGNTY CAME FIRST AND PROVOKED SOUTH

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TOP SECRET

-2- VIENTIANE 553, JANUARY 30.

INCN: 7974Q

VIETNAMESE REACTION, BUT HE WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT HE WAS OPPOSED TO ANY FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE IN LAOS AND HAD ORDERED LAO MILITARY FORCES TO SET UP DEFENSIVE SCREEN WEST OF AREA OF OPERATIONS ON ROUTE 9. IMPLICATION OF LATTER REMARK WOULD OF COURSE BE THAT RLG WAS DETERMINED TO SEE THAT AREA OF OPERATIONS FOR SOUTH VIETNAMESE WOULD NOT EXPAND INTO WESTERN PANHANDLE. PRACTICAL EFFECT OF SETTING UP SUCH A SCREEN WOULD BE TO INHIBIT WESTWARD MOVEMENT OF NORTH VIETNAMESE.
GP-1.

GODLEY

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TOP SECRET

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

Z 291212Z JAN 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 1261
BT
TOP SECRET VIENTIANE 550

7 6 0 5Q
29 JAN 71 Z12 42

NODIS ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY EYES ONLY

REF: VIENTIANE 522 JAN 29

1. CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER 1800 LOCAL. HE SAID KING APPROVED THE OPERATION AS I HAD DESCRIBED IT. HE SAID RLG WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT PROTEST AFTER THE OPERATION HAD BEGUN BUT WOULD MERELY MAKE A DECLARATION NOTING THAT THE PRESENCE OF A LARGE NUMBER OF AGGRESSORS ON RLG TERRITORY, POISED AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAM, HAD REQUIRED THE LATTER TO TAKE ACTION. THIS WOULD BE THE GENERAL GIST OF THE DECLARATION. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT OBVIOUSLY HAD NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN DRAFTED. THE ONLY THING THAT THE RLG INSISTS UPON IS THAT THERE BE NO REPEAT NO REFERENCE TO PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE RLG. THIS IS THE ONLY THING THE RLG ASKED.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE KING WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE ENEMY'S TAKING YESTERDAY MUONG PHALANE ON ROUTE 9 WEST OF TCHEPONE. KING BELIEVES THAT WITH SOUTH VIETNAMESE THRUST AGAINST TCHEPONE THE ENEMY MIGHT MOVE WESTWARD TO SAVANNAKHET. KING ASKED THAT I BEAR THIS IN MIND AND, USING THE FALL OF MUONG PHALANE AS A COVER, GET TROOPS, PROBABLY SGU'S, PLACED BETWEEN DONG HENG AND MUONG PHALANE. I ASSURED THE PRIME MINISTER I WOULD DO MY BEST WITHIN THE LIMITATIONS OF SECURITY, WHICH OF COURSE MUST BE MAINTAINED. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE UNDERSTOOD. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE HAD INFORMED SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR AT 1700 LOCAL OF THE KING'S VIEWS ON THE OPERATION AGAINST TCHEPONE AND THE NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING ABSOLUTE SECRECY ABOUT ANY CONSULTATION WITH THE LAO.

GP-1.

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Department of State

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

Z 282328Z JAN 71 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON FLASH 6308
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE FLASH 8475

74130

BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 015224

JAN 28, 6:28 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR AMBASSADORS BUNKER AND GODLEY ONLY

REF: A. VIENTIANE 470
B. VIENTIANE 485
C. STATE 15223
D. SAIGON 1330
E. VIENTIANE 521

1. YOU SHOULD ARRANGE TO SEE PRESIDENT THIEU SOONEST TO INFORM HIM OF CONVERSATIONS WHICH GODLEY HAS HAD WITH SOUVANNA AND LATEST INSTRUCTIONS TO GODLEY (REFS A, B AND C). YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN THAT FINAL DECISION ON PHASE II HAS TO AWAIT FULLER EXPLANATION OF LAO VIEWS AFTER SOUVANNA RETURNS FROM VISIT WITH KING.
2. YOU SHOULD THEN PROPOSE TO PRESIDENT THIEU THAT HE AGREE NOW TO EXECUTE FIRST PHASE OF OPERATION ASHAU AND THAT SCHEDULED REDEPLOYMENTS OF RVNAF FORCES TO MILITARY REGION I TAKE PLACE AS PLANNED. VIEW IS HERE THAT TROOP MOVEMENTS SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN NOW SO THAT PHASE II CAN BE LAUNCHED EXPEDITIOUSLY AFTER DETERMINATION OF LAO VIEWS AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETING HERE ON FEBRUARY 2. IT CAN BE JUSTIFIED ON GROUNDS OF INCREASING THREAT TO MR I FROM PANHANDLE.
3. YOU SHOULD ALSO TELL THIEU OF OUR INTENTION TO INFORM SOUVANNA OF MANNER IN WHICH WE ARE PROCEEDING AND OF FACT THAT DECISION ON SECOND PHASE EXECUTION ORDER BEING HELD IN ABEYANCE PENDING SOUVANNA'S REACTION. WE PROPOSE TO REPRESENT PHASE I MOVEMENT, IF PUBLIC QUESTIONS ARE ASKED, AS BEING MADE TO ESTABLISH A STRONGER DEFENSIVE POSTURE IN MR I IN THE LIGHT OF INCREASING ENEMY CONCENTRATIONS IN THE LAO PANHANDLE AND INTERRUPTING THE ENEMY'S SUPPLY LINES INTO RVN. IF THIEU HAS DIFFERENT VIEWS WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON HIS VIEWS.
4. THIEU SHOULD BE URGED THAT NO SEPARATE APPROACH BE MADE IN VIENTIANE BY SOUTH VIETNAMESE DIPLOMATS IN ORDER TO PREVENT CROSSED

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TOP SECRET

-2- STATE 015224, JAN 29, 1971

SIGNALS AND UNINFORMED SPECULATION. IN VIEW OF REF E, YOU SHOULD BE CERTAIN THAT THIEU AND WE ARE IN FULL AGREEMENT AS TO SIZE AND DURATION OF OPERATION AND THAT THERE IS NO MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN US.

4. REPORT SOONEST THE RESULTS OF YOUR CONVERSATION SO THAT WE MAY FORMULATE APPROPRIATE FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS TO GODLEY PER REF. C. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: EA: W H Sullivan
Cleared by: W.H. - Dr. Kissinger
The Under Secretary (draft)
The Secretary
Approved by: S/S - Theodore L. Eliot, Jr

TOP SECRET

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Department of State
TOP SECRET

(4)

TELEGRAM

Z 282338Z JAN 71 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE FLASH 8476
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON FLASH 6309
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 015223

7412Q

JAN 28, 6:28 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR AMBASSADORS GODLEY AND BUNKER ONLY

REFS: A. VIENTIANE 470 B. VIENTIANE 485 C. VIENTIANE 521

1. WE HAVE TAKEN CAREFUL NOTE OF OBJECTIONS WHICH SOUVANNA CONTINUES TO HAVE CONCERNING PROPOSED RVNAF OPERATIONS IN TCHEPONE AREA. WE NOW UNDERSTAND HE WILL GO TO LUANG PRABANG ON OR ABOUT 29 JANUARY TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH THE KING. WE EXPECT THAT YOU WILL KEEP US INFORMED AS THESE CONVERSATIONS PROGRESS, AND YOUR REPORTING WILL BE HELPFUL IN CONNECTION WITH HIGH-LEVEL MEETING HERE ON 2 FEBRUARY.

2. WE DO NOT RPT NOT WISH TO INVOLVE PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY IN FORM OF LETTER SUGGESTED REF B. IT IS OUR CONSIDERED JUDGMENT THAT DISCUSSIONS OF THIS PROPOSED OPERATION SHOULD REMAIN AT YOUR LEVEL WITH SOUVANNA. WE THEREFORE WISH YOU TO ASSURE THAT YOU AND HE CAN STAY IN TOUCH OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT YOUR END OF SCENARIO TO BE OUTLINED IN FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS.

3. WE ARE AUTHORIZING BUNKER TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT THIEU IMMEDIATELY AND INFORM HIM OF THE CONVERSATIONS YOU HAVE HAD WITH SOUVANNA. WE WILL PROPOSE THAT THIEU UNDERTAKE THE REDEPLOYMENT OF RVNAF FORCES TO MILITARY REGION I ON SCHEDULE CONTEMPLATED BY OPERATION ASHAU. IF THIEU AGREES TO THIS PROPOSAL, THIS WILL MEAN THAT FIRST PHASE OF OPERATION WILL BEGIN ON NIGHT OF 30-31 JANUARY.

4. WE WILL FURTHER PROPOSE TO THIEU THAT THIS PHASE BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE UNDERSTANDING THAT DECISION ON SECOND PHASE, WHICH INVOLVES CROSSING BORDER INTO LAOS DOES NOT NEED TO BE MADE AT THIS TIME AND HAS NOT RPT NOT YET BEEN MADE PENDING THE OUTCOME OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH SOUVANNA. UNTIL DECISION ON PHASE II IS MADE THESE RVNAF UNITS WOULD BE OPERATING IN BORDER REGIONS ENTIRELY WITHIN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND WOULD BE USED TO CLEAN OUT AREAS IN THE NORTHWEST OF MILITARY REGION I.

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-2- STATE 015223, JAN 28, 1971

TOP SECRET

THEIR VERY DEPLOYMENT TO THAT REGION WILL, IN OUR JUDGMENT, HAVE SOME DISRUPTIVE EFFECT UPON ENEMY OPERATIONS IN LAOS PANHANDLE AND IS JUSTIFIED ON BASIS ENEMY THREAT TO SVN I CORPS.

5. BECAUSE TROOP DEPLOYMENTS OF THIS SIZE WILL SOON COME TO PUBLIC ATTENTION, WE WILL WISH, AT APPROPRIATE TIME, TO HAVE YOU INFORM SOUVANNA WHAT ACTION IS BEING TAKEN. YOU WILL BE AUTHORIZED TO ASSURE HIM THAT THE BORDER-CROSSING OPERATION DEPENDS UPON THE PROVISION OF U.S. AIR AND LOGISTICS SUPPORT, AND, HENCE, CANNOT RPT CANNOT ACTUALLY TAKE PLACE WITHOUT A POSITIVE DECISION FROM WASHINGTON.

6. YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT IF YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS OPERATIONS WITH SOUVANNA AS OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 5, YOU WILL NOT RPT NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO GIVE HIM ANY EXECUTION DATE FOR PHASE TWO UNTIL DECISION IS REACHED AS TO DATE. HE WILL, HOWEVER, FROM FACT THAT PHASE ONE IS BEING EXECUTED, BE ABLE TO GAUGE POTENTIAL IMMINENCE OF ACTUAL BORDER-CROSSING OPERATION.

7. WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED YOUR 521 AND HAVE ASKED BUNKER FOR IMMEDIATE COMMENT. IT WOULD APPEAR EITHER THAT THERE IS SOME US/GVN MISUNDERSTANDING IN SAIGON OR ELSE THAT GVN IS ACTING WITH LESS THAN PROPER CANDOR WITH SOUVANNA. THIS DEVELOPMEN, HOWEVER, DOES NOT, RPT NOT, ALTER OUR BASIC VIEW OR INTENTIONS AS INDICATED IN FOREGOING PARAGRAPHS. YOU SHOULD THEREFORE CONVEY THEIR GENERAL CONTENT TO SOUVANNA AND WITHHOLD ANY, RPT ANY, COMMENT ON GVN DEMARCHE UNTIL WE HAVE CLARIFICATION FROM SAIGON. YOU SHOULD, AT THE SAME TIME, REAFFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY GIVEN HIM ABOUT THE SIZE AND DURATION PLANNED FOR THIS OPERATION. IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT NO MISREPRESENTATION BE MADE EXPRESSLY, IMPLICITLY OR BY ACQUIESCENCE. ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: EA - Mr Sullivan

Cleared by: WH - Dr Kissinger

The Secretary

The Under Secretary (draft)

Approved by: S/S - Mr Eliot

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

0 281256Z JAN 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 545
BT
TOP SECRET SAIGON 1330

7147Q
28 Jan 1971
1320Z

NODIS/ASHAU

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BUNKER

REF: SAIGON 1236

1. AS MENTIONED REFTTEL, ARVN IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MOVEMENT NORTH JAN 30, WITH CLOSING TIME IN I CORPS SET FOR FEBRUARY 2. THIEU WILL WANT TO SEE ME TOMORROW TO LEARN WHAT RESULTS WE HAVE HAD FROM APPROACH TO SOUVANNA. HE WILL ALSO BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FACT THAT WHEN MOVEMENT OF ARVN BEGINS, PRESS WILL ANTICIPATE SOMETHING AFOOT AND HE WILL WANT TO KNOW HOW WE PROPOSE TO HANDLE QUERIES. HIS CONCERN IS EVIDENT BY FACT THAT PALACE CALLED TODAY TO ASK WHETHER I HAD REQUESTED APPOINTMENT. WE REPLIED THAT I DID NOT REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT, BUT HOPED TO SEE HIM TOMORROW. HE WILL UNDERSTAND THIS TO MEAN THAT I DO NOT HAVE THE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS HE RAISED.

2. I BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT GENERAL ABRAMS AND I SEE PRESIDENT THIEU AND GENERAL VIEN TOMORROW, THE 29TH. THEREFORE REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS.

BUNKER

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Department of State

TOP SECRET

TELEGRAM

(4)

0 290330Z JAN 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1247
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 522

NODIS/ASHAU

7485Q

JAN 28, 11:03 PM 1971

REF: VIENTIANE 521

1. AFTER DISPATCHING REFTEL LAST NIGHT, I RETURNED TO PRIME MINISTER'S AND WE HAD ANOTHER BRIEF CHAT. HE WAS IN AN EXTREMELY GOOD MOOD AND SAID THAT HE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN THE KING'S CONSENT TO THE PROPOSED OPERATION. HE WAS THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH MILITARY SITUATION IN THE SOUTH AND SAID HE WOULD EMPHASIZE TO HIS MAJESTY THE ENEMY'S CAPABILITIES IN THE AREA AND THE RLG WEAKNESS. I TOLD HIM THAT I DID NOT WISH TO CHALLENGE WHAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD HIM BUT THAT IT WAS MY DEFINITE UNDERSTANDING THAT MORE THAN A DIVISION WOULD BE INVOLVED AND THAT THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION, AT LEAST AS PROVIDED FOR IN CURRENT PLANS, WAS LONGER THAN PRESENTED BY THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE APPRECIATED THE FRANKNESS WITH WHICH THE USG WAS APPROACHING THE PROBLEM.

2. EARLIER IN THE EVENING THE PRIME MINISTER HAD SPOKEN TO SISOUK ABOUT SISOUK'S TRIP TODAY TO PHNOM PENH AND FACT THAT PRIME MINISTER HAD REFUSED TO LET PRINCE BOUN OUM GO TO PHNOM PENH TO CONFER WITH LON NOL. IT WAS THEREFORE OBVIOUS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SEES SOME INTERNAL POLITICAL ADVANTAGE IN REDUCING THE ENEMY PRESSURE IN THE SOUTH, FOR IF THE ENEMY PRESSURE INCREASES THE SOUTHERNERS WILL TURN MORE AND MORE TO A LAOS/SOUTH VIETNAM/CAMBODIA FEDERATION TO WITHSTAND COMMUNIST AGGRESSION. IF THE PRIME MINISTER CITES THIS FACTOR IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE KING, IT WILL, I BELIEVE, WEIGH HEAVILY IN THEIR DECISION.

3. STATE 15223 RECEIVED THIS MORNING. AT 0900 LOCAL I INFORMED PRIME MINISTER THAT WASHINGTON HAD ACKNOWLEDGED RECEIPT OF THE INFORMATION HE GAVE

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TOP SECRET

-2- VIENTIANE 522, JAN 28, 1971

ME LAST EVENING. AMB BUNKER WAS BEING ASKED TO CONSULT WITH PRESIDENT THIEU. HOWEVER, I HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO INFORM THE PRIME MINISTER THAT AS FAR AS WASHINGTON KNEW THE INFORMATION I HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN HIM ABOUT THE SIZE AND THE DURATION OF THIS OPERATION WAS ACCURATE. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID "YOU MEAN ONE MONTH'S DURATION?" AND I SAID "NO SIR, FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DRY SEASON OR AT LEAST SIX WEEKS". HE TOOK OUT HIS LITTLE BLACK BOOK AND MADE SOME NOTATIONS. YOU MAY BE SURE THERE HAS BEEN NO REPEAT NO MISREPRESENTATION HERE.

4. PRIME MINISTER CONFIRMED HIS 1030 DEPARTURE FROM VIENTIANE FOR LUANG PRABANG AND THAT HE PLANS TO SEE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR AT 1700 LOCAL THIS AFTERNOON. HE SAID HE WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE ME AT 1800 LOCAL.

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TOP SECRET

0 271015Z JAN 71 AFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1231
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 485

INCN: 6 6 4 60
JANUARY 27, 1971
1110Z

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

RE STATE 13902

1. AT 1530 LOCAL I CALLED ON THE PRIME MINISTER AND WENT OVER THE POINTS RAISED REFTEL BUT MADE NO REPEAT NO ALLUSION TO DATES PROPOSED. HE TOOK IT ALL IN GOOD STRIDE BUT WHEN I CAME TO THE QUESTION OF THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION HE FROWNED, EVEN WHEN I HASTILY RETREATED TO THE SIX WEEKS MINIMUM. I THEN WENT ON TO INDICATE OUR HOPE THAT WHEN SOUVANNA PROTESTS, WITHDRAWAL OF BOTH NORTH VIETNAMESE AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS SHOULD BE CALLED FOR. HE SAID THAT HE OBVIOUSLY WOULD INCLUDE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

2. SOUVANNA HAS BEEN GIVING THIS MATTER MUCH THOUGHT AND SAID HE HAD CONCLUDED THAT HE MUST CONSULT THE KING. FOR THIS PURPOSE HE PLANS TO GO TO LUANG PRABANG ON SUNDAY, MANUARY 31. HE IS TOTALLY BOOKED UP UNTIL THEN. I DID NOT REPEAT NOT DEMUR BUT ASKED IF HE WISHED ME TO BE IN LUANG PRABANG AT THAT TIME. HE OFFERED TO TAKE ME WITH HIM BUT I SAID I DID NOT THINK THAT WAS WISE. HE SAID HE WOUL THINK THIS OVER AND MIGHT WANT ME TO BE DISCREETLY IN LUANG PRABANG. THIS CAN EASILY BE ARRANGED FOR THE LAST TIME I WAS THERE I HAD TOLD THE AREA COORDINATOR I HOPED TO BE BACK SOON TO VISIT WITH THE SWISS MEDICAL TEAM, ETC.

3. ONE QUESTION THAT STILL REMAINS UNANSWERED IS THAT RAISED IN PARA 6 OF VIENTIANE 470, I.E., WHETHER SOUTH VIETNAMESE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP THE OPERATION SECRET FOR A FEW DAYS. I THINK THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUSLY THAT THIS IS OUT OF THE QUESTION, GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE FORCES INVOLVED, BUT IT GIVES ME A CHANCE TO GO BACK TO SOUVANNA PRIOR TO HIS GOING TO LUANG PRABANG.

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TOP SECRET

-2- VIENTIANE 485, JANUARY 27.

INCN: 6646Q

4. SOUVANNA THIS AFTERNOON WAS AS RESOLUTE AS HE WAS YESTERDAY. I FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT AS HE CONTINUES TO MULL OVER THIS PROBLEM HE WILL BE WORRIED OVER THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION. I HAVE NEVER MENTIONED OUR PRESIDENT WITH REGARD TO THIS OPERATION. I THINK THAT THE TIE MIGHT NOW BE RIGHT FOR A PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE, PARTICULARLY AS THE KING HAS GONE OUT OF HIS WAY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO EXPRESS HIS ADMIRATION FOR OUR PRESIDENT AND HIS RESOLUTION AND STEADFASTNESS IN CARRYING OUT HIS INTENTIONS. SUCH A MESSAGE MIGHT BE ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

"YOUR HIGHNESS:

I FULLY APPRECIATE THE DIFFICULT DECISION YOU'RE FACED WITH IN CONNECTION WITH THE FORTHCOMING ACTION IN THE TCHEPONE AREA. I HAVE BEEN GIVING THIS OPERATION MY PERSONAL ATTENTION FOR I BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO REDUCE THE ENEMY'S PRESSURE AND HIS CAPABILITIES IN SOUTHERN LAOS AND CAMBODIA. WHILE YOUR TROOPS HAVE BEEN GALLANTLY DEFENDING THE BOLOVENS, I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH THE BUILDUP OF THE ENEMY'S FORCES IN SOUTHERN MILITARY REGION III AND IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF MILITARY REGION IV.

"I HAVE CONSIDERED WITH PRESIDENT THIEU THE POSSIBILITY OF KEEPING THIS OPERATION SECRET AT LEAST FOR A WHILE. THIS, HOWEVER, WE FIND IMPOSSIBLE GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES REQUIRES TO EXECUTE IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER THE OPERATION.

"IT ALSO HAS BEEN MY HOPE THAT THE OPERATION MIGHT BE OF A SHORT DURATION. HERE AGAIN, DETAILED STUDIES THAT WE HAVE MADE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE ENEMY PRESENCE IN THE TCHEPONE AREA AND THE COMPLEXITY OF HIS BASE STRUCTURE THERE LEADS ME TO CONCLUDE THAT TO BE EFFECTIVE, THE OPERATION SHOULD LAST THROUGH THE DRY SEASON. IF THIS IS ABSOLUTELY OUT OF THE QUESTION, A MINIMUM TIME THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES WOULD BE SIX WEEKS.

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TOP SECRET

-3- VIENTIANE 485, JANUARY 27.

INCN: 6646Q

"I WISH TO TAKE THIS OCCASION TO ASSURE YOUR HIGHNESS THAT NO U.S. GROUND FORCES WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION BUT WE WILL SUPPORT OUR SOUTH VIETNAMESE ALLIES IN EVERY OTHER POSSIBLE MANNER, I.E., IN THE AIR AND WITH ARTILLERY BASED IN SOUTH VIETNAM. I ALSO WISH TO ASSURE YOUR HIGHNESS THAT PRESIDENT THIEU HAS GUARANTEED ME THAT HHE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES WILL BE WITHDRAWN AS SOON AS THEIR MISSION IS ACCOMPLISHED".

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

O 270105Z JAN 71 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE 8455
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6206
BT
TOP SECRET STATE 013902

6555Q
JAN 26, 8:10 PM 1971

NODIS/ASHAU

REF: STATE 12344
STATE 13112
VIENTIANE 470

STRICTLY FOR AMBASSADORS GODLEY AND BUNKER

1. WE COMMEND YOU FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU HANDLED INITIAL APPROACH TO SOUVANNA. YOUR RESPONSES TO HIS SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS OTHER THAN PROPOSED TCHEPONE OPERATION WERE WELL TAKEN.
2. SOUVANNA'S DESIRE TO SLEEP ON OUR PROPOSAL IS UNDERSTANDABLE. WE ALSO SHARE YOUR VIEW THAT HE SHOULD HAVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OVER AND ABOVE THAT WHICH YOU HAVE ALREADY PROVIDED HIM, WHEN YOU MEET FOR SECOND TIME.
3. IT IS OUR FEELING THAT, EXCEPT FOR GIVING HIM THE DATE WHEN THIS OPERATION IS PROPOSED TO TAKE PLACE, YOU SHOULD INFORM HIM AT THE NEXT MEETING (WHICH WE HOPE WILL TAKE PLACE SOONEST) IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE MILITARY ACTIONS ENVISAGED. WE WISH TO AVOID ANY POSSIBLE SUGGESTION THAT WE ARE ENGAGING IN DUPLICITY IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM. OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPERATIONS, INCLUDING THE TRI-BORDER OPERATION, HAVE BEEN GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT TCHEPONE PLAN OFFERS THE GREATEST MILITARY BENEFITS.
4. THEREFORE, YOU CAN DRAW ON ALL THE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE OPERATION WHICH WE HAVE PROVIDED YOU IN REFS A AND B EXCEPT FOR THE TIME SCHEDULE. YOU SHOULD BE SURE THAT HE REALIZES THE RVNAF FORCE ENTERING THE TCHEPONE AREA WILL CONSIST OF TWO DIVISIONS PLUS, THAT THEY WOULD EXPECT TO STAY IN PLACE DURING MUCH OF THE DRY SEASON UNLESS FORCED TO WITHDRAW BECAUSE OF MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS, (OR IF THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO SOUVANNA AND A SHORTER PERIOD BUT NO LESS THAN SIX WEEKS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE, PLEASE ADVISE

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TOP SECRET

-2- STATE 013902, JAN 26, 1971

FOR OUR CONSIDERATION), AND THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE U.S. SUPPORT AS DETAILED IN PARA 1 OF REF A.

5. THE OBJECTIONS SOUVANNA APPEARS TO HAVE HAD TO THE PROPOSAL IN YOUR INITIAL DISCUSSION WITH HIM NATURALLY ARE BEING GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION. REFERENCE PARA 9 YOUR 470, IF OPERATION PROCEEDS, WE STRONGLY HOPE THAT IF SOUVANNA PROTESTS OPERATION AND ASKS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ARVN HE WILL NOT LIMIT PROTEST TO GVN BUT WILL PROTEST PRESENCE IN LAOS OF BOTH NVN AND GVN AND ASK FOR WITHDRAWAL OF BOTH.

6. FOR AMBASSADOR BUNKER: FOREGOING IS STRICTLY FYI.

GP-1 ROGERS
BT

Drafted by: EA: W H Sullivan
Cleared by: WH - Dr. Kissinger
S/S - Mr. Eliot
The Undersecretary
Approved by: The Secretary

TOP SECRET

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TO BE DELIVERED TO GENERAL HAIG FROM AMBASSADOR GODLEY
TOP SECRET SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

FROM: AMBASSADOR

FOR: GENERAL HAIG

I HAVE JUST TRANSMITTED TOP SECRET EMBTELL 470
NODIS/ASHAU WHICH FOLLOWS:
FOR THE SECRETARY

1. PURSUANT TO STATE 013312 I DELIVERED LETTER QUOTED
THEREIN AT 1640 TO PRIME MINISTER. I EMPHASIZED ITS
SECRECY AND CLASSIFIED IT TOP SECRET/EYES ONLY,
DESCRIBING TO HIM WHAT THIS MEANT FOR OUR SECURITY
REGULATIONS.

2. HE READ THE LETTER WITH GREAT CARE.
HIS FIRST QUESTION WAS "WHY DON'T YOU HIT THE TRI-
BORDER AREA (I.E., DOWN ROUTE 110) AND OCCUPY THE
HIGHLANDS SOUTH OF ROUTE 110?" I TOLD THE PRIME
MINISTER THAT AS FAR AS WE WERE AWARE THERE WERE
NO REPEAT NO ENEMY STORAGE AREAS IN THAT AREA
AND THAT ALREADY THERE WAS AN SGU CAMP LOCATED
SOUTH OF ROUTE 110 WHICH WAS OCCASIONALLY RAIDING

THAT ROAD.

3. WE THEN RETIRED TO HIS MAP ROOM AND HE EXAMINED MINUTELY THE TCHEPONE AREA. HIS NEXT QUESTION WAS "HOW LONG WILL THE OPERATION LAST?/ I SAID THAT I DID NOT KNOW BUT WOULD QUERY WASHINGTON POINTING OUT THAT IT HAD TO TAKE SOME TIME REALLY TO CLEAN OUT THE ENEMY INSTALLATIONS THERE. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY THAT WASHINGTON'S THINKING BE CLARIFIED ON THIS POINT.

4. HE THEN ASKED THE SIZE OF THE FORCES INVOLVED. I TOLD HIM I COULD NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY BUT I THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE SIZABLE FOR WE KNEW THAT THE ENEMY HAD AT LEAST TWO DIVISIONS IN THAT GENERAL AREA AND THAT IT WOULD BE FATAL TO SEND A WEAK FORCE IN AGAINST THEM. THIS DID NOT CAUSE TOO MUCH TROUBLE TO THE PRIME MINISTER BUT HE DID POINT OUT THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM POLITICALLY WITHIN LAOS DUE TO THE PRESS REPORTS OF THE EXCESSES OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN CAMBODIA. I TOLD HIM I UNDERSTOOD THIS PREOCCUPATION BUT THAT AS FAR

AS I WAS AWARE THERE WERE NO LOYAL LAO ALONG ROUTE 9 WHICH HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO HEAVY BOMBARDMENT, INCLUDING B-52'S AND THAT THE PICTURES I HAD SEEN OF THIS GENERAL AREA INDICATED NO CIVILIANS. I ALSO RECALLED TO HIM THAT WHEN HIS TROOPS OCCUPIED MUONG PHINE IN FALL OF 1969 AND GOT WITHIN EIGHT KILOMETERS OF TCHEPONE THAT ONLY SOME THREE THOUSAND CIVILIANS CAME OUT. THE PRIME MINISTER NODDED IN ASSENT.

5. I THEN DREW UPON PARAS 4A, 4B, 4C, AND 4D OF STATE 012344. THE ONLY LIBERTIES I TOOK WITH THIS TEXT WAS TO ADD SOUTHERN LAOS WHENEVER IT SPOKE OF THE SAFETY OF FRIENDLY FORCES IN PARAS 4A AND 4B. THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION I MENTIONED MY CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION IN THE BOLOVENS AND STRESSED THAT A RAID AGAINST TCHEPONE WOULD BE OF DIRECT BENEFIT TO RLG FORCES IN MR IV.

6. WE THEN DISCUSSED THE PUBLIC POSITION HE SHOULD TAKE ON THIS OPERATION. HE SAID HE WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO PROTEST AND ASKED THAT THE SOUTH

VIETNAMESE TROOPS WITHDRAW. I THEN SUGGESTED THAT HE MERELY EXPRESS HIS REGRET, INDICATING AN UNDERSTANDING WHY SUCH AN OPERATION WAS NECESSARY AND CITING THE PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN LAOS AS A REASON FOR THE OPERATION. HE DEMURRED AND ASKED IF THE OPERATION COULD NOT BE KEPT SECRET. I TOLD HIM THAT IN ALL HONESTY I DID NOT SEE HOW AN OPERATION OF THIS SIZE COULD BE KEPT FROM THE PUBLIC. HE THEN ASKED IF IT COULDN'T BE KEPT SECRET FOR A WEEK OR SO. HE POINTED OUT THAT AFTER HE PROTESTED HE DID NOT EXPECT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY BUT THAT THEY SHOULD LEAVE WITHIN A WEEK, TEN DAYS OR MAYBE EVEN TWO WEEKS. HE WAS SPECIFICALLY THINKING ALONG THE LINES THAT IF THE OPERATION COULD BE KEPT SECRET FOR A WEEK HE WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS REMAINING IN LAOS FOR, SHALL WE SAY, A TOTAL OF THREE AND POSSIBLY FOUR WEEKS. HE KEPT SHAKING HIS HEAD AND SAYING THIS RAISED SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS FOR HIM AND THERE-

FORE HE MUST PROTEST. I EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR HIS POSITION AND SAID IT WAS PRECISELY DUE TO THIS UNDERSTANDING THAT I HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO CONSULT WITH HIM.

7. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY THINKING ABOUT A POSSIBLE ATTACK ON SOME OTHER AREA, FOR STILL AT THE MAP HE ASKED IF THE ATTACK COULD NOT BE MADE IN NORTHEAST CAMBODIA. I TOLD HIM THAT I DID NOT THINK THIS WAS WISE BECUASE (1) THERE WERE NO KNOWN SIZABLE ENEMY TROOPS OR CONCENTRATIONS OF MATERIEL AND EQUIPMENT IN THAT AREA AND (2) AN ATTACK THERE WOULD NOT HELP HIS FORCES IN MR IV. HE SEEMED TO ACCEPT THIS AND WE WENT BACK TO LOOKING OVER ROUTE 9 ON HIS MAP.

8. RETURNING TO WHERE HE HAD RECEIVED ME, HE KEPT REPEATING THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PROTEST. I KEPT INJECTING THE IDEA THAT WHILE I ACCEPTED HE HAD TO PROTEST, HE SHOULD ALSO CITE THE PRESENCE OF SIZABLE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES ON LAO TERRITORY AS THE REASON FOR THE OPERATION.

AT ONE TIME HE SAID THAT IF HE DID NOT PROTEST VIGOROUSLY THE CHINESE WOULD ACT IN THE NORTH. I DODGED THIS ONE.

9. WE FINALLY LEFT IT THAT

(1) I WOULD QUERY WASHINGTON ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRI-BORDER OPERATION, (2) I WOULD QUERY WASHINGTON ABOUT THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION AND (3) I WOULD INFORM WASHINGTON THAT ONCE THE OPERATION WAS PUBLIC THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD PROTEST SOUTH VIETNAMESE ACTION IN LAO TERRITORY AND ASK THAT ALL REPEAT ALL FOREIGN TROOPS BE WITHDRAWN FROM LAO TERRITORY.

10. THE ONLY PORTION OF MY INSTRUCTIONS THAT I DID NOT COVER WAS TO ASK HIM TO REPLY IN WRITING TO MY LETTER. I FELT THAT SUCH A REQUEST WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNWISE. AS THE CONVERSATION DEVELOPED TO DO SO WOULD INDICATE A LACK OF CONFIDENCE BETWEEN US AND IF HE PUT HIS THOUGHTS ON PAPER IT MIGHT RAISE GREATER OBSTACLES. I NEVER ONCE IN THE CONVERSATION MENTIONED OUR PRESIDENT FOR IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE TO USE OUR PRESIDENT'S NAME IN FUTURE

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER.

11. AS I WAS WALKING OUT THE DOOR, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD SLEEP ON WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM AND THAT WE SHOULD KEEP IN VERY CLOSE TOUCH ON THIS MATTER. HE OBVIOUSLY WOULD LIKE FURTHER WORD FROM WASHINGTON. IN CONCLUSION I EMPHASIZED ONCE AGAIN THE SECRECY, POINTING OUT THAT MY SECRETARY AND I WERE THE ONLY ONES KNOWLEDGEABLE HERE. HE GRINNED AND SAID HE COULD ASSURE ME THAT HE WOULD HANDLE THIS PROBLEM IN THE SAME MANNER.

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TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

INCN: 6233Q

JANUARY 26, 1971
1143Z

O 261108Z JAN 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 479
BT
T O P S E C R E T SAIGON 1236

NODIS/ASHAU

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BUNKER

- REFS: A. STATE 12344
- B. VIENTIANE 423
- C. STATE 13112

1. I GREATLY APPRECIATE INFORMATIVE REFTELS, SINCE THIEU HAS EXPRESSED TO ME HIS CONCERN ABOUT NEED TO DEVELOP A SCENARIO FOR THE FORTHCOMING OPERATIONS IN LAOS. HOW THIS WILL BE DEVELOPED WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON SOUVANNA'S REACTION. SINCE PREPARATIONS FOR THE OPERATION HAVE ALREADY BEGUN, HE FEELS THAT THIS IS A MATTER OF SOME URGENCY. THE AIRBORNE DIVISION AND TWO-THIRDS OF THE MARINE DIVISION HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM THE LINE FOR A REST PERIOD. THE PRETEXT FOR THEIR WITHDRAWAL IS POSSIBLE ENEMY ACTION AGAINST THE SAIGON AREA DURING THE TET HOLIDAY PERIOD.

2. IT IS PROPOSED TO BEGIN MOVEMENT NORTH OF THESE CONTINGENTS JANUARY 30 WITH CLOSING TIME IN I CORPS SET FOR FEBRUARY 2. THIEU FEELS THAT WHEN MOVEMENT NORTH OF THIS LARGE NUMBER OF TROOPS BEGIN THE PRESS WILL ANTICIPATE SOMETHING AFOOT AND WE WILL HAVE TO DEVISE SOME DIVERSIONARY SCENARIO FOR THIS MOVEMENT. HE IS ALSO PLANNING SOME OPERATIONAL DIVERSION ONE OR TWO DAYS BEFORE LAOTIAN EXERCISE BEGINS.

3. GENERAL ABRAMS AND I, THEREFORE, BRIEFED THIEU AND GENERAL VIEN ON OUR PROPOSED APPROACH TO SOUVANNA (REFTELS A AND C) AND AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S VIEWS ON HIS PROBABLE REACTION (REF B). I TOLD THIEU THAT I WOULD INFORM HIM OF SOUVANNA'S REACTION WHEN AMBASSADOR GODLEY HAD REPORTED RESULTS OF THEIR MEETING. THIEU WILL BE AVAILABLE IN SAIGON THROUGHOUT TET HOLIDAY PERIOD.

BUNKER
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TELEGRAM

O 260150Z JAN 71 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE 8438
INFO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6161
BT
T O P S E C R E T STATE 013112

CONTROL: 6119Q
JAN 25, 1971-8:51P

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR AMBASSADORS GODLEY AND BUNKER ONLY

REF: A. STATE 12344 B. VIENTIANE 0423

1. WE APPRECIATE TIMELY RESPONSE TO REFTEL A AND CONSIDER THAT SUGGESTED MESSAGE TO SOUVANNA CONTAINED REFTEL B IS MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO TEST SOUVANNA'S REACTION TO PROPOSED OPERATION. MESSAGE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT HOWEVER BE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE BUT A PROPOSAL BEING CONSIDERED BY US GOVERNMENT. TEXT REVISED ACCORDINGLY IS AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE YOUR HIGHNESS:

MY GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN FOLLOWING WITH ADMIRATION THE GALLANT STAND YOUR ARMED FORCES ARE MAKING AGAINST THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION AND IN PARTICULAR THE NORTH VIETNAMESE BUILDUP IN SOUTHERN LAOS. WITH THE DENIAL OF CAMBODIA AS A CONDUIT FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES AND FOOD, HANOI IS CLEARLY MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO REINFORCE ITS ONLY REMAINING SUPPLY LINE TO SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA THROUGH LAOS. WE KNOW WHAT DIFFICULT PROBLEMS THIS POSES FOR THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT WHICH, UNDER YOUR WISE LEADERSHIP, IS SEEKING TO ASSERT THE NEUTRAL AND INDEPENDENT STATUS OF LAOS ASSURED BY THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS OF 1962.

THE NORTH VIETNAMESE BUILDUP IN SOUTHERN LAOS IS EQUALLY OF GRAVE CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES; IT COULD PRESAGE NEW OFFENSIVES BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA AS WELL AS LAOS. THE USAF HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO DO EVERYTHING IT CAN TO SUPPORT NOT ONLY YOUR FORCES IN SOUTHERN LAOS BUT ALSO TO INTERDICT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE LINES OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE SOUTHERN PANHANDLE. IT IS APPARENT HOWEVER THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE HEAVY TOLL WE ARE TAKING OF THE ENEMY WE ARE UNABLE TO KEEP HIS GROUND FORCES FROM ATTACKING IN SOUTHERN LAOS AND IN GETTING SUPPLIES THROUGH TO CAMBODIA. FOR THIS REASON MY GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING OTHER WAYS IN WHICH THIS ENEMY THREAT COULD BE COUNTERED.

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THE MOST PROMISING FROM A MILITARY POINT OF VIEW WOULD BE AN OPERATION ON ROUTE 9 DESIGNED TO DESTROY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE LOGISTICS BASE IN THE TCHEPONE AREA. THE ONLY FORCES CAPABLE OF UNDERTAKING SUCH A TASK ARE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHO WOULD NEED FULL U.S. LOGISTIC AND AIR SUPPORT TO SUCCEED. AS THE OPERATION IS VISUALIZED AT THE PRESENT TIME IT WOULD BE A PENETRATION-IN-FORCE WITH CLEARLY DEFINED LIMITATIONS ON ITS SCOPE AND DURATION.

NATURALLY SUCH AN OPERATION COULD NOT BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING YOU. I HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED THEREFORE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU THE DETAILS OF OUR THINKING ON THIS MATTER AND TO OBTAIN YOUR REACTIONS TO IT.

I HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED IN PARTICULAR TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS AS FIRMLY ATTACHED AS EVER TO THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS UNDER THE 1962 GENEVA ACCORDS. IT IS MY GOVERNMENT'S HOPE, AS IT IS YOURS, THAT LAO NEUTRALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY CAN BE EXTENDED TO SOUTHEASTERN LAOS AS WELL AS TO THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. THE LIMITED OPERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES WHOSE SUPPORT WE ARE CONSIDERING IN THE TCHEPONE AREA IS DESIGNED TO BRING THAT DAY NEARER. END QUOTE

2. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT CURRENT PLANNING WOULD INVOLVE REDISPOSITION OF RVNAF STRIKE FORCES INTO JUMPING-OFF BASES EARLY NEXT WEEK, WITH FIRST CROSSING OF LAOS BORDER SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY FIFTH, REPEAT FIFTH. THE URGENCY OF CONSULTATION WITH SOUVANNA AND OF IMMEDIATE COMMUNICATION WITH WASHINGTON AND SAIGON IS APPARENT FROM THIS TIMETABLE.

3. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DELIVER FOREGOING MESSAGE TO SOUVANNA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT ARE NOT RPT NOT AUTHORIZED TO INFORM HIM OF SCHEDULE OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 2. YOU MAY, HOWEVER, INFORM HIM THAT PLANNING WOULD INVOLVE MOVEMENT BY TWO-DIVISION RVNAF FORCES IN "NEAR FUTURE."

4. AFTER YOU HAVE DELIVERED MESSAGE TO SOUVANNA, YOU SHOULD REPORT HIS FIRST REACTION BY CABLE IMMEDIATELY. WE WOULD, HOWEVER, HOPE FOR A WRITTEN REPLY FROM THE PRIME MINISTER WHICH WOULD BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH THIS CHANNEL, AND WISH YOU TO URGE HIM TO SEND SUCH A MESSAGE EXPEDITIOUSLY. ROGERS
BT

DRAFTED BY: WHSullivan:EA

APPROVED BY: The Secretary

CLEARANCES: Mr. Green:EA, The Under Secretary, Mr. Eliot:S/S,
WH:Mr. Kissinger

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

CONTROL : 5772 Q
RECIEVED : Jan. 25, 1971
04:45Z

O 250345Z JAN 71 ZFF-1
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1202
BT
T O P S E C R E T VIENTIANE 423

NODIS/ASHAU

FOR THE SECRETARY

REF: STATE 012344

1. I BELIEVE WE HAVE A FAIR CHANCE OF OBTAINING SOUVANNA'S TACIT APPROVAL TO THE OPERATION OUTLINED IN REFTEL. HE WOULD NEVER COME OUT AND SAY THAT HE HAD APPROVED SUCH AN OPERATION BUT HE MIGHT NOT OPPOSE IT PROVIDED WE TAKE HIM INTO OUR CONFIDENCE AS SOON AS THIS OPERATION IS KNOWN BELOW THE PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL IN SOUTH VIETNAM. IF THERE SHOULD BE A LEAK BEFORE THE OPERATION OCCURS OR IF IT SHOULD BE LAUNCHED WITHOUT HIS BEING INFORMED, HE WOULD BE OBLIGED PUBLICLY TO OPPOSE IT AND IN HIS CURRENT MOOD MIGHT EVEN THREATEN TO USE HIS AIR FORCE FOR BOMBING THE "AGGRESSORS," I.E., SOUTH VIETNAMESE.
2. IN PRESENTING THE MATTER TO SOUVANNA I RECOMMEND THAT I BE GIVEN A MESSAGE ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE PRIME MINISTER:
3. "YOUR HIGHNESS": I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING WITH ADMIRATION THE GALLANT STAND YOUR ARMED FORCES ARE MAKING AGAINST THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION AND IN PARTICULAR THE NORTH VIETNAMESE BUILDUP IN SOUTHERN LAOS. WITH THE DENIAL OF CAMBODIA AS A CONDUIT FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES AND FOOD. HANOI IS CLEARLY MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO REINFORCE ITS ONLY REMAINING SUPPLY LINE TO SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA THROUGH LAOS. I KNOW WHAT DIFFICULT PROBLEMS THIS POSES FOR THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT WHICH, UNDER YOUR WISE LEADERSHIP, IS SEEKING TO ASSERT THE NEUTRAL AND INDEPENDENT STATUS OF LAOS ASSURED BY THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS OF 1962.

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4. "THE NORTH VIETNAMESE BUILDUP IN SOUTHERN LAOS IS EQUALLY OF GRAVE CONCERN TO ME; IT COULD PRESSAGE NEW OFFENSIVES BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IN SOUTH VIENAM AND CAMBODIA AS WELL AS LAOS. I HAVE DIRECTED THE USAF TO DO EVERYTHING IT CAN TO SUPPORT NOT ONLY YOUR FORCES IN SOUTHERN LAOS BUT ALSO TO INTERDICT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE LINES OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE SOUTHERN PANHANDLE. IT IS APPARENT HOWEVER THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE HEAVY TOLL WE ARE TAKING OF THE ENEMY WE ARE UNABLE TO KEEP HIS GROUND FORCES FROM ATTACKING IN SOUTHERN LAOS AND IN GETTING SUPPLIES THROUGH TO CAMBODIA. FOR THIS REASON I AM CONSIDERING OTHER WAYS IN WHICH THIS ENEMY THREAT COULD BE COUNTERED.
5. "THE MOST PROMISING FROM A MILITARY POINT OF VIEW WOULD BE AN OPERATION ON ROUTE 9 DESIGNED TO DESTROY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE LOGISTICS BASE IN THE TCHEPONE AREA. THE ONLY FORCES CAPABLE OF UNDERTAKING SUCH A TASK ARE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHO WOULD NEED FULL U.S. LOGISTIC AND AIR SUPPORT TO SUCCEED . AS THE OPERATION IS VISUALIZED AT THE PRESENT TIME IT WOULD BE A PENETRATION-IN-FORCE WITH CLEARLY DEFINED LIMITATIONS ON ITS SCOPE AND DURATION.
6. "NATURALLY SUCH AN OPERATION COULD NOT BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING YOU. I HAVE ASKED AMBASSADOR GODLEY THEREFORE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU THE DETAILS OF OUR THINKING ON THIS MATTER AND TO OBTAIN YOUR REACTIONS TO IT.
7. " I HAVE ASKED HIM IN PARTICULAR TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS AS FIRMLY ATTACHED AS EVER TO THE NEUTRALITY OF LAOS UNDER THE 1962 GENEVA ACCORDS. IT IS MY HOPE, AS IT IS YOURS, THAT LAO NEUTRALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY CAN BE EXTENDED TO SOUTH-EASTERN LAOS AS WELL AS TO THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. THE LIMITED OPERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES WHOSE SUPPORT WE ARE CONSIDERING IN THE TCHEPONE AREA IS DESIGNED TO BRING THAT DAY NEARER."

TOP SECRET

-3-Page, VIENTIANE 423 TOP SECRET NODIS/ASHAU

8. I BELIEVE SOUVANNA'S REACTION WOULD BE CAUTIOUSLY AFFIRMATIVE BUT HE WOULD INSIST THAT WE MAINTAIN SECRECY ON CONSULTATIONS WITH HIM AND MIGHT WANT TO LIMIT THE SIZE AND DURATION OF THE OPERATION. HE MIGHT EVEN INSIST ON A GUARANTEE THAT SUCH LIMITS BE OBSERVED. HE HAS FREQUENTLY INDICATED THAT THE WAR IN THE PANHANDLE IS NOT A LAO AFFAIR AND THAT THE GROUND HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER COMPLETELY BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. HIS PUBLIC POSTURE AFTER THE ATTACK WOULD BE THAT HIS CONSENT WAS NOT SOUGHT AND HE COULD ADD THAT THE WAR IN THE PANHANDLE WAS NOT A LAO AFFAIR. I BELIEVE THAT HIS POLITICAL POSITION IN LAOS WOULD NOT SUFFER UNDULY THEREFROM (SEE EMBTEL 424). THE INTERNATIONAL REACTION WOULD CERTAINLY BE STORMIER.

9. I DO NOT BELIEVE THE ENEMY WOULD REACT MILITARY IN THE NORTH ALTHOUGH SOUTH VIETNAM PRESENCE IN THE TCHEPONE AREA WOULD RESULT IN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE PLACING A GREATER EMPHASIS ON ROUTE 23 THAT PASSES WEST OF TCHEPONE THROUGH MUONG PHINE.

GP-1.

GODLEY

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

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0 231855Z JAN 71 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE 8433
INFO/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 6141
BT
TOP SECRET STATE 012344

CONTROL: 75690Q
JAN 23, 1971-1:55 P.M.

NODIS/ASHAU

STRICTLY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADORS GODLEY AND BUNKER
FROM THE SECRETARY

1. CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN HERE TO AN ARVN OPERATION INTO TCHEPONE AREA OF LAO PANHANDLE, DESIGNED TO DESTROY SUPPLY CACHES, EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL AND INTERDICT THE FLOW OF SUPPLIES UNTIL THE END OF THIS DRY SEASON. APPROXIMATELY A TWO-DIVISION EQUIVALENT OF ARVN FORCES WOULD BE INVOLVED. U.S. PARTICIPATION WOULD BE LIMITED TO AIR SUPPORT TO INCLUDE FIXED WING AND HELICOPTER, AIRLIFT, MEDICAL EVACUATION, TACTICAL AIR, HELO GUN SHIPS, AND U.S. ARTILLERY FIRING EXCLUSIVELY FROM THE VIETNAMESE SIDE OF THE BORDER. NO RPT NO U.S. GROUND COMBAT FORCES WOULD BE EMPLOYED IN LAOS. IT WOULD BE HOPED TO MAINTAIN THE FORCE IN LAOS UNTIL THE END OF THE DRY SEASON, BUT IF THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND DEVELOPED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE IT DESIRABLE THE FORCE WOULD BE WITHDRAWN EARLIER. THUS, WE WOULD NOT WANT TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO ANY SPECIFIC DATE FOR WITHDRAWAL.

2. THE FEELING HERE IS THAT IF SUCH OPERATION CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY MOUNTED, IT COULD HAVE MAJOR BENEFICIAL EFFECTS ON THE SITUATION SVN AND SECURITY AND SAFETY OUR FORCE IN SVN, BUT COULD ALSO DO MUCH TO ASSIST THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA. HOWEVER, IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT SUCH AN OPERATION WOULD PRESENT SOUVANNA WITH AWKWARD CHOICES, AND WE URGENTLY NEED YOUR BEST JUDGMENT ON WHEN AND HOW BEST TO APPROACH SOUVANNA SO THAT BEFORE MAKING OUR FINAL DECISIONS WE CAN OBTAIN SOME ESTIMATE OF HIS LIKELY REACTIONS.

3. ON THE QUESTION OF TIMING, THERE IS, OF COURSE, THE DILEMMA OF THE TRADE-OFF BETWEEN GIVING HIM THE FEELING THAT HE HAS HAD ADEQUATE TIME FOR CONSIDERATION AND THE NECESSITY FOR MAINTAINING SECURITY.

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4. ON THE QUESTION OF SUBSTANCE, OUR PRELIMINARY THINKING HERE WOULD BE TO HAVE YOU BRIEF HIM IN GENERAL TERMS ON THE OPERATION AND TELL HIM THAT WE AND THE GVN WOULD TAKE A PUBLIC POSTURE CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

A. THE OPERATION IS A RAID OF LIMITED DURATION AGAINST NVA-OCCUPIED BASE AREAS IN LAOS, DESIGNED TO DESTROY SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL ACCUMULATED IN VICINITY OF A MAJOR ENEMY LOGISTICS CENTER AND TO DISRUPT A CRITICAL ENEMY TRANSPORTATION HUB. THE OPERATION IS BEING UNDERTAKEN NOW BECAUSE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF RVN AND US FORCES IN SVN ARE THREATENED BY ENEMY CAPABILITIES SUPPORTED FROM THIS LOGISTIC COMPLEX.

B. BOTH GOVERNMENTS CONSIDER THIS OPERATION WILL ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF ALLIED FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM, HELP ENSURE THAT VIETNAMIZATION IS CARRIED OUT IN AN EXPEDITIOUS AND SUCCESSFUL MANNER, AND INHIBIT THE ENEMY EFFORTS TO REESTABLISH ITS SANCTUARIES IN CAMBODIA.

C. THE OPERATION IS OF LIMITED DURATION; THE GVN HAS NO INTENTION OR DESIRE TO OCCUPY LAOTIAN TERRITORY; AND THE GROUND FORCES WILL BE WITHDRAWN UPON COMPLETION OF THE OPERATION.

D. THE U.S. WOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT NO U.S. GROUND COMBAT FORCES WILL ENTER LAOS, BUT WE WOULD FRANKLY SET FORTH THE SCOPE OF OUR COMBAT AIR ARTILLERY AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT. (YOU MIGHT THEN WISH TO EMPHASIZE TO SOUVANNA PRIVATELY THAT USG FAVORS PLAN AND IS PREPARED TO MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO ENSURE ITS SUCCESS.)

5. WE WILL, OF COURSE, HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF WHETHER SOUVANNA WAS INFORMED AND HIS REACTIONS. IN MANY WAYS IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE ADVANTAGEOUS IF WE COULD SAY THAT HE WAS INFORMED AND SUPPORTED THE OPERATION, OR AT LEAST DID NOT OBJECT TO IT. HOWEVER, WE RECOGNIZE THAT HE MAY WELL FEEL FOR HIM TO TAKE SUCH A POSITION WOULD RISK LOSING HIS NEUTRAL POSTURE AND THE ACQUIESCENCE OF THE SOVIETS, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS TO HIS GOVERNMENT. HE MIGHT ALSO FEEL THAT SUCH A POSTURE ON HIS PART COULD INVITE MORE AGGRESSIVE ATTACKS BY THE NVA ON RLG POSITIONS IN NORTH LAOS.

6. THUS, WE WOULD BE UNDERSTANDING IF HE FELT HE COULD NOT GIVE PUBLIC SUPPORT TO THE OPERATION. IF THIS IS THE CASE, WE WOULD AT THE MINIMUM HOPE TO OBTAIN HIS PRIVATE ACQUIESCENCE AND A PUBLIC POSTURE ON HIS PART OF REGRETTING

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-3- STATE 012344, JAN 23

BUT UNDERSTANDING THE NECESSITY FOR THE OPERATION ARISING FROM NVA OCCUPATION OF THIS PART OF LAOS, EXPRESSING HOPE OF PROMPT WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM LAOTIAN TERRITORY AND TAKING NOTE OF GVN STATEMENTS ON INTENTION TO WITHDRAW. IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE IMPORTANT THAT ANY PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF REGRET ON HIS PART BE DIRECTLY ACCOMPANIED BY EXPRESSION OF UNDERSTANDING AS TO THE NECESSITY OF THE OPERATION OR AS A MINIMUM THAT HE LINK EXPRESSION OF REGRET TO NEED FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM LAOTIAN TERRITORY. WE WOULD, OF COURSE, ALSO UNDERSTAND IF HE WOULD PREFER THAT THE PUBLIC POSITION BE THAT HE HAD NO PRIOR INFORMATION.

7. WE WILL MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR ESTIMATE OF SOUVANNA'S REACTIONS TO AN APPROACH ALONG THE FOREGOING LINES AND ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR MODIFICATIONS YOU MAY HAVE, AS WELL AS FOR THE TIMING OF THE APPROACH WITH RELATION TO THE LAUNCHING OF THE OPERATIONS.

8. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS ON SOUVANNA'S REACTIONS TO AND DESIRABILITY OF A COURSE UNDER WHICH HE WOULD BE GIVEN LITTLE OR NO ADVANCE INFORMATION AND IN EFFECT WOULD BE PRESENTED WITH A NEAR OR COMPLETE FAIT ACCOMPLI. UNDER THIS ALTERNATIVE WE WOULD, OF COURSE, STILL WANT TO DO ALL POSSIBLE AT THE TIME TO INFLUENCE HIS PRIVATE ATTITUDE AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS.

9. KNOWLEDGE OF THE FOREGOING IS BEING HELD TO A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF HIGH-LEVEL OFFICERS IN WASHINGTON AND, ACCORDINGLY, YOU SHOULD AT THIS TIME CONFINE KNOWLEDGE OF THIS MESSAGE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF THE OPERATION STRICTLY TO YOURSELF. MESSAGES SHOULD BE SLUGGED NODIS/ASHAU.

GP-1. ROGERS
BT

DRAFTED BY: Alexis Johnson:J-U
CLEARANCES: CIA:Director Helms
DOD:Deputy Secretary Packard
JCS:Admiral Moorer
APPROVED BY: Under Secretary Johnson

TOP SECRET

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