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Action

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FOR THE PRESIDENT - SECTION III OF V SECTIONS

MODIS - 108

REF. PAR. 7(2), CAP-64375.

SINCE RECEIVING YOUR CAP-64375, GENERAL WESTMORELAND AND HIS STAFF HAVE MADE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR GIVING MAXIMUM SECURITY TO U.S. PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES BY UTILIZING U.S. GUARDS AND UNITS. HE ARRIVES AT THE STARTLING REQUIREMENT OF 34-BATTALION EQUIVALENTS OF ARMY OR MARINE INFANTRY, TOGETHER WITH THE NECESSARY LOGISTIC SUPPORT. HE CONSIDERS THAT THE TOTAL MANPOWER REQUIREMENT WOULD APPROXIMATE 75,000 U.S. PERSONNEL.

THE REASON FOR THIS HIGH FIGURE IS BASICALLY THE LARGE NUMBER OF INSTALLATIONS IN WHICH WE HAVE IMPORTANT U.S. INTERESTS. THEY TOTAL 16 IMPORTANT AIRFIELDS, 9 COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES, ONE LARGE POL STORAGE AREA, AND 289 SEPARATE INSTALLATIONS WHERE U.S. PERSONNEL WORK OR LIVE. ANY ONE OF THESE IS CONCEIVABLY VULNERABLE TO VC ATTACK IN THE FORM OF MORTAR FIRE OR SABOTAGE; AND ~~WHY~~ ARE VULNERABLE TO ATTACK BY VC GROUND FORCES. TO KEEP MORTAR FIRE OFF ANY GIVEN POINT, ONE MUST SECURE AN AREA ROUGHLY 16 SQUARE MILES (A CIRCLE WHOSE RADIUS IS 4,000 YARDS, THE MAXIMUM RANGE OF 81MM MORTAR). THUS LARGE AIRFIELDS WOULD, IN THE OPINION OF GENERAL WESTMORELAND, REQUIRE UP TO 6 BATTALIONS OF U.S. GROUND FORCES.

DECLASSIFIED

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-2- 2056, January 6, 2 P.M., From Saigon

EVEN WITH SUCH A COMMITMENT OF U.S. FORCES, THERE WOULD BE NO ABSOLUTE GUARANTEE AGAINST CLANDESTINE SABOTAGE OR COVERT MORTAR ATTACKS. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, CRITICAL INSTALLATIONS ARE LOCATED IN OR NEAR TOWN OR CITIES, OR IN HEAVILY POPULATED FARM LAND. IN MOST OF THESE AREAS, IT IS NEITHER PRACTICAL NOR POLITICALLY FEASIBLE TO CLEAR AWAY A 4,000 YARD WIDE BELT THAT COULD BE CONTROLLED BY U.S. FORCES. CONSEQUENTLY, U.S. TROOPS WOULD BE FACED WITH DISCHARGE OF GUARD MISSION WITHIN POPULATED AREAS AND WOULD LACK THE AUTHORITY AS WELL AS ABILITY TO CONTROL THE MOVEMENTS OF POPULATION AND TO EXECUTE THE SEARCH AND SEIZURE PROCEDURES REQUIRED BY SUCH A MISSION. IT IS LIKELY THAT SUCH AN EFFORT TO GIVE GREATER SECURITY TO OUR PEOPLE WOULD BRING US INTO GREATER CONFLICT WITH THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT.

IN CONNECTION WITH GUARDING U.S. PERSONNEL BILLETTS AND DEPENDENT QUARTERS, WE ARE PRESENTLY CONDUCTING A DETAILED SURVEY OF REQUIREMENTS. UNDER PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS, THE MAIN BURDEN FOR SECURITY RESTS UPON THE VIETNAMESE POLICE AND MILITARY SERVICES, AND WE BELIEVE THAT RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD REMAIN THEIRS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT AN ADDITIONAL U.S. MILITARY POLICE BATTALION IS REQUIRED IN SAIGON AREA TO AUGMENT THE VIETNAMESE IN ORDER TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF SECURITY PROVIDED.

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AND IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING CONSIDERATIONS GENERAL WESTMORELAND HAS INITIATED OR HAS RECOMMENDED TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

A. AN INCREASE OF THE VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES BY APPROXIMATELY 80,000 AND THE NATIONAL POLICE BY 10,000 IN 1965 IN ORDER TO PROVIDE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ADDITIONAL FORCES FOR THE PROTECTION OF U.S. INSTALLATIONS.

B. A LONG SERIES OF UNILATERAL U.S. MEASURES SUCH AS THE DISPERSAL AND REVIETMENT OF U.S. AIRCRAFT, THE PROVISION OF SANDBAG PERSONNEL SHELTERS WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL AIR AND MILITARY POLICE FOR CLOSE-IN SECURITY OF U.S. AIRCRAFT ON MAJOR AIRFIELDS, THE AUGMENTATION OF MARINE SECURITY ELEMENTS TO REINFORCED COMPANY STRENGTH FOR CLOSE-IN PROTECTION OF AIRCRAFT AT THE DANANG AIRFIELD, AND THE EMPLACEMENT OF COUNTER-MORTAR AND GROUND SURVEILLANCE RADAR NEAR CERTAIN SENSITIVE INSTALLATIONS.

C. PERSUASION OF THE VIETNAMESE MILITARY TO TAKE COMPLEMENTARY STEPS, TO INCLUDE THE CLARIFICATION OF COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY FOR AIRBASE DEFENSE, THE EMPLACEMENT OF ADDITIONAL ARTILLERY AND MORTAR BATTERIES AT CERTAIN AIRFIELDS, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BETTER INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS, PARTICULARLY AROUND KEY INSTALLATIONS."



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-3- 2056, January 6, 2 p.m., From Saigon

WE HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT WHEN THE FOREGOING MEASURES HAVE BEEN TAKEN, WE WILL HAVE CREATED COMPLETE SAFETY FOR OUR INSTALLATIONS AND FOR OUR PEOPLE. HOWEVER, WE CONSIDER THAT, ON BALANCE, OUR PRESENT PLANS TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE ARMED FORCES OF VIETNAM, TO IMPROVE THEIR COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS, AND, IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN EXPANDED POLICE FORCE, TO MAXIMIZE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO PACIFICATION ARE PREFERABLE TO THE COMMITMENT OF A LARGE NUMBER OF U.S. SECURITY FORCES TO STATIC GUARD MISSIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CURRENT PROGRAM WILL, IN THE END, PRODUCE THAT DEGREE OF SECURITY WHICH IS REASONABLY ATTAINABLE.

(MESSAGE GARDLED. APPROXIMATELY TWO LINES MISSING)  
BEING SERVED

TAYLOR

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