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DE YSNKQA 18 124135Z
O 031349Z ZYH ZFF-5
FM GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH DC
INFO MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC
MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC
O 030452Z ZYH ZFF-3
FM GEN WESTMORELAND COMUSMACV SAIGON
TO GEN WHEELER CJCS WASHINGZMN
ADM SHARP CINCPAC HAWAII
INFO AMB BUNKER SAIGON
AMB SULLIVAN VIENTIANE LAOS
LTG CUSHMAN CG III MAF DANANG
ZEM

1968 MAY 3 14 14

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JAG 830824
By RL, NARA, Date 0-1-93

Roxton

~~TOP SECRET~~ NOFORN LIMDIS PRAIRIE FIRE IVY TREE MAC 5817
EYES ONLY

SUBJ: PRAIRIE FIRE OPERATIONS (U)

1. (IS) AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT AN OPERATION IN BASE AREA 607 IN CONJUNCTION WITH OPERATION DELAWARE/LAM SON 216 WAS SOUGHT ON THE BASIS THAT A HAYMAKER-SIZE INCURSION INTO THIS AREA WOULD HAVE A STRONG CHANCE OF REMAINING UNDISCOVERED BY THE NEWS MEDIA. TODAY, I CANNOT GIVE THAT ASSURANCE.
2. (IS) NEWSMEN HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO EXPLORE OUR COURSES OF ACTION AND ARE PROBING TO DETERMINE OUR INTENTIONS OF EXPANDING DELAWARE/LAM SON 216. SUFFICIENT INDICATORS EXIST WHICH SHOW THAT WE ARE, AT THIS TIME, UNABLE TO PREVENT REPORTERS FROM DEDUCING OUR LAOTIAN OPERATIONS, AND IT IS NOW OBVIOUS THAT WE WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO DENY CATEGORICALLY THE INVOLVEMENT OF SIZEABLE FORCES IN LAOS IF QUERIED BY THE PRESS. THE MILITARY GAIN RESULTING FROM A SUCCESSFUL FORAY INTO BASE AREA 607 DOES NOT APPEAR SUFFICIENT TO OFFSET THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC EMBARRASSMENT WHICH THE DISCLOSURE OF THE OPERATION COULD CAUSE AT THIS TIME.
3. (IS) IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, I HAVE DECIDED TO CANCEL THE HAYMAKER-SIZE OPERATION IN BASE AREA 607, AS AN EXTENTION OF OPERATION DELAWARE/LAM SON 216.
4. (IS) WE WILL CONTINUE OUR RECONNAISSANCE OF BASE AREA 607 THROUGH NORMAL PRAIRIE FIRE OPERATIONS. IF RECONNAISSANCE SUGGESTS THAT THERE WILL BE A SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY ADVANTAGE TO THE COMMITMENT OF A BATTALION SIZE FORCE INTO BASE AREA 607, I WILL PROPOSE A SEPARATE PLAN FOR AN OPERATION WHICH WILL BE LAUNCHED FROM A SITE OTHER THAN A SHAU, AND WHICH CAN BE MORE EASILY SCREENED FROM THE PRESS.

GP-1

SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS
350

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