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U.S. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IN VIETNAM WAR -- 1969-1972

HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM

routes which for the most part were immune from attack and then to disperse and store this material in politically assured sanctuaries from which it was infiltrated to South Vietnam and Laos. The relatively unmolested receipt of supplies from Russia, China, and Soviet satellite countries contributed to Hanoi's belief in ultimate victory.

A few civilian advisers, such as Walt Rostow, reasoned that systematic and sustained bombing of war-making resources in North Vietnam would have decisive results, but Secretaries of Defense McNamara and Clifford, especially, continued to argue for strict limitations on military operations. The results of these restraints were described by the Joint Chiefs in October 1967 as follows:

First, the attacks on the enemy military targets have been on such a prolonged, graduated basis that the enemy has adjusted psychologically, economically, and militarily; for example, inured themselves to the difficulties and hardships accompanying the war, dispersed their logistic support system, and developed alternate transport routes and a significant air defense system.

Second, areas of sanctuary, containing important military targets, have been afforded the enemy.

Third, covert operations in Cambodia and Laos have been restricted.

Fourth, major importation of supplies into NVN by sea has been permitted.

On March 31, 1968, when President Johnson announced to the American people he would not seek reelection, he also restricted air strikes on North Vietnam above a line that was soon set at the 19th parallel. Then, on November, 1, 1968, President Johnson ordered the complete cessation of bombing in North Vietnam. Only defensive air operations were permitted until the resumption of strategic bombing in May of 1972.

During this bombing halt, U.S. aircraft were prohibited from even making protective reaction strikes into North Vietnam unless the strike was both below the 19th parallel and an immediate response against enemy aircraft or SAM/AAA which had first taken aggressive action against our aircraft. Requests for one time preemptive strikes against the maturing North Vietnamese air defense system south of the 20th parallel were turned down. This permitted the system to reach a high level of sophistication in which the North Vietnamese linked GCI radars with the lock on radar capability of SAM sites to guide Mig attacks on U.S. aircraft and to aim SAM's undetected until the instant of firing against our aircraft.

The rules of engagement were so tight that during the last week of March 1972, General Lavelle, commander of the Seventh Air Force, was relieved of duty for allegedly ordering unauthorized raids against North Viet-

namese airfields and radar sites. Ironically, during the same week General Lavelle was recalled, North Vietnam launched a major offensive against South Vietnam and by the first week of April the rules which he was accused of violating were already obsolete. Authority was granted in April to use tactical airstrikes against SAM's, artillery and other military targets to the 18th parallel and protective reaction strikes were authorized as far as the 20th parallel.

When President Nixon ordered the mining of Haiphong Harbor in May 1972, offensive air operations were reopened throughout North Vietnam except for a buffer zone at the Communist Chinese border. There was a short suspension of bombing north of the 20th parallel in late October, but President Nixon resumed the bombing on December 18, by ordering 12 consecutive days of strikes and using B-25's on a sustained basis for the first time over the northern part of North Vietnam. Hanoi reacted immediately by returning to negotiations in Paris and signing the peace agreement within 6 weeks.

Mr. President, on March 6 and 14, I placed two documents in the Record that were declassified recently at my request. These materials were Air Force reports examining the impact of the rules of engagement during the periods of 1960-65 and 1966-69, respectively. Today I wish to make available to my colleagues and the wide audience served by the Record, the third and final of these reports, known as Project Checo. The last report is entitled "Rules of Engagement November 1969-September 1972."

These rules unquestionably denied a military victory to allied forces in South Vietnam, and I hope that historians will come to recognize the importance of these self-defeating restrictions in preventing the successful culmination of military activities, an artificial handicap which must never again cripple our Armed Forces.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

PROJECT CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL EXAMINATION OF CURRENT OPERATIONS REPORT

(Rules of engagement, November 1969-September 1972)

(1 March 1973, HQ PACAF, Directorate of Operations Analysis, CHECO/Corona Harvest Division)

(Prepared by Capt. Paul W. Elder and Capt. Peter J. Melly)

PROJECT CHECO REPORTS

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia has resulted in USAF airpower being employed to meet a multitude of requirements. These varied applications have involved the full spectrum of USAF aerospace vehicles, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, operational data and experiences have accumulated which should be collected, documented, and analyzed for current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT—1969-1972

Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, the Pentagon Papers reveal that the Joint Chiefs of Staff repeatedly argued against the artificial limitations, known as the rules of engagement, that impeded the objectives of our Nation in the Vietnam war. The Chiefs pointed out that these self-imposed restraints allowed North Vietnam to receive war supporting material from external sources through

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activity which would provide timely and analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA and would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations, was established to meet the Air Staff directive. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements in Southeast Asia, Project CHECO provides a scholarly "on-going" historical examination, documentation, and reporting on USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine in PACOM. This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and examination which is being accomplished. It is an authentic source for an assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in PACOM when used in proper context. The reader must view the study in relation to the events and circumstances at the time of its preparation—recognizing that it was prepared on a contemporary basis which restricted perspective and that the author's research was limited to records available within his local headquarters area.

ROBERT E. HILLER,

Director of Operations Analysis,
DCS/Operations.

FOREWORD

(U) The Rules of Engagement (ROE) are the controls governing the conduct of all U.S. military operations in Southeast Asia (SEA). On the grand scale they represent the operational interpretations of U.S. policies and goals with respect to the limited SEA conflict. On the operating level, they are a detailed set of rules to be followed closely by all commanders, air planners, control personnel, and combat crewmembers in the actual planning and flying of combat missions.

(U) At the time of this writing the ROE were in the limelight in the United States because of possible deviations authorized by the military command in SEA. In April 1972, the Seventh Air Force (7AF) Commander, General John D. Levelle, was removed from command amid allegations that he personally had permitted air strikes not authorized under the ROE in North Vietnam (NVN) from November 1971 through March 1972. Senate Armed Services Committee hearings on these charges were continuing into the fall of 1972.¹

(U) This report presents the ROE for air operations in SEA from November 1969 through September 1972. It is the third in a series of CHECO reports on ROE. The first report traced the evolution of the air ROE from 1960 through 1965. The second report discussed the changes in the ROE for SEA from 1 January 1966 through 1 November 1969.

(U) All ROE are essentially restrictive in nature and, as such, they increase the difficulty of conducting an overall air war. The purpose of this report, however, is not to analyze the impact of the ROE on the ability and success of commanders in conducting military operations. Rather, this report presents the significant events and changes pertaining to the ROE since the last report and, whenever possible, relates them to the political or military conditions which produced the requirements for the changes.

CHAPTER I—OVERVIEW

(U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) promulgated authorizations for the conduct of

all military air operations in SEA in message form as Air Operating Authorities. These messages to the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific (CINCPAC) essentially identified an air resource that could be used for a specific purpose in a given area for a specified period of time. The air authorities provided the guidelines from which CINCPAC, in consultation with his subordinate commanders in SEA, synthesized the detailed Basic Operation Orders for air operations in SEA.

Ordinarily CINCPAC assigned nicknames to the basic operation orders identifying the operations with the various geographical areas of SEA. CINCPAC Basic Operation Order Barrel Roll/Steel Tiger/Yankee Team divided Laos into five operating areas and outlined the various responsibilities for the accomplishment of air operations in those areas. CINCPAC Basic Operation Order Freedom Deal governed U.S. air interdiction operations in eastern Cambodia. The air campaign in North Vietnam prior to the bombing halt in November 1968 was nicknamed Rolling Thunder/Blue Tree. The defensive air operations during the bombing halt were eventually termed "protective reaction strikes," but after the resumption of strategic bombing in May 1972, the campaign in NVN was named Linebacker. The protracted air operations in South Vietnam had no general nickname.

(U) The Rules of Engagement were grounded in the JCS Air Operating Authorities and promulgated in the CINCPAC Basic Operation Orders. They were never more permissive than the JCS authorities but could be made more restrictive by lower echelon commanders in response to special situations or conditions. For example, representatives of the National Armed Forces of Cambodia, the Republic of Vietnam Armed Force (RVNAF), and the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (USMACV) negotiated the ROE for Cambodia within the JCS guidelines. They then were made a part of the Freedom Deal operation order.

(U) In South Vietnam, where no single operation order governing air operations existed, the ROE for both air and surface operations had been specified in MACV Directive 525-13, dated 12 Oct 1968, and subsequent revisions. Seventh Air Force reiterated the ROE for air operations alone in 7AFR 55-49, 14 Nov 1968. Thus, for all of SEA, the air operations planners and the aircrews had to refer to at least four basic sources and subsequent change messages to find the applicable ROE. Seventh Air Force corrected this situation on 6 December 1971 when it published 7AF Operation Order 71-17 as the single source document providing ROE for conducting air operations in all areas of SEA.

(U) By the time 7AF Operation Order 71-17 was published, the ROE had evolved into an extensive, detailed set of rules—not a set easily committed to memory. Still 7AF required all strike aircrews, Forward Air Controllers (FACs), air liaison officers, mission control, and mission planning personnel to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the ROE before assuming operational duties. In the Tactical Air Control Center (TACC) which allocated all 7AF strike sorties, the Target Management Officer (TMO) compiled the ROE as they were promulgated at higher echelons and distributed them to the operational units via 7AF OPOD 71-17 supplements. Also, mission planners coordinated requests for air strikes with the TMO to insure that the targets were within the ROE before allocating sorties.

(U) In the operational units, the ROE formed an integral part of the training given newly arrived aircrew members, as well as refresher training for experienced airmen. Seventh Air Force required all

strike controllers and crew members to complete a written examination on the ROE applicable to the individual's operational areas.

(U) Besides their own ROE training, the strike crew's most important safeguard against violations of the ROE was communication with their controllers. FACs, for example, after flying over the same limited areas for many hours, were intimately familiar with the ROE in their areas. Since FACs controlled most air strikes in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, the likelihood of an ROE violation was further diminished. Even so, strike pilots were to abort the mission rather than chance a violation of the ROE, regardless of the FAC's instructions. In addition, to prevent border violations, 7AF defined positive control areas and required aircraft directed into the areas to establish positive radio contact with radar control agencies before entering. The radar control agencies monitored aircraft positions and transmitted border warnings as necessary.

(U) The training, procedures, and safeguards to prevent ROE violations reflect the important role the ROE played in the SEA air operations. During the period from late 1969 until September 1972 those operations expanded to include, for the first time, Cambodia and, again, all of North Vietnam. The expansion was in response to the increasing North Vietnamese threat to the Vietnamization program and to the dwindling U.S. forces in South Vietnam. Accompanying this expansion were the significant modifications in the ROE which are presented in this report.

CHAPTER II—SOUTH VIETNAM

(U) The ROE for South Vietnam were designed primarily to avoid injury to noncombatants and friendly troops. The 30 December 1971 revision of MACV Directive 525-13 emphasized this point in relationship to U.S. withdrawals from South Vietnam.

"The changing nature of operations in the RVN [Republic of Vietnam/South Vietnam] has necessitated a new approach to the ROE for the employment of firepower. The shift to predominantly Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) operations supported and advised by U.S. forces, coupled with a civilian populace that is less inclined to observe curfews and restricted areas, makes it imperative to ensure against the indiscriminate use of firepower. While the goal is maximum effectiveness in combat operations, every effort must be made to avoid civilian casualties, minimize the destruction of private property, and conserve diminishing resources. Accomplishment of these objectives requires that the ROE be adhered to by all friendly armed forces."

This guidance pertained to both ground and air firepower, but as more and more U.S. ground forces were withdrawn from South Vietnam, the thrust of the MACV directive was increasingly focused on the application of U.S. air power.

"Short rounds," the inadvertent air delivery of munitions onto friendly or noncombatant positions, was a continuing problem. Although short rounds did not necessarily result from violations of the ROE, strict adherence to the ROE was certainly one factor that could help prevent them. COMUSMACV focused on the problem on 17 September 1970.

"I am becoming increasingly concerned over the significant increase in the number of incidents in which friendly Vietnamese civilians have been killed or injured by U.S. aircraft. Since 2 September 1970, seven incidents have been reported. Six involved U.S. Army aircraft and one involved a USAF air-

¹ The ROE for the November 1971-March 1972 period in NVN are presented in Chapter V under "Protective Reaction Strikes."

craft. Such incidents are counterproductive to U.S. goals in SEA. The alarming number of incidents occurring since 2 September 1970 indicates a need for more thorough target evaluation and clearance prior to engagement. ROE applicable to the operation of U.S. aircraft are clearly defined in MACV Directive 525-13. To impose further restriction on the tactical employment of U.S. aircraft could have an adverse effect on combat operations and jeopardize the safety of air crewmembers and passengers."

The ROE for the DMZ were modified in 1970 in response to the North Vietnamese military build-up there. After the 1968 cessation of offensive air operations against NVN, the ROE prohibited U.S. aircraft operating in South Vietnam from entering the DMZ except in hot pursuit of hostile aircraft or in immediate response to firings of surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA). Thus, the enemy was essentially free to move men and equipment into the DMZ. To counter this threat against Allied forces in South Vietnam, tactical air support and B-52 strikes were authorized in the southern half of the DMZ beginning in August 1970. However, the enemy preparation continued in and above the DMZ and culminated in the Spring 1972 offensive against South Vietnam.

(U) There were no other significant changes in the ROE in South Vietnam. The specific rules are given in the previous Project CHECO report on ROE and in 7AF OPORD 71-17.

CHAPTER III—LAOS

The dual U.S. goals in Laos were to support the neutrality of Laos and to hinder the infiltration of North Vietnamese men and supplies into South Vietnam via the many-fingered Ho Chi Minh Trail in eastern Laos. While supporting these goals, the U.S. was trying to keep a low profile in deference to the 1962 Geneva Accords and to avoid damage to Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma's image among the Lao people. Complicating the American task were the ostentatious Chinese Communist road construction effort in northern Laos and a sensitive Thai ally to the west.

The seasonal nature of the conflict in Laos further added to the complexity of the situation. The North Vietnamese transported most of their men and supplies through eastern Laos during the dry season (approximately November through April). During the wet season when large portions of the Ho Chi Minh Trail became impassable, the enemy stockpiled materiel, improved and expanded routes, and prepared for the next dry season. These dry season surges of NVN men and equipment down the Ho Chi Minh Trail were accompanied in Northern Laos by North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Pathet Lao offensives onto the Plaine des Jarres where they were met by the government forces of General Vang Pao's Meo guerrillas.

The role of U.S. air power in northern Laos during the dry season was interdiction of NVN supply routes and close air support of Vang Pao's guerrillas; during the wet season, it was strategic bombing of the NVN staging areas and harassment of the road-work crews. This was to be accomplished without focusing unwanted attention on the U.S. presence in Laos.

In consonance with the delicate political and military situation, theater responsibility for all U.S. military operations in Laos was vested in the American Embassy, Vientiane (AMEMBV), which validated all targets and areas of operation. To permit immediate air strikes, the Ambassador to Laos had delegated part of his authority to the Air Attache in Vientiane, to Forward Air

Guides (FAGs), and to FACs with Laotian observers aboard (Raven FACs). However, he retained validation authority for some air operations, primarily B-52 drops, use of area denial munitions, and preplanned targets not in specifically prevailed areas.

In efforts to make the air support of U.S. goals in Laos compatible with the various conditions, AMEMBV and U.S. air planners had partitioned Laos into various configurations of named areas, each of which had its own ROE, the most recent realignment completed in September 1969. It designated five operating areas: Barrel Roll North, Barrel Roll West, Barrel Roll East, Steel Tiger East, and Steel Tiger West.

The ROE in each operating area reflected the logic of the subdivision. Barrel Roll (BR) North was a convenient buffer zone between active Allied operating areas and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The southern boundary of BR North was slightly south of the Chinese-built road across northern Laos, at least as far as the road had progressed in 1969. Accordingly, the ROE were the most restrictive in that area. Any U.S. air strikes or tactical air reconnaissance missions required JCS approval. Even ground fire could not be returned without specific AMEMBV approval.

The ROE in BR West and Steel Tiger (SL) West were similar, reflecting relatively moderate military actions, the presence of friendly troops, cities, and noncombatants, and their common borders with Thailand. In line with these realities, modified by the necessity for air support of the friendly troops and interdiction of infiltration routes into Thailand, the ROE were less restrictive than in BR North but more restrictive than in BR East and SL East where the enemy presence was greatest. In general, all air strikes in BR West and SL West, including the return of ground fire, had to be under FAC/FAG control. This was not so in BR East and SL East where the ROE authorized ground fire to be returned against any location (except the town of Sam Neua) without FAC/FAG control and armed reconnaissance without FAC/FAG control within 200 meters of all lines of communication (LOCs) up to the buffer zone along the NVN border. Strikes outside the 200 meter limit, however, had to be FAC/FAG controlled. The ROE for these areas are detailed in the preceding CHECO report on ROE and in 7AF OPORD 71-17.

BR East contained the buffer zone along the Laos/NVN border and the staging areas from which the NVA moved across the Plaine des Jarres during the dry season. The buffer zone was 10 NM wide extending from 19°N to the BR North boundary. All strikes there required JCS approval. At the end of 1969, the Ambassador to Laos, G. McMurtre Godley, wanted to strike the enemy LOCs in the buffer zone as supplies were being transported from NVN to the staging areas. While the JCS had approved some strikes, Ambassador Godley, supported by CINCPAC, wanted an extension of the authority. The JCS quoted Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird as not wanting to grant broader authority "to conduct military operations that have political sensitivity, e.g., an adverse impact on U.S. NVN discussions in Paris, international and domestic political repercussions, or possibilities of significant adverse publicity." Any expansion of existing authorities would have to be extremely well justified.

In his justification, Ambassador Godley described the Plaine des Jarres as "an important objective in which airpower will again play a vital role." He considered the "risks worth the gamble to destroy 100,000 lbs/day of enemy ammunition and supplies that transit LOCs in the buffer zone."

The result of the Ambassador's efforts was a special operating zone established within the buffer zone. The zone, initially approved until 28 February 1970, essentially reduced the southern half of the buffer zone to a four NM strip along the Laos/NVN border. Strikes were also authorized in the northern half of the buffer zone along Route 85 east of Sam Neua to within four NM of the NVN border. The JCS extended these buffer zone authorities until 31 March 1970, and permitted armed reconnaissance within 200 meters either side of Route 7 to a point 2600 meters from the NVN border. In all cases, the targets had to be validated by AMEMBV and the strikes conducted under FAC control. The ROE directed U.S. pilots to take every feasible precaution to preclude the inadvertent penetration of the NVN border. However, the rules permitted laser illuminator aircraft and aircraft delivering laser guided bombs to overfly NVN within three NM of the border in order to guide ordnance onto targets in Laos. IRON HAND SAM/AAA suppression aircraft were also allowed to cross the NVN border from Laos to position themselves between SAM/AAA sites in NVN and the strike aircraft delivering ordnance in Laos.

The buffer zone rules were later relaxed to include armed reconnaissance within 2000 meters either side of Route 7 up to four NM from the NVN border, FAC controlled armed reconnaissance and tactical air strikes within 200 meters of Route 7 (including all connecting roads) up to 200 meters of the border, and air strikes in support of temporary aircraft landing sites. Actually, with the resumption of the interdiction bombing of NVN, the buffer zone existed in name only. In May 1972, the JCS authorized air strikes against all AMEMBV validated targets in the Barrel Roll East buffer zone effective until the termination of the Linebacker campaign in NVN.

An increase in the number of Special Operating Areas (SOAs) throughout Laos accompanied the changes in the ROE along the Laos/NVN border. SOAs were areas validated by AMEMBV for air strikes without FAC control against all forms of enemy military activity. At the end 1969, there were only two SOAs—located just inside the western boundary of BR East. By June 1972, the list had been expanded to seven areas. The ROE differed slightly in each SOA, primarily regarding the type of ordnance that could be used. The differences in allowable ordnance generally involved napalm, mining munitions, and area denial munitions, all of which would be hazardous to friendly troops in the typical see-saw ground action in Laos.

Following the ebb and flow of the ground conflict, the boundaries of the SOAs varied, especially in the case of SOA #2 which encompassed the northern half of the Plaine des Jarres and the sites of the seasonal clashes between the NVA and the Meo guerrillas. The fluctuation of the SOA boundaries simply reflected the tie between the ROE and the support of ground troops. This also applied to the creation, expansion, and contraction of the Raven control boxes, where friendly ground forces were operating. Raven FACs, or FAGs, or fixed wing gunships in contact with FAGs controlled all air strikes within the boxes. The AMEMBV had authorized FAGs and the Laotian observers flying with Raven FACs to validate targets of opportunity. Since Raven boxes and SOAs were contiguous, changes in any single area's boundaries usually led to changes in adjoining areas. Raven boxes advanced and retreated with the friendly troops while the SOAs moved in the opposite way. At one time during

February 1972, a special night SOA existed within the Raven box on the southern half of the Plaine des Jarres. There, the ROE for SOA #2 governed air operations at night but the rules for the Raven box applied during daylight hours. Figure 3 shows the location of the Raven boxes and SOAs as of 14 September 1972. The Raven box and SOAs in southern Laos encompass the major LOCs from Laos into Cambodia.

At the same time that the ROE in BR East were becoming less restrictive, those in BR West were being tightened. The Chinese had begun a southwesterly spur from the east-west road they had been constructing within the southern boundary of BR North. Late in 1969, the spur began to emerge from BR West in the Nam Beng Valley where U.S. air operations were authorized. While the Royal Laotian Government was deciding its policy toward the road, an interim ban was placed on low level reconnaissance and combat strikes within five kilometers either side of the road. Apparently the Laotian policy was to avoid the road because, early in 1970, the restriction became permanent from Muong Sai to Muong Houn. Later, in July 1971, rather than continually extend the restriction as road construction progressed and new Chinese positions appeared, the JCS simply extended the restrictive BR North ROE to encompass all known or suspected Chinese positions in northern Laos. No air operations were permitted within 5000 meters of those positions unless specifically requested by AMEMBV and approved by CINCPAC and the JCS. By September 1972, the road had progressed to within 25 miles of Pak Beng on the Mekong River—20 miles from the Thal border.

Consistent with the policy to avoid attracting attention to the U.S. air operations in Laos and damaging Souvanna Phouma's image, there were altitude and radii restrictions around certain cities, mainly in SL West and BR West. The ROE generally authorized air strikes within 200 meters either side of the enemy's LOCs, sometimes with validation and FAC control required and sometimes without, depending upon the area. Air strikes more than 200 meters from a LOC and not in an SOA required validation and PAC control. Validation authority and permissible ordnance varied depending upon the five main operating areas and the SOAs within them. Strikes could not be made within 500 meters of an active village unless ground fire was received from the village. In October 1971, this last restriction was modified for SL West to require that the ground fire be of 14.5 caliber or higher before strikes could be made within 500 meters of a village.

From 1970 through 1972, the most significant changes in the ROE for Laos were the gradual elimination of the BR East buffer zone and an increase in the number of SOAs. As in the past, many of the changes involved the BR East operating area where the enemy and his logistic networks were concentrated. However, the appearance of the Raven box and SOAs just north of the Cambodian border were evidence of the increased U.S. involvement in Cambodia.

CHAPTER IV—CAMBODIA

Since 1966, Prince Norodom Sihanouk had permitted the North Vietnamese to ship supplies into Cambodia through the port of Sihanoukville. The North Vietnamese transported the supplies to the Cambodia/RVN border and stockpiled them at bases there for later use in South Vietnam. At the same time, Prince Sihanouk refused the use of Cambodian airspace for U.S. air operations. Consequently, the ROE for Cambodia hinged upon the often emphasized requirement of a military commander to defend his

forces against armed attack with all means at his disposal." The ROE permitted U.S. ground commanders in RVN who came under fire from enemy positions in Cambodia to employ all available artillery and air strikes against positively identified sources of fire. The responsive fire was to be delivered in a "timely manner" and reconnaissance by fire was strictly forbidden.

On 18 March 1970, a group of Cambodian generals led by Prime Minister Lon Nol deposed Prince Sihanouk. Lon Nol had stated earlier that he intended to follow a strictly neutralist policy. Therefore, the Viet Cong (VC) and the NVA, with Sihanouk's blessing, initiated pro-Sihanouk demonstrations and began military operations to protect their LOCs and to jeopardize the Lon Nol government. When it became obvious to Lon Nol that his national army (Forces Armées Nationales Khmer) could not stand alone against the VC/NVA, he requested help from the United States.

Lon Nol's request for help dovetailed conveniently with U.S. military advisors' desires to clean out the VC/NVA sanctuaries in Cambodia which represented a threat to the Vietnamization program in South Vietnam. Therefore, with the dual objectives of supporting a non-communist government in Cambodia and of enhancing our efforts in Vietnam, President Richard M. Nixon authorized the 1 May 1970 incursion into Cambodia.

The Cambodian incursion plan was a closely held secret timed to coincide with the President's announcement. It was not until 27 April that 7AF was told to start definitive planning. Thus, there was no time to coordinate a new set of ROE for Cambodia. Instead 7AF instructed its pilots to follow the normal rules for South Vietnam and to exercise extreme vigilance to avoid dropping ordnance on the noncombatant populace.

Support of ground troops along the RVN/Cambodia border was the initial role of air in Cambodia. However, within the first two weeks of May, "higher authority" requested the JCS prepare an outline plan for air interdiction operations in eastern Cambodia. This apparently was motivated by intelligence estimates that the enemy would attempt to consolidate his positions in north-eastern Cambodia and extend his LOCs from Laos into Cambodia in preparation for renewed efforts in South Vietnam.

The plan drafted by JCS called for interdiction against enemy base areas, stored supplies, and movements of men and materiel along the LOCs; air support of friendly troops in contact; and reconnaissance. The JCS had patterned the target validation procedure after that for Laos in that the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh, or its designated representatives, was to validate all targets and areas of operation. The JCS specified some ROE but there were few specific ones. Phnom Penh would be a restricted area. Ordinarily, FACs would control all strikes but fighter aircraft would be allowed to strike any sites in Cambodia firing at U.S. aircraft. ARC LIGHT strikes would be conducted against targets a minimum of one kilometer from the nearest combatants and not less than three kilometers from friendly troops. B-52 target areas could not contain monuments, temples, or other historical landmarks.

In a message to CINCPAC regarding the JCS outline plan, General Creighton Abrams, COMUSMACV, envisioned validation and FAC procedures much like those in South Vietnam, except that U.S. FACS might require FANK (Forces Armées Nationales Khmer) to fly with them to eliminate any language problems. He reasoned that the expanded air operations would

entail more close air support than interdiction because the Allied forces had overrun the majority of the enemy base areas in the incursion and the enemy had not yet established new ones. Finally, General Abrams recommended a meeting between FANK, RVNAF, and MACV representatives be held in Saigon to implement target validation procedures.

The JCS transmitted the execute message for the operation plan on 24 May. The interdiction area, later nicknamed Freedom Deal, was that part of Cambodia bounded by a line 200 meters west of the Mekong River on the west, the Laotian border on the north, the RVN border on the east, and Route 13 on the south. Strikes outside that area would require prior approval of the JCS. The plan as transmitted in the execute message was still an interdiction plan but the JCS had modified it to reflect General Abrams' recommendations. Thus, the American Embassy was removed from the normal target validation procedure. The JCS concurred in the requirement for a coordination meeting between FANK, RVNAF, and MACV representatives to develop target identification procedures and means to prevent noncombatant casualties. Such a meeting was held on 29 May 1970 in Saigon. The result was a memorandum of agreement, "Rules of Engagement—Cambodia."

The ROE promulgated in the memorandum were very similar to those for South Vietnam. FACs would control all tactical fighter strikes except for properly cleared radar controlled attacks. The FANK would validate all targets. Aircraft could return ground fire immediately if not from an urban area, town, village or hamlet, in which case FANK approval was required. In general, air strikes could not be directed at an inhabited area unless the area contained only enemy forces and was validated for strike by the FANK/As in South Vietnam and Laos, the ROE provided for special operating areas wherein all targets were prevalidated by the FANK and aircraft could attack any enemy target without further approval.

Unique to Cambodian ROE were prevalidated Category A and B lines of communication along which enemy targets could be attacked without further approval. Category A LOCs were those along which there were no friendly personnel, traffic, installations, or dwellings. Along those LOCs, aircraft could expend ordnance on targets or suspected targets within 1000 meters on either side of the road or waterway. Category B LOCs were those used by friendlies as well as the enemy. Within 500 meters either side of Category B LOCs, aircraft could strike motor vehicles or moving watercraft at night and motor-powered boats and vehicles during the day. Prior to the first strike on a Category B LOC and periodically thereafter, psychological warfare aircraft were to drop leaflets and use loudspeakers to warn friendly personnel not to travel at night and not to use motor-powered vehicles or boats at any time. As an added safety measure, the ROE prohibited strikes within 500 meters of an inhabited village or hamlet. The rules permitted the use of area denial munitions along Category A LOCs and in special operating areas.

To facilitate target validation outside special operating areas and not along Category A/B LOCs, a FANK liaison officer with validation authority was always on duty with the TACC at Hq 7AF. Also, at least three English speaking FANK liaison officers were stationed at Pleiku AB, RVN. They rode as observers with the U.S. FACs and, with the authority to validate targets of opportunity, they facilitated immediate at-

tacks against fleeting enemy targets. Later, 7AF further tightened the validation procedure for strikes against built-up areas by requiring that all such strikes be approved by 7AF TACC only. In that case, a Cambodian observer's on-the-spot validation authority was considered as merely a recommendation—the 7AF TACC retained the final say.

With the beginning of U.S. military operations in Cambodia, the Secretary of State had received inquiries showing concern over possible damage to art and archeological treasures in Cambodia. Secretary Rogers obtained a preliminary list of such sites through the American Embassy in Phnom Penh and asked that an effort be made to protect them even though the enemy would probably use them as sanctuaries. Cambodian cultural authorities initially identified 15 such sites, which were incorporated into the memorandum of agreement on ROE. Forty-three new sites were added in June 1970; eventually, they totaled 98. When they incorporated the original 15 site restrictions into the ROE on 29 May, the drafters of the memorandum stated that the sites would not be struck unless the strikes were requested and the targets validated by the FANK. Within two weeks, however, the rule was changed to direct that no aircraft would make any strikes within 1000 meters of cultural properties. Aircraft were to depart such areas rather than return ground fire.

The original interdiction mission in Freedom Deal was to prevent the VC/NVA from using certain waterways and overland infiltration routes to deliver war material and personnel to their forces conducting aggression against South Vietnam and Cambodia and to strike enemy forces and base camps located in Cambodia. The JCS had authorized U.S. air power for that purpose effective until 30 June 1970. Since late May, U.S. aircraft had conducted reconnaissance missions east of the Mekong River except in the vicinity of Phnom Penh. On 9 June, the JCS authorized tactical reconnaissance of all Cambodia through 30 June 1970. In mid-June, President Nixon met with his White House Staff Advisory Group to consider future courses of action in Cambodia. According to Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, Acting Chairman, JCS, the President felt that Cambodia could be saved from a communist take-over and that a U.S. effort for that purpose was worth the risks. Since U.S. ground forces were to be out of Cambodia by 1 July, the President wanted U.S. air planners to be as imaginative as possible in the employment of air power in the critical period following the ground withdrawal.

Seventh Air Force received the following guidance on the Cambodian ROE on 24 June 1970:

"U.S. air power will be employed within Cambodian territory to maintain surveillance of enemy activities in Cambodia east of the Mekong River and attack those activities as necessary to protect U.S. forces in the Republic of Vietnam."

Further, the JCS directed that tactical air interdiction be employed in any situation involving a serious threat to major Cambodian positions whose loss would be a serious military or psychological blow to Cambodia. Adding emphasis, the JCS requested COMUSMACV to conduct an aggressive U.S. and VNAF air campaign. At that time, however, the authority for any and all air operations in Cambodia was due to expire in just one week.

On 30 June, 7AF received a revised authority specifying air operations in Cambodia subsequent to 30 June 1970. The Freedom Deal interdiction area was the same as before. A new area, called Freedom Deal Extension, was defined south of and adjoining Freedom Deal. Operations in Freedom Deal

Extension were to be against "identified, highly lucrative targets that pose a substantial threat to Allied forces." The ROE authorized reconnaissance and search and rescue throughout Cambodia although armed reconnaissance was permitted in the Freedom Deal area only. Otherwise, the ROE for Cambodia remained the same as in June.

By the first week in November, the JCS had further expanded the interdiction area, primarily to the west to encompass new enemy build-up areas. Because of the denser population there, strikes below Route 13 were still limited to highly lucrative, threatening targets. However, the ROE permitted armed reconnaissance throughout the interdiction area.

From November 1970 through the writing of this report, the interdiction area remained constant. The total area and the CINCPAC Basic Operation Order were again nicknamed Freedom Deal. There were few significant changes in the ROE within the area during the next two years. In May 1971, the FANK validated all motorable land routes and waterways in the original Freedom Deal area (bounded by Route 13 on the south, the Mekong River on the west, and the Cambodian border on the east and north) as Category B LOCs in order to permit a rapid response against lucrative targets. This ROE change did not affect the status of existing Category A LOCs. The first two special operating areas entered the ROE in February 1972. Their approximate locations, both below Route 13, are shown in Figure 5.

Significantly, SOA #1 was partially outside the interdiction area. Until May 1971, strikes outside the Freedom Deal area had required JCS approval except 7AF had discretionary authority to conduct air strikes in certain areas, in particular to support FANK ground elements defending the Kirirom Plateau and Route 4 areas. Then, in May 1971, the JCS granted COMUSMACV discretionary authority to employ U.S. TACAIR interdiction anywhere in Cambodia in any situation that posed a threat to major Cambodian positions, such as a provincial capital, whose loss would be a military or psychological blow to the country. The FANK had to validate all targets and the ROE for Freedom Deal applied to all discretionary strikes. COMUSMACV delegated the authority to the Commander, 7AF, in June 1971. The authority gave 7AF the needed flexibility to more effectively counter the enemy's increasing belligerence in Cambodia through 1972. In particular, it was used to provide TACAIR and gunship protection for Khmer convoys throughout Cambodia.

At the end of September 1972, then, there were two basic areas of operation in Cambodia. Freedom Deal, the interdiction area, encompassed the eastern one-third of the country. There, TACAIR, gunship, and B-52 interdiction strikes were authorized against enemy troops and supplies. In the rest of the country 7AF had discretionary authority to employ TACAIR and gunship interdiction in any situation that posed a threat to major Khmer positions. The growth of the interdiction area from the original Freedom Deal to the area as it existed in September 1972 and the discretionary authority granted 7AF reflect the spread of NVA activity in Cambodia.

CHAPTER V—NORTH VIETNAM

The U.S. terminated offensive operations against NVN on 1 November 1968, but continued unarmed reconnaissance missions. The ROE established at that time permitted U.S. aircraft to enter North Vietnamese territorial airspace in pursuit of any enemy

aircraft or vessel which had taken hostile action against Allied forces or had demonstrated by its actions that it was operating in support of VC/NVA insurgency in South Vietnam. Attacks were authorized against SAM/AAA weapons, installations, and supporting facilities south of 19°N immediately after such weapons were fired at Allied aircraft operating over South Vietnam or Laos. The JCS further authorized armed escorts to provide protection to manned reconnaissance aircraft below 19°N in the event those aircraft were attacked. However, in all cases, aircraft engaged in immediate response strikes were not authorized to attack other unfriendly forces or installations encountered, except in response to attack by them.

Although immediate defensive actions were still authorized at the end of 1969, the reins were tight on military operations that could be politically sensitive, e.g., operations that could jeopardize the Paris peace discussions or cause adverse publicity. An 11 December 1969 memorandum from Secretary of Defense Laird promulgated policy guidance on politically sensitive operations and directed that the following information be provided to justify any such operations:

"What sequence of military actions will occur if the request is approved and what broader implications might be involved?"

"What are the military risks of these actions?"

"What are the costs or penalties, respectively, if the proposed actions are authorized or not authorized?"

"What are the alternative means of accomplishing the objective and the cost of each alternative?"

"What specific results will the proposed actions achieve that the alternatives will not?"

Later in December a 7AF request to conduct reconnaissance and retaliatory strikes against a belligerent AAA site above 19°N at Barthelemy Pass (see Figure 6) indicated that such strikes were considered politically sensitive and outside the existing authorities. Although U.S. pilots reported that the site had been firing at U.S. aircraft operating in Laos, the JCS required 7AF to justify its reconnaissance and strike request within the context of a politically sensitive operation. Approval for such strikes was not easy to obtain.

Protective reaction strikes

At the end of 1969 and in the early part of 1970, then, the necessary criteria for strike authority into NVN were (1) the strike had to be below 19°N and (2) the strike had to be an immediate response against enemy aircraft or SAM/AAA which had first taken aggressive action against Allied aircraft. In a 4 February 1970 message to General George Brown, Commander of 7AF, concerning the ROE for the DMZ, General Abrams clarified the second criterion, emphasizing that U.S. aircraft could attack only the SAM/AAA or aircraft which had first fired at them—attacks on other unfriendly forces or installations encountered were prohibited.

During the same time period, however, 7AF was becoming more and more concerned over the increasing threat to B-52 and strike aircraft operating in Laos near the NVN border and to manned reconnaissance flights in NVN below 19°N. The threat was in the form of SAM units deployed in the vicinity of Mu Gia and Ban Karai passes below 19°N and Barthelemy Pass above 19°N. (See Figure 6.) Seventh Air Force wanted authority to conduct reconnaissance and preplanned retaliatory strikes against these sites.

In March 1970, the JCS authorized 7AF to conduct tactical reconnaissance and a one-time preplanned attack on occupied SAM sites and logistic targets in NVN along Route 7 east of Barthelémy Pass. The authority for the one-time strike suggested a slight relaxation of the ROE, for later that month the JCS advised 7AF that preplanned attacks against SAM sites in the Route 7 area of NVN and Laos could not be made unless a site fired at U.S. forces during the course of normal U.S. operations. Then on 1 April, CINCPAC advised that strikes against SAM/AAA sites in NVN south of 20 degrees were authorized if the site(s) fired at manned reconnaissance missions over NVN. This afforded added protection to aircraft flying tactical reconnaissance below 19°N.

At the beginning of May 1970 the JCS authorized armed reconnaissance and strikes against logistic targets in the Route 1036/1039/1032 complex in NVN within 20 NM of the Laotian border. They also permitted a few strikes along the routes in NVN leading to the Mu Gia and Barthelémy passes and against routes north of the DMZ. Secretary of State William Rogers described the May strikes as suppressive fire to protect reconnaissance flights over NVN. He explained that such strikes were part of an arrangement with NVN dating from the 1968 bombing halt. The U.S. would conduct reconnaissance flights over NVN and, if the enemy attacked, the U.S. aircraft would respond. It was not a new policy at all. The term "protective reaction" was not mentioned. However, that term was applied to the next "special mission" conducted in November 1970 under the nickname Freedom Bait.

On 21 November, 7AF executed Operation Freedom Bait against SAM sites, POL storage areas and truck parks in NVN below 19°N. The plan also called for armed reconnaissance along heavily used infiltration routes. A Department of Defense spokesman described the operations as "protective reaction strikes" in response to enemy attacks on our unarmed reconnaissance aircraft. He noted that these strikes were consistent with earlier Secretary of Defense statements that the U.S. was ready to take appropriate action in response to attacks on unarmed U.S. reconnaissance aircraft, to major infiltration across the DMZ, and to the shelling of major South Vietnamese cities. Saigon and Hue had been shelled in November.

Operation Freedom Bait was followed by a series of protective reaction strikes against an increasing SAM threat to B-52 and other aircraft operating over Laos, and to reconnaissance aircraft over NVN. These operations, conducted below 19°N, each included an armed reconnaissance effort followed by a one-time strike on the site of any SAM/AAA associated equipment and installations located by the reconnaissance. The series of operations was nicknamed Louisville Slugger.

The Louisville Slugger authorities were originally for strikes against SAM/AAA sites in the Ban Karai/Route 137 area and were to expire on 11 January 1971; however, they were extended on a case by case basis through February. Most of the targets were located in Route Package 1 (RP 1) where the ROE permitted reconnaissance escorts to strike only in response to hostile fire. However, the Louisville Slugger authorities permitted armed reconnaissance to locate and destroy SAMs and SAM associated equipment in that area of RP 1 within 25 NM of the Laotian border. The 7AF inter-

pretation of these conflicting rules was that escort aircraft could strike SAM targets without first being fired upon only if those escorts were directed into the authorized area on one of the special armed reconnaissance (Louisville Slugger) missions.

There were other preplanned protective reaction strikes similar to Louisville Slugger during 1971. Fracture Cross in March was against air defense and logistic targets south of 18°N and within 30 NM of the Laotian border. Others were Prize Bull in September against all military and logistic targets in most of RP 1 and Proud Deep Alpha in December against SAM sites and radar sites near the Mu Gia and Barthelémy Pass areas.

The ROE and Prize Bull were typical:

"(1) Protective reaction strikes north of the described arc [northern boundary of operations] are authorized when SAM/AAA defenses pose a threat to the strike force.

"(2) Necessary precautions will be taken to avoid endangering third country shipping. Aim points will be located no closer than 400 meters to any third country shipping in the Dong Hoi transshipment point area.

"(3) Air-to-air combat is authorized against all hostile aircraft.

"(4) SAR operations in NVN are authorized as requested for recovery of aircrews.

"(5) Attacks will be conducted so as to minimize danger to the civilian populace to the extent feasible without compromising effectiveness.

"(6) No strike will be targeted against third country shipping.

"(7) To counter a MIG threat TALOS/TERRIER (U.S. Navy ship-launched) missiles and fighter forces may engage in accordance with current operating authorities.

"(8) Attacks will avoid known POW compounds (minimum distance of 500 meters for visual strikes, 3000 meters for all weather strikes)."

As U.S. aircraft were conducting preplanned protective reaction strikes to neutralize the SAM/AAA threat in eastern RP 1, the MIG threat to B-52s, gunships and other "soft" aircraft was increasing. In the first two months of 1971, COMUSMACV, CINCPACAF, and CINCPAC collectively submitted requests to engage MIGs (airborne or on the ground), airfields, and Ground Controlled Intercept (GCI) sites in NVN below the 20th parallel. In April 1971, Admiral Moorer, now Chairman, JCS, recommended to the Secretary of Defense that the MIG defensive authority should be modified to permit attacks against any MIG which was (a) operating in NVN below 20°N, or (b) operating within 20 NM of the BARREL ROLL East area of Laos, or (c) deployed in NVN below 20°N. However, Secretary Laird disapproved the request, stating that he believed the then existing authorities were adequate to handle the NVN air defense threat.

Throughout the spring and into the summer of 1971 the Secretary of Defense disapproved all requests for one-time preemptive strikes against the maturing NVN air defense system south of 20°N. When he turned down a request at the end of July, just a week before General Lavelle took command of 7AF, Secretary Laird said, "as stated previously in similar circumstances by the SECDEF on 15 and 19 May and 17 June, existing authorities are considered to be adequate." Admiral Moorer passed the Secretary's statement on to Admiral John S. McCain, CINCPAC, with the message, "Given the above response, I am certain that you will continue to take full advantage of current authorities. In relaying the message to General Abrams, Admiral McCain made additional comments:

"The current air operating authority allows immediate protective reaction strikes upon any SAM or AAA site which fires at, or is activated against, our aircraft. I urge you to make maximum use of this existing authority for immediate reaction to SAMs and AAA in NVN, as our requests for retaliatory strike authority have consistently been denied."

On 1 August General Abrams advised General Lavelle, who had been in command for three days, to make the armed escort of sufficient force level to protect U.S. aircraft and to achieve the impact desired for fully punitive response to the enemy air defense tactics under the current authorities. He further advised that "interlocking and mutually supporting NVN air defenses constitute an unacceptable hazard to air crews attempting to identify a particular SAM/AAA firing site" and that it was "considered appropriate for escort forces to direct immediate protective reaction strikes against any identifiable element of the firing/activated air defense complex." Later, an attempt by a MIG to shoot down a B-52, Admiral Moorer in November 1971 interpreted hostile intent of enemy aircraft as follows:

"In my view there is no question that MIG aircraft which depart NVN airfields south of 19° North are suspect and if all source collateral information correlates with B-52 or other US/Allied air operations in NVN/Laos border area this would constitute prima-facie evidence of hostile intent."

These messages, then, had the effect of broadening the interpretation of what might be done within existing authorities.

Although Operation Prize Bull had been executed in September, the enemy threat of U.S. unarmed reconnaissance aircraft and American forces remaining in South Vietnam continued to grow. After a 4 December 1971 conference on ROE, Admiral McCain advised that the reconnaissance escort package could be enlarged and structured for increased protective reaction capability and that every effort should be made "to so employ our current authorities as to maximize protective reaction against elements of the MIG threat."

(U) By mid-December the NVN air defense system had reached a new level of sophistication. In addition to using their GCI radars to guide MIGs on intercepts of U.S. aircraft, the North Vietnamese had linked the GCI radars with the lock-on radar capability of SAM sites. Since few U.S. aircraft were equipped to detect GCI tracking as they were SAM tracking, the enemy aimed SAMs undetected until the instant of firing. According to General Lavelle, the system eventually accounted for the loss of two aircraft and crews. The new enemy achievement was threatening 7AF's aerial reconnaissance mission in RP 1 as well as air operations in the border areas of South Vietnam and Laos.

On 5 January 1972, two F-105G aircraft expended anti-radiation missiles against EW/GCI radars in NVN north of the 20th parallel . . . the strike caught the attention of the JCS who requested immediate details of the mission. Both Admiral McCain and the JCS concurred in General Abrams justification for the mission and his request for further strike authority based on the recent and continuing aggressive MIG harassment of U.S. aircraft operating in northern Laos. In an 8 January message to his subordinate commanders, Admiral McCain quoted Admiral Moorer on the matter:

"[I] appreciate the logic contained in [the] references relative to the need and justification for continuation of such activity. A strong case for modifying existing au-

*RP 1 includes most of that area of NVN below 18°N.

thorities to permit such operations was made to higher authority using the information you provided. As of this date we have not been successful.

"The urgency of the situation we are faced with is recognized and we will continue our efforts to obtain the needed authorities. In the meantime, however, we are constrained by the specific operating authorities as written: e.g.,

"A. Enemy EW/GCI sites in NVN are not authorized to be attacked at any time, unless included as approved targets in operations such as PROUD DEEP.

"B. SAM/AAA sites and associated equipment in NVN may be struck in immediate protective reaction only when south of 20 degrees north.

"C. Incursions of NVN airspace north of 20 degrees North are not authorized without JCS approval except when in immediate pursuit of hostile enemy aircraft as provided for in the basic Rules of Engagement for Southeast Asia. Immediate protective reaction against SAM/AAA activity during such authorized flights north of 20 degrees north is authorized under the prudential rule.

"Request you continue to take all possible actions within the current rules and authorities to minimize the risk to friendly forces. I will keep you advised of any progress we may make in the area of additional authorities."

At the beginning of 1972, then, the ROE for NVN were the same as they were in April 1970 except for the interpretations regarding the hostile intent of activated SAM/AAA sites and airborne MIGs.

In December 1971 and January 1972, 7AF had applied the "more vigorous protective reaction posture" adopted by the SEA commanders at the 4 December 1971 conference on ROE. By intensifying the escort reconnaissance activity over NVN, 7AF employed the protective reaction authority to achieve what the JCS referred to as "several highly successful protective reaction strikes, examples being the attack on Quan Lang by U.S. Naval air elements on 18 Dec 1971 and the recent U.S. Air Force protective reaction strikes on Dong Hoi on 23 January." At the same time that he praised these strikes, Admiral Moorer advised Admiral McCain and General Abrams on 26 January that the developing threat of an NVA offensive had been fully discussed at the highest levels in Washington and that Admiral McCain's desire for full standby authorities to deal with individual threats was understood. He again advised that current protective reaction authorities permitted attacks on airfield defenses when unarmed reconnaissance aircraft reconnoitering these facilities were brought under enemy attack. He said that "should the expected ground campaign develop, you are authorized to intensify the reconnaissance activity in the vicinity of Dong Hoi, Vinh, and Quan Lang airfields, as well as associated protective reaction strike activity when such aircraft are fired on" and "appropriate escort and defense suppression force should be utilized to insure effective results." With regard to enemy GCI radar activity, he said "current operating authorities permit anti-radiation missile attacks against SAM or AAA fire control radars below 20 degrees N when activated against friendly aircraft" but "because it is anticipated the enemy will attempt to employ MIGs directed by GCI radars, as well as SAMs and AAA to disrupt our air activity in support of friendly forces in the event of a major attack, you are authorized until 1 May 1972 to employ anti-radar missiles against primary GCI sites (Bar Lock/SIG Bar and associated height finders) out-

side RP 6² when MIGs are airborne and indicate hostile intent." On 29 January, Major General Alton D. Slay, 7AF DCS/Operations, informed all Air Force and Navy air strike forces of this major new (Iron Hand) authority.

Early in February General Abrams passed to General Lavelle the authority to intensify reconnaissance and protective reaction strike activity in the vicinity of the Dong Hoi, Vinh, and Quan Lang airfields. MIG aircraft airborne from those airfields were to be assumed hostile and could be engaged whenever encountered below the 18th parallel.

In spite of the recent broadening of the protective reaction strike authorities, the SEA commanders did not consider them adequate. General Abrams and Admiral McCain continued to request broader operating authorities to counter the increasing enemy air and ground threat above the DMZ; however, no changes in the ROE were forthcoming through February and March. Then, on the 21st of March, rather than broadening the authorities, Admiral Moorer sent a message of Admiral McCain and General Abrams, information to General Lavelle, implying that recent air strikes against the enemy air defenses may have been outside the protective reaction authorities. After referencing the initial 1968 authorities for use of armed escorts to protect reconnaissance aircraft and the various changes to the authority through February 1972, the Admiral said in part:

"The increased number of protective reaction strikes since 1 January 1972 has attracted a considerable amount of high level interest here [Washington] and is receiving increasing attention from the press. Although it is recognized that these strikes are directly related to the increasing tempo of enemy air defense activity it is extremely important that such protective reactions be conducted strictly according to current air operating authorities.

"In view of the extreme sensitivity of this subject and the attention it is receiving, request you insure that all crews are thoroughly briefed that current authority permits protective reaction to be taken only repeat only when enemy air defenses either fire at or are activated against friendly forces."

General Abrams on 24 March requested General Lavelle to insure that all air crews were thoroughly briefed on the current ROE for protective reaction.

The high level interest proved to be more intense than Admiral Moorer's message had implied. During the last week of March, General Lavelle was recalled to Washington and relieved of duty for allegedly ordering unauthorized air strikes in NVN during the period November 1971 through March 1972. The General was accused of conducting 28 raids against NVN airfields and radar sites in violation of White House rules and at a time when the Administration was engaged in delicate peace negotiations with Hanoi. Furthermore, he was accused of having strike reports falsified to conceal the unauthorized strikes. After his actions were investigated by the Senate Armed Services Committee, General Lavelle was reduced in rank and retired.

During the same week in March that General Lavelle was recalled, Hanoi initiated a major offensive against South Vietnam. The rules which General Lavelle had transgressed were soon obsolete.

The VC/NVA launched a major invasion south of the DMZ on the night of 29/30

² RP 6 is that area of NVN north of 20°22'N and east of 105°20'E. It contains the Hanoi/Haiphong areas.

March 1972. On 1 April Admiral McCain sent a strong plea for broader operating authorities to the JCS. The result was authority to use tactical air strikes against SAMs, artillery, and other military and logistic targets within 25 NM north of the DMZ and authority to use B-52 strikes within the DMZ. The 25 NM limit was extended to 17°30'N on 3 April and then to 18°N on 4 April.

On April, the JCS advised Admiral McCain that the conflict had entered a new phase in Vietnam, and requested recommendations for new initiatives, authorities, and resources required. Subsequently, the JCS authorized tactical air operations in NVN below 18°N which began on 8 April under the nickname Freedom Train. Air strikes south of 18°N would be categorized as Freedom Train missions, while any above 18°N would be protective reaction strikes. On 9 April, Freedom Train operations were extended to 19°N.

All through April the JCS steadily broadened the air operating authorities for NVN in response to requests from 7AF, COMUSMACV, and CINCPAC. The JCS granted authority to attack any NVN military aircraft, including helicopters, south of 20°N. During any U.S. air operations in NVN north of 19°N beginning one hour before the first time over target and ending with the last aircraft egress, U.S. aircraft could attack airborne enemy fighter aircraft anywhere in NVN exclusive of the PRC buffer zone⁴ and employ anti-radar missiles against primary GCI sites throughout NVN. TACAIR was authorized below 20°N after 20 April. 7AF began B-52 and TACAIR strikes against the Thanh Hoa area, Routes 1A and 7, and the Hanoi-Vinh railroad south of 20°N under the nickname Freight Train. On 2 May, the JCS authorized manned tactical reconnaissance south of 25°25'N. Then, on 9 May in conjunction with President Nixon's announcement of the mining of Haiphong Harbor, the JCS authorized offensive air operations throughout NVN below the PRC buffer zone. This marked the resumption of the interdiction bombing in NVN.

Linebacker

The air interdiction campaign, nicknamed Linebacker, was initiated on 10 May 1972 against the NVN transportation and supply system. The overall goal of the new Linebacker, like the old Rolling Thunder, was to bring sufficient pressure on the government of NVN to cause it to stop open aggression and support of insurgent operations in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

The air operations against NVN had been developed during April under Freedom Train. Therefore, the initiation of Linebacker was primarily a name change rather than a massive increase in the breadth of air operations. The JCS authorized TACAIR and B-52 support "to destroy and disrupt enemy POL and transportation resources and LOCs in NVN, e.g., POL storage and pumping stations, rails and roads, bridges, railroad yards, heavy repair equipment, railroad rolling stock and trucks." The JCS further authorized air attacks to neutralize the enemy's defenses, and armed reconnaissance throughout NVN against choke points and other time-sensitive transportation/interdiction targets outside of restricted areas.

The restricted areas were the PRC buffer zone and the areas within 10 NM of the centers of Hanoi and Haiphong, although the JCS could validate targets within these

⁴ The PRC buffer zone was that area within 30 NM of the Chinese border from the Laotian border east to 106°E and thence within 25 NM of the Chinese border to the Tonkin Gulf.

areas. Indeed, on 2 June the JCS authorized attacks against rail lines, bridges, and tunnels to within 10 NM of the PRC border. There were also special category targets which were restricted, such as prisoner-of-war compounds, foreign shipping, dikes and dams, fishing boats, hospitals, and shrines. Otherwise, CINCPAC had the authority to choose fixed targets with the provision that the JCS be advised of them. Strikes and armed reconnaissance missions were to be planned so that the flight paths of U.S. aircraft would approach no closer than 20 NM to the PRC border unless, of course, the strike was authorized against one of the JCS validated targets there. Aircraft could transit the Hanoi and Haiphong restricted areas as necessary to conduct air operations.

The ROE permitted attacks against all airborne enemy fighter aircraft anywhere in NVN except the PRC buffer zone.* Aircraft engaged in hot pursuit were authorized to pursue enemy fighter aircraft into the buffer zone up to 20 NM from the Chinese border and air attacks on military airfields were permitted when there were no third nation aircraft present. The use of anti-radar missiles was authorized against GCI sites and associated height finders throughout NVN but the tactics employed were to preclude the impact of missiles in the territory of the PRC.

The ROE also specified that waterway targets could be struck if the targets were positively identified as NVN mine-clearing vessels located in NVN internal and claimed territorial waters (12 NM). Air attacks against merchant ships and third country vessels, however, were prohibited except in self-defense or with the specific approval of the JCS. The rules permitted the use of area denial munitions in NVN inland waterways and coastal waters within the three NM limit, as well as against land targets south of the PRC buffer zone.

The Linebacker interdiction operation, under the 7AF command of General John W. Vogt, Jr., continued essentially unchanged through September 1972. A comparison of the air operating authorities for Rolling Thunder and Linebacker is presented in the Appendix. According to the Hq USAF Rolling Thunder—Linebacker Preliminary Comparative Analysis, Linebacker appeared to be the more effective interdiction campaign.

APPENDIX

Rolling Thunder, 1968	Linebacker 1972
A. U.S. armed reconnaissance was authorized throughout NVN with the following areas excluded:	A. U.S. armed reconnaissance was authorized throughout NVN with the following areas excluded:
1. PRC buffer zone. The area within 30 NM of the Chinese border from the border of Laos eastward to 106°E longitude and within 25 NM of the Chinese border from 106°E longitude to the Gulf of Tonkin.	1. Same as Rolling Thunder.
a. Except, strikes were authorized against railroad rolling stock on the northeast rail line and against vehicle traffic on Route 1A to a point no closer than 15 NM of the Chinese border.	a. Except, attacks were authorized against certain RR lines, bridges and tunnels to within 10 NM of the PRC border during specified time periods.
b. Except for strikes authorized in the buffer zone, missions were to be planned so that flight paths of U.S. aircraft would approach no closer than 20 NM to the Chinese border.	b. Same as Rolling Thunder.

* The authority to engage helicopters below 20°N had been granted in April 1972 but was later rescinded.

APPENDIX—Continued

Rolling Thunder, 1968	Linebacker 1972
2. Hanoi prohibited area: the area within 10 NM of the center of Hanoi.	2. N/A in Linebacker.
3. Haiphong prohibited area: the area within four NM of the center of Haiphong.	3. N/A in Linebacker.
Hanoi/Haiphong restricted areas: the areas within 30 NM of the center of Hanoi (excluding the Hanoi prohibited area) and within 10 NM of the center of Haiphong (excluding the Haiphong prohibited area).	4. Hanoi/Haiphong restricted areas: the areas within 10 NM from center of each city.
a. Transit of Hanoi/Haiphong restricted and prohibited areas was authorized as necessary in conducting air operations.	a. Transit of Hanoi/Haiphong restricted areas was authorized as necessary in conducting air operations.
b. Armed reconnaissance against LOCs and LOC-associated targets, including associated ferries, lords, by-passes, choke points and transshipment points, was permitted along designate segments of road, rail, and inland waterways of LOCs in the Hanoi restricted area from the limits of the 10 NM Hanoi prohibited area to the periphery of the 30 NM Hanoi restricted area and in the Haiphong restricted area from the limits of the four NM Haiphong prohibited area to the periphery of the 10 NM Haiphong restricted area.	b. N/A to Linebacker.
F. Aircraft could engage in combat operations, including SAM suppression required to protect the strike forces.	F. Defense suppression was authorized as required to support air operations.
G. When engaged in immediate pursuit of hostile aircraft, U.S. forces were not authorized to attack NVN air bases from which attacking aircraft were operating, except those air bases authorized for attack.	G. Attacks were authorized against all airborne enemy fighter aircraft, but not helicopters and transports, anywhere in NVN except the PRC buffer zone. Aircraft engaged in immediate pursuit were authorized to pursue enemy fighter aircraft into the PRC buffer zone, but in no event closer than 20 NM to the PRC border. Military airfields could be attacked; however, no NVN airfield on which third nation aircraft were present was to be attacked.
H. Extreme caution was required in conducting air strikes so as to avoid endangering foreign shipping.	H. All possible precautions were to be taken to minimize civilian casualties and avoid damage to foreign shipping.
I. Every feasible precaution was to be exercised in conducting air strikes, including flak/SAM suppression, in the Haiphong area to (1) avoid endangering foreign shipping, (2) minimize civilian casualties and collateral damage.	I. Included in "H" above.
J. Special coastal armed reconnaissance was authorized from 24°42'N to the PRC buffer zone. In this area, armed reconnaissance of the NVN coast and offshore islands within three NM of NVN territory, avoiding a 10 NM radius from the center of Haiphong, was authorized against (1) positively identified NVN attack-type naval craft, (2) NVN cargo-carrying craft, (3) craft which fired upon U.S. aircraft.	J. Attacks were authorized against vessels or craft positively identified as NVN which were actively engaged in, suspected of, or configured for performing mine clearing operations in NVN internal and claimed territorial waters. This provision did not permit armed actions against vessels of any nation other than NVN unless in self-defense or with the specific approval of the JCS. Extreme caution was to be exercised to avoid attacking, damaging or harassing and the appearance of attacking or harassing any third country shipping in the vicinity of the mine fields.
K. Naval craft north of 24°42'N and outside of the three NM limit of the NVN coast and offshore islands were not authorized for attack.	K. Same as "J" above.
L. In the interest of obviating charges of escalation, either from foreign or domestic sources, the following additional authorities were to be exercised in a measured manner: (1) Attacks on newly authorized Rolling Thunder targets were to be scheduled at the rate of no more than three targets per day. (2) Concentration of armed reconnaissance effort inside the 30 NM Hanoi restricted area was to be avoided. (3) approximately a constant level of effort in Route Package 6 was to be maintained.	No comparable Linebacker restrictions.

APPENDIX—Continued

Rolling Thunder, 1968	Linebacker 1972
M. Strikes on CAM Pha and Hon Gai ports were authorized only when there were no ships berthed in the docking areas or within 2000 yards of the docking areas.	M. Both Cam Pha and Hon Gai were validated targets. Authorization included only those areas that could be targeted with aiming point not closer than 800 feet to non-NVN shipping for TACAIR; not closer than 250 feet from non-NVN shipping for EO/LGB weapons.
	N. Other fixed targets could be added to the JCS validated target list at CINCPAC's discretion, the only proviso being that JCS be advised of this action.

Note.—Information extracted from Rolling Thunder—Linebacker: a Preliminary Comparative Analysis, prepared by Hq USAF (DCS/P&O), June 72, Tab 3.

GLOSSARY

AAA—Anti-aircraft Artillery.
 AMEMB—American Embassy, Vientiane.
 ARC LIGHT—(S) B-52 operations in Southeast Asia.
 BR—Barrel Roll.
 CINCPAC—Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command.
 CINCPACAF—Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Air Forces.
 COMUSMACV—Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
 DCS—Deputy Chief of Staff.
 DMZ—Demilitarized Zone.
 EO/LGB—Electro-optically/laser guided bomb.
 EW—Electronic Warfare.
 FAC—Forward Air Controller.
 FAG—Forward Air Guide.
 FANK—Forces Armées Nationales Khmer (Cambodian Army).
 GCI—Ground Controlled Intercept.
 IRON HAND—(S) SAM and radar-controlled AAA suppression flown by specially equipped F-105F aircraft.
 JCS—Joint Chiefs of Staff.
 LOC—Line of Communication.
 MACV—Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
 MIG—Soviet-built jet fighter aircraft.
 NM—Nautical Mile.
 NVA—North Vietnamese Army.
 NVN—North Vietnam.
 POL—Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants.
 POW—Prisoner of War.
 PRC—People's Republic of China.
 ROE—Rules of Engagement.
 RP—(S) Route Package—numbered interdiction areas in North Vietnam.
 RVN—Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam).
 RVNAF—Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.
 SAM—Surface-to-Air Missile.
 SEA—Southeast Asia.
 SECDEF—Secretary of Defense.
 SL—Steel Tiger.
 SOA—Special Operating Area.
 TACAIR—Tactical Air.
 TACC—Tactical Air Control Center.
 TALOS/TERRIER—U.S. Navy ship-launched surface-to-air-missiles.
 TFW—Tactical Fighter Wing.
 TMO—Target Management Officer.
 USMACV—United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
 VC—Viet Cong.
 VNAF—Vietnamese Air Force (South Vietnam).

TEXT OF VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

● Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, in the past 2 weeks I have placed in

the RECORD three reports prepared by the Air Force explaining the effect and evolution of rules of engagement which hampered and restricted operations by the Armed Forces in the Vietnam war. These reports reveal that through 1966, the air campaign against North Vietnam was centered on attacking enemy lines of communication well below Hanoi and Haiphong, while primary targets in the northeast, where the bulk of North Vietnamese war supporting resources were located, remained almost untouched.

The long delay in approving targets in North Vietnam and piecemeal approval of such targets unquestionably contributed to our aircraft and pilot losses since it gave North Vietnam time to build up massive air defenses and to disperse its stocks of war supplies. One point on which military experts disagreed most vehemently with civilian managers, who dictated and wrote the rules of engagement, was the certainty among professional military men that these self-imposed restrictions greatly increased U.S. casualties.

Targets on the Joint Chiefs of Staff list could not be hit without the approval of the Secretary of Defense and other high civilian authority. As a result, the air campaign was less than optimum. For example, in 1966, as a result of this procedure, only 22 of 242 targets on the Joint Chiefs of Staff list of recommended fixed targets were struck.

The charge is untrue, although I know that some revisionist historians are trying to argue it, that military commanders did not press their views clearly or persistently. Anyone who takes the time to read book 6 of the Pentagon Papers, relative to the air war in North Vietnam, will find proof enough that the Joint Chiefs and commanders in the field repeatedly transmitted to the President and Secretary of Defense proposals for putting more pressure on North Vietnam. Over and over the Chiefs protested the artificial limitations impeding the achievement of our Nation's objectives in the war.

To refute critics who obviously do not know what they are talking about, I will place in the RECORD excerpts from the Joint Chiefs' bombing policy paper submitted by General Wheeler to the Clifford group in 1968. This was a senior group of advisors convened by Defense Secretary Clark Clifford from the State and Defense Departments, the CIA and the White House to review U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The cover memo for this paper noted that "General Wheeler would favor action to close the Port of Haiphong through mining or otherwise," but a specific paper was not included since the general had received word that closing the ports was not an action President Johnson was going to consider, even as part of a comprehensive review. This fact itself illustrates what our military leadership was up against.

I ask that the paper written by the Joint Chiefs be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The excerpt follows:

EXCERPTS OF BOMBING POLICY

"1. The air campaign against North Vietnam is now entering the fourth year of operations. Only during the latter part of the past favorable weather season of April through October 1967, however, has a significant weight of effort been applied against the major target systems. During this period, even though hampered by continuous and temporarily imposed constraints, the air campaign made a marked impact on the capability of North Vietnam to prosecute the war. Unfortunately, this impact was rapidly overcome. The constraints on operations and the change in the monsoon weather provided North Vietnam with numerous opportunities to recuperate from the effects of the air strikes. Facilities were rebuilt and reconstituted and dispersal of the massive material aid from communist countries continued . . .

"2. . . . The viability of the North Vietnam military posture results from the availability of adequate assets received from communist countries which permits defense of the homeland and support of insurgency in the South . . .

"4. A coordinated and sustained air campaign could hamper severely the North Vietnam war effort and the continued support of aggression throughout Southeast Asia. An integrated interdiction campaign should be undertaken against the road, rail and waterway lines of communication with the objective of isolating the logistics base of Hanoi and Haiphong from each other and from the rest of North Vietnam. To achieve this objective, the following tasks must be performed employing a properly balanced weight of effort:

"a. Destroy war supporting facilities as well as those producing items vital to the economy.

"b. Attack enemy defenses in order to protect our strike forces, destroy enemy gun crews and weapons, and force the expenditure of munitions.

"c. Conduct air attacks throughout as large an area and as continuously as possible in order to destroy lines of communication targets and associated facilities, dispersed material and supplies and to exert maximum suppression of normal activities because of the threat.

"d. Attack and destroy railroad rolling stock, vehicles and waterborne logistics' craft throughout as large an area as possible, permitting minimum sanctuaries.

"5. Targeting criteria for the effective accomplishment of a systematic air campaign would continue to preclude the attack of population as a target, but accept greater risks of civilian casualties in order to achieve the stated objective. The initial changes in operating authorities necessary to the initiation of an effective air campaign are:

"a. Delete the 30/10NM Hanoi Restricted/Prohibited Area and establish a 3NM Hanoi Control Area.

"b. Delete the 10/4NM Haiphong Restricted/Prohibited Area and establish a 1.5NM Haiphong Control Area.

"c. Delete the Special Northeast Coastal Armed Reconnaissance Area.

"6. The present Restricted Areas around Hanoi and Haiphong have existed since 1965. The Prohibited Areas were created in December 1966 . . . A reduction of the control areas would expose approximately 140 additional miles of primary road, rail and waterway lines of communication to armed

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reconnaissance, as well as hundreds of miles of secondary lines of communication, dependent upon NVN reactions and usage. Additional military targets would automatically become authorized for air strikes under armed reconnaissance operating authorities. This would broaden the target base, spread the defenses, and thus add to the cumulative effects of the interdiction program as well as reducing risk of aircraft loss.

"7. There have been repeated and reliable intelligence reports that indicate civilians not engaged in essential war supporting activities have been evacuated from the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong. Photographic intelligence, particularly of Haiphong, clearly shows that materials of war are stockpiled in all open storage areas and along the streets throughout almost one-half of the city. Rather than an area for urban living, the city has become an armed camp and a large logistics storage base. Consequently, air strikes in and around these cities endanger personnel primarily engaged directly or indirectly in support of the war effort.

"8. The special coastal armed reconnaissance area in the Northeast has limited attacks on NVN craft to those within 3 NM of the NVN coast or coastal islands. This constraint has provided another sanctuary to assist NVN in accommodating to the interdiction effort."

Mr. GOLDWATER, Mr. President, in order to assist interest Members, the media, historians or individual citizens in better understanding the rules of engagement, I asked Secretary Weinberger to declassify them. Earlier this year he agreed and I am now able to insert in the Record for study the actual text of the rules of engagement covering South Vietnam. In the interest of comparison, I will first insert the rules applicable to air and surface operations in South Vietnam, dated June 28, 1966, with 1967 revisions, and the same rules as they appeared 5 years later on December 30, 1971. Also, I will insert directive 95-4, establishing procedures and responsibilities for command, control and coordination of U.S. military air operations in South Vietnam, both as it was issued on June 28, 1966 and as revised on August 15, 1970.

The rules governing bombing in North Vietnam were included in regular message traffic and were not in the form of directives. That message traffic was not retained and is no longer available.

Mr. President, it must be remembered that our pilots and fighting men had to memorize every tiniest detail of these complicated and lengthy rules and to implement them under extreme moments of stress. If anyone ever again foolishly criticizes the performance of our military in the Vietnam War after having reviewed these materials, he or she must not understand the English language.

Mr. President, at this point I wish to insert the newly declassified documents described above.

The material follows:

RESTRICTIONS AND RULES OF ENGAGEMENT, RVN

1. (U) Purpose. To define specific operational restrictions and rules of engagement for US aircraft in RVN.

2. (C) General.

a. All targets selected for an air strike will be approved by the Province Chief directly or through higher ARVN authority.

b. All pilots will endeavor to minimize non-combatant casualties and civilian property damage. A strike will not be executed where identification of friendly forces is in doubt.

c. All pilots will have a knowledge of the disposition of friendly forces and/or civilians prior to conducting a strike. This information may come from ground or air briefing.

d. For purposes of this directive, references to the Forward Air Controller (FAC) also encompass and apply to the Marine Tactical Air Coordinator Airborne (TACA).

e. USAF, USMC, and USN strike aircraft will normally be controlled by the following in the order of preference as listed:

* (1) US Air Force ALO/FAC or Marine TACA.

(2) VNAF FAC/FAO.

(3) USAF MSQ-77 (SKY SPOT) or USMC TPQ-10.

f. In an emergency, when no qualified means of control is available, the following personnel may designate the target for strike aircraft:

(1) The commander of a ground unit or US advisor engaged with the Viet Cong.

(2) US pilot of an airplane or helicopter supporting a ground unit, who has radio contact with the ground unit involved and/or can identify friendly positions in relation to enemy positions.

(3) US pilot of an airplane or helicopter required to operate within the vicinity of a hostile village or hamlet for the purpose of conducting a medical evacuation or supply mission, and where enemy fire presents an immediate threat to the lives of the helicopter or transport crew.

g. Close Air Support missions that involve strikes on hamlets or villages must always be controlled by a FAC. If the attack on a village or hamlet is deemed necessary and is executed in conjunction with a ground operation involving movement of ground forces through the area, the attack may be made without warning; however, appropriate US-GVN-RVNAF approval is required, except in emergencies. If the attack on a village or hamlet is not in conjunction with any immediate ground operation, the inhabitants must be warned by leaflets and/or loud-speaker system prior to the attack and must be given sufficient time to evacuate the area.

3. (C) Specific instructions for close air support to include interdiction (day or night).

a. ALO/FAC will:

(1) Have thorough knowledge of the ground scheme of maneuver.

(2) Make every effort to secure a VNAF observer to assist in directing an air strike. If a VNAF observer is not available, an ALO/FAC is authorized to direct the air strike.

(3) Maintain reliable communications with ground unit and with strike aircraft.

(4) Make positive identification and mark the target.

(5) Insure that strike pilots are aware of friendly locations in relation to target, characteristics of target area, and local weather conditions.

(6) Use 1:50,000 scale maps of target area, and photographs when available.

b. Strike Pilots will:

(1) Always be under the control and have direct radio contact for a strike with a Forward Air Controller or designated control agency (airborne or ground).

(2) Have visual contact with target or target marker except as noted in paragraph (6), below.

(3) Always ascertain the position of friendly troops (or civilians, when applicable).

(4) Ascertain local conditions regarding weather, target area, and surrounding terrain characteristics.

(5) Defend themselves against ground fire providing:

(a) Source of fire can be visually identified.

(b) The strike can be positively oriented against the source.

(c) The fire is of such intensity that counter-action is necessary.

(6) Strike at night only with flares, unless under control of TPQ-10 or MSQ-77.

4. (C) Border restrictions for aircraft conducting assigned missions in RVN.

a. Aircraft will not cross the demilitarized zone or Cambodian border unless specifically authorized by COMUSMACV.

b. All FACs operating in the vicinity of the border will have a 1:50,000 map of the target area. Maps, mosaics, and photos will be made available to the pilots.

c. Joint operations-intelligence facilities will be established and complete prestrike briefings and poststrike debriefings will be conducted for strikes within 5000 meters of the border, when practical.

d. Cambodian border restrictions which are additional to the above:

(1) Strike aircraft within 5000 meters of the Cambodian border will be under positive control of a Forward Air Controller or MSQ-77/TPQ-10. The authority to waive this requirement is restricted to COMUSMACV or his designated representative.

(2) All organizations responsible for planning or execution of missions within 5 km of the border will have posted in operations a 1:250,000 or larger scale map on which the Cambodian border is distinctly marked, on the RVN side, to the depth of 5 km.

(3) Aircraft supporting border outposts (fire support, reconnaissance, supply, and transportation) are allowed to operate as necessary in the outpost area, but will neither cross nor fire across the border.

(4) Appropriate radar stations will flight follow aircraft on missions within 5 km of the border within equipment capability.

5. (C) Jettison.

a. Munitions will be jettisoned only in designated jettison areas.

b. During night or IFR conditions, aircraft will be under positive radar control while jettisoning.

c. During day VFR, drops will be monitored by radar whenever possible.

6. (C) US Armed Helicopters.

a. US Army and US Marine armed helicopters will be marked "US Army" or "US Marine," as appropriate, and may be manned with all-US crews at the unit commanders discretion.

b. If the target involves non-combatants, such as in a hamlet or village, whenever possible an RVNAF observer will be aboard the helicopter and US-GVN-RVNAF approval to fire must be obtained unless the situation clearly presents an immediate threat to the lives of the crew.

7. (C) USAF C-123 aircraft (Ranch Hand). Ranch Hand aircraft flying Trail Dust missions in RVN for the purpose of crop destruction will be flown under "Farmgate" rules which require Vietnamese markings on the aircraft and a Vietnamese observer aboard.

* Under VFR conditions, when a USAF, USMC, or VNAF FAC is not available, a qualified Army Target Identifying Pilot (TIP) may designate the target to be struck and the flight leader of the strike aircraft will control the strike.

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8. (C) Air reconnaissance and aerial surveillance missions.

a. Operational restrictions placed upon reconnaissance aircraft near the RVN/Cambodian border, for the purpose of insuring that inadvertent overflights do not occur, preclude aerial reconnaissance over large areas within RVN where significant enemy activity is known to be taking place. In order to eliminate the immunity of such areas to observation and photography, these restrictions may be waived on a case-by-case basis.

b. Reconnaissance requests for coverage in areas which present a danger of an overflight or border violation will be forwarded through normal reconnaissance request channels to the TASE. Upon determination that a waiver is justified, the request will be executed. In the event of particularly sensitive complications, COMUSMACV will be the final determining authority.

c. US Army OV-1 aircraft may be armed with target marking ordnance while on surveillance missions.

9. (U) Air to air restrictions. Commander, 7th Air Force, prescribes Rules of Engagement and Restrictions for air to air combat in RVN. These are published by that headquarters in Tactical Air Control Center (TACC) Operating Instructions (OI) No 55-33, 30 March 1966.

MILITARY OPERATIONS RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF FIREPOWER IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (U)

1. (U) Purpose. This directive provides specific rules of engagement (ROE) for the conduct of the air and surface operations within the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

2. (U) Applicability. This directive is applicable to all MACV staff agencies and subordinate commands.

3. (U) General.

a. The changing nature of operations in the RVN has necessitated a new approach to the ROE for the employment of firepower. The shift to predominantly Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) operations supported and advised by US forces, coupled with a civilian populace that is less inclined to observe curfews and restricted areas, makes it imperative to ensure against the indiscriminate use of firepower. While the goal is maximum effectiveness in combat operations, every effort must be made to avoid civilian casualties, minimize the destruction of private property, and conserve diminishing resources. Accomplishment of these objectives requires that the ROE be adhered to by all friendly armed forces.

b. This directive will not be modified by subordinate commanders nor will directives modifying or interpreting substantive rules in this directive be published by subordinate commands. Unit commanders are authorized to issue instructions to users, provided such instructions do not circumvent the substantive rules contained in this directive.

c. This directive will serve as the basis for standing operating procedures for the conduct of all fires to include artillery, mortar, tank, riverine, strike aircraft, armed helicopters, air defense artillery, and naval gunfire.

d. It is not the intent of this directive to restrict any commander from exercising the inherent right and responsibility of self-defense of his forces. Commanders at all echelons must establish a balance between the force and weapons necessary to accomplish their mission yet ensure safety of noncombatants who are in the area.

4. (U) Responsibility.

a. Advisors will take all necessary advisory action to encourage RVNAF compliance with these ROE.

b. Senior tactical commanders and senior advisors will:

(1) In coordination with their RVNAF counterparts, where applicable, insure that all units conduct operations in accordance with this directive, and develop positive, practical, and understandable target clearance procedures to preclude error or misunderstanding.

(2) Insure that all personnel engaged in fire support activities are fully cognizant of the contents of this directive, with specific emphasis on procedures pertaining to clearance for fires and air strikes. Periodic testing of personnel on their knowledge of ROE is encouraged.

(3) Require advisory personnel to insure that US fire support resources provided in support of RVNAF operations are employed in accordance with this directive. If the request of a RVNAF unit falls outside the provisions of this directive, the advisor will take action to suspend the US fire support which is in violation of the ROE.

5. (U) Definitions.

a. Air Strike. An attack on specific objectives by fighter, bomber, or attack aircraft on an offensive mission. ARC LIGHT strikes will be governed by MACV Directive 95-14(S).

b. Armed Helicopters. For the purposes of this directive, all helicopters having an attached ordnance delivery system including door guns are considered armed helicopters.

c. Close Air Support. Air attacks against hostile targets which are in close proximity to friendly forces and which require detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces.

d. Curfew, Inland Waters. The Army, Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) military region (MR)/corps commanders in coordination with local authorities may designate curfews on inland waters. Such curfews will be reported through channels to the Joint General Staff and Headquarters, MACV.

e. Hostile Fire. Fire directed from a hostile source toward friendly forces. It may be delivered by either direct or indirect fire weapons. It does not include devices such as mechanical ambushes, booby traps, and mines unless command detonated.

f. Hostile Watercraft. A watercraft or vessel (surface or subsurface) which is engaged in one of the following acts:

(1) Attacking or acting in a manner which indicates within reasonable certainty as intent to attack US or friendly forces or installations, including the unauthorized landing of troops or material or friendly territory.

(2) Laying mines within friendly territorial seas or inland waters without permission of the Government of Vietnam (GVN).

(3) Direct support of attacks against friendly forces.

g. Inhabited Area. Includes any dwelling or group of dwellings as well as established hamlets and villages that do not qualify as an urban area.

h. Military Clearance Authority. The U.S. military clearance authorities are the senior tactical commanders, senior advisors or their authorized representatives. The RVN military clearance authorities are the ARVN corps commanders or their authorized representatives.

i. Political Clearance Authority. The RVN province chiefs, or their authorized representatives are the political clearance authority for their respective provinces.

j. Senior Tactical Commanders and Senior Advisors. Includes CG, XXIV Corps/SA, I Corps and MR 1; DIR/SA, SRAG/USARMYF MR 2; DSA/CG, USARMYF MR 3; CG, TRAC/SA, III Corps and MR 3; CG, DRAC/SA, IV Corps and MR 4; COMNAV, FORV/CHNAVADVGP and Cdr, 7th AF/SA, Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF).

k. Specified Strike Zones (SSZ). An area designated for a specific period of time by an ARVN corps commander in which there are no friendly forces or populace and in which targets may be attacked on the initiative of US, Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF), or RVNAF commanders. SSZ will not be referred to as "free fire zones." Furthermore, the term "free fire zone" will not be used under any circumstances.

l. Strike Aircraft. Fixed wing aircraft of the fighter, bomber, and attack classification capable of conducting an air strike.

m. Troops In Contact (TIC). A unit is considered in contact when it is engaged with an enemy force, being fired upon, and returning fire. The supported unit commander is responsible for making the "in contact" determination.

n. Urban Area. Those areas depicted as built-up areas on an Army Map Service 1:50,000 scale map.

o. Waters.

(1) Territorial. The belt of sea adjacent to the RVN coast three miles wide measured from the low water mark.

(2) Inland. Waters to landward of the territorial sea.

(3) International. Waters to seaward of the territorial sea.

6. (C) General rules.

a. All possible means will be employed to limit the risk to the lives and property of friendly forces and civilians. In this respect, a target must be clearly identified as hostile prior to making a decision to place fire on it.

b. Precautionary measures will be taken to avoid the violation of operational and national boundaries.

c. The enemy is known to take advantage of areas normally considered as non-military targets. Typical examples of non-military targets are places of religious or historical value and public or private buildings and dwellings. When the enemy has sheltered himself or installed defensive positions in such places, the responsible brigade or higher commander must positively identify the preparation for, or execution of, hostile enemy acts before ordering an attack. During the attack, weapons and forces used will be those which will insure prompt defeat of enemy forces with minimum damage to structures in the area.

d. The exception to the above policy is the palace compound in Hue Citadel. For this specific area, commanders will employ riot control agents and take all other possible actions to avoid damage to the compound.

e. The use of incendiary munitions in inhabited or urban areas will be avoided unless friendly survival is at stake or it is necessary for the accomplishment of the commander's mission.

f. Riot control agents (RCA) will be used to the maximum extent possible. RCA can be effectively employed in inhabited and urban area operations to flush enemy personnel from buildings and fortified positions, while reducing the unnecessary danger to civilians and the likelihood of destruction of civilian property.

g. The ARVN corps commander in each MR has the authority to designate, modify, suspend temporarily, or cancel a SSZ. Notification of SSZ designation, modification, temporary suspension, or cancellation will be disseminated by the ARVN corps commander to all commands operating in the MR with a minimum of 72 hours notification prior to the change becoming effective. Notification of US and FWMAF will be through US command channels. Requests for SSZ changes will be submitted to the ARVN corps commander via appropriate command channels.

h. Specific ROE for the employment of weapons and weapon systems in the RVN are outlined at Annexes A through D.

7. (U) Reports. This directive requires no report.

8. (U) References.

- a. MACV Directive 95-4(C).
- b. MACV Directive 95-14(S).
- c. MACV Directive 335-12(U).
- d. MACV Directive 525-3(U).
- e. MACV Directive 525-9.
- f. MACV Directive 525-11(C).
- g. MACV Directive 525-11(C).
- h. MACV Directive 525-218(C).
- i. 7th AF OPORD 71-7(TS).

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT—SURFACE WEAPONS

1. (U) Purpose. This annex provides guidance for the control of organic weapons and the artillery, mortar, tank, naval, and riverine gunfire provided to the surface commander by US, FWMAF, and RVNAF.

2. (C) General.

a. These rules of engagement apply to the conduct of surface operations to include the employment of artillery, mortar, tank, naval, and riverine gunfire by US, FWMAF, and RVNAF in both offensive and defensive situations within the RVN. These rules also apply to the employment of US, FWMAF, and RVNAF fire support resources in cross service support missions for all forces.

b. Artillery, mortar, tank, naval, and riverine gunfire requires that care and attention be exercised in the formulation of fire requests and the application of all gunnery techniques. The exercise of sound judgment on the part of all personnel involved in originating requests for fire, solving the gunnery problem, and exercising precise gunnery procedures will provide the best assurance against endangering friendly forces and noncombatants or destroying civilian property.

c. Procedures applicable to the conduct and control of naval gunfire are contained in the effective CTG 70.8 Operation Order 320. Market Time units will comply with the provisions of COMCOSURVFOR Operation Order 201.

3. (C) Conduct of Fire.

a. Every effort will be made to observe fires regardless of the target location. Unobserved fires will be employed only where absolutely necessary for mission accomplishment and will be in accordance with the criteria outlined herein.

b. SSZ. Unobserved fire may be directed against all targets and target areas located within a SSZ after obtaining military clearance.

c. Uninhabited Areas Outside a SSZ.

(1) In uninhabited areas, fire may be directed against Viet Cong (VC)/North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces in contact without obtaining military or political clearance.

(2) Observed fire may be directed against targets of opportunity which are clearly identified as hostile without obtaining military or political clearance.

(3) Unobserved fires may be directed at targets and target areas clearly identified as hostile, other than VC/NVA forces in contact, after obtaining military and political clearance.

d. Inhabited Areas. Fire missions directed against known or suspected VC/NVA targets in, or in the immediate vicinity of, inhabited areas will be conducted as follows:

(1) Inhabited areas from which hostile fire is received.

(a) Surface commanders of units engaged in operations involving the maneuver of surface forces in or through inhabited areas may respond with direct fire without prior warning and without prior clearance if, in the judgment of the commander, his mis-

sion or troops would be jeopardized by such warning or delay. However, response should be designed for self-protection and directed only at the source of hostile fire.

(b) Indirect fire missions will be controlled by an observer and may be executed after approval of the political and military clearance authority. The only exception to the clearance requirement would be a situation in which the hostile fire presents an immediate threat to friendly forces despite the employment of direct fire.

(2) Inhabited areas containing observed or suspected VC/NVA targets but from which hostile fire is not received.

(a) Surface commanders may initiate direct fire against positively identified enemy targets after securing political and military clearance.

(b) Indirect fire missions will be controlled by an observer and executed only after political and military clearance has been granted. Civilians will be given prior warning by leaflets, loudspeakers, or other appropriate means and given sufficient time to evacuate the area.

(3) Inhabited areas not immediately associated with the maneuver of surface forces will not be fired upon without prior warning by leaflets, loudspeaker, or other appropriate means, even though fire is received therefrom. Should friendly troops be placed in jeopardy, the provisions of paragraph 3d(1), above, apply.

e. Urban Areas.

(1) Fire missions directed against known or suspected VC/NVA targets in urban areas must preclude unnecessary danger to civilians and destruction of civilian property.

(2) Fire support in urban areas will be governed by the following:

(a) Approval by both the senior tactical commander and the ARVN corps commander is required to conduct fire missions in urban areas. This authority will not be delegated except for the built-up areas of Saigon, Cholon, and Gia Dinh City. CG, TRAC, is authorized to delegate authority to Commanding Officer, Capitol Military Assistance Team, for the employment of indirect fire in these areas. No further delegation is authorized.

(b) All indirect fire missions will be controlled by an observer.

(c) Direct fire, flat trajectory weapons are authorized in a direct fire role in urban areas at the discretion of a battalion or higher commander without the prior approval of the senior tactical commander, or, in the case of Saigon, Cholon, and Gia Dinh City, the Commanding Officer, Capitol Military Assistance Team. Direct fire weapons will be used to the maximum in the elimination of enemy strong points or fortified structures in urban areas. All types of munitions, except incendiary, may be used in direct fire weapons including flechette (bee-hive), HEAT, and canister rounds.

(d) Maximum use will be made of helicopters to maneuver troops and heavy weapons to roofs of key buildings and other locations to expedite cordoning.

(e) Prior to firing upon urban areas, leaflets, loudspeakers, or other appropriate means will be utilized to warn and secure the cooperation and support of the civilian populace even though fire is received from these areas.

f. Watercraft.

(1) Fire will not be employed against waterborne craft in international or RVN territorial (coastal) waters unless the craft is positively identified as hostile and firing clearance is granted by the appropriate coastal zone commander or coastal surveillance center.

(2) Return of fire when fired upon and firing in support of friendly forces receiving

hostile fire in RVN territorial or international waters is authorized if the watercraft is positively identified as hostile.

(3) Illumination rounds are authorized over RVN territorial or international waters when specifically requested or cleared by a coastal surveillance center.

g. Vicinity of the RVN Border. Fire missions along or across the RVN border will be in accordance with current MACV border and cross-border authorities.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT—STRIKE AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS

1. (U) Purpose. This annex defines ROE for US, FWMAF, and RVNAF fixed wing strike aircraft in the RVN.

2. (C) General.

a. All pilots will receive an air or ground briefing to determine the disposition of friendly forces and civilians prior to initiating an air to ground attack.

b. Pilots will endeavor to minimize civilian casualties and civilian property damage. Air attacks will not be executed where identification of friendly forces is in doubt.

c. US strike aircraft may be controlled by any of the following:

(1) US Forward Air Controller (FAC).

(2) VNAF FAC/Forward Air Observer (FAO).

(3) Flight leader control utilizing US Air Force LORAN or beacon-tracking, sensor-equipped aircraft.

(4) US Air Force MSQ-77 (SKY SPOT).

(5) US OV-10 aircraft commanders. In an emergency, US OV-10 aircraft commanders may mark a target for themselves and expend their own ordnance. They may also exercise FAC control of each other when operating in elements of two or more.

d. In an emergency, when compliance with the provisions of paragraph 2c, above, is not possible, the following personnel may designate the target for strike aircraft:

(1) The commander of a company or larger ground unit or US advisor of any unit engaged with enemy forces.

(2) The US, FWMAF, or RVNAF pilot of an aircraft supporting a ground unit, who has radio contact with the ground unit involved and can identify friendly and enemy positions.

(3) The US, FWMAF, or RVNAF pilot of an aircraft required to operate within the vicinity of a hostile inhabited area for the purpose of conducting medical evacuation or supply missions and where enemy fire presents an immediate threat to the lives of the aircraft crew.

e. commanders of units assigned strike aircraft will ensure that records of ordnance expended are maintained a minimum of three months. Records will include as a minimum:

(1) Type and amount of ordnance expended on each target.

(2) Coordinates of target.

(3) Date and time of initial and final engagement of the target.

(4) Unit supported.

3. (C) Conduct of fire.

a. SSZ. Air attacks against targets or target areas in a SSZ, excluding the Demilitarized Zone, may be made under flight leader control after obtaining military clearance.

b. Uninhabited areas outside a SSZ. Military and political clearance are required for airstrikes against targets in uninhabited areas outside a SSZ except:

(1) When in close support of friendly troops in contact (paragraph 4, below).

(2) When returning ground fire (paragraph 4b(5), below).

c. Inhabited Areas. Fixed wing aircraft close air support missions that involve

strikes in inhabited areas must be controlled by a FAC and be initiated only after political clearance has been obtained. The conduct of such air operations also must be approved by the attacking battalion or higher commander.

(1) An attack deemed necessary on an inhabited area may be made without warning (prescribed in paragraph 3c(2), below) or delay provided all three of the following requirements are satisfied:

(a) Enemy fire is being received from the area.

(b) The attack is executed in conjunction with a ground operation involving the movement of ground forces through the area.

(c) In the judgement of the battalion or higher commander, his mission would be jeopardized by prior warning.

(2) If the attack on an inhabited area is not in conjunction with an immediate ground operation, the inhabitants must be warned by leaflets, loudspeakers, or other appropriate means prior to the attack, and given sufficient time to evacuate the area. Once the inhabitants of a target area have been adequately warned that the area has been selected as a target and given sufficient time to evacuate, the area may then be struck without further warning. An exception may be made for herbicide missions in cases where prior warning may jeopardize the safety of the spray aircraft (MACV Directive 525-216).

d. Urban Areas. Air attacks directed against known or suspected VC/NVA targets in urban areas must preclude unnecessary danger to civilians and destruction of civilian property, and by their nature require greater restrictions than the rules of engagement for less populated areas. Therefore, the following specific US, GVN, and RVNAF clearance procedures and restrictions must be strictly adhered to:

(1) Approval by both the senior tactical commander and the ARVN corps commander is required to conduct air attacks in urban areas including support of RVNAF. This authority will not be delegated except for the built-up areas of Saigon, Cholon, and Gia Dinh City. CG, TRAC, is authorized to delegate authority to Commanding Officer, Capitol Military Assistance Team, for the employment of US and FWMAF tactical air in these areas. No further delegation is authorized.

(2) Air attacks in urban areas will be controlled by a FAC.

(3) Prior to subjecting urban areas to an air attack, even when fire is being received from the area, the inhabitants must be warned by leaflets, loudspeakers, or other appropriate means prior to the attack and given sufficient time to evacuate the area.

e. Watercraft.

(1) Fixed wing aircraft are not authorized to engage watercraft of any description in international or RVN territorial (coastal) waters, except as authorized in paragraph 3c(3) below. This restriction does not deny aircraft commanders the right to return hostile fire in the exercise of self-defense.

(2) Watercraft on inland waters may be engaged after being positively identified as hostile and with military and political clearance granted. During hours of announced curfews, any waterborne craft on inland waters may be presumed hostile and engaged after military and political clearance has been granted.

(3) Specific instructions for engagement of watercraft by fixed wing aircraft in the Tran Hung Dao Fifteen and Market Time tactical area of responsibility (TAOR):

(a) Tran Hung Dao Fifteen and Market Time TAOR is defined as the water area off the coast of the RVN out to a distance of forty nautical miles. The northeastern

boundary is 17 degrees North Latitude; and the northwestern boundary is the seaward extension of the RVN/GKR border.

(b) Fixed wing aircraft will not engage watercraft in this TAOR except in support of TRAN HUNG DAO FIFTEEN or MARKET TIME surface forces.

(c) Surface craft must be positively identified as hostile and firing clearance must be granted by the appropriate coastal zone commander or coastal surveillance center except when firing is in support of a TRAN HUNG DAO FIFTEEN or MARKET TIME unit under actual attack.

4. (C) Specific Instructions for Close Air Support (Day or Night).

a. The FAC will:

(1) Have a thorough knowledge of the scheme of ground maneuver.

(2) Maintain reliable communications with the ground unit and strike aircraft.

(3) Make positive identification and mark the target.

(4) Insure that strike pilots are aware of friendly locations in relation to target, characteristics of target area, and local weather conditions.

(5) Use 1:50,000 or larger scale maps of target area and photographs when available.

b. During a strike, pilots of strike aircraft will:

(1) Always be under the control of, and in direct radio contact with, a FAC or designated control agency, airborne or ground, except in a SSZ when flight leader control is authorized (see paragraph 3a, above).

(2) Have visual contact with the target or target marker. During night strikes, the target must be visually identified through illumination e.g., illumination flares, ground marking flares, fires, lunar illumination, etc. A waiver of this requirement is granted for aircraft equipped with night observation devices.

(3) Always ascertain the position of friendly forces (or civilians when applicable).

(4) Ascertain local conditions regarding weather, target area, and surrounding terrain characteristics.

(5) Defend themselves against ground fire provided:

(a) The source of the fire can be visually identified.

(b) The strike can be positively oriented against the source.

(c) The fire is of such intensity that counteraction is necessary.

(6) Utilize LORAN or beacon-tracking sensor systems for instrument flight rules (IFR) deliveries. Aircrews making LORAN or beacon-tracking, sensor-directed strikes will be in direct radio contact with a designated control agency, airborne or ground, except in an SSZ.

5. (U) Air Interdiction. Air interdiction missions will be conducted and controlled in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4, above.

6. (C) Vicinity of the RVN border.

a. US and FWMAF military fixed wing aircraft will not penetrate the DMZ, Laotian, or Khmer Republic airspace unless specifically authorized by COMUSMACV/DEP-COMUSMACV for Air, 7th AF.

b. All FAC operating in the vicinity of the borders will have a 1:50,000 or larger scale map of the target area. Maps, mosaics, and photographs will be made available to the pilots whenever possible.

7. (C) Jettison.

a. Munitions will be jettisoned in designated jettison areas.

b. During night or IFR conditions, aircraft will be under positive radar control while jettisoning, except during emergencies as indicated in paragraph 7d, below.

c. During day visual flight rules (VFR), jettisons will be monitored by radar whenever possible.

d. Aircraft may jettison munitions in other than designated areas during emergencies when there is an immediate threat of injury to the crew or damage to the aircraft. Every effort will be made to insure that munitions are not jettisoned so that they impact into or near inhabited areas.

e. Emergency jettisoning of herbicides will be reported immediately to the MACV Command Center giving date-time, coordinates, agents, volume, and circumstances.

8. (C) Air Reconnaissance and Aerial Surveillance Missions. Aerial reconnaissance and surveillance missions conducted in the vicinity of the DMZ, Khmer Republic or Laotian border, and in Khmer Republic, Laotian, or North Vietnamese airspace will be in accordance with authorities established by separate MACV directives.

9. (U) Air to Air Restrictions. 7th AF rules of engagement for air-to-air combat in the RVN are published in 7th AF OPOD 71-7.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT—ARMED HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

1. (U) Purpose. This annex defines specific operational restrictions and rules of engagement for US, FWMAF, and RVNAF armed helicopters operating in the RVN.

2. (C) General.

a. Ordnance delivery systems in armed helicopters will be fired only when authorized by the aircraft commander.

b. All pilots and gunners will receive an air or ground briefing to determine the disposition of friendly forces and civilians prior to initiating an air attack.

c. Pilots and gunners will endeavor to minimize civilian casualties and civilian property damage. Air attacks will not be executed where identification of friendly forces is in doubt.

d. Commanders of units assigned helicopters with an attached weapons system which is fired by the pilot or copilot will ensure that records of ordnance expended are maintained for a minimum of three months. Records will include as a minimum:

(1) Type and amount of ordnance expended on each target.

(2) Coordinates of each target.

(3) Date and time of initial and final engagement of the target.

(4) Unit supported.

e. Pilots of armed helicopters will:

(1) Fire only when all three of the following requirements are satisfied:

(a) They are under the control of, and in direct radio contact with the designated control agency, airborne or ground, except in a SSZ when a designated flight leader is authorized to control.

(b) The target or target marker can be visually identified.

(c) Friendly and civilian positions are positively identified.

(2) Ascertain local conditions regarding weather, target area, and surrounding terrain characteristics.

(3) Defend themselves against ground fire provided:

(a) The source of fire can be visually identified.

(b) The return fire can be positively oriented against the source.

f. The following personnel may designate targets for armed helicopters.

(1) The commander of a ground or VNN surface unit or the US advisor of any unit in contact with enemy forces.

(2) The US, FWMAF, or RVNAF pilot of a helicopter supporting a ground unit who has radio contact with the ground unit and

can identify friendly positions in relation to enemy positions.

(3) The US, FWMAF, or RVNAF pilot of a helicopter required to operate in the vicinity of a hostile inhabited area for the purpose of conducting medical evacuation or supply missions, and where enemy fire presents an immediate threat to the lives of the helicopter crew.

g. Airborne test firing of weapons will be conducted only after obtaining military and political clearance.

h. When appropriate, US Army, US Air Force and US Navy armed helicopter operations will be coordinated within the operational area with controller aircraft of the other services.

3. (C) Conduct of fire.

a. SSZ. Armed helicopters may attack targets and target areas in a SSZ, excluding the DMZ, after obtaining military clearance.

b. Uninhabited Areas Outside an SSZ. Military and political clearances are required to engage targets in uninhabited areas outside an SSZ except:

(1) When in close support of friendly troops in contact.

(2) When returning ground fire (paragraph 2f(3), above).

c. Inhabited Areas.

(1) Armed helicopters involved in air attacks on inhabited areas must receive the approval of, and always be in direct radio contact with, the designated control agency of the responsible ground commander. Attacks may be initiated after military and political clearances have been obtained.

(2) If the attack on an inhabited area from which enemy fire is being received is deemed necessary, the attack may be made without warning (as prescribed in paragraph 3c(3), below) or delay provided all three of the following requirements are satisfied.

(a) The enemy fire is being received from the area.

(b) The attack is executed in conjunction with a ground operation involving the movement of ground forces through the area.

(c) In the judgement of the commander, his mission would be jeopardized by prior warning.

(3) If the attack on an inhabited area is not in conjunction with an immediate ground operation, the inhabitants must be warned by leaflets, loudspeakers, or some other appropriate means prior to the attack and given sufficient time to evacuate the area. Once the inhabitants of a target area have been adequately warned that the area has been selected as a target and given sufficient time to evacuate, the area may then be attacked without further warning.

d. Urban Areas.

(1) Air attacks directed against known or suspected VC/NVA targets in urban areas must preclude unnecessary danger to civilians or destruction of civilian property, and by their nature require greater restrictions than the rules of engagement for less populated areas. Approval by both the senior tactical commander and the ARVN corps commander is required to conduct US and FWMAF air attacks in urban areas, including supporting RVNAF. This authority will not be delegated with the exception of the built-up areas of Saigon, Cholon, and Gia Dinh City. CG, TRAC, is authorized to delegate authority to Commanding Officer, Capital Military Assistance Team, for employment of armed helicopters in the built-up areas of Saigon, Cholon, and Gia Dinh City. No further delegation is authorized.

(2) Only point targets, e.g., a specific building, will be engaged and these targets must be positively identified to the pilot. The engagement of area targets in urban areas is prohibited.

(3) Prior to subjecting urban areas to air attack, even when fire is received from the area, the inhabitants must be warned by leaflets, loudspeakers, or some other appropriate means prior to the attack and given sufficient time to evacuate the area.

e. Watercraft.

(1) Helicopters are not authorized to engage watercraft of any description in international or RVN territorial (coastal) waters except as authorized in paragraph 3e(3), below. This restriction does not deny aircraft commanders the right to return hostile fire in the exercise of self-defense.

(2) Watercraft on inland waters may be engaged after being positively identified as hostile and with military and political clearance granted. During hours of announced curfews, any waterborne craft on inland waters may be presumed hostile and engaged after military and political clearances have been granted.

(3) Specific instructions for engagement of watercraft by helicopters in the Tran Hung Dao Fifteen and Market Time Taor:

(a) Tran Hung Dao Fifteen and Market Time Taor is defined as the water area off the coast of the RVN out to a distance of forty nautical miles. The northeastern boundary is 17 degrees North Latitude; and the northwestern boundary is the seaward extension of the RVN/GKR border.

(b) Helicopters will not engage watercraft in this Taor except in support of Tran Hung Dao Fifteen or Market Time surface forces.

(c) Surface craft must be positively identified as hostile and firing clearance must be granted by the appropriate coastal zone commander or coastal surveillance center except when firing is in support of a Tran Hung Dao Fifteen or Market Time unit under actual attack.

4. (C) Jettison.

a. Munitions will be jettisoned in designated jettison areas.

b. During night or IFR conditions, aircraft will be under positive radar control while jettisoning, except during emergencies covered in paragraph 4c, below.

c. Aircraft may jettison munitions in other than designated areas during emergencies when there is an immediate threat of injury to crew or damage to the aircraft. Every effort will be made to ensure that munitions are not jettisoned so that they impact into or near inhabited areas.

d. Emergency jettisoning of herbicides will be reported immediately to the MACV Command Center giving date-time, coordinates, agent, volume, and circumstances.

5. (C) Vicinity of the RVN Border.

a. US and FWMAF military rotary wing aircraft will not penetrate the DMZ, Laotian, or Khmer Republic airspace unless specifically authorized by COMUSMACV/DEPCOMUSMACV for Air, 7th AF.

b. Aerial reconnaissance flights along or near the Cambodian or Laotian border are vital to the security of the RVN and US defense efforts. However, extreme care must be exercised in planning and executing in-country missions by reconnaissance aircraft of all services to ensure that inadvertent overflights do not occur. All aircraft involved in coordinating close air support and operating in the vicinity of the border will have a 1:50,000 or larger scale map of the target area. Maps, mosaics, and photographs will be made available to pilots whenever possible.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT—AIR DEFENSE

1. (U) Purpose. This annex provides guidance for the interception and identification of unknown aircraft, and the engagement of hostile aircraft in the territorial airspace of the RVN.

2. (C) General.

a. In accordance with directives of the services concerned, the individuals occupying the following positions have been delegated authority to declare aircraft hostile and to direct engagement:

(1) Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, 7th AF, Tan Son Nhut, or his designated representative, for US actions.

(2) Commander, VNAF Tactical Air Control Center (TACC), Tan Son Nhut, for RVNAF actions.

b. Coordination will be maintained between USAF TACC and VNAF TACC to avoid actions which may endanger friendly forces or interfere with authorized operations.

c. Caution and judgment will be exercised in directing the engagement of unknown aircraft. Consideration must be given to the possibility that such engagement could be contrary to US and RVN interests. Examples of such instances include:

(1) Civilian aircraft which intrude into RVN airspace because of navigational error or equipment malfunction.

(2) Communist aircraft whose aircrews or passengers desire to defect.

3. (C) Hostile Acts. The following or similar acts of known enemy aircraft, missiles, and drones or aircraft which remain unidentified shall be considered hostile unless other circumstances clearly show that such act do not involve a clear and present danger:

a. Aircraft releasing bombs, launching missiles, or firing guns, rockets, torpedoes, or other weapons at any water, air, or ground target other than on recognized firing ranges.

b. Aircraft conducting minelaying operations along the approaches to or in territorial (coastal) waters of the RVN.

c. Aircraft not obviously in distress, releasing parachutes or towing gliders over the territorial (coastal) waters of land masses of the RVN.

d. Aircraft opening fire on interceptor aircraft maintaining surveillance, or engaging in other aggressive actions which indicate that the aircraft is preparing to attack friendly aircraft, vessels, installations, or personnel.

e. Aircraft opening bomb bay doors or performing other actions which indicate that bombs may be dropped or missiles fired.

f. Missiles or drones not known to have been fired or launched by friendly forces or whose track indicates a possible threat to friendly forces.

g. Aircraft visually identified as belonging to a communist bloc country, operating within the boundaries of territorial waters or land masses where means of diverting or bringing the aircraft under control are not feasible, unless it has proper clearance or is obviously in distress.

4. (C) Procedures.

a. Aircraft, missiles and drones declared hostile under the provision of paragraph 3, above, will be engaged and destroyed. Engagement orders will be directed by the officers designated in paragraph 2a, above, and passed to US or VNAF interceptor aircrews by the senior director of the appropriate Control and Reporting Center (CRC).

b. The engagement of hostile aircraft, missiles, or drones by US Army or US Navy air defense artillery batteries or surface to air missiles placed in defense of installations will be as prescribed by the commander responsible for the air defense of the respective area.

c. If an armed attack is initiated against US, FWMAF, or RVNAF military or non-military personnel, aircraft, vessels, or installations in RVN territory, interceptor air-

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crews will take immediate and aggressive protective measures.

d. Visual identification of airborne objects will be made before firing unless the track has been designated hostile by proper authority or indicates commitment of a hostile act.

e. Precise location of friendly aircraft, vessels, and ground forces will be ascertained prior to issuing a clearance to engage enemy aircraft, missiles, or drones. Clearance will not be granted to engage slow speed targets if the track extends into an area occupied by ships.

f. In those circumstances where an intruding aircraft, missile, or drone is to be intercepted and escorted, but not engaged, the International Interception Signals and Procedures published in the Enroute Supplement of the Flight Information Publication (FLIP) will be used.

AVIATION: U.S. OPERATIONS IN RVN (U)

1. (U) Purpose.

a. To establish the procedures and responsibilities for command, control, and coordination of United States (US) military air operations in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

b. To publish the rules of engagement and restrictions for military air operations in RVN.

2. (U) Definitions.

a. Specified Strike Zones. Those areas approved by a province chief where strikes may be conducted without additional political clearance. Whenever possible, a FAC will support these strikes.

b. Close Air Support. Air action requested by the ground commander against hostile targets in close proximity to friendly forces and which requires integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of the ground forces. Due to the widespread intermingling of friendly forces and populations with enemy forces, GVN political and tactical approval of all strikes within RVN is required, therefore harassment and interdiction missions within country must be processed as close air support missions.

c. Joint Air Ground Operations System (JAGOS). A composite of integrated command and control systems which includes the MACV Command and Control System, the Army Air Ground System (AAGS), and the Air Forces Tactical Air Control System (TACS).

3. (C) General.

a. The mission of all US military aviation forces in the Republic of Vietnam is to assist and provide air support for the counterinsurgency effort of the RVN Armed Forces (RVNAF) and the United States/Free World Military Assistance Forces (US/FWMAF).

b. All services operate through portions of the same air space and are frequently employed on joint and combined operations. Each possesses to some degree the capability to accomplish missions normally assigned to another service. Therefore, close cooperation and coordination are required to assure that efforts are complementary, integrated, and achieve the most effective results.

c. Enroute Air Traffic Control is a function of the Director of Civil Aviation. It is exercised through the Joint VN/US Air Coordination Committee which coordinates the use of civil and military communication and navigation facilities and personnel. Terminal Air Traffic Control is a function of the supported force commander as defined by MACV Directive 95-5, subject: Flight Facilities in the RVN, and MACV Directive 95-9, subject: Joint Airborne/Airmobile Airstrip Operations. Aircraft performing close

air support are controlled as specified in appropriate service Air/Ground Operations directives.

d. All US military pilots providing air fire support will endeavor to eliminate incidents involving friendly forces, non-combatants, and damage to civilian property by adherence to the Procedures, Restrictions, and Rules of Engagement established by RVNAF and this headquarters (see Annex D). While these restraints and procedures are designed to minimize losses to friendly forces and non-combatants, the objective still remains to obtain the full productivity of US air capabilities with out appreciably inhibiting responsiveness or flexibility.

e. In the event of a major emergency or disaster, COMUSMACV may direct the Commander, 7th Air Force, to assume operational control over certain designated US air resources. The responsibility for determining the existence of such an emergency rests with COMUSMACV and will not be delegated. Upon termination of the emergency condition, operational control over US air resources will revert to normal as specified in this directive.

4. (C) Responsibilities.

a. Commander, 7th Air Force, in his capacity as MACV air Force Component Commander, acts as coordinating authority for all US/FWMAF air operations and Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) activities in the MACV area of responsibility. For detailed responsibilities see paragraph 3, Annex A.

b. Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF), will conduct offensive and defensive tactical air operations in accordance with the established Rules of Engagement and will augment daily the US Air Force effort with resources not required to support operations of prime concern to III MAF. For detailed responsibilities, see paragraph 3, Annex B.

c. Commanding General, US Army Vietnam (USARV), will provide those US Army aviation resources necessary to support both US/FWMAF and ARVN ground operations and will exercise all functions of command, except those specifically withdrawn by COMUSMACV, of all US Army aviation units not assigned to US Divisions. For detailed responsibilities, see paragraph 3, Annex C.

d. Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, will provide strike aircraft as directed by CINCPAC to operate in coordination with the JAGOS.

5. (C) Operational Planning.

a. Joint operational planning for required aviation support will be conducted on a continuing basis at all levels of command down to and including battalion. Representatives of the ground commander (G2/3 Air or S2/3 Air), Air Liaison Officer, and Army aviation representative will participate in the tactical ground planning to assure efficient utilization of all air support and proper integration into the ground scheme of maneuver. USMC and 7th Fleet liaison officers will be provided to the JAGOS when aircraft of these services are participating in joint operations or providing close air support.

b. RVNAF advisors and US commanders of ground and Naval units will assure that planners consider the use of air support for all operations. Plans for movement of convoys and trains, ground reconnaissance patrols, security forces, and quick reaction forces will include provisions for obtaining or using air support. During the execution phase of operations, aerial fire support is especially appropriate to support efforts to maintain contact with the enemy. In the conduct of airmobile operations, air cover of lift elements and prestrikes on all landing zones will be used as required where there is a possibility of opposition.

c. Requests for close air support will be processed through the Joint Air Ground Operations System (JAGOS) (for III MAF/ I Corps/USAF relationship, see Annex B). Utilization of this system will insure that application of close air support is in accord with the ground commander's plan and will provide required responsiveness.

d. Army Aviation considerations: See Annex C, this directive.

e. Planning coordination of air support requirements will be achieved in the field through the Combat Support Coordination Center (see paragraph 6n).

f. Herbicide operations (Trail Dust) must be selective in nature and coordinated both politically and militarily. Requests must be initiated at province level (see paragraph 6m).

g. SKY SPOT should be utilized to maintain close air support or interdiction during times of reduced visibility or darkness (see Annex A, this directive).

h. Troop Airlift. See paragraphs 6d, 6e, 6f, and 6g.

6. (U) References.

a. JCS Publication 1, Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage (JD).

b. JCS Publication 2, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF).

c. Letter of Agreement between DCS, VNAF, and MACV, MACJ311, HQ MACV, Serial 395, 5 February 1965, subject: Special Procedures for Tactical Operations Flights.

d. MACV Directive 55-2 (C), subject: Movement of Units (U).

e. MACV Directive 55-4, subject: Movement System in RVN.

f. MACV Directive 95-3 (C), subject: USA/USMC Aviation Support (U).

g. MACV Directive 95-5, subject: Flight Facilities in the Republic of Vietnam.

h. MACV Directive 95-6 (C), subject: Joint and Combined Helicopter Operations (U).

i. MACV Directive 95-11 (C), subject: Joint Air Ground Operations System (JAGOS) (U).

j. MACV Directive 95-8, subject: Joint Airborne-Airmobile Air Strip Operation.

k. MACV Directive 381-1 (C), subject: Visual Aerial Surveillance (U).

l. MACV Directive 381- (C), subject: Airborne Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) to be published).

m. MACV Directive 525-1 (C), subject: Herbicide Operations (U).

n. MACV Directive 525-12, subject: Combat Support Coordination Center.

o. MACV LOI governing operations of III MAF in RVN, 6 May 1965.

7TH AIR FORCE OPERATIONS

1. (U) Purpose. To establish responsibilities of USAF for command, control, and coordination of military air operations in the Republic of Vietnam.

2. (U) General. Command and control of USAF strike aircraft and the coordination of USMC/USN/VNAF strike aircraft will be accomplished through the Tactical Air Control System.

3. (C) Responsibilities. Commander, 7th Air Force, will:

a. Conduct offensive and defensive tactical air operations to include maintenance of air superiority, close air support, reconnaissance as requested by the ground commander or Corps Senior Advisor, search and rescue, air transport, and other supplemental air support as required.

b. Provide essential training of VNAF in offensive and defensive tactical air operations.

c. Provide tactical air support through SKY SPOT when darkness or inclement weather create such a requirement.

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d. Provide meteorological support for air operations.

e. Establish, in conjunction with other US and RVN agencies, an Air Traffic Control System which provides normal processing and flight following.

f. Prepare joint instructions in conjunction with CG, USARV; CG, II MAF; and Commander, 7th Fleet, to assure integrated and coordinated air operations.

4. (C) Operational Planning.

a. Immediate and preplanned requests for Close Air Support will be processed through the Joint Air Ground Operations System (JAGOS) as outlined in reference 81, basic directive. 7th Air Force will maintain tactical aircraft on ground alert to fulfill immediate air requests.

b. Coordination of air activities will take place at all levels of JAGOS to eliminate conflict between participating forces and to insure required support.

c. Sky Spot Control Points (Radar Directed Bombing) will be submitted from friendly ground units to appropriate Sky Spot unit to insure complete preplanning for air support. Special Forces camps and outposts of special political/strategic importance will insure that their control point coordinates have been catalogued by nearest Sky Spot unit so that points can be verified by USAF photo reconnaissance.

d. In the event COMUSMACV declares a major emergency, 7th Air Force will assume operational control of certain air resources as designated by COMUSMACV.

III MAF AIR OPERATIONS

1. (U) Purpose. To establish operating procedures and assign responsibilities for command, control, and coordination of US Marine Corps aviation operations in the Republic of Vietnam.

2. (C) General.

a. Marine Corps aviation resources are organic to III MAF and are commanded and directed in support of tactical operations as designated by CG, III MAF.

b. The Marine Corps Tactical Air Control System, a component of Marine aviation, will exercise positive control over all USMC aircraft in support of Marine Corps operations and over other aircraft as may be assigned in support of such operations. The Marine Corps Tactical Air Control System includes a Tactical Air Direction Center, Direct Air Support Centers, radar surveillance capability, and such terminal guidance facilities as necessary to facilitate the orderly and expeditious handling of tactical aircraft. This system will coordinate with the TACS operated by VNAF/USAF and will be prepared to supplement and integrate with the existing Air Defense Control System.

3. (C) Responsibilities. Commanding General, III MAF, will:

a. Exercise operational control over all USMC aviation resources except as provided in paragraph 3e of the basic directive.

b. Conduct offensive and defensive tactical air operations, to include close air support, interdiction, reconnaissance, maintenance of air superiority, air transport, search and rescue, and other supplemental air support, as required.

c. Provide aircraft to support US 7th Fleet operations as directed by COMUSMACV or higher authority.

d. Establish joint and combined planning coordination measures required in connection with III MAF/USAF/RVNAF air operations in I Corps and make provision for apprising 7th Air Force (TACC) of future ground operations and possible USAF reinforcement requirements by the following means:

(1) Prepare in conjunction with the Commander, 7th Air Force, joint operating in-

structions to insure an integrated and coordinated joint effort.

(2) Identify to the Commander, 7th Air Force, for coordination and control through the TACS, those resources in excess of current requirement for support of III MAF operations so that such resources may be allocated in support of other forces or missions.

(3) Provide liaison with the Commander, 7th Air Force, to facilitate the coordination and control of USMC aviation assets committed in support of 7th Air Force requirements and for purpose of keeping 7th Air Force abreast of III MAF ground operations.

(4) Provide liaison with the I Corps Tactical Operations Center and I Corps Direct Air Support Center. This liaison effort will facilitate the timely passing of information on current and proposed military operations in order that available aviation assets may be most effectively utilized.

(5) In his capacity as I Corps Senior Advisor, insure that the I Corps Advisory Group establishes physical liaison with III MAF for the purpose of informing III MAF of impending and current I Corps operations and required air support.

e. In the event COMUSMACV declares a major emergency, be prepared to transfer to Commander, 7th Air Force, operational control of air resources as designated by COMUSMACV.

ARMY AVIATION

1. (U) Purpose. To establish operating procedures and assign responsibilities for command, control, and coordination of US Army aviation operations in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

2. (C) General.

a. US Army aviation resources not organic to combat units will normally be allocated to Senior Corps Advisors and US commanders for employment in support of ARVN/US/FWMAF operations. Aviation resources so allocated will be assigned, insofar as practicable, missions of direct support of ARVN divisions and US/FWMAF divisions, brigades, and regiments. Senior Advisors will establish and Army Aviation Element (AAE) within each ARVN Corps and Division Tactical Operations Center (TOC). US division or higher commanders will establish an AAE at their TOCs.

b. Aviation assets will be allocated as directed by COMUSMACV. US Army resources are subject to reallocation, recall, or diversion through the Army Aviation Division (AAD), Combat Operations Center (COC), to comply with priorities established by this headquarters.

c. US Army aviation resources assigned in general support and not allocated to support a specific ARVN Corps or US unit will remain under operational control of COMUSMACV. OV-1 units in this category are under the operational control of MACV J2. This control is exercised through HQ, USARV. Other resources in this category will be allocated by AAD, COC, MACV, in accordance with priorities established by this headquarters. When committed to operations, such resources exclusive of OV-1's will be under operational control or in support of the commander of the US unit, or the Senior US Advisor of the ARVN unit concerned until released by the US commander or advisor, or recalled by MACV through the AAD.

d. US/FWMAF units assigned to a CTZ or major US unit will request US Army aviation support through the respective TOC.

3. (C) Responsibilities.

a. Commanding General, US Army Vietnam (USARV), will:

(1) Provide US Army aviation resources to support ground operations including airborne operations, aerial reconnaissance and surveillance, fire support, search and rescue, air transport, and other supplemental air support, as required.

(2) Exercise command, less operational control, of US Army Aviation resources and provide combat aviation support, as directed, to US/FWMAF/ARVN forces for the conduct of combat, logistical, or other counterinsurgency operations throughout the RVN.

(3) Provide qualified aviation personnel to operate Army Aviation Elements at corps and division TOC's.

(4) Provide US Army aviation support for Headquarters, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

(5) Establish and operate an Army Air Traffic Regulation and Identification System, coordinated with and responsive to the Air Traffic Control System.

(6) Prepare in conjunction with Commander, 7th Air Force, joint operating instructions to assure integrated and coordinated air operations.

b. US Commanders will:

(1) Exercise operational control over allocated US Army aviation resources.

(2) Exercise command over organic US Army aviation resources.

c. Corps Senior Advisors will:

(1) Exercise operational control over allocated US Army aviation resources.

(2) Within allocated resources, provide essential aviation support for ARVN military and paramilitary forces in zone of responsibility, including units of the General Reserve and Special Forces when committed.

AVIATION: U.S. AIR OPERATIONS IN RVN (U)

Directive Number 95-4, this headquarters, dated 28 June 1966, is changed as follows:

Annex D

2. (C) General.

g. (Superseded) Close Air Support missions that involve strikes on hamlets or villages must always be controlled by a FAC.

(1) If the attack on a village or hamlet is deemed necessary and is executed in conjunction with a ground operation involving movement of ground forces through the area, the attack may be made without warning; however, appropriate US/GVN/RVNAF approval is required except in emergencies.

(2) If the attack on a village or hamlet is not in conjunction with any immediate ground operation, the inhabitants must be warned by leaflets and/or loudspeaker system prior to the attack and must be given sufficient time to evacuate the area. Once the inhabitants of a preplanned target area have been adequately warned that the area has been selected as a target and given sufficient time to evacuate, the hamlet/village may then be struck without further warning.

(3) Commanders initiating a request for attack of a hamlet/village are responsible for ensuring that US/GVN/RVNAF approval is obtained and, in the case of preplanned attack, that required warning is given prior to execution of the attack.

AVIATION: US AIR OPERATIONS IN RVN (U)

Directive Number 95-4, this headquarters, dated 28 June 1966, is changed as follows:

March 26, 1985

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Annex B

3. (C) Responsibilities: Commanding General, III MAF, will:

d. (Superseded) Establish joint and combined planning coordination measures required in connection with III MAF/USAP/RVNAF air operations in I Corps and in the DMZ south of a line running from the coast line west along the northern boundary of the DMZ to NS grid line XD 90; then south along the NS grid line XD 90 to the PMDL; then west along the PMDL to the Laotian border and make provision for apprising 7th Air Force (TACC) of future ground operations and possible USAP reinforcement requirements by the following means:

AVIATION: US AIR OPERATIONS IN RVN (U)

1. (U) Purpose. This directive establishes procedures and responsibilities for command, control, and coordination of US military air operations in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

2. (U) Applicability. This directive is applicable to all MACV staff agencies and subordinate commands.

3. (U) Definitions. For the purpose of this directive, the following definitions apply:

a. The definitions in Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Publication 1 apply without modification.

b. Joint Air Ground Operations System (JAGOS). A composite of integrated command and control systems which includes the MACV Command and Control System, the Army Air Ground System (AAGS), the Air Force Tactical Air Control System (TACS), and the Marine Tactical Air Control System (MTACS).

c. Mission/Operational Direction. The authority delegated to DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations (Cdr, 7th AF) to assign specific fixed wing air tasks to the CG, III MAF, on a periodic basis as implementation of a basic mission assigned by COMUSMACV.

4. (C) General.

a. The mission of all US Military aviation forces in the RVN is to assist and provide air support for the counterinsurgency effort of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) and the US/Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF).

b. All services operate through portions of the same air space and are frequently employed on joint and combined operations. Each possesses to some degree the capability to accomplish missions normally assigned to another service. Therefore, close cooperation and coordination are required to assure that efforts are complementary, integrated, and achieve the most effective results.

c. En route air traffic control is a function of the Director of Civil Aviation. It is exercised through the Joint RVN/US Air Coordination Committee, which coordinates the use of civil and military communications and navigation facilities and personnel. Terminal air traffic control is a function of the supported force commander as defined by MACV Directives 95-5 and 95-9. Aircraft performing close air support are controlled as specified in appropriate service air/ground operations directives.

d. All U.S. military pilots providing air fire support will endeavor to eliminate incidents involving friendly forces, noncombatants, and damage to civilian property by adherence to the procedures, restrictions, and rules of engagement established by RVNAF and this headquarters in MACV Directive 525-13 (C). While these restraints and pro-

cedures are designed to minimize losses to friendly forces and noncombatants, the objective still remains to obtain the full productivity of US air capabilities without appreciably inhibiting responsiveness or flexibility.

e. In the event of a major emergency or disaster, COMUSMACV may direct the Cdr, 7th AF, to assume operational control over certain designated US air resources. The responsibility for determining the existence of such an emergency rests with COMUSMACV and will not be delegated. Upon termination of the emergency condition, operational control over US air resources will revert to normal, as specified in this directive.

5. (C) Responsibilities.

a. Cdr, 7th AF, in his capacity as DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations, acts, as coordinating authority for all US/FWMAF air operations and Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) activities in the MACV area of responsibility. For detailed responsibilities, see Annex A.

b. CG, III MAF, will exercise operational control of US Marine Corps (USMC) aviation resources, and will conduct offensive and defensive air operations in accordance with MACV Directive 95-8, the established rules of engagement, and Annex B.

c. CG, USARV, will provide those US Army aviation resources necessary to support both US/FWMAF and Army, Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), ground operations, and will exercise all functions of command, except those specifically withdrawn by COMUSMACV, of all US Army aviation units not assigned to US divisions. For detailed responsibilities, see Annex C.

d. Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), will provide strike aircraft as directed by Commander in Chief, Pacific (CINCPAC) to operate in coordination with the JAGOS.

6. (C) Operational Planning.

a. Joint operational planning for required aviation support will be conducted on a continuing basis at all levels of command down to and including battalion/squadron. Representatives of the ground commander (G2/3 Air or S2/3 Air), air liaison officer, and Army aviation representative will participate in the tactical ground planning to assure efficient utilization of all air support and proper integration into the ground scheme of maneuver. USMC and 7th Fleet liaison officers will be provided to the JAGOS when aircraft of these services are participating in joint operations or providing close air support.

b. RVNAF advisors and US commanders of ground and Naval units will insure that planners consider the use of air support for all operations. Plans for movement of convoys and trains, ground reconnaissance patrols, security forces, and quick reaction forces will include provisions for obtaining or using air support. During the execution phase of operations, aerial fire support is especially appropriate to support efforts to maintain contact with the enemy. In the conduct of airmobile operations, air cover of lift elements and prestrikes on all landing zones will be used as required where there is a possibility of opposition.

c. Requests for close air support will be processed through the JAGOS in accordance with MACV Directive 95-11. Utilization of this system will insure that application of close air support is in accord with the ground commander's plan and will provide required responsiveness. For command relationships see MACV Directive 10-11(S).

d. Army aviation considerations (see Annex C).

e. Planning coordination of air support requirements will be achieved in the field

through the Combat Support Coordination Center.

f. Herbicide operations (Trail Dust) must be selective in nature and coordinated both politically and militarily. Requests must be initiated at province level (see paragraph 81, below).

g. SKY SPOT and TPOQ-10 should be utilized to maintain close air support or interdiction during times of reduced visibility or darkness (see Annex A).

h. Troop Airlift: See paragraphs 8d, e, and h, below.

7 (U) Reports. This directive requires no report.

8. (U) References.

- a. JCS Publication 1.
- b. JCS Publication 2.
- c. MACV Directive 10-11(S).
- d. MACV Directive 55-4.
- e. MACV Directive 95-3.
- f. MACV Directive 95-5.
- g. MACV Directive 95-8(S).
- h. MACV Directive 95-9.
- i. MACV Directive 95-11(C).
- j. MACV Directive 381-1(C).
- k. MACV Directive 381-23(S).
- l. MACV Directive 525-1(C).
- m. MACV Directive 525-13(C).

7th Air Force Operations

f. (U) Purpose. To establish responsibilities of US Air Force (USAF) for command, control, and coordination of military air operations in the RVN.

2. (U) General. Command and control of USAF strike aircraft, mission direction of USMC strike and reconnaissance aircraft, and coordination of US Navy (USN) /VNAF strike aircraft will be accomplished through the TACS.

3. (C) Responsibilities. Cdr, 7th AF, will:

a. Conduct offensive and defensive tactical air operations, to include maintenance of air superiority, close air support, reconnaissance as requested by the ground commander or military region senior advisor, search and rescue, air transport, and other supplemental air support as required.

b. Function as air defense commander and exercise overall air defense responsibility within the RVN. Authority exercised over III MAF and USARV air defense resources will be as specified herein and MACV Directive 95-8(S).

c. Coordinate all air operations in the MACV area of responsibility, including those of US, FWMAF, and VNAF units which are not assigned or attached to the 7th AF.

d. Exercise mission direction of MACV tactical air assets, including strike and reconnaissance aircraft of CG, III MAF, in the MACV area of responsibility.

e. Provide essential training of VNAF in offensive and defensive tactical air operations.

f. Provide tactical air support through SKY SPOT when darkness or inclement weather create such a requirement.

g. Provide meteorological support for air operations.

h. Establish, in conjunction with other US and RVN agencies, an Air Traffic Control System which provides normal processing and flight following.

i. Prepare joint instructions in conjunction with CG, USARV; CG, III MAF, and Commander, 7th Fleet, to assure integrated and coordinated air operations.

4. (C) Operational Planning.

a. Immediate and preplanned requests for close air support will be processed through the JAGOS as outlined in reference 8i; basic directive. 7th AF will maintain tactical aircraft on ground alert to fulfill immediate air requests.

b. Coordination of air activities will take place at all levels of JAGOS to eliminate conflict between participating forces and to insure required support.

c. SKY SPOT Control Points (Radar Directed Bombing) will be submitted from friendly ground units to the appropriate SKY SPOT unit to insure complete preplanning for air support. Special Forces camps and outposts of special political/strategic importance will insure that their control point coordinates have been catalogued by the nearest SKY SPOT unit so that points can be verified by USAF photo reconnaissance.

d. In the event COMUSMACV declares a major emergency, Cdr, 7th AF, will assume operational control of certain air resources as designated by COMUSMACV.

III MAF AIR OPERATIONS

1. (U) Purpose. To establish operating procedures and assign responsibilities for command, control, coordination, and mission direction of USMC aviation operations in the MACV area of responsibility.

2. (C) General. The CG, III MAF, exercises operational control of USMC aviation resources in the RVN as assigned or attached by CG, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific (FMFPAC).

3. (C) Responsibilities. CG, III MAF, will:

a. Conduct offensive and defensive tactical air operations to include close air support, interdiction, reconnaissance, maintenance of air superiority, air transport, search and rescue, and other supplemental air support as required.

b. Designate to Cdr, 7th AF, those forces assigned to participate in and conduct air defense tasks in accordance with MACV Directive 95-8(S).

c. Exercise operational control of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, except as provided in paragraph 3e, basic directive. Make available to DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations strike and reconnaissance air assets and TACS as required for mission direction; retaining those assets necessary to support USMC peculiar operations, e.g., RABFAC beacon strike, helo escort, and landing zone preparation fire.

d. Provide aircraft to support US Seventh Fleet as directed by COMUSMACV or higher authority.

e. Exercise scramble authority of III MAF assets for immediate air support in the III MAF area of operations.

f. Provide liaison with the Cdr, 7th AF, to facilitate the coordination and control of USMC aviation assets committed in support of 7th AF requirements, and for the purpose of keeping 7th AF abreast of III MAF ground operations.

g. In the event COMUSMACV declares a major emergency, be prepared to transfer to Cdr, 7th AF, operational control of air resources as designated by COMUSMACV.

ARMY AVIATION

1. (U) Purpose. To establish operating procedures and assign responsibilities for command, control, and coordination of US Army aviation operations in the RVN.

2. (C) General.

a. US Army aviation resources not organic to combat units will normally be allocated to military region senior advisors and US commanders for employment in support of ARVN/US/FWMAF operations. Aviation resources so allocated will be assigned, insofar as practicable, missions of direct support of ARVN divisions and US/FWMAF divisions, brigades, and regiments. Senior advisors will establish an Army Aviation Element (AAE) within each ARVN military region and division Tactical Operations

Center (TOC). US division or higher commanders will establish an AAE at their TOC.

b. Aviation assets will be allocated as directed by COMUSMACV. US Army resources are subject to reallocation, recall, or diversion through the Aviation Support Branch (ASB), Surface Operations Division (SOD), MACV, to comply with priorities established by this headquarters.

c. US Army aviation resources assigned in general support and not allocated to support a specific ARVN military region or US unit will remain under the operational control of COMUSMACV. OV-1 units in this category are under the operational control of the ACofS, J-2, MACV. This control is exercised through Headquarters, USAFV. Other resources in this category will be allocated by ASB, SOD, MACV, in accordance with priorities established by this headquarters. When committed to operations, such resources, exclusive of OV-1, will be under operational control or in support of the commander of the US unit, or the senior US advisor of the ARVN unit concerned until released by the US commander or advisor, or recalled by MACV through the ASB, SOD, MACV.

d. US/FWMAF units assigned to a military region or major US unit will request US Army aviation support through the respective TOC.

3. (C) Responsibilities.

a. CG, USAFV, will:

(1) Provide US Army aviation resources to support ground operations, including airborne operations, aerial reconnaissance and surveillance, fire support, search and rescue, air transport, and other supplemental air support, as required.

(2) Exercise command, less operational control, of US Army aviation resources and provide combat aviation support, as directed, to US/FWMAF/ARVIN forces for the conduct of combat, logistical, or other counterinsurgency operations throughout the RVN.

(3) Provide qualified aviation personnel to operate AAE at military region and division TOC.

(4) Provide US Army aviation support for Headquarters, MACV.

(5) Establish and operate an Army Air Traffic Regulation and Identification System, coordinated with and responsive to the Air Traffic Control System.

(6) Prepare, in conjunction with Cdr, 7th AF, joint operating instructions to insure integrated and coordinated air operations.

b. US commanders will:

(1) Exercise operational control over allocated US Army aviation resources.

(2) Exercise command over organic US Army aviation resources.

c. Military region senior advisors will:

(1) Exercise operational control over allocated US Army aviation resources.

(2) Within allocated resources, provide essential aviation support for ARVN military and paramilitary forces in their zone of responsibility, including units of the General Reserve and Special Forces when committed. ●

CIVILIAN MANAGERS LOST WAR IN VIETNAM

● Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, until this year, the story had not been told of how civilian officials of the executive branch hobbled, chained, and bound American military forces with restrictions saying what the military could and could not do in Indochina. These restrictions were known as rules of engagement. The recent declassification of these documents, formerly classified top secret, proves the military took a bum rap in Vietnam.

U.S. military forces did not lose the Vietnam war, civilian policymakers did.

The rules of engagement caused a piecemealing of air operations which allowed North Vietnam to adjust to the U.S. air bombing campaign by importing war materials through routes immune from attack and then to disburse and store the materials in guaranteed sanctuaries. From these safe areas North Vietnam infiltrated the material to South Vietnam and Laos. The rules allowed the enemy to protect its forces and material, provided it with military training and staging areas free from attack and permitted it to erect massed air defense weapons. One of the most tragic consequences of the rules was the impact on American aircraft and pilot losses by giving North Vietnam time to build up its sophisticated air defense system.

The lesson of Vietnam is that once civilian policymakers decide on war, the result of placing military operations under day-to-day management of unskilled amateurs and rejecting the advice of the best military professionals may be loss of the original objective for going to war. Such rules must never again be applied to our Armed Forces.

Mr. President, my legal counsel, Mr. J. Terry Emerson, was invited to speak on the subject of the rules of engagement at a symposium held on Capitol Hill last week sponsored by the American Security Council, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Conservative Union. His statement presents a

tight history of the effect and evolution of these rules. One could not claim to understand the Vietnam war without being aware of the rules of engagement and for that reason I submit his remarks for the RECORD.

The remarks follow:

VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

(J. Terry Emerson)

United States military forces did not lose the war in Vietnam.

Congress did not block the Vietnam War. In fact, Congress was up to its ears in the Vietnam conflict, from as early as 1949 when it first pushed funds on President Truman to support anticommunist forces in Indochina.

Although Congress can be blamed for denying Presidents authority to enforce the peace agreement with Hanoi after January 1973, it was civilian managers of the Executive Branch who first denied our military forces victory by imposing a complex and lengthy set of restrictions on what the military could and could not do in South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and North Vietnam. These restrictions were known as Rules of Engagement.

They ran on page after page and were constantly changing. The rules were almost impossible to memorize or interpret, although our pilots had to do so. When some changes were made after repeated appeals of the Joint Chiefs, the reductions were gradual and not strong enough to serve strategic ends. Numerous partial and total bombing halts interrupted the effectiveness of preceding bombing campaigns. Often, when limited extensions of target areas were granted, they were withdrawn shortly afterward.

For years the contents of these rules were kept top secret. It is only this year, thanks to the initiative of Senator Goldwater and the agreement of Secretary Weinberger, that the actual text of the rules were declassified. In addition, a contemporary historical examination of the air war in Southeast Asia compiled by the Air Force was among the top secret documents newly released at Senator Goldwater's request.

The rules covering North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were issued in the form of daily message traffic and these papers were not retained. They are described, however, in the three volume Air Force report entitled Project Checo. The detailed rules for South Vietnam were issued as official directives and the complete set of these rules for 1966 and 1971 were placed in the Congressional Record by Senator Goldwater. The Air Force reports and the rules appear in the Record of March 6, 14, 18 and 26.

These newly public documents reveal just how comprehensive the restrictions were that bound our military units in Vietnam. For example, one rule told American pilots they were not permitted to attack a North Vietnam MIG sitting on the runway. The only time it could be attacked was after it was in flight, was clearly identified and showed hostile intentions. Even then, its base could not be bombed. The same "hostile intention" rule applied to truck convoys driving on highways in Laos and North Vietnam, if you can imagine how a truck is to show hostile intent. In some regions, enemy trucks could evade attack under the rules by simply driving off the road. Even military truck parks located 200 yards from a road could not be destroyed. Another rule provided that SAM missile sites could not be struck while they were under construction but only after they became operational and dangerous, unless a bombing halt was in

effect and not even an active missile site could be attacked.

In 1967, the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee conducted extensive hearings relative to the conduct of the air war against North Vietnam. After gathering the facts, the Subcommittee issued a report on August 31, which was strongly critical of the Rules of Engagement.

The Subcommittee concluded:

"That the air campaign has not achieved its objectives to a greater extent cannot be attributed to inability or impotence of air power. It attests, rather, to the fragmentation of our air might by overly restrictive controls, limitations, and the doctrine of 'gradualism' placed on our aviation forces which prevented them from waging the air campaign in the manner and according to the timetable which was best calculated to achieve maximum results."

The Subcommittee found that Secretary of Defense McNamara and the Johnson Administration had "discounted the professional judgment of our best military leaders and substituted civilian judgment in the details of target selection and the timing of strikes." The Subcommittee charged these civilian managers with having "shackled the true potential of air power and permitted the build up of what has become the world's most formidable anti aircraft defense. . . ." The Subcommittee found the Rules of Engagement to be directly attributable for the fact that "during the entire year of 1966 less than 1% of the total sorties flown against North Vietnam were against fixed targets on the JCS target list." I should point out the targets on the Joint Chiefs list could not be hit without specific approval of the Secretary of Defense.

The concentration of the air war to areas well south of the vital Hanoi-Haiphong regions, which left the important targets untouched—the existence of large assured sanctuaries—the failure to close the Port of Haiphong—the prohibition against a coordinated aerial mining of coastal water lanes of communication with a bombing attack continuously cutting off rail and road lines to China, all these results of the rules combined to cause a piecemealing of air operations which allowed North Vietnam to adjust to the air campaign by importing war materials from communist countries through routes immune from attack and then to disburse and store this material in guaranteed sanctuaries. From these safe areas North Vietnam infiltrated the material to South Vietnam and Laos. By granting North Vietnam sanctuaries with our blessing, the Rules of Engagement allowed the enemy to protect its forces and material, provided it with military training and staging areas free from attack and permitted it to erect massed air defense weapons.

One of the most tragic consequences of the Rules of Engagement was the impact on American aircraft and pilot losses by giving North Vietnam time to build up its sophisticated air defense and to disburse its stocks of war supplies. The point on which military experts disagreed most vehemently with civilian managers was the certainty among professional military men that these self imposed restrictions greatly increased U.S. casualties.

Revisionist historians argue military leaders did not convey to civilian officials the depth of their concern with the rules. Bunk!

The Pentagon Papers and the newly declassified documents reveal that the Joint Chiefs repeatedly argued against the artificial limitations impeding the objectives of our nation in the Vietnam War. A handful of civilian advisors, such as Walt Rostow, agreed with military professionals that sys-

tematic and sustained bombing of war making resources in North Vietnam would have decisive results, but Secretaries of Defense McNamara and Clifford stubbornly insisted on continued strict limitations over military operations.

The Joint Chiefs and commanders in the field pressed time after time for changes in the rules to put more pressure on North Vietnam. For example, in 1968, Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford convened a senior group of advisors from the State and Defense Departments, the CIA and the White House to review United States involvement in Vietnam. General Wheeler submitted a paper to this group on behalf of the Joint Chiefs. The cover memo for his paper noted that "General Wheeler would favor action to close the Port of Haiphong through mining or otherwise." But a specific paper was not included since President Johnson had already indicated closing the ports was not an action he was going to consider, even as part of a comprehensive review. This illustrates what our military leadership was up against.

Specifically, the paper written by the Joint Chiefs proposed:

"An integrated interdiction campaign should be undertaken against the road, rail and waterway lines of communication with the objective of isolating the logistics base of Hanoi and Haiphong from each other and the rest of North Vietnam."

To achieve this objective, the Chiefs wrote it was necessary to reduce the restricted and prohibited areas around Hanoi and Haiphong and to delete the Special Northeast Coastal Armed Reconnaissance area which limited attacks on North Vietnamese craft to those within three nautical miles of the coast.

The Joint Chiefs explained how North Vietnam had taken advantage of the sanctuaries gratuitously given them in the cities. The JCS paper stated:

"There have been repeated and reliable intelligence reports that indicate civilians not engaged in essential war supporting activities have been evacuated from the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong. Photographic intelligence, particularly of Haiphong, clearly shows that materials of war are stock piled in all open storage areas and along the streets throughout almost one half of the city. Rather than an area for urban living, the city has become an armed camp and a large logistics storage base."

But the Joint Chiefs' paper fell on deaf ears. On March 31, 1968, President Johnson announced he would not seek reelection and at the same time he restricted air strikes on North Vietnam to a line south of the 19th parallel. Then, on December 1, President Johnson ordered the complete cessation of bombing in North Vietnam. Only defensive air operations were permitted until the resumption of strategic bombing in May of 1972 by President Nixon.

During this bombing halt, U.S. aircraft could not make even protective reaction strikes into North Vietnam unless the strike was below the 19th parallel and it was an immediate response against enemy aircraft which had taken aggressive action against our aircraft. Military requests for one time preemptive strikes against the maturing North Vietnamese air defense system south of the 20th parallel were turned down. This permitted the system to reach a high level of sophistication in which the North Vietnamese linked their GCI radars with the lock on radar capability of SAM sites to guide MIG attacks on U.S. aircraft and to aim SAMs undetected until the instant of firing against our aircraft.

The Rules of Engagement were so tight that during the last week of March 1972,

General Lavelle, Commander of the Seventh Air Force, was relieved of duty for allegedly ordering unauthorized raids against North Vietnamese air fields and radar sites. During the same week General Lavelle was recalled, North Vietnam launched a major offensive against South Vietnam. Within a week the rules he was accused of violating were obsolete. Authority was granted in April 1972 to use tactical air strikes against SAMs, artillery and other military targets to the 18th parallel and protective reaction strikes were authorized as far as the 20th parallel.

A month later, President Nixon ordered the mining of Haiphong harbor and offensive air operations were reopened throughout North Vietnam except for a buffer zone at the communist Chinese border. There was a brief suspension of bombing north of the 20th parallel in late October, but President Nixon initiated the famous Christmas bombings, 12 consecutive days of strikes starting on December 18, 1972, using B-52's on a sustained basis for the first time over the northern part of North Vietnam. Hanoi returned to the negotiating table immediately and signed a peace agreement within six weeks.

A major objection to increased war operations that prevailed among civilian policy makers had been concerned about armed intervention by Red China. Yet Henry Kissinger tells us in his memoirs, "Years of Upheaval," that during his visit to Peking in February 1973 he discovered a unified communist Vietnam dominant in Indochina would be a strategic nightmare for Mainland China. Peking approved the goals of the Paris peace agreement because it would benefit China by denying Hanoi primacy in the region and buffer North Vietnam with three independent states, Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam. Dr. Kissinger also writes that he discovered the answer to a mystery which had long confounded him. The road Chinese troops had been building through northern Laos for nearly a decade was not intended or used to supply the Pathet Lao; instead it sat on the flank of the advancing North Vietnamese and could be used to contain and threaten Hanoi's possible domination over all Indochina. No wonder that Red China had stood by passively when virtually unlimited bombing of North Vietnam had been permitted in December 1972.

Unfortunately, Congress made it impossible for Presidents Nixon or Ford to uphold the peace terms. Again quoting Dr. Kissinger, the resulting collapse of South Vietnam in 1975 "not only led to genocidal horrors in Indochina; from Angola to Ethiopia to Iran to Afghanistan, it ushered in a period of American humiliation (and) an unprecedented Soviet geopolitical offensive all over the globe. . . ."

But the Congressional abandonment of friendly peoples who relied on us came at the end of the war. The real architects of the lost opportunity that doomed our undertaking in Vietnam were the civilian officials who had made a commitment large enough to risk our global position but executed it with so much hesitation as to defeat their purpose. Without derogating the principle of civilian control of the military, it should be recognized that once civilian policymakers decide on war, the result of placing military strategy and tactical operations under the day to day direction of unskilled amateurs may be greater sacrifice in blood and the denial of a military victory. Once American forces were committed, there is no logical goal except to prevail. ●

Assistant Secretary Defense Armitage recently provided me with several volumes of papers which were formerly classified top secret but have now been declassified.

These newly public documents clearly reveal the excessive restraints our military units had to operate under in Vietnam. For example, one rule told American pilots they were not permitted to attack a North Vietnam Mig sitting on the runway. The only time it could be attacked was after it was in flight, was identified and showed hostile intentions. Even then, its base could not be bombed. The same hostile intention rule applied to truck convoys driving on highways in Laos and North Vietnam. In some regions, enemy trucks could evade attack by simply driving off the road. Military truck parks located just over 200 yards away from a road could not be destroyed. Another rule provided that SAM missile sites could not be struck while they were under construction, but only after they became operational.

VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT DECLASSIFIED

● Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, U.S. military forces have been much maligned by some people in this country who blame the military for what they call the loss of the war in Vietnam. However, the Armed Forces did not suffer a military defeat in any sense of that term. Rather, it was civilian managers of the U.S. Government who denied our military forces a victory by imposing a complex and lengthy set of restrictions on what the military could and could not do in South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and North Vietnam.

These layers of restrictions, which were constantly changing and were almost impossible to memorize or understand, although it was required of our pilots, granted huge sanctuary areas to the enemy. When certain limits would at last be removed after repeated appeals by the Joint Chiefs, the reductions were made only in gradual steps and seldom were strong enough to serve our strategic ends. Numerous partial and total bombing halts interrupted the effectiveness of earlier bombing campaigns. Often, when limited extensions of target areas were granted, they were unexpectedly canceled and withdrawn shortly afterward.

Mr. President, in the interest of informing the American people and any journalists who are interested in the truth of what really prevented a military victory in Southeast Asia, I have asked several Secretaries of Defense to declassify the pertinent records, the actual text of the rules which restrained military conduct in the Vietnam war. I am delighted to inform my colleagues that Secretary Weinberger has now agreed with me that it would be useful to declassify the remaining Vietnam rules of engagement. He and

Mr. President, the declassified material I have received is too lengthy to make available all at one time in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Therefore, I plan to insert these documents as a series of publications over the next few weeks. I will begin today with the first of three studies prepared by the Air Force examining the rules of engagement governing USAF combat operations in Southeast Asia from their beginnings in 1960-65. I think it is very important for the Members of this body, the public, the press, and media to understand fully the restrictions that were placed upon all of our forces in Southeast Asia. It is unbelievable that any Secretary of Defense would ever place such restraints on our forces, as Secretary McNamara did, or that any President would have allowed this to happen, and I hope that if civilian officials ever decide again that it is necessary to have to engage in war, and I pray that we will never have to do so, that such damaging restrictions will never be applied to our forces.

Mr. President, I ask that the document entitled "Project Checko Report," covering the years 1960-65, shall appear at this point in the RECORD.

The document follows:

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

In a futile attempt to reverse the course of events engulfing the French in Indochina, the U.S. Air Force contributed 1,800 airlift sorties, comprising 13,000 flying hours, during the first six months of 1954. On 7 May 1954, Dien Bien Phu fell to the Communist Viet Minh, followed on 20 July by the Geneva Convention on the partition of Vietnam. The U.S. decision to pledge increased aid to the government in South Vietnam was made by Presidential announcement of 24 October 1954. Thus began the role which the U.S. Air Force was to

play in counter-insurgency within the overall framework of U.S. foreign policy as supplemented by the policies of the Department of Defense.

By spring of 1960, the counter-insurgency situation in RVN had obviously deteriorated. With the arrival of the first of the U.S. Special Forces Teams on May 30, RVN resistance stiffened. This month also marked the delivery of the first full squadron of 25 A-1H aircraft to the RVN. Later, on 1 October 1961, PACAF deployed a Control and Reporting Post (CRP) to Tan Son Nhut Air Base:

"Its purpose was to provide radar coverage for the southern area of SVN and to train the Vietnamese Air Force in controlling air traffic, both civil and military. Within four months, 63 Vietnamese personnel had been trained, the CRP was expanded into a CRC, and it became part of the Tactical Air Control System which was established in mid-January."

The JCS, on 14 November 1961, directed Jungle Jim forces to be deployed to the RVN. This deployment consisted of the 1st Air Commando Group (formerly the 4400th CCTS), four SC-47's four RB-26's, and eight T-28's—all carrying RVN Air Force (VNAF) markings. Within 48 hours, President Kennedy announced the decision to bolster RVN strength but not to commit U.S. combat forces. On 11 December, two U.S. Army helicopter companies arrived in RVN.

The commitment, by the United States, to a policy of unlimited support of the RVN, short of actual combat forces, was subject to many restraining influences. In addition to the provisions of the Geneva Accords of 1954, which the U.S., although not a signatory, had undertaken to support, there were other considerations—the possible alienation of the Vietnamese people; relations with Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand; and vulnerability to charges, by the NVN and Communist China, of aggression in Southeast Asia. Further, and of particular significance to the U.S. Army and Air Force, was the opinion of Mr. McNamara (December, 1961) that the war in South Vietnam should be considered a ground war and that although "naval and air support operations are desirable, they won't be too effective." The U.S. military structure in the RVN and the ensuing intra-command relationships reflected an awareness of McNamara's views.

Two short quotations from the Geneva Accords of 1954 serve to illustrate the nature and scope of the constraints imposed. Chapter III, Article 16 (quoted in part): "With effect from the date of entry into force of the present Agreement, the introduction into Vietnam of any Chapter III, Article 17 (a): "With effect from the date of entry into force of the present Agreement, the introduction into Vietnam of any reinforcements in the form of all types of arms, munitions and other war material, such as combat aircraft, naval craft, pieces or ordnance, jet engines and jet weapons and armored vehicles is prohibited."

Thus, the U.S. decision to increase substantially its aid to the RVN ran head on into the Geneva Accords and the International Control Committee (ICC) established to oversee its provisions.

On October 28, 1961, Secretary of State Rusk sent a message to the American Embassy in Saigon requesting concurrence on ground rules for the introduction of the USAF Jungle Jim unit into the RVN. Mr. Rusk proposed that the aircraft have Vietnamese markings painted on them before being flown in or being brought in by surface transportation. Military personnel, other than aircrews, were to arrive in the RVN in civilian clothes but could then wear

their uniforms. Such were some of the efforts to circumvent the provisions of the Geneva Accords and the ICC.

This issue was finally settled on November 16, 1961 when President Kennedy formally announced the U.S. decision to aid the Government of Vietnam—short of introducing U.S. combat forces. The position that U.S. combat forces were not involved in the war was to be maintained for the ensuing two years (until December 31, 1963).

By the close of 1961, the Communist insurgency in South Vietnam had grown to proportions where immediate response was required to contain and then defeat the threat. This situation resulted in a modification of our policy position to provide for U.S. armed and manned helicopters to "defend themselves" and to return fire from the ground. (Subsequently, authority was granted to initiate fire on known Viet Cong targets posing a threat.)

The immediate U.S. objectives, at this time, was to provide the VNAF with such training as would eventually enable the Vietnamese to perform all required missions. Determined to meet this goal and to realize the "immediate response" requirement, PACAF conceived the covert Farm Gate operation. Following CINCPAC approval, the first of these missions was flown in December 1961.

The concept of employment of Farm Gate (previously Jungle Jim) was to utilize the function of training the VNAF as a cover. The aircraft and personnel of Detachment 2, 4400th CCTS to actually be used in support of RVNAF actions against the Viet Cong within the borders of the RVN. The concept envisioned, "all feasible operational activity," overt and covert, and would be in addition to the advisory and training functions.

In agreeing with the Farm Gate concept, CINCPAC said:

"... In addition to operational tests and combat support fighters previously authorized by JCS and CINCPAC to train the VNAF, as decided at the SecDef meeting 18 December, all kinds of conventional combat and combat support flights can be flown in SVN by Detachment 2, 4400th CCTS provided a Vietnamese is on board for purpose of receiving combat support training."

This was amplified on 26 December when the JCS said that Farm Gate aircraft could be employed on combat missions only when the VNAF did not have the capability. This latest instruction also said that combat training missions with joint crews would be conducted so the Vietnamese crews could take over the missions at the earliest possible time. The rule dictated that the aircraft be based in-country and be of the same type as the host country, if the effort was to be plausibly deniable. These latter dictates had been a continuing limiting factor on Farm Gate operations in the RVN.

The issue of U.S. pilots flying Farm Gate missions in the RVN came to the fore early in 1962. Admiral Felt's opinion of the State Department release of 9 March 1962 was that it evaded the issue. He recommended instead, a "factual" statement:

"USAF pilots are flying in two-seater T-28's and RB-28's with VNAF pilots. The purpose of these missions is to train VNAF pilots in tactical air strikes. On some of these training sorties, the aircraft deliver ordnance on actual Viet Cong targets. No USAF pilot has ever flown on a tactical mission except in the role of tactical instructor, and VNAF pilots flying single-seater AD-6's (A-1H's) continue to perform most of the combat air sorties."

In a message to the Embassy in Saigon in February 1963, State expressed the obvious and unequivocal position that the Farm

Gate activity in the RVN was a "clear violation of the Geneva Accords."

The VNAF had no rules of engagement in late 1961 except to avoid overflying the boundaries of neighboring countries. Once an air strike was approved by the AOC or higher authority, the pilot was free to strike the target. Neither were there rules of engagement for air defense. Upon being advised of this, CINCPAC suggested to CHMAAG-V that the VNAF be assisted, if they so desired, in developing rules of engagement—initially for air defense. Admiral Felt then proposed guidelines for the interception, identification, and destruction of hostile aircraft intruding into the airspace of the RVN. VNAF accepted the suggestion and drafted rules of engagement. By late April 1962, the Joint General Staff (JGS) had approved them and was in the process of coordinating them with other governmental agencies.

MACV Directive Number 62, 24 November 1962, established operational restrictions on U.S. aircraft to be employed on combat support missions which read, in extract, as follows:

"4. General policy:

"a. In South Vietnam all operational missions flown by U.S. personnel and/or aircraft are classified as combat support. As a general policy, no missions will be undertaken utilizing U.S. personnel and/or aircraft unless it is beyond the capability of the Vietnamese Air Force (because of lack of training, equipment, etc.) to perform the mission. Efforts will be intensified to provide the necessary training for GVN personnel so that the VNAF can perform all required missions at the earliest possible time.

"b. U.S. aircrew personnel operating under the terms of this and other applicable directives are reminded that nothing shall infringe upon the inherent right of the individual to protect himself against hostile attack. In event of such an attack, the individual concerned will take immediate aggressive action against the attacking force with any means available.

"5. Specific restrictions: The following specific restrictions are applicable and strict compliance therewith is directed:

"a. Farmgate: Utilization of Farmgate aircraft for operational (combat support) missions will be only with a combined U.S. and Vietnamese crew. Farmgate U-10 aircraft will not be employed on armed reconnaissance missions. Farmgate aircraft will carry VNAF markings.

"b. Waterglass: 2d Air Division will prepare regulations applicable to U.S. aircraft conducting air defense orientation training under the Waterglass concept. Waterglass restrictions are not included in this directive due to classification.

"c. Mule Train/Ranch Hand: C-123's will be U.S. marked. They will be manned with a combined U.S. and Vietnamese crew on applicable combat missions as defined . . . above.

"d. U.S. Army CH-21C's (Shawnee) and USMC UH-34D's (HUS): Armament may be installed in and utilized from transport helicopters for defensive purposes only. Armament in such aircraft will not be utilized to initiate fires upon any target; however, if the aircraft is fired upon, it may return the fire. Aircraft will be U.S. marked and manned.

"e. U.S. Army UH-1's (Iroquois): The U.S. Army armed UH-1 may be used defensively only. It may not be utilized to initiate fires upon any target; however, if the aircraft or any aircraft which it is escorting is fired upon, it may return the fire. Such aircraft, when employed on combat support missions, will be U.S. marked and manned with a combined U.S. and Vietnamese crew.

"f. U.S. Army OV-1's (Mohawk): The OV-1's may be utilized in an armed configuration (only as specifically directed by COMUSMACV) for combat support missions; however, such armament will be utilized only defensively. These aircraft will not be utilized as strike aircraft. When utilized in a combat support role, they will be U.S. marked and manned with a combined U.S. and Vietnamese crew.

"g. Cambodian/SVN/DMZ Border: MACV Letter, subject: Air Operations, dated 23 October 1962, applies to operations of all U.S. aircraft. However, the general content of this letter is repeated in this directive and is applicable to all U.S. aircraft operating in SVN. Day: Normally no U.S. aircraft will operate closer than three miles to the Cambodian border and then only when the ceiling is at least 1500 feet and visibility is three miles or better. When the border is clearly defined by physical landmarks, operational missions may be conducted to a point no closer than one mile to the border; non-operational flights are restricted to five miles from the border and at least 2000 feet altitude. Night: U.S. aircraft will operate closer than three miles to the Cambodian border during periods of reduced visibility and only then when under positive radar control. Unless specifically authorized by this headquarters, no U.S. aircraft will conduct combat missions more than two miles off the coast of Vietnam. Waivers to these border restrictions (paragraph 3c, above cited letter) will be granted with the utmost discretion and then only when the border can be unmistakably defined by visual reference."

Thus, there were aircraft operating within the Republic of Vietnam which had VNAF markings and Vietnamese crews; VNAF markings and U.S.-Vietnamese crews; U.S. markings and U.S.-Vietnamese crews; and U.S. markings with U.S. crews.

Admiral Felt pointed out to General Harkins that JCS message Number 5972 of 6 September 1962 had authorized the initiation of fires by armed aircraft engaged in escort:

"By definition (JCS 5972) suppressive fires resulting from escort missions are considered defensive fire. You should amend paragraphs 5D and E of (MACV Directive 62) in such manner as to indicate armament on UH-1's and CH-21's/UH-34's may be used to initiate fire provided enemy target is clearly identified and is threat to the safety of the helicopter and passengers."

Moreover, JCS message 8678 of February 1963 (had) authorized an amendment to the rules of engagement, pertaining specifically to U.S. helicopters in the RVN, to allow them to engage clearly identified Viet Cong forces considered a threat to the safety of the aircraft and their passengers. JCS stated that, during a visit of their team to the RVN, it was found that the JCS message of September 1962 concerning rules of engagement for armed Army helicopters had been erroneously interpreted to mean that the helicopter must wait to be fired upon before initiating return fire. "Such interpretation is more restrictive than was the intent . . ." COMUSMACV amended his rules of engagement accordingly.

The jet question, along with the determination of the purpose and scope of FARM GATE appeared to remain essentially moot. The problem of jet engines and aircraft did not seem relevant in regard to the introduction of U.S. Army helicopters. UH-1A's and UH-1B's were both introduced into the RVN. The first five of the turbo-jet UH-1A Iroquois arriving in the RVN aboard the USNC Croatan on 20 April 1962.

Certain violations (of the Geneva Accords) had evidently been deemed acceptable in view of U.S. objectives—others were not. The bases of the value judgments involved were not always deductible.

From the inception of Jungle Jim (Farm Gate) activities in the RVN in late 1961, the State Department evidenced growing concern that air operations might become counter-productive by alienating the non-combatant population. Early in 1962, the Vietnam Task Force had proposed suspending air operations until the subject could be thoroughly discussed at the next SecDef meeting scheduled for 19 February at Headquarters CINCPAC.

Although the DOD had not been in favor of suspending air operations, the issue was placed on the February SecDef conference agenda. Headquarters USAF requested Headquarters PACAF to prepare a thorough briefing on the "concept of employment of air units and methods used for target selection and identification to include measures taken to insure minimum impact on civilian population."

During his visit, these procedures and the control structure which had been established were closely examined. The conclusion reached was that, considering the political and operational problems involved, a "solid control structure" existed. Targets were selected by the VN and closely checked by the Joint Operations Center (JOC) and the Air Support Operations Center (ASOC). Targets were marked by the VN forward air controllers (FAC) flying in liaison aircraft. The report illustrated the degree of care exercised by citing a mission in which the VN airborne controller did not arrive to mark the target. The USAF instructor pilots in the aircraft observed that a fire fight was taking place, and saw an officer in a jeep pointing to the location of the enemy; nevertheless, the bombs were salvaged in the ocean."

In December 1962, Secretary of State Rusk indicated, in a message to the Embassy in Saigon, his views regarding border restrictions on U.S. aircraft. Leading to a discussion concerning the proper military tactics to defeat the Viet Cong, the Secretary stated:

"It remains that political significance at present of another RKG (Cambodian) border incident certainly outweighs probable military advantages of air operations in border area. . . Politically, count against us now two and three-quarter strikes. Militarily, there is general agreement that success lies not in drawing tight Cordon Sanitaire in Maginot manner. . ."

The implicit concern reflected in these messages was prompted by many charges of border violations lodged by Cambodia. The Cambodian (and Laotian) border was unmarked, ill-defined, and hotly in dispute. In response to this concern, on 25 January 1963, the commander of the 2nd ADVON restricted Farm Gate aircraft from conducting operations within five miles of international borders during daylight and ten miles during darkness. The VNAF did not have this restriction.

On 15 November 1962, the VN JGS published a memorandum entitled "Limitation of Air and Artillery Supports Along Vietnam Republic Border Corridor." Whereas the 2nd ADVON restriction of 25 January provided for a five mile buffer during daylight hours, which was increased to ten miles at night, the JGS memorandum placed a constant 10 KM restriction on air support and 15 KM along the south bank of the Ben-Hai River. Under emergency conditions, according to the JGS, requests for

waiver of the restriction would be considered. With regard to the waiver authority which JGS had reserved to itself, CINCPAC advised COMUSMACV, in January 1963, that he also be prepared to waive, with discretion, restrictions on U.S. aircraft. "I expect you to exercise the same (JGS) waiver authority for U.S. operations on case by case basis when deemed necessary and when expected 'take' is worth risk (of border violation) involved."

At this time, and to the normal Farm Gate restrictions imposed by the JCS, another was added by the 2d Air Division. The crews could only conduct strikes under a VNAF forward air controller. An exception was established for night strikes permitting Farm Gate crews to strike under a C-47 flare-ship which established radio relay between VN personnel under attack on the ground and the strike aircrew.

These restrictive measures created many problems, one example of which is illustrated by the Viet Cong attack on the Soc Trang Airfield on 10 September 1963. Within five minutes after the first 81mm mortar hits, four USAF pilots were airborne. In the air, they notified the AOC of the attack and asked for a flare-ship and additional fighters. They then expended ordnance on what they believed to be the Viet Cong mortar positions identified by what appeared to be muzzle flashes. This was done during ARVN retaliation with mortar and other fire. Immediately following the air attack the Viet Cong withdrew.

The commander of the 34th Tactical Group, whose T-28's were involved, commented the aggressive action of the USAF pilots in defending a base under attack. He pointed out, however, that such an action was in violation of the rules of engagement since there were no VNAF crew members on board, no FAC, no flare-ship, and no way of positively identifying the target which was in an allegedly friendly area. In making this point, the 34th's commander noted that it was difficult to understand why certain rules had to be observed. In a COIN environment, he said, the rules of engagement are necessarily sensitive since there are usually no clearly defined battle lines. He added that the winner of a COIN war would probably be the side which wins over the people and it was possible that victory over a thousand of the enemy could be offset by the unintentional death of one of the friendly forces. The commander also stated:

" . . . We must exercise our most mature judgment and restraint at all times and abide by the rules of the game. This is vital, even though in certain situations, such as this case, it might appear that the proper course of action lies elsewhere. . . Take pride in accomplishing a difficult job under adverse conditions in a sane and professional manner."

Another case occurred on 5 December 1963, when Army helicopters supporting a II Corps outpost at night were reported to have fired on friendly forces in an attack made without positive identification of the Viet Cong target. The commander, MACV, directed that corrective action be taken. He added:

" . . . It is also of concern that a possibility exists in which U.S. pilots conducted indiscreet firing against ground targets without adequate knowledge of the ground force disposition, without communications with ground forces or the air control system, and without prior arrangement or briefing. . ."

These general conditions prevailed to the end of 1963, at which time a test plan involving the arming of OV-1's (Mohawks) was proposed. To permit such testing, Gen-

eral Harkins advised Admiral Felt that the rules of engagement would have to be changed. (MACV directive permitted the Mohawk to be used offensively only after being fired upon.) The OV-1 test (in the role of an armed escort for transport aircraft) was approved and the rules subsequently modified.

Defoliation (Ranch Hand) and crop destruction operations came in for their share of discussion. In mid-1963, control of crop destruction was tightly held at the Washington level. On 19 June, the Embassy Saigon proposed an operation which involved about 3000 acres. "We (General Harkins and Minister Truehart) urgently requesting this discretionary authority in order to minimize delays so that greatest possible crop area could be hit before conclusion overall military operation toward mid-July." Both Truehart and Harkins were "satisfied that this area is Viet Cong controlled, and that Viet Cong do not repeat do not have nearby alternative sources of food."

The use of napalm was also the center of controversy; however, it was somewhat more loosely controlled than was crop destruction. State felt that "political considerations would suggest limiting use napalm to high priority targets which (are) clearly Viet Cong installations."

In response to a query from the Embassy Saigon, State responded:

"Concur discretion in use napalm. To extent control can be exercised, (it) should be left with Task Force Saigon. However, as you are well aware there are special political aspects in its use."

"Request State and Defense be advised in time to approve in advance any operations which in your judgment are of size or type likely (to) have significant political repercussions."

The VNAF had observed the results which could be obtained from napalm and had arrived at the conclusion that it was an effective weapon. While some elements in the U.S. remained unconvinced as to the desirability and essentially of its use vis-a-vis U.S. political interests, the VNAF officially . . . requested that this type of weapon be fully used whenever it seems to be necessary for the purpose of operational missions."

The continuing and ever-changing restraints continued to plague the USAF/VNAF efforts to achieve operational effectiveness. Particularly, the various events within the RVN, and the attitudes of its government and its people influenced the prosecution of the war against the Communist insurgents. Such incidents as the bombing of the Presidential Palace in February 1962; the maturing of the Buddhist unrest in the late summer of 1963; and the coup of 1 November 1963, which deposed the Diem government, brought the joint air operations to a temporary but disruptive halt.

Immediately following the bombing of the Presidential Palace, (27 February 1962) in what was eventually interpreted as an attempt to assassinate President Diem, the VNAF was grounded. Only FARM GATE aircraft were available to respond to calls for help against Viet Cong attack. Two days later the VNAF A-1H squadrons were released for operations but were allowed to carry ordnance no heavier than 20mm. Subsequently, Colonel Vinh informed General Anthis that all restriction on VNAF strike aircraft would probably be removed by 5 March.

The alleged repression and persecution of the Buddhists during August of 1963 further confused the issues and detracted the RVN military efforts. The U.S. Embassy reported a conversation with General Khiem,

Chief of Staff of the General Staff of 21 August. "In answer to a specific question, Khiem said that all general officers, in unison, had lately become convinced that if situation (Buddhist problem) were to continue few weeks longer, morale of Army would seriously deteriorate. . . ."

Adding religious objectives to the military objective—progress toward which was, at best, not going well—increased the scope and complexities of the joint RVN/US problem and, in effect, opened a "second front" for the GVN. The GVN was then faced with an internal political conflict as well as an external military conflict.

The coup of 1 November directly resulted from the preceding events. The VNAF, under Colonel Ky who had assumed command, fully supported the coup. The U.S. Air Attache noted, "Most VNAF pilots now bedded down in Alert Room. T-28's at Tan Son Nhut bombed and ready to go. FARM GATE standing by for Viet Cong outpost attacks. . . ."

Plans written in 1962 to saturate the countryside with air-ground actions to seek, destroy and fragment the Viet Cong effort, were approved by the Diem government in February 1963. These plans were initiated 1 July and built up to approximately 15,000 actions during August. With the deterioration of the RVN political situation, emphasis was turned from offensive military action to the maintenance of the government's own existence. The coup wrote "finis" to these plans. This complete and dangerous diversion of VNAF/USAF objectives was accentuated by the potential exploitation of the situation by the DRV.

At the start of the coup, the VNAF had assumed control of all aircraft including USAF aircraft. However, as of 0900L on 2 November, the Air Attache learned that the VNAF "had relinquished control of all USAF aircraft and had, in fact, asked USAF to maintain and support the battle against the Viet Cong to maximum of their capability as they were all on alert status in support of coup operation." At 1655L, on 1 November, AOC (joint VN/USAF manned) advised the COC, 2d Air Division, of instruction from Colonel Ky that U.S. aircraft would not be permitted to takeoff unless on approved rescue or operational necessity missions. Forty minutes later, at 1735L, grounding of USAF aircraft was lifted.

With the fall of the Diem regime, General Harkins, in a message to JCS, stated:

" . . . The big job now, and the entire interest of my people and me, is to get the new team focused on the Viet Cong immediately. We buckle down to this at once."

The crucial question remained unanswered at the end of 1963. Would this radical procedure for effecting governmental change correct the debilitating disease which had afflicted RVN's prosecution of the war—or would it merely exchange one syndrome for another, leaving the disease unchecked?

The beginning of 1964 saw the stage set for further restrictions, relaxations, additions, and changes to the rules of engagement in efforts to meet the exigencies of changing political and military policies. Compliance with these policies and rules was not enhanced by activities of the Fourth Estate.

While violation of the Geneva Accords did not become a serious Press issue, the issue of the USAF flying combat missions was raised—many times. The official U.S. position stipulated that a Vietnamese crew member had to be aboard; that all flights were conducted for the purpose of training the VNAF; and, that comprehensive training sometimes involved combat missions—

with the USAF airman in an instructional role.

Certain reporters had received information, allegedly from a U.S. military source (and subsequently confirmed by VN armed forces sources) that FARM GATE aircraft, in many cases, spearheaded ground operations with bombing missions against the Viet Cong. Also, it had been reported to them that there were now two air forces operating in the RVN against the Viet Cong, "the GVN Air Force and, secondly, American units (FARM GATE) controlled and operated by USAF." Ambassador Nolting replied that it was incorrect to say the U.S. was "spearheading" the grand assault. "In training the VN Air Force in operation of T-28's, a new plane to them, we are giving on-the-spot training which often involves training under combat conditions, but that in no case do U.S. pilots operate alone; purpose and objectives being the training of GVN pilots in combat operations." Nolting labeled as "fake" the charge that there were two Air Forces in the RVN. The reporters indicated that they were satisfied with these responses and the discussion made the reports considerably less "sensational."

Countering the Communist insurgency in the RVN had proven to be extremely difficult, complex and vexing. A composite of diverse influences existed—political, psychological, sociological and military. The interaction of these variables had determined the relative effectiveness—or ineffectiveness—of joint RVN/U.S. efforts. However, change—an immutable characteristic of progress—continued.

On 5 March 1964, the Chief of Staff, USAF, directed TAC to deploy four T-28's and necessary personnel to Udorn for a period of six months, on TDY basis. Prior to their arrival, Ambassador Unger had recommended that the restraints imposed by the United States on the use of aircraft and bombs by the RLAF be relaxed and greater discretionary authority given. He proposed their use for reprisal against aggressive actions and for interdiction of build-ups for attack. The JCS supported Ambassador Unger's proposals and recommended even stronger action. They recommended that:

1. Missions assigned should be offensive as well as defensive.
2. Restrictions on the use of napalm should be removed.
3. First priority on interdiction missions should be inbound convoys.
4. Considerations should be given to use of United States and third country forces to provide air support in Laos.
5. U.S. aerial reconnaissance could contribute much in view of the limited capability of the RLAF.
6. The SAW detachment being deployed to SEA could provide substantial assistance in training and advice to the RLAF.

These views were forwarded to the State Department. On 20 March, the State Department advised Ambassador Unger that a limited number of bomb fuses could be released to the RLAF, since the proposed use of bombs could be considered in support of "responsive counter-attacks to regain ground lost to the Pathet Lao and as reprisal in response to Pathet Lao attack." This was the first time the RLAF had been permitted to maintain custody of any bomb fuses.

In March 1964, several modifications were made to the MACV Directive 62. Vietnamese crews were no longer required on missions flown by U.S. marked, unarmed reconnaissance aircraft, although they could be used on any mission which might be facilitated by the use of VN observers.

With reference to border flights, aircraft were not authorized to cross RVN borders

"without diplomatic clearance obtained through the Air Attache, American Embassy, or the Embassy of the country concerned," and even then aircraft were not authorized to fire on or across the borders. Air support activities for border outposts (fire support, reconnaissance, transportation evaluation, supply, etc.) was authorized under the same conditions.

The distances from the borders at which aircraft could normally operate were also changed. Where the border was determined by a river or vehicle route, or if a river or vehicle route was inside and along the border and located within 1000 meters of the border, the maximum operating limit of the aircraft was the river or vehicle route. In other areas, aircraft were limited to 2000 meters from the border when aircraft were directed by a forward air controller (FAC) and 5000 meters when not so directed. All aircraft were required to remain south of an imaginary line parallel with and 5000 meters south of the Ben Hai River separating North and South Vietnam. Restrictions on visual and photographic mission aircraft could be waived under certain MACV provisions. However, the JCS authorized the Air Force to fly armed F-100 missions up to and along the Mekong River where it constituted the Thai-Laotian border. Authority was not granted to make incursions into Laos.

F-100 pilots were instructed that aircraft would be armed during all operations except air refueling training, but that a safety pin would be retained in the trigger and the trigger safety switch kept off to prevent inadvertent firing. Although specific rules of engagement had not yet been approved for these operations, pilots were instructed that they retained their inherent right of self-defense and were authorized to take such measures as were necessary to protect themselves should they be subjected to hostile action.

On 17 May 1964, Communist forces turned against the Neutralists who were co-located on the Plaine des Jarres (PDJ). An overt intervention decision was made by the United States to bolster the Neutralist forces and to serve notice to the Communists that the United States was determined to back the legal government. It was decided that a reconnaissance effort might provide a means of proving that Viet Minh and Chinese Communists were assisting the indigenous Pathet Lao. Such evidence could be presented to the International Control Commission.

The first action in the buildup of this U.S. reconnaissance effort was a CINCPAC alert to Carrier Task Group (CTG) 77.4 on 18 May, to be prepared to conduct a show of force and reconnaissance over Laos. Air Force elements were already present in Southeast Asia. A reconnaissance task force (RTF), nicknamed Able Mable, was in place at Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam. F-100 Super Sabres were located at Clark AB, Philippines. . . .

On 18 May, the JCS authorized the first missions, which were flown by USN aircraft. The USAF flew its first mission "during the daylight hours" of the next day. The proposal that low-level reconnaissance flights be initiated with two daylight and one night mission to be flown each week was made by MACV. A further recommendation was that strikes against any targets discovered as a result of these reconnaissance missions would be made by unmarked VNAF or RLAF T-28's. The next option was strikes by marked USAF and Farm Gate aircraft, followed by a final option of USAF/USN strikes. The reconnaissance effort was formally christened on 22 May 1964 when JCS assigned the nickname Yankee Team to it.

Until the May attack against the Neutralists, the RLAF possessed only four T-28's, plus a few non-tactical aircraft, and its aircraft were restricted to the use of rockets and guns. On 17 May, with the PDJ attack in its second day, American Ambassador Leonard Unger (then Ambassador to Laos) authorized the use of 100 and 500-pound bombs against the attacking forces.

The initial efforts of T-28 or other aircraft operating over Laos were confined to preplanned missions, based on the best intelligence and a system which would allow the Air Force to react to field requests. Rules of engagement and authority to strike had to be resolved at the earliest point if the Air Force effort was to be effective.

A continuous program of reconnaissance in Laos was authorized by the JCS in a message to CINCPAC on 25 May. The Joint Chiefs also made it clear that overflight of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was absolutely not authorized. CINCPAC added that the Yankee Team program had to be responsive to the requirements of the U.S. team in Laos, COMUSMACV, CINCPAC, the JCS and higher authority. Thai bases were not to be used under any circumstances and coordination between the operating forces was to be effected locally. COMUSMACV designated the Commander, 2d Air Division (Major General Joseph Moore), as coordinator between the Air Force and Navy. General Moore was given the authority to suggest but not to compel Navy actions. He assigned the Navy all targets on the MACV target list located north of 18 degrees 30 minutes for planning purposes.

The question of joint US/VN crews on Farm Gate aircraft was raised in May 1964, when 2d Air Division was asked by the Chief of Staff, USAF, to explain its use of VNAF pilots on Farm Gate missions. The 2d Air Division replied that, since November 1962, VNAF pilots had not flown on Farm Gate aircraft but that basic VNAF airmen were used for the task. A VNAF non-commissioned officer had the job of scheduling and controlling basic airmen who stood alert in the ready room adjacent to the 1st Air Commando Squadron operations room. There were "infrequent" occasions when the non-availability of VNAF airmen required the cancellation or delay of a mission. The 2d Air Division pointed out that the presence of the 1st Air Commando Squadron had contributed significantly to VNAF effectiveness by setting an example for the VNAF in the number of sorties flown, flying hours, and in the professionalism of the squadron itself.

On 20 May 1964, the JCS, in a message to CINCPAC, reaffirmed that the U.S. policy in Vietnam was that the U.S. military would not take part in combat. An exception was made in the case of Farm Gate aircraft, although these could only be used to fly bona-fide operational training missions against hostile targets in order to prepare VNAF personnel for an eventual "take over" from the USAF.

The JCS also stated that helicopters in the theater were for use as transport only and their weapons were for the protection of vehicles or passengers. U.S. Army helicopters would not be used as a substitute for close support air strikes. U.S. military personnel assigned as advisors would be exposed to combat conditions only as required in the execution of their advisory duties. This statement of the JCS on the employment of Farm Gate aircraft and U.S. Army helicopters was one of several actions during 1964 which helped resolve the question of a proper mix of U.S. Army and USAF aircraft in the theater. During 1962-63, the absence of clear-cut directives in this

area served as a limitation upon USAF activities in Vietnam.

On the 29th of May, General Moore sent a message to PACAF requesting that he be given authority to employ U.S. aircraft and crews for search and rescue (SAR) as he "deemed necessary in the event U.S. aircraft were downed over Laos (Yankee Team missions)." He did not receive a reply until 6 June when a Navy aircraft was shot down. The pilot ejected successfully. According to Colonel Robert F. Tyrell, the Air Attache in Vientiane, three requests were forwarded to the Ambassador asking the U.S. pilots be sent in to provide close support for the rescue helicopters. By the time authorization came through, the rescue helicopters had both been shot up and Navy Lieutenant Charles Klusman was a prisoner of the Pathet Lao.

On 4 June, the Secretary of State requested that the frequency of Yankee Team flights be cut back to one or two days per week, supplemented by demand flights related to specific objectives. CINCPAC agreed with this request but added that, in his estimation, the main purpose of Yankee Team was to provide the intelligence vital to decision making. In the South, reconnaissance flights were needed to keep tabs on Communist supply routes from the DRV into South Vietnam through Laos.

Scoring higher in the world's attention that this undercurrent of debate was the harsh reality of Lt. Klusman's mishap and, on the following day, the loss of another Navy aircraft. On 6 June, the day before the mishap, the JCS directed CINCPAC to:

"... Be prepared to fly two low-level reconnaissance sorties as a single flight over Laos on the Plaine des Jarres area on 7 June. Schedule eight fighter bomber aircraft as escort with optimum mix of weapons for AAA suppression. Escort aircraft are authorized to employ appropriate retaliatory fire against any source of anti-aircraft fire against recon or escort aircraft. Reference AMEMB Vientiane 081121Z, coordinate timing of operation and area to be covered by recon operation underway 7 June. Suggest Kitty Hawk resources be employed if operationally feasible. Mission should not overly Khang Khay or Xieng Khouang..." It was one of these escort aircraft which was shot down. This pilot was recovered.

Later that day, the JCS told CINCPAC that it was necessary that the Communists be taught that the United States was going to conduct this reconnaissance program, and use force if necessary. Therefore, a strike force of eight F-100's staging from Tan Son Nhut was to strike the antiaircraft installations at Xieng Khouang on 9 June. After the strike, pilots reported direct hits on the target.

CINCPACFLT reinforced this determination with a message to units under his command directing that there be a minimum of two escorts per recon aircraft. CINCPAC was still not able under the prevailing rule to go all the way in deterring the enemy. He directed, on 18 June, that there be no use of either napalm or cluster bomb units (CBU).

Yankee Team flights were an "on again, off again" proposition during these early days. On 12 June, Ambassador Unger reported to the State Department that Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma had agreed to the continuation of the flights. Souvanna requested that nothing be said to the press about this or the fact that escorts were being used. Ambassador Unger presented two "compelling" arguments for publicly acknowledging use of escorts: (1) to assure congressional and public opinion that recon planes be adequately protected and (2) by public mention of escorts to forcefully

signal Hanoi and Peking which would not be nearly as effective if we appeared to be trying to suppress this information. Souvanna then volunteered that he wanted maximum use made of the RLAF T-28's to interdict supply routes and destroy, on the ground, those supplies already in place. The Ambassador reported, "there is no question in the Prime Minister's mind that violations by Pathet Lao/Viet Minh justify actions already underway and perhaps more, but he insists, for political reasons, that we must avoid going on record acknowledging action and thus giving Communists both propaganda fuel and pretense." He concluded the message by stating: "We have to assume always that RLAF forces incapable of standing up to PL/VM if latter really meant to push through, conceivably with air support (there is, of course, always risk that Communists will also introduce aircraft).

Five messages concerning escorts, during this period, were significant. First was a 16 June JCS message which authorized weather reconnaissance flights prior to the actual Yankee Team photo mission. It also authorized flak suppression by the fighters, low level only, in advance of the reconnaissance aircraft. Commander of TFG 77.6 asked CINCPAC on 18 June if he was right in the assumption that "escort" included any available attack on fighter aircraft. CINCPAC replied that he was correct. General Moore sent a directive to the 33d Tactical Fighter Wing element at Da Nang on 18 June ordering that two F-100's be maintained on alert at all times and to be prepared to put two more on 15 minute and four on one hour alert. The final of the five messages was a CINCPACFLT decision to allow Navy forces to use the "Snake Eye" bomb.

PACAF announced on 20 June that Thailand based USAF assets could be used for SAR. Two days later the Pacific Air Rescue Center at Tan Son Nhut informed PACAF that the procedures for coordinating rescue resources had been established. The H-34's could be scrambled through the Air Attache's office in Vientiane or by the HU-16 aircraft that was always in the area whenever U.S. aircraft were operating in Laos.

The Navy had EA-3B aircraft available for electronic intelligence gathering (ELINT) missions. CINCPACFLT put a hold on their use on 26 June until intelligence sources could verify whether fire control radar was present in Laos. JCS finally gave the execute order on their use on 30 June.

A few days later, CINCPAC spelled out the JCS policy on rules of engagement:

a. When weather permits, reconnaissance aircraft will utilize medium altitude levels above effective hostile ground fire.

b. Route reconnaissance will normally be conducted at medium altitude.

c. Low level reconnaissance will be authorized when medium level reconnaissance will not give satisfactory results. Areas of known strong antiaircraft will be avoided.

d. Low level reconnaissance against areas of strong antiaircraft will be authorized only for specific cogent reasons, on a case by case basis when the requirements are of sufficient priority to warrant the risks involved.

e. In cases of missions flown at medium altitudes, retaliatory fire is authorized if the reconnaissance or escort aircraft are endangered by ground fire.

f. In cases of missions flown at low level and the reconnaissance or escort are fired upon, retaliatory fire is authorized either on the first pass with the reconnaissance aircraft or by circling back and conducting subsequent passes.

g. In cases of missions flown at low level against areas of strong antiaircraft, flights

will be escorted and escorts are authorized to employ best operational techniques to minimize risk, which, when authorized by JCS, may include attack of known anti-aircraft positions in advance of the reconnaissance aircraft where suppression of ground fire is considered essential for the safety of the reconnaissance aircraft.

Using the policy set forth by JCS, CINCPAC went on to provide further guidance:

a. Operational missions should be planned and conducted to emphasize minimum risk to planes and crews consistent with the achievements of desired objectives.

b. As a general rule, reconnaissance missions should be conducted at medium level. Medium level is defined as an altitude above the level of expected hostile ground fire.

c. A differentiation must be made between routine and priority requirements. The determination of priority should be made by Ambassador Vientiane or by COMUSMACV based on intelligence requirements. COMUSMACV must evaluate the urgency of the requirement against the known risks of weather, terrain and hostile fire that must be accepted in accomplishment of the missions. This urgency or lack of urgency should be indicated for each requirement submitted to CINCPAC and will also dictate the operational commanders for the conduct of the mission.

d. In Laos there are areas that are free of hostile ground fire and other areas where hostile ground fire will be expected. Most of these areas are known to you. In scheduling missions over areas where hostile ground fire is not expected, low-level coverage can be conducted if weather precludes coverage at medium levels and if risks involved with the hazards of weather and terrain at low altitude are acceptable. However, when missions are to fly over areas where effective hostile ground fire can be expected, schedule the mission at medium level. In those cases due consideration should be given to requesting use of suppressive fire if considered essential to the safety of the mission.

The Air Force wanted greater freedom to schedule low-level flights, as required. CINCPACAF recommended the removal of restrictions to permit such flights. Although CINCPAC agreed with CINCPACAF as to the need for low-level missions, he did not feel the time was right to ask for full authority to fly them. He believed overall authority could be won in time, but not until authorities at higher levels were convinced of the advantage of low-level reconnaissance. Until then, permission to fly at low-level would have to be obtained separately for each mission.

The continued success of the Viet Cong in South Vietnam, the successful Pathet Lao/Viet Minh offensive on the Plaine des Jarres, and the critical political conditions which existed in both the RVN and Laos painted a grim picture of the U.S. effort in Southeast Asia in mid-1964. The U.S. COIN effort in South Vietnam was not achieving its objectives. The insurgents increased in numbers and capability and extended their control of the South Vietnam countryside, largely due to successful infiltration from NVN into the RVN. In Laos, the enemy had taken over practically all of the PDJ by the end of May and threatened Muong Soui, where the bulk of the Neutralist forces were located with no avenue for orderly withdrawal. The Royal Laotian Government had little popular support and owed its existence, primarily, to U.S. backing. The government of Vietnam was faced with popular discontent, stemming mainly from Buddhist dissidents and a people tired of years of war.

Despite U.S. military efforts, the continuing influx of Communist personnel and ma-

teriel into Laos and South Vietnam brought conditions in these two countries to a dangerous imbalance. Since 1959, an estimated 20,000 officers, men and technicians were known to have infiltrated into South Vietnam and another 17,000 probably came in according to the U.S. State Department.

The Communist forces in Laos were stopped from expanding their area of control beyond what it was in May 1964. Yankee team reconnaissance flights over Laos and air strikes by RLAF T-28's (and, later, by USAF jet aircraft) were the major contributing factors in curbing enemy activities.

In South Vietnam, the mid-1964 situation was also grim. Fighting under practically the same rules as were in effect when the United States stepped up its assistance in 1961, the government was making little progress against the Viet Cong. The Diem coup in November 1963, and the Khanh coup in January 1964, left an aftermath of political instability that practically stopped pursuit of pacification programs elaborately drawn early in the year. The USAF, which, in the spring had grounded its B-28's and T-28's, was in the process of receiving A-1E aircraft and only a handful were available for combat in June and July. The month of July was the worst and bloodiest of the war—for both U.S. and Vietnamese forces—as the Viet Cong pushed their campaign to peak intensity, apparently to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva accords.

The Honolulu high level strategy meeting, in early June, to line up a new approach to the war, the change in command of both military and political leadership of the U.S. effort, and tough diplomatic warnings to North Vietnam all signified the opening of a new phase of U.S. participation in the war.

Plans for the stepping up of U.S. efforts dominated MACV activity during July to the point where the MACV staff was significantly detracted from its vital pacification mission in the RVN. General Westmoreland, on 12 July, urgently requested a TDY augmentation which would permit manning of an operations war room 24 hours a day. Yankee Team missions in the Muong Soui and PDJ areas, in support of Operation Triangle were authorized by the JCS on 20 July. The aircraft could fly at medium level, with the exception of one which could go at low altitude if weather permitted. The escort aircraft could retaliate if either the recon or escort aircraft were endangered by hostile fire. On the low-level flight, the aircraft could retaliate on the first pass, if fired upon, and then circle and strike again.

Toward the end of the month, PACAF and CINCPACFLT both expressed concern to CINCPAC about suppressive fire. PACAF considered use of suppressive fire by Yankee Team aircraft most desirable. The message suggested that a combination of counterbattery and preplanned interdiction strikes be used against the "improving" Communist anti-aircraft fire. CINCPACFLT said that suppressive fire was needed for low altitude missions, and while not 100 percent effective, it would keep gun crews from firing with impunity. It was also felt that the authority to order suppressive fire should be left with the "on-the-scene" commander.

Although Yankee Team operations over Laos and USAF support of the RLAF T-28 operations signified an escalation of the conflict in Southeast Asia, the events of early August, in the Gulf of Tonkin, triggered a sudden upsurge in air activity. The attack on the U.S. destroyers Maddux and Turner Joy (August 2 and 4) and the subsequent U.S. Navy strikes on four NVN installations (August 5) helped a lot of pieces fall into place in the complex plans for defend-

ing Southeast Asia. First, the movement of USAF jets into the RVN was carried out with justification.

A system for U.S. control of air defense and the employment of air in out-of-country operations got approval from the RVN government.

For the U.S. Air Force, the Tonkin Gulf incidents were the start of a new emphasis on air power in the counterinsurgency struggle.

More significant, perhaps, than the retaliatory strikes, was the deployment of USAF strength to Southeast Asia following the Tonkin attacks. PACAF was alerted to dispatch two squadrons of B-57's from Clark to Bien Hoa on August 5. At the same time, it was to alert one F-105 squadron to move from Yokota.

It was also told to alert one RTF of six F-101's to deploy from WestPac to Tan Son Nhut. Deployment alert orders went out also to other CINCPAC units, involving the Marines and the 173d Airborne Brigade.

On the morning of the 5th, General Khanh, in a meeting with General Westmoreland, agreed to allow the B-57's and F-102's into the RVN. He also said that the VNAF, along with all Vietnamese armed forces, was on alert status. He said that 25 percent could be off the ground in 30 minutes and the rest in 45 minutes. The RVNAF was ready to attack North Vietnam if they attacked the south, and they would also attack Cambodia under similar conditions.

Actions were taken in several other areas to prepare for the new situation. With the increased possibility that a retaliatory attack by NVN in South Vietnam might follow, CINCPAC asked its commands to study the air defense needs. It noted that the rules of engagement had two voids: (1) No rules for intercept, pursuit, or destruction of hostile aircraft over Thailand and, (2) no rule for allowing aircraft intercepted over Vietnam to be followed outside the RVN.

To prepare for a possible movement of Communist troops across the 17th Parallel, or into Laos, COMUSMACV recommended, on 6 August, that medium-level and low-level photo recon flights begin over NVN.

CINCPAC amplified his rules of engagement in mid-August 1964. He said:

1. In view of fighters in North Vietnam, you are authorized to arm Yankee Team escort aircraft for air-to-air combat, especially in areas where DRV aircraft could be expected to cross the Laotian border.

2. Number, type, ordinance load and tactics of escort aircraft will continue to be determined on individual mission basis. This information will continue to be included in OP-00 reports for long-range plans and OP-1 reports for individual mission approval. The following rules of engagement apply for Yankee Team operations in Laos.

a. If the reconnaissance or escort aircraft are fired upon by ground fire, retaliatory fire is authorized either on the first pass with the reconnaissance aircraft or by circling subsequent passes by escorts.

b. If the reconnaissance or escort aircraft are attacked by hostile aircraft, immediate and aggressive measures are authorized including hot pursuit, but only to the DRV/Laos border.

c. When authorized by JCS on individual mission basis, attacks to known anti-aircraft positions in advance of the reconnaissance aircraft is authorized where suppression of ground fire is considered essential for the safety of the reconnaissance aircraft.

CINCPAC went further into rules of engagement on 21 August when he informed tactical commanders that authority to

launch Yankee Team weather reconnaissance missions had been delegated and did not require approval from higher headquarters. Weather recon missions were authorized as required, provided they were flown at altitudes and in areas where they would not be subject to hostile ground fire. No photography was permitted on these flights.

Regarding the OP procedural messages, CINCPAC told his subordinates that, under current ground rules, missions required approval by State, Defense and JCS. Missions had to be flown exactly as listed in the OP-00 and approved by JCS/CINCPAC. If deviations were desired, they had to be submitted as an OP-00 MOD and the mission was not to be flown until the request for deviation was acted upon.

Shallow, unescorted photo penetration into Laotian border areas were approved by the JCS on 25 August. These missions were to be flown at medium altitudes to obtain coverage of specific targets of interest to MACV and were not to exceed one mission every 48 hours. On 15 October, permission was given by the JCS to fly a maximum of two missions per day during the period 15-31 October, in order to complete the terrain study. Missions were flown unescorted and at medium or high-level altitudes, with the 2d Air Division providing SAR support.

Relaxation of the rules of engagement to allow normal Farm Gate operations with either a VNAF student pilot or VNAF observer aboard was agreed to by Sec Def on 25 September. This was in response to a request from the JCS to change several Farm Gate rules. The JCS, in addition to asking for "observers," sought a change of the Farm Gate mission to include combat support as well as training, authorization for scrambling Farm Gate aircraft for immediate requests with only the U.S. crew aboard, and changing the markings on Farm Gate aircraft from VNAF to USAF. The SecDef authorized only the use of "observers" considering the other changes as "not being in the best interest at the time."

Near the end of Sept, 1964, . . . gave the RLAF approval for use for its T-28's in the proposed interdiction strikes along Route 7. These aircraft were authorized for use in high-cover support, flak suppression roles and SAR operations. Armed Yankee Team recon missions were also authorized to strike targets beyond the capabilities of the RLAF T-28's.

In an embassy telecon from the Ambassador in Bangkok to the State Department (October 5th), the Ambassador summarized guide lines for using Thal-based USAF assets. Briefly, they included photo reconnaissance over Laos; armed escort for photo reconnaissance over Laos; SAR operations in Laos; armed escort and suppressive fire for Laotian SAR; air defense of Thal airspace with hot pursuit over neighboring borders authorized; and, in the event of direct Chinese Communist intervention, any use of Thal-based air power as needed.

A final planning meeting for air strikes against targets in the Panhandle was held at MACV Headquarters on 9 October. Representatives from 2d Air Division, MACV, U.S. Embassy Vientiane, and 7th Fleet attended. At this meeting, the Air Attache, Vientiane, said the RLAF would go against 13 targets, including Mu Gia Pass on 14 October 1964. This would be done whether or not the U.S. provided any requested CAP or Yankee Team strikes. The term Yankee Team in relation to strikes against targets was a CINCPAC action of the Yankee Team mission which considered the armed in armed race attacks as part of the overall package. Its authority was not granted for CAP aircraft to fly over Laos, such cover would be provided by aircraft orbiting over

the BVN and Thailand. There was no question about the automatic launch of U.S. jets from Thailand or South Vietnam in support of SAR operations or air in an ordinance with the new rules of engagement.

CINCPAC reported that U.S. close air support for RLAF operations in Laos was authorized, using forces named in Vietnam or aboard aircraft carriers. The Ambassador to Laos approved Yankee Team operations north of 20 degrees and east of the Nam Hou and Nam Hou Rivers on 28 October.

In late October, renewed recommendations for approval of Yankee Team strikes against Route 7 were made and the first USAF interdiction mission was finally approved and flown. These interdiction missions, later termed Barrel Roll, were not authorized alternate targets when flown at night.

Shortly after the Viet Cong morning attack on Bien Hoa, on 1 November Ambassador Taylor, concurring with the ICS plans for counteractions, and with an endorsement from COMUSMACV, strongly recommended that retaliatory air strikes be undertaken jointly with the RVN. COMUSMACV wired that he knew of no specific Viet Cong target in the RVN which would constitute an appropriate reprisal. While there was a constant search for such a target, and with some limited success, none were found justifying a mass air attack.

While there were enough VNAF/Farm Gate aircraft in the RVN to launch reprisal attacks in the immediate future, COMUSMACV considered it "highly desirable" that he have in-hand authority to use USAF augmentation forces when and if required. To reduce congestion of bases in the RVN and improve the U.S. posture in Southeast Asia, OSD in early November 1964 was considering an increase in the number of U.S. aircraft based in Thailand. Ambassador Martin, in Bangkok, was asked by OSD on 2 November to get Thai government authority for the movement of aircraft in and out of Thai bases as CINCPAC may desire and for increased use of Thai aircraft on Yankee Team escort missions. However, on 7 November, Secretary of State Dean Rusk advised that the Royal Thai Government was not to be approached on the use of Thai-based aircraft until further instructions were issued.

Following the downing of two USAF aircraft in a three-day period (18-21 November) the rules of Yankee Team operations were changed again. As a result of the crashes, the JCS immediately set 10,000 feet as the new minimum for Yankee Team missions. Authority for low-level missions had to be approved on an individual basis. The U.S. Ambassador in Laos was gratified by this decision and recommended that any flight authorized for low-level be individually approved by the Embassy in Vientiane.

CINCPACAF considered that JCS restriction of flight to 10,000 feet would only result in significantly less effective reconnaissance operations in Laos and would deny U.S. agencies the intelligence necessary for both military and political planning. Any additional restrictions, if applied to tactical operations, he said, would further decrease the capability for timely response to priority visual and photo reconnaissance requirements.

As the Yankee Team effort cut down enemy daylight activity and increased night movements, there was a need for a night photo-capable aircraft which could keep the enemy off balance and crimp his nocturnal activity. There were two RB-57's in Vietnam and two more enroute in December which were IR configured and capable of night work. The RF-101's had a limited night capability using a pod for carrying flash car-

tridges, but possessed no self-contained navigation system. All the Yankee Team night photography and the day-and-night ELINT recon operations had employed carrier based RA-3B's, RF-8's, and EA-3B aircraft. These aircraft were restricted to minimum altitudes of 15,000 feet using flash bombs instead of flash cartridges. This restricted the night photo recon to aircraft with bomb bays and eliminated the RF-type aircraft for night operations since flash bombs could not be carried externally due to their sensitivity. In view of these deficiencies in the night recon capability, CINCPAC asked the JCS for an Air Force strike RTF package of four RB-66B's and two RB-66C's to be deployed to Clark to augment the Yankee Team forces in SEA. These aircraft could operate under the rules then in effect.

On 20 November, CINCPACFLT granted authority to COMSEVENTHFLEET to schedule RA-5C aircraft for day as well as night Yankee Team missions. Guidance for employment was a list of specific "do nots." "Do not schedule missions against heavily defended targets unless specifically directed to do so. Do not schedule the RA-5C for weather recon missions. Select altitudes giving a reasonable margin of safety above ground fire envelopes."

Ambassador Unger (Vientiane) was obviously unimpressed by the Air Force's arguments concerning altitudes and approval for Yankee Team missions. In a 27 November message he said that various sensor systems allow aircraft to operate just as effectively at medium altitude levels as they operate at low, providing periods of weather promise good ceiling and visibility. The message concluded, "Embassy reserves right to comment on all Yankee Team missions."

On 14 Dec 1964, the first of the Barrel Roll missions was flown, resulting in strikes against a bridge and a group of buildings on the east approach. Ambassador Sullivan (Laos) wired the Secretary of State on 18 December that he was disturbed by two aspects of this mission. First, it was his understanding that the bridge was not a target of opportunity unless enemy forces were moving on it. This was a RLAF target and could have been hit by RLAF T-28's that day. The Ambassador felt this pointed up the need for more coordination. Secondly, according to the Ambassador, photos showed houses destroyed on the east approach to the bridge which could well have been civilian dwellings. He added:

. . . . Either I have a serious misunderstanding of rules of the game for these Barrel Roll missions or else there has been a serious failure in coordination of a type which could cause us some significant headache. . . .

CINCPAC wired the JCS the next day that he concurred with Ambassador Sullivan's views that the bridge, per se, was not a target of opportunity unless enemy forces were moving on it. The possible civilian houses, he added, appeared to be RLAF Target No. 25, which was a military installation. However, he did not consider this a target of opportunity in the absence of any observed PL/VM activity. To avoid future misunderstandings, he reported, he was instructing his operational commanders that targets of opportunity were confined to unmistakable military activity of a transient or mobile nature and that fixed installations were to be struck only in connection with attacks on clearly identified military convoys and military personnel or when prebriefed as a secondary target. Yankee team procedures were to be used for all future operations.

Prior to the second series of Barrel Roll flights, 2d Air Division requested and received approval to fly recon aircraft with the strike group with the recon aircraft authorized to fly below 10,000 feet at optimum altitude to get photos of the type and quality necessary to assess immediate strike results. If the recon aircraft had to descend, escort of CAP aircraft would support them. Like the first mission, napalm was not authorized on these flights, nor were strike aircraft to be launched from Thailand bases.

On 15 December, AC-47 aircraft were introduced to combat, which was to result in additional rules of engagement to provide for their utilization.

Another request by MACV for the use of two Thai-based F-105's to escort strike recon aircraft on the second series of Barrel Roll missions was disapproved by CINCPAC on 22 December. CINCPAC said that the intent of Barrel Roll was to limit strike forces of our aircraft for other than Thailand bases. The addition of the two F-105's would raise the number of aircraft to six and would not comply with the ground rules laid down by "higher authority."

At the close of 1964, 2d Air Division published a compilation of the Rules of Engagement summarizing prohibitive and permissive air actions in force at that time:

ANNEX 1—INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND AIRSPACE OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS

1. U.S. Forces are authorized to attack and destroy any vessel or aircraft which attacks.
2. Hot pursuit into territorial waters and airspace as may be necessary and feasible is authorized.
3. Hostile forces and installations, other than those actively engaged in accordance with these rules, which are encountered outside the confines of RVN and Thailand will not be attacked except as necessary for self defense and only to that extent.
4. To pursuit is authorized into CHICOM territorial waters and airspace.

ANNEX 2—REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (RVN)

1. U.S. Forces are authorized to engage and destroy hostile aircraft encountered within the boundaries of RVN.
2. Hot pursuit may be conducted as necessary and feasible into North Vietnam (DRV), Laos, Cambodia, and other international waters not to include CHICOM territory or territorial waters.
3. Hostile forces or installations, other than those actively engaged in accordance with these rules, which are encountered outside the confines of RVN, will not be attacked except as necessary for self defense and only to that extent.

ANNEX 4A—AIR DEFENSE OF LAOS

1. U.S. Forces positioned in RVN may be used for air defense in Laos when authorized by the Commander 2AD or his authorized representative.
 - a. Information on any action taken under this authority will be provided to JCS by flash precedence message.
2. U.S. air defense forces are authorized to engage and destroy hostile aircraft in Laos. Hot pursuit may be necessary and feasible over RVN
 - a. Hot pursuit into North Vietnam and Cambodia is not authorized except when actually engaged in combat.
 3. Unless specifically authorized, U.S. air defense forces are not authorized to attack hostile forces or installations, other than those committed against, unless attack first, and then only to the extent necessary for self defense.
 4. Definitions of a hostile aircraft and hostile acts are the same as those defined in paragraph 4 (basic attachment) with the following additions:

a. A hostile aircraft is one which is visually identified, or designated by the U.S. Director of an AOC or his authorized representative, as a Communist bloc or Cambodian aircraft overlying Laos territory and committing a hostile act.

ANNEX 4B—YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS—LAOS

1. *Medium level escort:* Retaliatory fire is authorized if reconnaissance or escort aircraft are endangered by ground fire.
2. *Low level escort:* If reconnaissance or escort aircraft are fired upon, retaliatory fire is authorized either on the first pass with the reconnaissance aircraft, or by circling back and conducting subsequent passes.
3. *Low level escort against areas having strong AAA:* Escorts are authorized to employ the best operational technique available to minimize risk which, when authorized by JCS, may include attack on known AAA positions in advance of reconnaissance aircraft where suppression of ground fire is considered essential for safety of the reconnaissance aircraft.

ANNEX 4C—RESCAP OPERATIONS—LAOS

1. RESCAP aircraft will not enter the area of the distressed crew member(s) unless requested by the Rescue "On-Scene-Commander" or Rescue Control.
2. If rescue helicopters are fired upon, RESCAP aircraft will take action to suppress ground fire after the helicopter(s) departs the area of ground fire.
 - a. If ground fire is coming from the vicinity of the distressed crew member(s), RESCAP aircraft will insure that return fire will not endanger friendlies on the ground.
 - b. If the crew on the ground can be seen and ground fire is preventing helicopters from approaching close enough for pick-up, RESCAP aircraft between the enemy positions and the distressed crew member (s) as a screening action for the helicopters.

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

1. When requested by the U.S. Ambassador to Laos, CAP is authorized to provide top cover for RLAF T-28 strikes in Laos by CINCPAC TS message 140843Z Oct 64, "Corridor Ops Laos", and IAW JCS 9117, "Definitive Rules of Engagement Applying to Laos." This applies only to authorized pre-briefed targets in Laos and to the provision of navigational assistance to RLAF T-28's and Yankee Team aircraft assigned to obtain BDA of attacked targets. JCS 9117, "Definitive Rules of Engagement Applying to Laos" applies with the following exception: Suppressive or retaliatory fire against AAA is not authorized.
2. Should CAP aircraft be diverted for RESCAP, current SAR rules will apply.

The problem of finding targets visually after dark presented another factor leading to special restrictions and limitations compounded in the rules of engagement. This situation was amply illustrated in the unfortunate bombing of the village of Ban Tang Val, several miles west of Route 23 and just south of Route 9 in the central panhandle of Laos. Although actual damage to the village was slight, and there was evidence that high speed aircraft not associated with the Barrel Roll mission had attacked the village prior to the Navy strike, the incident caused considerable concern in Vientiane and Washington.

Although General Ma, RLAF Commander, representing the Lao Government, accepted apologies from American officials, he was insistent that new limitations be placed on future Barrel Roll missions, both day and night, and that targets of opportunity be restricted to vehicle and troop movements spotted on or near authorized recon

routes. Future Barrel Roll operations were to be the exclusive preserve of the RLAF.

Several restrictions were placed on early Barrel Roll missions, commencing 12 February 1965, which do doubt served to offset the effectiveness of the program somewhat. Early missions were limited to small number of strike aircraft and were sparsely spaced. A period of 72 hours was initially required between armed reconnaissance missions (later reduced to 48 hours), and the use of napalm as a weapon was prohibited, although there were advocates for its use. Overflight of NVN was not permitted and a two-mile buffer zone was established along the Laos/North Vietnam border. In February, MACV recommended that all such restraints be closely monitored since they created unnecessary restrictions for the tactical commander responsible for mission accomplishment.

The sterile interval required between missions in the early months, although reduced from 72 to 48 hours, resulted in mission delays and created scheduling problems. The requirement that the JCS give final approval of all Barrel Roll missions also limited the scope of the early Barrel Roll program. Fleeting or mobile targets, pinpointed by such intelligence sources as FAR and Meo forces, road watch teams and had to be left to the RLAF T-28's until the establishment of Bango/Whiplash missions in mid-1965.

A lack of low-level photo reconnaissance photography over Laos was another example of early restrictions affecting air operations. CINCPAC considered low-level oblique and vertical photography essential in locating and confirming dispersed and concealed targets. He recommended low-level reconnaissance, by Yankee Team aircraft, to obtain the required intelligence. Reflights by Steel Tiger/Barrel Roll aircraft, merely to obtain BDA, also had to be approved by higher authority. MACV felt that the three-day waiting period for approval of reflights gave the enemy ample time to remove the evidence, especially where mobile targets were concerned. MACV wanted provisions made in the original operations order to allow reflights to obtain BDA when necessary, without the necessity for obtaining further approval.

The long-awaited approval for the use of napalm in North Vietnam was finally granted and used in the 15 March strike against the Phu Qui Ammunition Depot. The following day (16 March 1965), to provide operational flexibility on future strikes, the JCS authorized strike missions against the NVN on a weekly basis, with strikes to be executed at any time during a seven-day period. Those targets not struck during the period could be carried over into subsequent weeks.

CINCPAC further relaxed the ground rules for the four-week Rolling Thunder program, 17 March-13 April 1965. Thai-based planes could now be used. U.S. forces could fill out VNAF requirements. Enough aircraft could be used to achieve a high damage level. Random armed recon missions, employing 4-8 aircraft, plus suitable CAP and flak support were authorized. U.S. strikes were not required in association with VNAF missions. Armed recon of highways and railways to strike rolling stock was authorized after strikes. Flak and CAP aircraft could expend on rolling stock and military vehicles. Low-level and medium altitude BDA recon was also authorized.

In late March, according to CINCPAC, the U.S. was transiting between a situation where the U.S. was not involved in a large war with the NVN and/or CHICOMs and a situation where large U.S. forces were actually engaged in combat. In this latter case,

U.S. military daily missions; larger numbers of aircraft were assigned to individual targets; the use of napalm permitted when approved by the American Ambassador to Laos; removal of the two-mile buffer zone; low-level photography and more flexible target assignments were provided for. However, many old limitations were replaced with new ones and political restraints were a never-ending problem in the Laos interdiction operations.

Other photo reconnaissance problems were raised by the August 1964 prohibition of accomplishing photographic reconnaissance on weather flights. Second Air Division said that such a restriction did not permit the best use of its aircraft assets. The division added that the JCS were unaware of the restrictions and thought it might not be in line with the latter's thinking. In late January, 2d Air Division informed 13AF of failure in past efforts to obtain approval from MACV and other agencies up the line of authority. The division then asked 13AF to seek permission to photograph targets of opportunity during YANKEE TEAM weather missions. It was not until September that CINCPAC notified COMUSMACV that the rules barring photography had been waived and photos could be taken.

Following several weeks of command and control discussions among CINCPAC, CINCPACFLT and COMUSMACV, the arguments were closed by CINCPAC when, in a message to COMUSMACV, it was stated that the controlling agency for Yankee Team operations would be CINCPAC. Contained in this decision was CINCPAC's statement of YANKEE TEAM rules of engagement: "Reconnaissance flights may be conducted at medium or low-level . . . Retaliatory fire by escorts authorized except against the towns of Sam Neua, Khang Khay or Xieng Khouang. Use of suppressive fire not authorized unless AMEMB Vientiane coordinates and JCS approval is obtained . . . The Air Force continued to press for freedom in applying suppressive fire ahead of reconnaissance flights into heavily defended areas.

By September, the policy had changed only to the extent that approval came from the U.S. Ambassador in Vientiane and CINCPAC.

Another restriction which was detrimental to Yankee Team was the prohibition against use of napalm on escorts. Second Air Division operations personnel considered this to be an outstanding weapon for use against AAA positions, but its use was specifically disapproved. (Use of CBU-2A munitions was authorized by JCS 8899/August 64.)

Rules of engagement appeared to be quixotic—trucks sighted by escorts on Yankee Team missions were immunized to attack, while those same trucks, sighted by Barrel Roll aircraft, could be destroyed.

Steel Tiger missions, begun 3 April 1965, were to be conducted under the same general ground rules as Barrel Roll with a notable exception—napalm could now be used when authorized by the Ambassador to Laos.

Approximately two months after the Steel Tiger operations began, COMUSMACV clarified and consolidated previous message traffic on Barrel Roll/Steel Tiger ground rules for operating units. One of the restrictions, the observance of the two-mile buffer zone, was lifted by the Ambassador to Laos a few days later. The message spelled out the following operating procedures:

Barrel Roll:

1. Choke point missions were authorized to conduct armed route reconnaissance and

attack targets of opportunity along all approved routes in both BR and SL areas, in addition to their primary missions.

2. Day reconnaissance missions could crater roads along all approved RLAF route segments in both areas—this included all choke points—to dispose of ordnance in the event weather or other operational factor prevented strikes against pre-briefed targets.

Steel Tiger:

1. Not allowed to penetrate BR areas in search of targets of opportunity.

2. Choke point missions could conduct armed reconnaissance or strikes against targets of opportunity along approved routes in the SL area in lieu of primary targets.

3. Could crater approved roads and choke points, within the area, to dispose of ordnance.

Barrel Roll/Steel Tiger:

1. When operating in the SL area both were directed to comply with strict radar flight-following and navigational procedures.

3. All bridges located within route segments authorized for road cratering could be hit, but bridges outside of these segments could not unless they were assigned as primary targets.

4. Secondary targets could be struck before attacking the primary.

5. Approved areas could be used to dump ordnance. (However, there were no authorized jettison areas in Laos except approved target areas such as roads authorized to be cratered and established choke points.) If emergency required jettison in other than a target location, a "safe" site would be selected and the jettison reported as soon as possible.

As the air strikes worked northward in NVN, a request was made for strikes above 20 degrees. This request was approved commencing with the 11-17 June 1965 Rolling Thunder operations.

On 1 October 1965, all Steel Tiger missions were ordered to be discontinued until further notice by the Air Attache in Vientiane. The ban on Steel Tiger missions also applied to Rolling Thunder flights with alternate targets in the SL area. Barrel Roll missions in Northern Laos were not affected. This stringent action followed on the heels of an unintentional strike in an RLG-controlled area. A flight of SL aircraft, due to a navigational error, strafed a fish trap and a bridge, damaging both and wounding two civilians and four soldiers.

Interdiction operations were curtailed sharply during October. Second Air Division pointed out that difficulty encountered in positively identifying targets and armed reconnaissance routes, and suggested the possible use of RLAF forward air controllers in future Steel Tiger operations, similar to procedures established in the successful Bango/Whiplash close air support program. Early in November, the Air Attache in Vientiane informed CINCPAC that he was making every effort to get General Ma to remove the restrictions placed on Steel Tiger by convincing him that the weight of effort needed along Route 92, east of Savanavane, was beyond RLAF capability. However, he said that he hesitated to predict when SL missions could be resumed.

The restrictions placed on Steel Tiger operations were lifted later in November. On the 22nd of that month, 2d Air Division, after recounting several minor infractions of the SL ground rules, directed the tactical fighter wings involved to make an immediate review of targeting for the heavy schedule for 22 November. Brigadier General George P. Simler, Director of Operations, 2d Air Division, told responsible commanders, ". . . Air operations in Laos are extremely

sensitive. It is absolutely imperative that your aircrews do not expend munitions outside of approved areas. There have been six instances since 20 November that violated the rules of engagement. Laos is being utilized as a staging base for NVN (North Vietnam) military personnel and supplies into SVN (South Vietnam). Continued violations will jeopardize U.S. authority to attack enemy forces before they can engage our ground forces. You are responsible for the conduct of your strike crews and their compliance with (the) rules of engagement. There is no excuse that is acceptable for any attack outside an approved area . . ."

SAR operations, at this time, were also affected by restrictions on suppressive fire. If a pilot of an SAR aircraft flying low cover believed that a downed airman was endangered by ground activity he had authority to attack. He could also attack AAA positions, in a flak suppression role, while helicopters were attempting recovery. No other authority for suppressive fire was indicated.

At this time, the southern half of the Steel Tiger area was reconstituted as Tiger Hound in an effort to speed up the validation of targets sighted in that region.

A special set of rules applying to Barrel Roll/Steel Tiger, since the beginning of those operations, were extended to Tiger Hound. Aircraft employed on these missions were permitted unlimited armed reconnaissance along all motorable roads within a specified area of the Laos panhandle but only targets of opportunity within 200 yards of the road could be struck. Targets beyond this 200 yards limit or anywhere outside the specific geographical area could only be struck if they had previously been approved RLAF targets, or were targets marked by RLAF FAC's. Infiltration trails or way-stations could not be attacked and napalm could not be employed.

Ambassador Sullivan (Laos) made it clear that there would be no relaxation of the rules of engagement and proposed to confine efforts to the special zone east of allene from the intersection of Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam to UTM coordinate XD 8716.

The rules of engagement and the restrictions on targets in the Tiger Hound, Steel Tiger, and Barrel Roll programs were slowly being moderated, as indicated by a JCS message of 3 December in which the Joint Chiefs stated that Washington's approval was no longer required for preplanned missions.

As things stood, however, all planned targets had to be coordinated and validated by AMEMB/USAIRA Vientiane and placed in one of three categories: Priority Alpha—All targets having some residual value that may be attacked without further Vientiane coordination except inclusion in the daily OPREP 1; Priority Bravo—Inactive status, those targets already destroyed, abandoned or having very low residual value; Priority Charlie—Hold status, those targets that may not be struck for political or military reasons.

Although Tiger Hound aircraft were allowed to perform unlimited armed reconnaissance along the roads and motorable trails within the TAOR, they could not hit villages or built up areas, regardless of military value, without having that target validated by Vientiane or the RLAF. Even with the elaborate communications equipment aboard the ABCCC, including the single side-band radio, target validation took an agonizingly long time. In early December, it was proposed that the system be streamlined. Authority was obtained to have two RLAF officers attached to the Tiger Hound task force, to ride in the C-130 ABCCC and

act as observers, with on-the-spot approval authority for any targets detected. Colonel Groom said:

"... This has worked out very successfully to date—much better than we thought at first. If the Lao observer is in doubt whether to strike the target or not, he has a single side-band radio capability and can call the Laotian Air Force headquarters and have them make the decision. When we first started the program, this happened many times, but since we have been working some months in the area and the people have become more acquainted with the area, we have received approvals almost immediately..."

In the closing months of 1965, the rules of engagement governing strike operations in North Vietnam (Rolling Thunder) included the following:

a. JCS targets previously struck could be re-struck without prior authorization (excluding locks, dams, and that portion of Target 52 which was formerly Target 38).

b. Strike sorties were limited to 1200 for each 14-day cycle, with additional sorties authorized if necessary to destroy SAM installations, trucks, rail stock or NVN naval craft.

c. Military targets of opportunity, in the vicinity of target areas (and crafts or units firing upon aircraft enroute to or from missions) to be destroyed.

d. Targets of opportunity situated outside the armed reconnaissance area were not to be struck if within 25nm of China border, 30nm from the center of Hanoi, or 10nm from the center of Haiphong.

e. Those JCS targets authorized in paragraph "a", above (and with the same exclusions), could be attacked by aircraft returning from missions (including Barrel Roll and Steel Tiger aircraft overflying NVNO if those targets lay in the armed reconnaissance area and were suitable as jettison areas.

f. Aircraft overflying Laos were authorized attack on RLAF targeted road segments in Laos.

g. Pre-strike, concurrent and post-strike reconnaissance authorized.

h. MIGCAP, screen aircraft, and other appropriate elements were directed to engage in combat (including SAM suppression) when required to protect strike forces.

i. When engaged in immediate pursuit, U.S. were not authorized to attack NVN air bases from which enemy aircraft were operating.

j. Attacks on populated areas to be avoided during strikes against any target (including those developed by armed route reconnaissance).

k. Flight paths of strike and armed reconnaissance missions to be planned so as to preclude approaching closer than 20nm to the China border.

l. CINPAC was authorized to assign alternate missions to Barrel Roll and Steel Tiger aircraft in the Rolling Thunder area.

EPilogue

U.S. military operations in Southeast Asia have been marked by a variety of political and operational constraints. Self-imposed restrictions on the application of military power is almost certain to remain an essential feature of our national policy. The nature of the conflict in Southeast Asia and the policy objective of conveying to the enemy the limited nature of our response, even while we conduct air strikes on his territory, require careful consideration of the restrictions to be adopted. A constraints policy must be fashioned which will minimize the risk of major escalation but which also will permit use of enough measured force to assure attainment of our objec-

tives—to check NVN support of insurgency in South Vietnam and Laos.

The rules established for conduct of air operations to date have taken a number of forms. These have included geographic and political restraints; limitations on the size, frequency and altitude of flights; and restrictions on weapon types employed. In combination, they have posed a challenging, sometimes frustrating succession of problems for the commanders and staff officers charged with the planning and conduct of an effective campaign. Gradual modification of the constraints policy has occurred during the reporting period and some of the more restrictive rules which applied to earlier armed reconnaissance and strike missions have been relaxed. Several of the constraints that still exist, however, limit the capability of our forces to conduct a campaign that will achieve the desired objective. The repeated discussions and exchanges which have been generated at all levels by these constraints have centered mainly on the specific prescriptions rather than on the fundamental policy considerations which underlie them.

GLOSSARY

AAA—Antiaircraft artillery.
 ABCC—Airborne command and control center.
 ACG—Air Commando Group.
 ACS—Air Commando Squadron.
 ACW—Air Commando Wing.
 AD—Air Division.
 ADVON—Advanced Echelon.
 AIRA—Air Attache.
 AMEMB—American embassy.
 AOC—Air Operations Center.
 ARVN—Army of the Republic of South Vietnam.
 ASOC—Air Support Operations Center.
 BDA—Bomb damage assessment.
 BR—Barrel Roll mission.
 CAP—Combat air patrol.
 CBU—Cluster bomb unit.
 CHICOM—Chinese Communist.
 CHMAAG—Chief, Military Advisory and Assistance Group.
 CINPAC—Commander in Chief, Pacific Area.
 CINCPACAF—Commander in Chief, Pacific Air Forces.
 CINCPACFLT—Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet.
 COIN—Counterinsurgency.
 COMUSMACTHAI—Military Advisory chief, Thailand (MACTHAI).
 COMUSMACV—Military advisory Chief, South Vietnam (MACV).
 CRP—Control and reporting post (CRC—Control and Reporting Center).
 DOD—Department of Defense.
 DRV—Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam, NVN).
 ELINT—Electronic intelligence.
 FAC—Forward air controller.
 FAR—Laotian ground forces.
 GVN—Government of South Vietnam (SVN).
 ICC—International Control Commission.
 JCS—Joint Chiefs of Staff.
 JOS—Joint General Staff (South Vietnam).
 JOC—Joint Operations Center.
 MACTHAI—See COMUSMACTHAI.
 MACV—See COMUSMACV.
 MIGCAP—MIG defense combat patrol.
 Navaid—Navigational aid.
 NVN—North Vietnam.
 OPREP—Operations report.
 PACAF—Headquarters, Pacific Air Forces.
 PDJ—Plaine des Jarres (Plain of Jars, Laos).
 PL—Pathet Lao.
 RA—Reconnaissance/Attack.
 RB—Reconnaissance/Bomber.
 RESCAP—Rescue combat patrol.
 RF—Reconnaissance/Fighter.
 RKG—Royal Cambodian Government.
 RLAF—Royal Laotian Air Force.
 RTF—Reconnaissance task force.
 RVN—Republic of South Vietnam.
 SAM—Surface to air missile.
 SAR—Search and rescue.
 SEA—Southeast Asia.
 SL—Steel Tiger mission.
 TAOR—Tactical area of responsibility.
 TFG—Task Force Group (Naval Carrier).
 TSN—Tan Son Nhut Air Base, South Vietnam.
 VC—Viet Cong.
 VM—Viet Minh.
 VNAF—South Vietnamese Air Force. ●

VIETNAM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT DECLASSIFIED—1966-69

● Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, in August 1967 the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, then chaired by the Senator from Mississippi, Mr. STENNIS, conducted extensive hearings relative to the conduct of the air war against North Vietnam. The subcommittee heard the most knowledgeable and qualified witnesses, including both military leaders and their civilian managers. After gathering the basic and fundamental facts, the subcommittee issued a report on August 31, 1967, which was strongly critical of the rules of engagement restricting our aviation forces and preventing them from waging the air war in a manner best calculated to achieve results from a military standpoint.

The subcommittee concluded: That the air campaign has not achieved its objectives to a greater extent cannot be attributed to inability or impotence of air power. It attests, rather, to the fragmentation of our aimight by overlying restrictive controls, limitations, and the doctrine of "gradualism" placed on our aviation forces which prevented them from waging the air campaign in the manner and according to the timetable which was best calculated to achieve maximum results.

The Preparedness Subcommittee found that Secretary of Defense McNamara and the Johnson administration had "discounted the professional judgment of our best military leaders and substituted civilian judgment in the details of target selection and the timing of strikes." In the judgment of the subcommittee, these civilian managers had "shackled the true potential of air power and permitted the build up of what has become the world's most formidable anti aircraft defenses * * *." The subcommittee found the rules of engagement were directly attributable for the fact that "during the entire year of 1966 less than 1 percent of the total sorties flown against North Vietnam were against fixed targets on the JCS target list."

Mr. President, until recently most of my colleagues and the American public had not had an opportunity to see the text of these detailed restrictions put on our Armed Forces during the Vietnam war. Only recently has the last of these rules been declassified. The concentration of the air war for so long well south of the vital

Hanoi-Haiphong areas, leaving the important targets untouched, the existence of large sanctuaries, the failure to close the port of Haiphong, the prohibition against a coordinated aerial mining of coastal water lanes of communication with a bombing attack continuously cutting rail and road lines to China, caused a piecemealing of air operations which allowed North Vietnam to adjust to the air campaign by importing war materials from Communist countries through routes immune from attack and then to disperse and store this material in assured sanctuaries. From these sanctuaries North Vietnam infiltrated the material to South Vietnam and Laos. By granting North Vietnam sanctuaries, the rules of engagement allowed the enemy to protect its forces and material, provided it with a military training and staging area free from attack and permitted it to erect massed air defense weapons.

Mr. President, while the air war in Southeast Asia was going on the Air Force was making a contemporary historical examination of those operations. The reports compiled by the Air Force are among the top-secret documents declassified at my request early this year. Last Wednesday, March 6, I inserted such a report covering the years 1960-65.

Today I wish to place in the Record the second of these reports covering the years 1966-69. To use words similar to those which concluded the Preparedness Subcommittee Report of 1967, I do not derogate the principle of civilian control of the military, but I think it should be recognized that once civilians decide on war, the result of placing military strategy and tactics under the day-to-day direction of unskilled amateurs may be greater sacrifice in blood and the denial of a military victory.

Mr. President, I ask that the Project Checo Report on Rules of Engagement from January 1, 1966, to November 1, 1969, be printed in the Record.

The material follows:

PROJECT CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL EXAMINATION OF CURRENT OPERATIONS REPORT (Rules of engagement (U) 1 January 1966-1 November 1969)

(31 August 1969, HQ PACAF, Directorate, Tactical Evaluation, CHECO Division)
(Prepared by Maj. John Schlight)

PROJECT CHECO REPORTS

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia has resulted in the employment of USAF airpower to meet a multitude of requirements. The varied applications of airpower have involved the full spectrum of USAF aerospace vehicles, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, there has been an accumulation of operational data and experiences that, as a priority, must be collected, documented, and analyzed as to current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activi-

ty that would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction, and would provide timely and analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations, was established to meet this Air Staff requirement. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements at Hq 7AF and 7AF/13AF, Project CHECO provides a scholarly, "on-going" historical examination, documentation, and reporting on USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine in PACOM. This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and examination which is being accomplished. Along with the other CHECO publications, this is an authentic source for an assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in PACOM.

MILTON B. ADAMS,
Major General, USAF,
Chief of Staff.

FOREWORD

During the period 1966-1969, there were three categories of rules which controlled the employment of airpower in the Southeast Asia (SEA) conflict. The Rules of Engagement (ROE) were promulgated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and sent through channels to the operational commands. Covering all of SEA, these Rules of Engagement defined: geographical limits of SEA, territorial airspace, territorial seas, and international seas and airspace; definitions of friendly forces, hostile forces, hostile acts, hostile aircraft, immediate pursuit, and hostile vessels; rules governing what could be attacked by U.S. aircraft, under what conditions immediate pursuit could be conducted, how declarations of a "hostile" should be handled, and the conditions of self-defense.

The second set of rules was designated Operating Restrictions, which were contained in the CINCPAC Basic Operations Orders. These rules included prohibitions against striking locks, dams, hydropower plants, fishing boats, houseboats, and naval craft in certain areas; prohibitions against strikes in certain defined areas such as the Chinese Communist (ChiCom) buffer zone or the Hanoi/Haiphong restricted areas; conditions under which targets might be struck, such as validation requirements, when FACs were required, distances from motorable roads.

Finally, Operating Rules were issued the Seventh Air Force for Laos and Route Package I (RP I) since July 1967 when the Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV), delegated most of the operating responsibility in these areas. Operating Rules that had been established, especially for Laos, concerned the use of Forward Air Controllers (FACs), the return of ground fire, the use of the AGM-45 (SHRIKE) missile, restrictions against mine-type munitions, and the requirements for navigational position determination.

Although, in theory, these three types of rules were distinct, in practice, they were almost always referred to collectively as "Rules of Engagement." This report retains this policy, since the formal distinctions were not always honored in message traffic and further, a report unifying the three types of limitations presents a compact picture of the restraints upon airpower that were in existence.

A detailed reconstruction of the many twists and turns of the rules in the period of 1966-1969 is at this point in time both impossible and undesirable. A general pattern of development can be seen and it is this evolution that gives unity to "Evolution of

the Rules of Engagement." At few other points in the conduct of war are national policies and military operations focused as sharply as they appear in the Rules of Engagement. It is fair to say that the rules are national policy translated to the battlefield. Each change, or threat of change, to the U.S. political relationship with other nations, whether Allies, enemies, or potential enemies, was reflected in a corresponding alteration of the Rules of Engagement for the Vietnam conflict. In addition, the rules were often modified in response to local tactical or strategic requirements. Finally, there were a number of cases during these years in which the attempt to improve the image of the war on the home front dictated change. This report attempts to highlight examples of these three sources of change in the Rules of Engagement which illustrate the continuing validity of the maxim that "war is an extension of national policy."

The ultimate story of the political background to changes in the rules must await a detailed investigation of the files at the highest level of government. This report traces their evolution primarily from an operational viewpoint, with only general attempts to link them to political decisions.

Unlike the earlier CHECO report entitled "The Evolution of the Rules of Engagement," this report employs a geographical, rather than a strictly chronological arrangement by treating separately the development of the rules in the three physical areas of U.S. military involvement in SEA: North Vietnam, Laos, and South Vietnam. This arrangement produces a more valuable historical picture for those interested in the restrictions affecting particular air campaigns. Yet, it must be borne in mind that developments in one area often affected the others, particularly in the border areas.

CHAPTER I—NORTH VIETNAM

The policy of gradualism which characterized the Rolling Thunder (RT) bombing campaign over North Vietnam (NVN) since its inception in 1965 continued until the bombing halt late in 1968. The first summer of Rolling Thunder operations over the north (1965) was followed by a bombing moratorium which lasted from 23 December 1965 through 30 January 1966. The bombing pause was designed as a backdrop to a major peace offensive on the part of the United States, but it failed to elicit adequate signals that Hanoi was willing to move the conflict from the battlefield to the conference table. Consequently on 31 January 1966, air attacks on the north were resumed.

It was recognized by military commanders that the limited nature of air operations in 1965, as reflected in restrictive Rules of Engagement, had not produced the desired result of leading Hanoi into negotiations. The bombing halt produced similarly negative results. At the Commanders Conference held in Honolulu between 17-31 January 1966, a stronger approach was suggested. Three tasks were proposed to accomplish the objectives of the forthcoming 1966 Rolling Thunder campaign:

Reduce, disrupt, and harass the external assistance being provided to NVN.

Destroy in depth those resources already in NVN which contributed most to the support of aggression. Destroy or deny use of all known permanent military facilities. Harass and disrupt dispersed military operations.

Harass, disrupt, and impede movement of men and materials through southern NVN into Laos and SVN.

Armed reconnaissance was authorized south and west of a line running due west from the coast at latitude 20° 31' N to longitude 105° 20' E, then due north to a point 30

NM from the ChiCom Border, then southwesterly to the Laotian Border. Air operations north and east of that line (RP VIA and VIB), which is in the area containing the three major water entry ports into NVN and one of the two major RR lines from China, were severely circumscribed. Armed reconnaissance by U.S. aircraft was authorized against naval craft along the NVN coast north of 20° 31' N only if fired upon first by recognized NVN naval craft which were within the 3-NM limit of the NVN coast or offshore islands. Aircraft were to avoid a 30-NM circle from the center of Hanoi and a 10-NM circle around Haiphong. Attacks were forbidden in a zone along the ChiCom Border 30-NM wide from the Laotian Border east to 108° E and 24-NM wide from there to the Gulf of Tonkin. Attacks on populated areas and on certain types of targets, such as hydropower plants, locks and dams, fishing boats, sampans, and military barracks were prohibited. The suppression of SAMS and gun-laying radar systems was prohibited in this area as were attacks on NVN air bases from which attacking aircraft might be operating. In military eyes, these restrictions had the effect of creating a haven in the northeast quadrant of NVN into which the enemy could with impunity import vital war materials, construct sanctuaries for his aircraft, and prop his AAA defenses around the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong.

In a 1967 interview in "U.S. News and World Report", a French journalist and editor, Rene Dabernat, said that Communist China had informed the United States in the spring of 1966 it would not become involved in the Vietnam war, if the U.S. refrained from invading China or North Vietnam, as well as bombing North Vietnam's Red River dikes. Dabernat said that statements by President Lyndon B. Johnson and other U.S. officials demonstrated they had "agreed to these conditions." The State Department replied with a "no comment" to this information, but officials acknowledged that the U.S. had received a number of messages from Communist China through a number of third parties. In the same month, a newspaper article written by Edgar Ansel Mower stated the U.S. had a promise from Red China not to intervene in Vietnam as long as the U.S. refrained from attacking Red China, blockading Haiphong, and invading North Vietnam. In a hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations on 27 January 1967, Secretary McNamara was questioned about this newspaper article. He said, "There is no agreement, formal or informal, with Red China relating to the war in South Vietnam in any form whatsoever that I know of." In the same hearing, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, declared that he had "no other information" on the subject.

The fact that the Rules of Engagement for the Rolling Thunder operation were weighted in favor of the third task (interdiction), and against the other two (disruption of external assistance and destruction of resources), did not escape the attention of the military commanders. At the Honolulu Requirements Planning Conference in June 1966, CINCPAC noted that the two major elements of the January concept for an effective air campaign had not been authorized.

Even while this conference was in session, CINCPAC was recommending to the JCS that the highest priority be given to strikes against POL facilities in NVN. On 22 June 1966, JCS directed that airstrikes commence two days later against seven POL storage areas in NVN including those around Hanoi and Haiphong. The political sensitivity of

this escalation was appreciated by the JCS and the Secretary of Defense and mirrored in the rules set down for the operation. Damage to merchant shipping was to be avoided. Ships in the Haiphong Harbor were to be attacked only in retaliation and only those that were clearly North Vietnamese. The piers which served the Haiphong POL storage areas were not to be attacked if a tanker were berthed off the end of the piers. Measures were to be taken to minimize civilian casualties included the striking of targets only when weather conditions permitted visual identification and through maximum use of electronic countermeasure (ECM) support to hamper SAM and AAA fire control.

Marginal weather delayed the first POL strikes until 29 June. Follow-up strikes against the Hanoi/Haiphong complex were made on 30 June and 1 July 1966. It was estimated that two-thirds of North Vietnam's POL storage capability was destroyed in this three-day period.

The political value gained from strict adherence to the Rules of Engagement during these strikes was illustrated several days later in a letter sent by United Nations Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg, to the President of the Security Council, in which he stated:

"In recent attacks on petroleum facilities every effort has been made to prevent harm to civilians and to avoid destruction of non-military facilities. The petroleum facilities attacked were located away from the population centers of both Hanoi and Haiphong. The pilots were carefully instructed to take every precaution so that only military targets would be hit. Moreover, to assure accuracy, the attacks have been scheduled only under weather conditions permitting clear visual sighting."

On 5 July 1966, President Johnson told newsmen that every precaution had been taken to spare civilians during the raids. At a news conference on 20 July 1966, the President stated:

"The men who conducted the bombings on the military targets, the oil supplies of Hanoi and Haiphong, did a very careful but very perfect job. They hit about 90 percent of the total capacity of that storage, and almost 70 percent of it was destroyed. . . . We were very careful not to get out of the target area, in order not to affect civilian populations."

Throughout 1967, the Rolling Thunder program escalated not only in the skies above North Vietnam, but also as a political issue in the halls of national decision. The Basic Operations Order for RT, issued by CINCPAC on 8 April 1967, contained Rules of Engagement which closely resembled those of the preceding year. Armed recon was authorized from the Provisional Military Demarcation Line (PMDL) norm to the ChiCom Buffer Zone. Use of classified ordnance was not authorized. Locks, dams, fishing boats, houseboats, and sampans were not to be attacked. Coastal armed recon north of 20° 42' N was authorized only against ships that were clearly of NVN registry which were within 3 NM of the NVN coast and which fired first. The 30 NM restricted area and 10 NM prohibited area around Hanoi remained in effect. The restricted area around Haiphong was still a 10-NM circle around the city. Strikes within these restricted areas could be made only against targets specifically mentioned in the Operations Order or the succeeding Executive Orders for Rolling Thunder. When conducting strikes in the Haiphong area, extreme caution was to be taken to avoid endangering foreign shipping. No change was made to the boundaries of the ChiCom Buffer

Zone. Aircraft engaged in immediate pursuit were authorized to pursue enemy aircraft into the Buffer Zone, but in no event closer than 12 NM of the ChiCom Border. However, when engaged in immediate pursuit of enemy aircraft, U.S. aircraft were not authorized to attack NVN air bases from which aircraft might be operating.

The RT Execute Orders during the first few months of 1967 brought about a gradual liberalization of rules and targets. RT 53-54 (Jan-Feb) authorized strikes against dispersed POL and SAM support areas within the Hanoi/Haiphong restricted areas. In April, RT 55 contained an expanded list of targets including the POL storage area, ammo depot, and cement plant in Haiphong, and the RR/Highway Bridge, RR repair shops, and transformer in Hanoi. It also authorized strikes against the Hoa Lac and Kep Airfields east and northwest of Hanoi, but limited these to small and random harassment strikes designed for attrition of aircraft and disruption of support facilities. A strike of about eight attack aircraft or less was considered small. For the first time, aircraft engaged in immediate pursuit of enemy aircraft were permitted to attack airfields. In this case, Hoa Lac and Kep.

These changes to the rules represented a gradual expansion of the bombing phase of the war. For some, however, the expansion was too gradual. In January 1967, CINCPACFLT, in a Targeting Concept Review, stated that the whole RT effort should not be expended on transient targets but that the closing of the Port of Haiphong should be first. During the same month, retired Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, in an interview in Washington, said that he would start the progressive destruction of NVN support and supply bases by closing the Port of Haiphong and other ports. The joint CINCPACFLT/CINCPACAF concept of operations, published in April 1967 for RP VI, noted that:

"The primary objective in denying external assistance to NVN is the closure of the Haiphong Port and, in conjunction with this, the objective of preventing the enemy from diverting his resupply effort to the NE and NW rail line and/or the Hon Gai and Cam Pha Ports. Until authority is received which will allow the closing of the ports, no meaningful military campaign can be launched which will achieve the objective of denying external assistance."

The Secretary of Defense, however, did not share this enthusiasm for denying external assistance to North Vietnam. In his opinion, the limited bombing approach was successful when weighed against its stated objectives. During testimony before Congress in August 1967, the effectiveness of the bombing policy and Rules of Engagement came under discussion:

"Senator Margaret Chase Smith: If you (Secretary McNamara) had read the testimony of the witnesses who have appeared so far in these hearings, you would have noted that they were virtually unanimous in concluding that if the restrictions and prohibitions against certain targets had not been in effect these past two years, the air campaign against the north would not only have been more efficient and effective but more importantly, would most probably have reduced our casualties in the south. Would we in effect have experienced fewer casualties in the south had these restrictions and prohibitions not been imposed against the bombing of the north?"

"Secretary McNamara: Senator Smith, it is my very firm opinion that regardless of what other merit there might have been for following a different practice of air activity

against the north in the past, it would not have reduced our casualties in the south."

Further, it was the Secretary's view that an intensive air campaign designed to interdict completely war-supporting materials might result in a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union. Bombing of the port facilities, he said, or mining of the harbors would seriously threaten Soviet shipping. Mining the harbors would be an act of war requiring advance notice to third parties, who would be justified in regarding this as notice of the existence of a state or war in the sense of international law.

There was justification for sensitivity on this point and for strict adherence to the Rules of Engagement. Two months earlier, on 2 June 1967, an F-105 had strafed the Russian ship "Turkestan" along the NVN coast 40 NM northeast of Haiphong. The subsequent investigation noted that the Rules of Engagement for attacking coastal shipping northeast of Haiphong did not permit attacks on any commercial vessels coming into or moving out of Haiphong Harbor, even though they were within the 3-NM limit. The only exception to this was in case the vessel fired first on U.S. aircraft. In that event, return fire was authorized. The pilot testified that he had received fire from a nearby flak site and thought he was also fired upon by the vessel. He stated there were no identifying marks on the vessel and that he saw no flags.

As a result of this incident, the Commander, Seventh Air Force, in a personal message to each commander, reminded them that airstrikes were not authorized within a 10-NM radius of the Port of Haiphong and that the area within a 4-NM radius of Haiphong was now established as a prohibited area. No strikes were to be conducted, he added, in port areas where incidents involving foreign shipping might occur. In the course of his congressional testimony, the Secretary of Defense made use of the incident to buttress his argument against intensification of the air campaign and the mining of NVN harbors.

With the publication of the Execute Order for RT 57 in July 1967, a major change in targeting took place, for the first time, attacks were authorized against targets in the ChiCom Buffer Zone and within the Hanoi/Haiphong circles. Nineteen targets were identified in the Buffer Zone; 21 within the 30-NM Hanoi circle; and 9 within the 10-NM Haiphong restricted area. Authority to strike additional targets within these areas was added in August 1967, with the guidance that in the interest of obviating charges of escalation, either from foreign or domestic sources, it was desired that these additional authorities be exercised in a measured manner. The rules for these strikes called for the commanders to exercise every feasible precaution in conducting airstrikes in the ChiCom Buffer Zone to preclude penetration of the ChiCom Border and avoid engagements with ChiCom MIGs except in self-defense over NVN territory. Commanders were also to utilize experienced pilots, provide adequate electronic capability and targets were to be attacked only when the weather conditions enabled positive identification of the target. The most active bombing of the year—and of the war—occurred during August 1967.

The ROE contained in the Rolling Thunder Operations Order for 1968, published in December 1967, indicated the forthcoming bombing campaign would remain as limited as it had been in the past, and that the weight of effort would continue to be placed on interdiction of LOCs into RVN from the north. Although armed reconnaissance was once again authorized from the PMDL to the ChiCom Buffer Zone, its implementa-

tion was modified by the earlier restrictions against striking populated areas, locks, dams, hydropower plants, watercraft, sampans, and houseboats. Prohibitions were repeated against attacking naval craft north of 20°42' N and outside of the 3-NM limit of the NVN coast or offshore islands unless fired upon. Authorization was still withheld for aircraft engaged in immediate pursuit to attack NVN bases from which the pursued aircraft might have been operating. The mining of waterways and deep draft harbors north of 20°00' N was forbidden. Prohibited areas remained unchanged: 10 NM around Hanoi, 4 NM around Haiphong, and the ChiCom Buffer Zone.

No ordnance was to be expended in these prohibited areas unless specifically directed in the frag orders. Strike and recon aircraft were authorized transit and immediate pursuit into the Haiphong and Hanoi prohibited areas if operational requirements dictated. In the ChiCom Buffer Zone, flight paths of strike aircraft were not allowed to approach closer than 20 NM of the ChiCom Border east of 108°E and no closer than 30 NM west of that meridian. The flight paths of reconnaissance (Blue Tree) aircraft were not to approach closer than 20 NM to the ChiCom Border. Aircraft engaged in immediate pursuit were authorized to penetrate the Buffer Zone but not the ChiCom Border. SAR and RESCAP aircraft were not permitted to operate closer than 3 NM of the ChiCom Border, except when the risk of engagement was small and there were clear prospects of successful recovery.

The 30-NM and 10-NM restricted areas around Hanoi and Haiphong, respectively, remained in effect. Strikes were authorized in these areas against NVN craft or NVN units which fired upon U.S. aircraft en route to or from missions. Extreme caution was to be exercised in the Haiphong area to avoid endangering foreign shipping. Transit of these areas was authorized as necessary to conduct air operations. Immediate pursuit into the restricted areas was also permitted.

Two control areas existed on the NVN/Laotian Border: (1) a Radar Control Zone (RCZ) encompassing the area within NVN immediately adjacent to the Laotian Border and extending 10 NM into NVN and running from the DMZ northward to 19°30' N and (2) the Laotian Buffer Zone of the same width as the RCZ extending northward from 19°30' N to 22°00' N. The Rules of Engagement for the RCZ prohibited U.S. forces from striking targets unless under positive radar control. In conducting these strikes, aircraft had to be vectored to target coordinates, or to the initial coordinates of an armed recon route and released for mission accomplishment. Conventional aircraft, which were performing as strike/FAC aircraft, were permitted to strike in the RCZ without radar control, if it were not available. Missions flown elsewhere in the NVN, outside the DMZ and RCZ, had to be radar vectored, until the aircraft was positively established as being outside these areas prior to being released for mission accomplishment.

This rigidity of the Rules of Engagement for the coming campaign was the subject of a message sent on 28 March 1968, from CINCPACAF to the 7AF commander. Current restrictions within which U.S. forces must operate in North Vietnam, stated CINCPACAF, collectively represent an impressive picture of the limitations on the effectiveness of forces now in place in Southeast Asia. The present restrictions, disadvantageous to Allied forces operating in an extremely difficult air defense environment, were serving enemy aircraft to advantage.

The total impact of these various self-imposed restrictions was providing the enemy a sanctuary situation which he was using to great advantage in Hanoi, Haiphong, and throughout the LOC structure in North Vietnam. It was inconsistent from a military point of view to build up and reinforce U.S. forces in SVN without major relaxation of existing restrictions on the U.S. air and naval offensive against NVN.

This annual plea for more bombing latitude and for a relaxation of the Rules of Engagement was smothered by a presidential decision three days later. On the evening of 31 March 1968, President Johnson made the twin surprise announcements that he would not be available for the presidential nomination that summer, and that "he had ordered our aircraft and surface vessels to make no attacks on North Vietnam except in the area north of the DMZ where the continuing enemy buildup directly threatens Allied forward positions." The Chief Executive had placed outside the reach of American airpower precisely that area which military judgment considered to be the most essential to strike. On 1 April, airstrikes north of 20° N were discontinued and two days later the line was moved one degree southward. Limited aerial reconnaissance to NVN and the Gulf of Tonkin continued to be authorized. But aircraft operating over the Tonkin Gulf had to remain over international waters at all times. Immediate pursuit of enemy aircraft over NVN territory or territorial waters was not permitted. Maximum care was to be taken not to overfly ChiCom territory.

A JCS message declared that effective at 1300Z (2100H Saigon time) on 1 November 1968, all offensive operations against NVN and the DMZ and within the claimed 12-NM territorial waters would be terminated. The ROE for the post-bombing period were established and permitted immediate pursuit into NVN territorial seas or airspace in response to hostile acts and in pursuit of any vessel or aircraft whose actions indicated with reasonable certainty that it was operating in support of the VC/NVN insurgency in SVN. U.S. naval and air forces engaged in immediate pursuit of the NVN naval and air elements were not authorized to attack other unfriendly forces or installations encountered, except in response to an attack by them and then only to the extent necessary for self-defense. A second JCS message, also dated 1 November 1968, authorized the destruction of SAM and AAA weapons, installations, and supporting facilities in NVN south of 19° N which fired at Allied aircraft from across or from within the DMZ. In a clarification of this rule later in the month, permission to destroy aggressive SAM and AAA sites and facilities in NVN was extended to those which fired at Allied aircraft over Laos.

This ended the Rolling Thunder campaign. In early 1968, just prior to the 1 April 1968 bombing halt, many officials believed the campaign of graduated pressure through the use of U.S. airpower had reached a point which appeared just short of allowing maximum application. Authority had been extended to allow airstrikes to within 10 NM of Hanoi and within 4 NM of Haiphong. All major industrial production had been halted, nearly all of the major bridges had been laid in the water, all airfields except Gra Lam had been attacked, and there was open discussion in the U.S. through the new media to close the Port of Haiphong. In short, NVN was facing another summer season of good weather conditions and increased U.S. airstrike activity. The 1 April bombing halt, and even more so the complete cessation of bombing on 1 November 1968, cut short this development.

Summary of ROE for Rolling Thunder

The Rules of Engagement for Rolling Thunder from beginning to end faithfully mirrored the political aims and limited military objectives of this air campaign. In the strictly military sphere, the ROE established sanctuaries/restricted areas within which airstrikes could not be conducted. Havens were provided within enemy territory which were used to cache, import, replenish, launch attacks, and to use for political propaganda whenever the sanctuary was inadvertently violated. Interrelated target systems were never authorized. The overriding consideration for avoidance of population centers precluded attacks on military targets in important cities such as Nam Dinh and Thanh Hoa. The agricultural sector of the NVN economy was protected. Anti-dike and anti-crop campaigns were not undertaken. Third country shipping was protected to an extent that prohibited attacks or mining activities against NVN's three major ports. Taken collectively these restrictions, while reducing potential effectiveness of airpower, contributed to the national policy as determined by the Commander-in-Chief.

CHAPTER II—LAOS

After the November bombing halt in NVN, the focus of air operations centered more than ever on Laos. The basic American policy toward this country had been set in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy's decision to attempt to neutralize Laos through political agreement, while retaining enough strength among pro-Western and friendly military forces in the Mekong River Valley to protect the flanks of Thailand. The major U.S. military effort was to be concentrated against the North Vietnamese in South Vietnam. This decision to attempt the neutralization of Laos was based largely on the assumption that the USSR and the U.S. shared a common interest in keeping Laos neutral and outside the ChiCom sphere of influence.

By 1966, the conflict in Laos had, in effect, become two wars, each with a somewhat different objective and different Rules of Engagement. In the northern war, the USSR had failed to restrain the NVN. The conflict in the northeastern provinces along the border of NVN was bound up with the traditional Tonkin interest in that area. During the earlier French colonial period, two of these provinces were actually administered from Hanoi rather than from Vientiane. It was not until 1942 that they were turned over to Vientiane and the Laotian entity. The NVN insurgents in these provinces operated through a front, the Pathet Lao (PL), which was controlled from Hanoi. This northern war was one of position and maneuver. The US/Royal Laotian Government (RLG) objective was to take and hold terrain, and in so doing to expand the influence of the RLG throughout northern Laos. By so doing, it was hoped the RLG would be in a position of strength if, and when, it participated at the conference table. U.S. air operations in northern Laos supported this objective.

The other Laotian war, in the Southern panhandle, initially had different objectives. It was directly associated with the NVN support of its operations in SVN and was a war of attrition, infiltration, and interdiction along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The few tribal inhabitants of this eastern mountain area did not front for the NVN—it was completely an NVN operation. NVN soldiers guarded the trail structure; NVN engineers did the road building; NVN coolies carried the supplies down the trail. Whereas the objective of U.S. air operations in the north was the preservation of the flank of

Thailand, in the panhandle, it was the interdiction of supplies which passed from NVN to SVN.

The dual nature of the conflict was reflected by the division of the country for the purpose of air operations into two sectors, the northern Barrel Roll (BR) area and the southern Steel Tiger (SL) region. The line separating these operating areas ran from the Nape Pass (18° 27' N/105° 06' E) on the NVN/Laotian Border, westward to 18° 20' N/103° 57' E on the Thai/Laotian Border. The ROE for both BR and SL were established by CINCPAC and the American Embassy (AmEmb), Vientiane. MACV coordinated with and obtained approval from AmEmb, Vientiane, for the conduct of air operations by PACOM forces and kept the American Embassy in Bangkok fully informed of the use of Thai-based aircraft. Seventh Air Force was the operating agency for airstrikes in Laos and the rules established by the commander were designated as "Operating Rules." By presidential directive, the U.S. Ambassador to Laos was responsible for all U.S. activities in support of the RLG. The key role played by the American Embassy, Vientiane, in determining the Rules of Engagement, helps to explain the nature of the rules during this period.

The BR/SL Rules of Engagement for 1966 and the first two months of 1967 were relatively simple. Seven armed recon areas were created along the NVN/Laotian Border. They were lettered A through G running north to south. Within these areas, U.S. aircraft could strike without further permission any targets of opportunity that were outside villages and within 200 yards of a motorable trail or road. Targets farther than 200 yards from a motorable road could be struck only with permission and under FAC control, or when gunfire was first received from the target. Outside these armed recon zones, fixed targets and targets of opportunity could be struck only if they were validated RLAFF "A" or "B" targets (APP. I), approval had been obtained from the Air Attache, Vientiane, the Assistant AIRA, Savannakhet, or an authorized FAC with a Lao observer on board who possessed validation authority, or if gunfire had been received from the target.

FACs were required under a variety of situations, notably on close air support missions, when called for by the AmEmb, Vientiane, when striking within five KM of the Cambodian Border, and on all night strikes against fixed targets unless they were controlled by ground radar (MSQ). Aircraft without FAC or MSO assistance had to confirm their position by radar or tactical air navigation (TACAN). Prior to entering or exiting SL armed recon areas, aircraft had to establish radio/radar contact with the appropriate ground-controlled intercept (GCI) site. Classified ordnance was prohibited. Napalm could be employed in BR/SL under FAC control, along infiltration routes within the SL area, against validated RLAP numbered targets and against motorized vehicles, but not against truck parks or other targets of opportunity.

The political situation in the north led to restrictions against air attacks on certain areas. Under no circumstances was ordnance to be expended on the villages of Sam Neua, Khang Khal, or Xieng Khouangville even in response to hostile fire. Camp fires and civilian habitations were not to be attacked. Populated areas were to be avoided to the maximum extent possible. Vientiane and Luang Prabang were to be skirted by at least 25 NM; restricted areas with a radii of 10 NM and heights of 15,000 feet were created around the friendly villages of Savan-

nakhet, Attopeu, Thakhet, Saravanne, and Pakse.

Within the restricted Attopeu circle ran Route 110, a major avenue of infiltration. In a meeting held at Tan Son Nhut AB in November 1966 among MACV, 7AF, and AIRA representatives to clarify the Rules of Engagement for Laos, the Air Attache representative said that he had intended no restriction to armed recon along Route 110 within this 10-NM circle. The Basic Operations Order was subsequently changed to allow armed recon within this portion of the restricted area.

During the third week in February 1967, further restrictions were placed on air attacks within the BR area. Nearly all of these restrictions were temporary and were motivated primarily by political considerations. After Soviet questions concerning strikes on Khan Khay had arisen, the rule for that village was strengthened to create a six-NM restricted area around the town. A temporary restricted area was also placed around Xieng Khounaville, because the International Control Commission (ICC) had been invited to the village to discuss USAF bombing in Laos. No armed recon was authorized on the south side of the Nam Ou River because friendly forces were operating in the area.

In March 1967, a major change of zones and Rules of Engagement for the SL area resulted from a series of highly publicized Short Round incidents near the Laotian/SVN/NVN Borders. On 12 February, the friendly Laotian village of Muong Phalane was inadvertently attacked by three F-105 aircraft. The intended target was a highway bridge 24 NM northeast of Muong Phalane. Three Laotian civilians were killed and nine injured. Eleven houses were destroyed and thirty damaged. The incident was an apparent case of target misidentification. Muong Phalane is on the 130° radial of the Nakhon Phanom (NKP) TACAN at 68 NM; it has a bridge in the center of the village. The bridge against which the F-105 flight was fraged was on the 113° radial of the NKP TACAN at 69 NM. The final report of investigation stated that apparently the pilot inadvertently tracked outbound on a heading of approximately 130° and sighted a target which by sheer coincidence was the same distance from NKP as his intended target. The mission was under no outside control such as FAC or Combat Skispot.

Another Short Round incident occurred on 2 March when the RVN village of Lang Vei was struck by two F-4C aircraft. The flight leader's intended target was a group of trucks believed parked alongside a road under the trees. The flight had been released by an airborne FAC to conduct armed recon in the TIGER HOUND area of Laos, along the RVN Border. Six 500-lb. bombs, four LAU-3A rocket pods, and CBU-2 bomblets were expended on the village of Lang Vei which was obscured by the forest canopy. Eighty-three RVN civilians were killed, 170 were wounded, and the village was 60-70 percent destroyed. The attack was made under conditions of reduced visibility caused by haze and the approaching sunset. But the primary cause was navigational error. The flight leader's TACAN was inoperative. A reading taken from the wingman's instrument was misinterpreted. The flight believed itself to be 24 NM from Lang Vei and over Laos rather than over RVN.

In an attempt to reduce the number of these incidents, the SL area was rezoned early in March 1967. (Fig. 3.) The armed recon line was rescinded and four north-south zones were created, each with its own Rules of Engagement. The former TIGER HOUND Special Operating Area along the Laos/NVN/SVN Border was redesignated as

Zone I and remained a free fire area with the same Rules of Engagement as before. The AmEmb, Vientiane, authorized armed recon in this zone without FAC control on all roads, trails, paths, and rivers; airstrikes were allowed against all forms of enemy activity outside 500 meters of active villages. Seventh Air Force, however, insisted on the use of a FAC in Zone I, even though the AmEmb, Vientiane, did not, because "to the guy in the air the line on the map means nothing. He could never be sure there wasn't going to be a violation." This decision was proof of one of the main drawbacks of the new division—its complexity.

Any validated RLAFF "A" or "B" targets, as well as any area from which ground fire was received, could be attacked. Prior to conducting strikes with out FAC control, the pilot had to confirm his position by radar or TACAN as being within Zone I. Aircraft unable to establish a positive fix by use of available navigational aids prior to entering this zone had to abort unless FAC directed. Normally, strikes were not to be made within 1 KM of the known location of friendly teams or units.

ARC LIGHT strikes within Zone I required prior validation by Vientiane based on photo coverage and normal intelligence justification. Mine-type munitions (MK-36, M-28, and Gravel) could be delivered only on selected targets as approved by Vientiane and directed by 7AF; or under FAC control on RLAFF validated targets; or against motorized vehicles; or against an area from which ground fire was being received, unless this area were an active village. No airstrikes could be conducted closer than five KM of the Cambodian/Laotian Border.

Immediately west of this free fire area was Zone II, which stretched from 17° 40' N, south to the Cambodian Border. This corridor was entered from NVN by two of the three major doorways to the Ho Chi Minh Trail—Mu Gia and Ban Karal passes. Since it was more populous than Zone I, the ROE for Zone II were slightly more restrictive. Targets of opportunity could be attacked day or night, as long as they were within 200 yards of a motorable trail or road and outside of villages. Outside of this 200-yard limit targets could be struck only if they were validated RLAFF priority "A" or "B" targets. With the exception of active villages, any area from which ground fire was received could be struck without FAC/MSO control. Searchlights could also be attacked, if it were positively determined they were of the high intensity antiaircraft type and were located in proximity to authorized strike areas. Wide-beam boats and barges which were engaged in military activities could be struck under FAC control.

The next area to the west, Zone III, extended from the point on the NVN/Laotian Border where the northern limit of RP II joined the northern boundary of SL down to 16° 00' N. The entrance from NVN into Zone III was Nape Pass, the third major starting point of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The Rules of Engagement for this zone were even more restrictive than those for Zones I and II. Targets, regardless of their location, could not be struck without FAC or MSQ control. The only allowable exceptions to this rule were areas from which ground fire was received and where high-intensity antiaircraft searchlights were located in proximity to authorized strike areas. Targets outside villages could be struck, if they were within 200 yards of a motorable road or trail. Farther than 200 yards, targets could not be attacked, unless they were either validated RLAFF "A" or "B" targets, approved by one of the AIRAs, or approved by a Lao observer aboard a FAC or Airborne Battlefield Command and Control (ABCCC) aircraft.

The remaining rules were the same as those for Zones I and II.

In the funnel-shaped, northern end of Zone III, a special area was set aside for the training of Road Watch Teams (RWT). No strikes were permitted in this area unless the pilot was in positive radio contact with one of the ground RWTs through a FAC or the ABCCC.

The remaining area was designated as Zone IV. This was the region that contained the bulk of the native population of southern Laos. While the spine of the Annam Mountain Range ran through the first three zones, the fourth zone was largely an area of plains, bounded on the west principally by the Mekong River Valley. The major towns of the Laotian panhandle were located in this region—Savannakhet, Saravane, Thakhet, Attopeu, and Pakse. Since the NVN objective in the panhandle was the creation and maintenance of LOCs running down the mountain range from NVN into Cambodia and RVN, and the U.S. objective was its interdiction, Zone IV was largely ignored by these countries. Consequently, the Rules of Engagement for airpower in Zone IV were the most restrictive of any in SEA. All strikes within this zone had to have the double safeguard of AIRA approval and FAC control. Strikes could be directed only by Raven or Nall FACs. There were two exceptions to this rule: (1) two English-speaking, Lao ground Forward Air Guides (FAGs) in the immediate area of Attopeu were authorized to request and direct U.S. airstrikes without prior AIRA validation; and (2) helicopters or escort aircraft actively engaged in Search and Rescue (SAR) missions could return ground fire, but not outside 1,000 meters in all directions from the exact location in which the SAR operations were being conducted.

Twenty-one miles northwest of Saravane, Route 23, a major link of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, left Zone III and entered Zone IV. The Zone III Rules of Engagement followed it into Zone IV, until it disappeared into the 10 NM restricted circle around Saravane.

Restricted areas remained in effect around the five villages already designated in Zone IV, and to them was added a sixth—Muong Phalane. Aircraft could not approach within 10 NM or 15,000 feet of these towns. A small special operating area called Cricket West (CW) was marked off within Zone IV, twenty miles east of NKP along the Zone III/Zone IV boundary. Within CW, each target had to be validated prior to a strike, either by an airborne Lao FAC or by radio request to the Assistant AIRA, Savannakhet. All strikes had to be under FAC control except when ground fire was received.

Far to the south near the Cambodian Border, Route 110 crossed Zone IV from west to east and then entered Zone I. Although two-thirds of this road was in Zone IV, the Zone I rules applied to all of it.

In the northern war, the three armed recon zones along the Lao/NVN Border, designated A, B, and C, remained unchanged. The Rules of Engagement for these areas were identical to those of SL Zone II. In the rest of BR, outside these armed recon sectors all targets had to be validated and strikes had to be FAC controlled.

Prohibited areas defined by a circle with a 25-NM radius remained in effect around Vientiane, the political capital, and Luang Prabang, the royal capital. No ordnance could be expended within a 6-NM radius from the center of Khang Khay nor on the town of Sam Neua.

No free zone existed in Laos for jettisoning live ordnance. In case of emergency, all ordnance except napalm could be dropped

under visible conditions on any motorable trail, road, ford, or bridge within the BR armed recon areas and Zones I and II in Steel Tiger. Napalm could be jettisoned on certain specified road segments in Laos under radar control.

The total effect of these 1967 changes to the Rules of Engagement was to make them more complex and possibly more restrictive. In usage, some of the rules proved impractical. An example of the restrictiveness of the ROE may be seen in the rule requiring validation of targets. Three major ROE hampered ARC LIGHT operations in central and southern Laos. Strikes could not be made on targets that were within three KM of friendly forces such as RWTs or suspected PW camps. In addition, no ARC LIGHT strikes could be executed within five KM of the Cambodian Border. Finally, there could be no shrines, temples, national monuments, places of worship or active huts and villages within the target area. It was this final rule that created most of the problems for obtaining validation for lucrative ARC LIGHT targets. According to Seventh Air Force records, the average time consumed between identification of an area and the clearance to strike was 15.5 days. A large portion of this time (8.8 days) was used for administrative processing, transmission of the validation request, and awaiting Vientiane's response. Since success of these missions required timely strikes in response to the most recent intelligence available, the existing administrative processes and Rules of Engagement combined to reduce the timeliness and effectiveness of B-52 bombing.

The problem of validation time was thoroughly discussed at a conference at Udorn RTAFB in September 1968. The 7AF figures indicating that it took Vientiane from three to five days to process nominations for strikes, and eight to ten days for renominations, were refuted by the AmEmb representative. Embassy records indicated its response in most cases was within one or two days, except when extensive analysis of friendly personnel or RWT activity necessitated longer periods of time. As a result of these discussions, a decision was made to streamline the validation procedures. The 7AF representative proposed the creation of Special ARC Light Operating Areas (SALOAs), each of which would contain several target boxes capable of being validated en masse. The Vientiane American Embassy representative reluctantly agreed to this proposal. Although validation time rose to 25.5 days (7.0 days at Vientiane) after the creation of the SALOAs, this was partially explained by the fact that larger numbers of targets were validated at once. Validation time continued to be a problem, with tactical as well as strategic airstrikes.

In October 1968, The Air Attache in Vientiane issued a list of rules and restrictions pertaining to the BR area. This list highlighted the complexity which had crept into the Rules of Engagement. JCS-imposed restrictions included those against operating in BR areas Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie within 10 NM of the NVN Border, armed reconnaissance on certain designated routes, College Eye, Hot Pursuit, air operations adjacent to the ChiCom Border, and ARC Light. The AmEmb, Vientiane, controlled ordnance, target validations, PW camp restrictions, defoliation, and ground and Raven FAC operations. Seventh Air Force imposed tactical AF release altitude restrictions for high threat areas, and command and control procedures governing Laos strikes.

The profusion of areas in Laos, the narrowness of the zones, and the lack of outstanding geographical/navigational features

created problems with the new arrangement. In July 1968, the Commander, 7AF, proposed simplification of the rules, so that the ROE for Zone I would be extended to Zones II and III; the Zone III rules would be put into effect in Zone IV and Cricket West. Although these proposals were not acted upon, the problems of complexity and restrictiveness came up at a meeting at Udorn RTAFB two months later. The purpose of the meeting was to iron out the ground rules for the forthcoming COMMANDO HUNT campaign in SL Zone II. Discussions among the Ambassadors to Laos and Thailand the the Commanders of 7AF and 7AF/13AF ranged across the entire spectrum of existing ROE and the problems created by them.

The continuing problem of validation time came up for discussion. Referring to ARC Light strikes, the DCS/Intel, 7AF, commented:

"It took on the average of 5-8 days to get the first ARC Light box validated. However, one ARC Light box for 12 B-52s against the average of 35 truck parks will only give you about a 30% probability of hitting the trucks. So you need 3 boxes for B-52s. And in order to get validation for restrike another 5-8 days are entailed. As a consequence of the whole administrative problem, the need to build these targets and get them off to SAC, we were able to get only a fraction of the effort we wanted. . . . I would hope that in our future discussions we could iron out some procedures that would help us in our next campaign."

The Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence, also stated much time has been lost in Zone II, due to the inability to get validation for Combat Skyspot. The Ambassador to Laos replied that he was unaware of any problems with the validation system and knew that AIRA had validated targets as quickly as six minutes after acquisition. It was his opinion that the existing machinery for validation was good—it was a question of proper usage, and briefing of personnel required to use it.

A major factor hurting the truck kill ratio, in the opinion of 7AF, was the requirement for FAC verification and clearance for strikes against visual sightings. The element of surprise, essential when dealing with perishable targets, was lost due to the overt nature of the FAC mission, which gave the enemy ample warning to evade by driving off the road. The FAC requirement for identification of trucks was unnecessary because "the only ones running around are NVN." The Ambassador replied that some of the Rules of Engagement were not too well understood. In Zones I and II the FAC requirement was not too important and, except for several specific areas of suspected PW camps, could be removed. Two factors made it necessary to continue the requirement for FACs in Zone III. One was the presence there of RWTs and Commando units. The other was the friendly population of the area which provided logistical support to the RWTs.

On the question of munitions, 7AF requested relaxation of some of the restrictions:

Yet, its use was not authorized anywhere in Laos. The Ambassador agreed to refer the question of using the CS agent to higher authority at Washington but, knowing the feeling in the State Department about it, he was sure they would not buy it. Further, given the propaganda aspects of the weapon, he knew that Souvanna Phouma would not be too eager about it.

In Zones II and III, only targets of opportunity within 200 yards of a motorable road could be struck. The Ambassador interpreted the 200-yard limitation this way:

"Many of your [7AF] people have interpreted that to mean that if there's a truck park over 200 yards away from a known road, it's excluded. This is not so. If the truck got from the road to the truck park, it is ipso facto a motorable road or trail. So anyplace that you find a vehicle, you can assume that it got there on something that is fair game. . . . If you find a truck you can assume it motored there, it didn't drop there."

No change in the Rules of Engagement for the Commando Hunt campaign resulted from these discussions.

Cessation of bombing over NVN or 1 November 1968 brought about a change in the rules for the Laotian/NVN Border area. Immediately after the halt, a positive control area 10 NM wide was created inside Laos, along the border, to protect against inadvertent penetration of the NVN airspace. Several days later, the JCS authorized U.S. aircraft "to destroy SAM or AAA weapons, installations, and immediate supporting facilities in NVN south of 19° which fire at our aircraft over Laos."

In December 1968, the requirement for FAC or MSQ control of AC-47 gunships in Laos was waived to permit the accomplishment of the AC-47 mission. During the same month, mine-type munitions, such as the MK-38, BLUs, and Gravel were approved for use in Laos, but only on targets validated by the American Embassy. The importance of Zone II, through which wound a major portion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, was highlighted by a change in the rules pertaining to the use of napalm. Whereas in Zone I, napalm could not be used against gun emplacements unless ground fire was received, in Zone II it could be used against gun emplacements even though ground fire was not received.

A major consolidation of the Rules of Engagement for Laos was achieved in 1969. At an April meeting at Vientiane, representatives of AmEmb, Vientiane, MACV, and 7AF agreed to reduce the four SL zones to two, separated by a line running north-south down the center of the Laotian panhandle. The new division became effective on 11 May. East of this line was a new area designated Steel Tiger East which comprised areas formerly known as Zones I, II, and part of III, and the Special Operating Area along Route 110. The Rules of Engagement for SL/East were essentially the same as those for the former Zone II. Armed recon without FAC control was authorized within 200 meters of all routes when fragged by 7AF or cleared by ABCCC. Targets of opportunity more than 200 meters from a motorable road could be struck only when controlled by FACs and when validated by the American Embassy, Vientiane. Radar bombing was authorized against any targets having prior embassy approval. Ordnance, except napalm and mine-type munitions, could be dropped armed or safe under visual conditions on any road, trail, ford, or bridge.

With the exception of vehicles, it could not be used against targets of opportunity. Mine-type munitions and area denial weapons were authorized as validated and directed by 7AF. No gas weapons could be used in Laos except for use in SAR missions.

Active villages were to be avoided by 500 meters when conducting airstrikes unless fired upon or when high-intensity AA searchlight illumination was received. Ground fire could be returned from any area, except within 500 meters of a confirmed PW camp. F-105 aircraft were authorized to carry antiradiation.

The area west of this line was designated Steel Tiger West and the Rules of Engagement were essentially those of the former

Zone IV. Armed recon was not authorized. All strikes required a FAC or Forward Air Guide. No radar bombing or napalm would be used unless specifically authorized by the AmEmb, Vientiane. Ground fire could be returned only by aircraft actively engaged in Air Force SAR operations. This authorization was limited to an area 1,000 meters in all directions from the exact location in which these operations were being conducted.

The April conference was less successful in changing the Rules of Engagement for the BR area. The Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie areas remained armed recon zones, with the same ROE as in the newly designated Steel Tiger East. In the Alpha area, Route 19 was authorized to be struck. All LOCs in Bravo were approved for armed recon. In Charlie, Routes 6, 61, and 7 could be struck. A Special Operating Area (SOA) northwest of Khang Khai was designated a Free Strike Zone. When fragged or cleared into this Free Strike Zone by ABCCC, aircraft could attack all forms of military activity outside of 500 meters of an active village without FAC control.

The presence of Chinese road construction crews in the northern and northwestern regions of Laos led to the creation of yet another restricted area. Following the 1962 agreement of Laos, the Chinese offered to assist the Laotian Prime Minister, General Phoumi Nosavan, by building roads for him leading from China into Laos. The Prime Minister agreed. For more than five years, no construction took place but, in 1968, the ChiComs began to fulfill their promise and Souvanna Phouma was helpless to stop them. They built a major highway which ran east-west slightly above the 21st parallel from the Dien Bien Phu area in NVN across the top of Laos to the Chinese border near Ban Botene. This in effect separated the northern province of Phong Saly from the rest of Laos. Early in 1969, they were engaged in constructing a road southward toward Pak Beng. To avoid international incidents in this area, U.S. aircraft were prohibited from conducting airstrikes or low level photo reconnaissance missions without special approval of the American Embassy, Vientiane, north of a line along the 21st parallel from the ChiCom border to the western edge of the armed recon area Alpha.

The Buffer Zone along the Laos/NVN border remained in effect with the same Rules of Engagement as before. No strike could be conducted within 10 NM of the NVN border or east of 104° 15' E, between 19° N and 21° 15' E unless authorized by Cincpac and directed by 7AF. Even with this authorization, strikes had to be made under the electronic surveillance of College Eye and under FAC control. Further, College Eye monitor was required for all strikes in Barrel Roll.

A surge of NVN/Pathet Lao (PL) activity in Barrel Roll during the summer of 1969, which was climaxed by the enemy capture on 27 June 1969 of Muong Soui, 90 miles north of Vientiane, brought about a modification of the role of airpower in northern Laos. Prior to this summer offensive, USAF aircraft had been used in Barrel Roll almost solely for close air support of troops in contact. With the fall of Muong Soui and the resultant threat to Luang Prabang and Vientiane, airpower took on the additional role of interdiction; the war in Barrel Roll assumed certain aspects of the war to the south in Steel Tiger.

Two main avenues of supply snaked into Barrel Roll from North Vietnam. Route 7 entered Laos from North Vietnam through Barthelemy's Pass and ran westward through the Plaine des Jarres and on to

Muong Soui. Farther north, Route 6 and its tributaries connected North Vietnam with Sam Neua, the PL headquarters in this northern province, and from there ran south to a juncture with Route 7. In addition to these main arteries, numerous trails and bypasses were being developed to supply the NVN/PL troops in Laos.

At a conference at Vientiane in August 1969, proposals were made for changes to the Rules of Engagement to bring them in line with the full situation. For two months, recommendations and comments followed. In September, the new rules were approved by JCS, and put into effect by Cincpac on 27 September 1969. The areas were realigned so as to be more consistent with cultural and geographical features (Fig. 6). At the same time, the new areas and rules provided for sufficient clearance between friendly forward positions and armed reconnaissance areas.

Barrel Roll was divided into three areas: North, East, and West (Fig. 6). Of the three Barrel Roll North contained the most restrictive rules. No airstrikes nor Yankee Team (tactical reconnaissance) operations were permitted, unless the American Embassy at Vientiane requested them and Cincpac and JCS approved. In Barrel Roll West, all targets had to be validated and controlled either by a FAC or a FAG, or employing all-weather bombing. No ordnance could be dropped on Khang Khai or Phoung Savan. Embassy authorization was required before napalm could be used. The 24-NM prohibited circle around Vientiane was extended to cover the Nam Gum Dam construction project. The circle around Luang Prabang was reduced to 10 NM.

The main NVN LOCs were in Barrel Roll East and the greatest changes in the Rules of Engagement occurred there. The A, B, and C armed reconnaissance areas were replaced with a solid zone to within 10 NM of the NVN border in which armed reconnaissance without FAC control was authorized within 200 meters of all LOCs. Outside the 200-meter limit, strikes had to be validated and controlled by a FAC/FAG. Ground fire could be returned anywhere in Barrel Roll East except into the town of Sam Neua. The total effect of these changes was to simplify the areas and rules and to provide more flexibility to the interdiction effort.

The line separating SL East and SL West was adjusted slightly westward. The rules for these sectors were essentially the same as those established for BR East and BR West, respectively.

The covert nature of U.S. air operations in Laos kept such operations out of the limelight of U.S. public opinion. Accordingly, the Rules of Engagement were shaped less by the need to create a favorable impression at home than by the restrictions laid down by the 1962 agreement and the necessity of avoiding damage to the image of Souvanna Phouma among his people. For these reasons, the U.S. Ambassador to Laos became the focal point in ROE determination.

Between 1966 and 1969, the ROE for Laos shifted from the relatively simple rules in existence before 1967, to more complex ones between 1967 and mid-1969, and back again to simpler arrangements by the end of 1969. The rule that appeared to have created the greatest consternation was the need to obtain validation of the targets from Vientiane and the time required for this validation.

CHAPTER III—SOUTH VIETNAM

The Rules of Engagement for air operations in RVN remained relatively constant throughout the period 1966-1969. These rules were conditioned by the fact that in-country air activity was directed toward

close air support (CAS) of ground forces and by the frequency of combined ground operations involving U.S., Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF), the Army of Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), and the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF). During this three-year period, there was one shift of emphasis worthy of note. As a result of the mounting number of Short Round incidents, particularly during the 1968 TET offensive, the rules issued late in 1968 contained "additional provisions to enhance Short Round prevention."

The agency responsible for the Rules of Engagement pertaining to RVN was MACV, whose directive (525-13) contained the rules for the use of artillery, tanks, mortars, naval gunfire, riverine forces and air and armed helicopter support. The rules governing air support were further specified by 7AF's Regulation 55-49, which laid down the rules for the control of airstrikes and the duties of the FAC and pilots of strike and recon aircraft.

The basic requirement was the approval of the province chief or a higher RVN authority for strikes by U.S. aircraft. This was often tempered by the pilot's judgment at the time of the strike. In Specified Strike Zones—areas designed by MACV—where no friendly forces or populace existed, airstrikes did not require further RVN clearance. Targets could be attacked on the initiative of the US/FWMAF commanders. U.S. strike aircraft had to be controlled, in order of preference, by either a U.S. FAC, a VNAF FAC, or Combat Skyspot. When control by FAC or Combat Skyspot was impossible, targets could be designated by the commander of a ground unit or by the US/FWMAF pilot of an aircraft supporting the ground unit. In addition, targets could be designated by the US/FWMAF/RVNAF pilot of a MedEvac or supply aircraft which was required to operate in the vicinity of a hostile village or hamlet.

One set of rules governed air attacks on villages and hamlets, another controlled strikes within urban areas. Fixed-wing aircraft CAS missions that involved strikes on hamlets and villages had always to be controlled by a FAC and had to receive US/RVN/RVNAF clearance before the attack could be conducted. If the airstrike were not conducted in conjunction with an immediate ground operation, the inhabitants of the village were to be warned of the impending attack either by leaflets or a loudspeaker. Sufficient time was to be provided for the inhabitants to evacuate the village. When the attack was carried out in conjunction with a ground operation, no warning was necessary if the ground commander judged that such a warning would jeopardize his mission.

The ROE for attacks on known or suspected VC/NVA targets in urban areas were necessarily hedged in by greater restrictions to avoid unnecessary destruction of civilian property. In addition to the requirement for FAC control, approval had to be obtained from either the Corps Commander or the U.S. Field Force Commander. This also held true for U.S. airstrikes in support of RVNAF. In all cases of air attacks on urban areas, leaflets and loudspeakers were to be employed to warn the civilian population and to attempt to secure the cooperation and support. The use of incendiary-type munitions was prohibited unless destruction of the area was unavoidable and friendly survival was at stake. AC-47 gunships could be employed without a FAC to fire on targets designated by the ground commander responsible for the tactical situation.

Since the mission of U.S. aircraft operating in-country was largely close air support,

detailed rules were in force to prevent Short Rounds. The FAC had to be acquainted with the exact location of all friendly forces near the target. To do this, he had to have a thorough knowledge of the ground scheme of maneuver and receive the appropriate ground commander's clearance prior to clearing strike aircraft. Friendly forces on the ground were responsible for marking their position for each flight of strike aircraft and for remarking them as often as it was required. The FAC was responsible for marking the target and the ground commander for confirming the accuracy of the target-mark. If in the opinion of either the ground commander, the FAC, or the strike pilot, the target was inaccurately or poorly marked, the FAC was to remark it before the strike aircraft could be cleared to expend ordnance. If the position of friendlies could not be marked due to lack of marking material or for tactical reasons, the FAC was to ask the ground commander to accept responsibility in the event of a Short Round.

The success of a mission depended heavily upon reliable communication and complete understanding among the FAC, ground commander, and strike pilot. The FAC communicated with the ground commander to coordinate marking, receive ground clearance prior to clearing strike aircraft, advise the ground commander of all pertinent aspects of ordnance delivery, and to advise the ground commander when all ground elements were to take protective cover. FAC radio contact with the strike pilot was needed to insure that the strike pilot was given a thorough briefing on all aspects of the mission. The FAC had to supply the strike pilot with prominent ground references from which he could ascertain surface distances, friendly locations in relation to the target, characteristics of the target area, local weather conditions, final clearance for the strike, or discontinuance of the mission.

When an airstrike was conducted in support of an ARVN unit the rules called for the FAC to be assisted by a VNAF FAC or VNAF observer to aid him in directing the airstrike. In the event the VNAF FAC had language difficulty, the U.S. FAC was to assume control of the strike. When requested by the VNAF FAC, the airstrike was to be stopped.

The strike pilot was enjoined by the Rules of Engagement to always be under control of the FAC or other designated control agency. He had to have visual contact with the target or target marker and be positive of the position of friendly troops. Strike pilots were authorized to defend themselves against ground fire when the source of the fire could be visually identified when the strike could be positively oriented against the source, and when the fire was of such intensity that counteraction was necessary.

Pilots of strike aircraft were to avoid flying over friendly populated areas when armed. When conditions made overflight of friendly positions necessary, the ground commander was to be notified so that he could determine the risk versus the desired results. All armament switches were to remain in the "safe" position until entrance into the target area.

Helicopters could attack urban areas only when directly by the responsible ground commander. Only specific buildings (point targets) which were positively identified by the pilot could be struck. The engagement of target areas in urban areas was prohibited. Door gunners could fire only when authorized by the aircraft commander. Pilots of helicopters could defend themselves against ground fire when the source of fire could be visually identified, when the attack

could be positively oriented against the source, and when the fire was of such intensity that counteraction was necessary.

The rules of jettisoning munitions were very specific. Munitions could be jettisoned "safe" only in designated areas except during inflight emergencies. During night or Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) conditions, aircraft had to be under positive radar control while jettisoning. During day Visual Flight Rules (VFR), drops were to be monitored by radar whenever possible. During an inflight emergency, munitions could be jettisoned "safe" in other than designated jettison areas, when there was an immediate threat of injury to the crew or damage to the aircraft. Every effort was to be made to insure that jettisoned munitions did not impact into or near inhabited areas. CBU dispensers and expendable rocket launchers were to be jettisoned in the immediate vicinity of the target after expenditure of munitions. Water areas within or adjacent to the target area were to be utilized whenever possible to deny the enemy access to the dispenser tubes or unexpended ordnance.

When air operations involved religious monuments or public buildings in RVN, special Rules of Engagement applied:

"The enemy has shown by his actions that he takes advantage of areas or places normally considered as nonmilitary target areas. These areas are typified by those of religious background or historical value to the Vietnamese. Where it is found that the enemy has sheltered himself in places of worship such as churches and pagodas or has installed defensive positions in public buildings and dwellings, the responsible senior brigade or higher commander in the area may order an air attack to insure prompt destruction of the enemy. The responsible commander must identify positive enemy hostile areas either in preparation or execution. Weapons and forces used will be those which will insure prompt defeat of enemy forces with minimum damage to structures in the area."

Since 1966, COMUSMACV published a quarterly consolidation of the Rules of Engagement applicable to the borders of the RVN and the DMZ. Specific restrictions fluctuated with changes in air operations in neighboring countries. In the DMZ, before the bombing halt, authority was granted to conduct airstrikes within the zone against clearly defined military activity. After the halt, aircraft were prohibited from crossing the DMZ. In the event that SAMs or AAA were fired at friendly aircraft over RVN, friendly forces could destroy the enemy's weapons, installations, and immediate supporting facilities. Immediate pursuit was authorized into NVN territorial sea or airspace in response to hostile acts and in pursuit of any vessel or aircraft that was operating in support of the VC/NVA insurgency. U.S. naval and air forces engaged in immediate pursuit of NVN naval and air elements were not authorized to attack other unfriendly forces or installations, except in response to an attack by them, and then only to the extent necessary for self-defense. Aeromedical evacuations in support of any authorized ground operations in the DMZ were permitted.

To the west, aircraft were prohibited from crossing the Cambodian Border without specific authorization from COMUSMACV. Strike aircraft could not operate within five KM of the Cambodian Border without FAC or MSQ control. All FACs operating in the vicinity of the border had to determine their position from charts of a scale of 1:50,000 or larger. All organizations responsible for planning or execution of missions within five KM of the border had to have posted in Operations a 1:250,000 or larger

scale chart on which the Cambodian Border was distinctly marked, on the RVN side, to the depth of five KM. Aircraft supporting border outposts were permitted to operate as necessary in the outpost area, but could neither fire nor fly across the border. All aircraft on missions within five KM of the Cambodian Border had to be tracked by radar, which could advise them of their position relative to the border and of any impending penetration.

Along the RVN/Laotian Border, aircraft were not permitted to cross the border into Laos without prior approval of COMUSMACV. All operations planned near the border had to be reported in advance to COMUSMACV. In an emergency, U.S. forces could take appropriate countermeasures, including airstrikes against enemy forces firing from the Laotian side of the border.

EPILOGUE

The Rules of Engagement for American airpower between 1966 and 1969 reflected the political situation in each of the three major areas of military conflict in SEA. The political decision to avoid adverse public opinion and to avoid the possibility of direct confrontation with Communist China and Russia dictated a less than total bombing campaign against North Vietnam. Accordingly, the Rules of Engagement prohibited the bombing of certain areas and the use of certain ordnance. The covert nature of operations in Laos, coupled with the need to avoid political embarrassment to Premier Souvanna Phouma required strict control of the air effort in Laos. This control was exercised through the American Ambassador to Vientiane, who played a major role in formulating the Rules of Engagement. The status of American airpower as an instrument of RVN policy placed limits on its exercise in South Vietnam.

Despite differences of opinion regarding the wisdom of American policy in these three areas, it seems clear that the Rules of Engagement allowed airpower to serve that policy well, while at the same time depriving airpower of a true test of what it could accomplish.

APPENDIX I

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Fixed targets: Caves, truck parks, open storage buildings, ferries, cantonment/bar-racks, trenches, and bunkers.

Immediate pursuit: [Pursuit initiated in response to actions or attacks by hostile aircraft or vessels as defined in the Rules of Engagement. The pursuit must be continuous and uninterrupted and may be extended as necessary and feasible over territorial/international airspace/seas as prescribed.]

PMDL: Provisional Military Demarcation Line.

RLAF target category: Either:

"A"—An RLAF target on the Active Target List which has been approved by AmEmb, Vientiane, and can be struck without further approval.

"B"—Same as "A" except the target is considered inactive. If there are signs of activity, it can be struck without further approval.

"C"—Listed on the Active Target List in "hold" status for political reasons. Must obtain specific AmEmb, Vientiane, approval for strikes.

SALOA: Special ARC LIGHT Operating Area.

Target of opportunity: Target of a military nature such as vehicles, troops, active AA/AW, bridges, fords, etc. not specifically designated in the frag orders.

Territorial seas: A belt of sea adjacent to a coastal state three miles in breadth meas-

ured from the low water mark along the coast. However, in the stages claiming over three miles, that distance shall be observed for the Rules of Engagement, as if it were the width of their territorial seas. The following are the states' claims with regard to their territorial seas:

- (1) Thailand, 6 miles presumed.
- (2) Cambodia, 5 miles.
- (3) South Vietnam, 3 miles presumed.
- (4) North Vietnam, 12 miles presumed.
- (5) Communist China, 12 miles.

VC—Viet Cong.
VFR—Visual Flight Rule.
VNAF—Vietnamese Air Force.●

GLOSSARY

AAA—Antiaircraft Artillery.
AA/AW—Aircraft Artillery/Automatic Weapons.
ABCCC—Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center.
AIRA—Air Attache.
AmEmb—American Embassy.
ARVN—Army of Republic of Vietnam.
BR—BARREL ROLL.
BZ—Buffer Zone.
CAS—Close Air Support.
CBU—Cluster Bomb Unit.
ChiCom—Chinese Communist.
CINCPAC—Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command.
CINCPACAF—Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Air Forces.
CINCPACFLT—Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet.
COMUSMACV—Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
CW—CRICKET WEST.
DMZ—Demilitarized Zone.
DOD—Department of Defense.
ECM—Electronic Countermeasure.
FAC—Forward Air Controller.
FWMAF—Free World Military Assistance Forces.
GCI—Ground-Controlled Intercept.
ICC—International Control Commission.
IFR—Instrument Flight Rule.
JCS—Joint Chiefs of Staff.
KM—Kilometer.
LOC—Line of Communications.
MACV—Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
MedEvac—Medical Evacuation.
NE—Northeast.
NKP—Nakhon Phanom.
NM—Nautical Mile.
NVA—North Vietnamese Army.
NVN—North Vietnam.
NW—Northwest.
PL—Pathet Lao.
PMDL—Provisional Military Demarcation Line.
POL—Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants.
PW—Prisoner of War.
RCZ—Radar Control Zone.
RESCAP—Rescue Combat Air Patrol.
RLAF—Royal Laotian Air Force.
RLG—Royal Laotian Government.
ROE—Rules of Engagement.
RP—Route Package.
RR—Railroad.
RT—ROLLING THUNDER.
RTAFB—Royal Thai Air Force Base.
RVN—Republic of Vietnam.
RVNAF—Republic of Vietnam Air Force; Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.
RWT—Road Watch Team.
SAC—Strategic Air Command.
SALOA—Special ARC LIGHT Operating Area.
SAM—Surface-to-Air Missile.
SAR—Search and Rescue.
SL—STEEL TIGER.
SOA—Special Operating Area.
SSZ—Special Strike Zone.
SVN—South Vietnam.
TACAN—Tactical Air Navigation.
USSR—Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.