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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Action 00 RUEHCR

DE RUMJIR 1311A 25/1210Z

0 25 1205Z ZEA

FM AMEMBASSY/SAIGON

22478

Info TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO RUHL HQ/CINCPAC
STATE GRNC

1965 MAR 25 AM 8 04

BT

~~SECRET~~ ACTION IMMEDIATE DEPT 3089 INFO CINCPAC 1862 CITE
(25 1205Z) FROM SAIGON MAR 25, 8PM

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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L I M D I S

Authority State 5-19-78, OSD 9-20-78By 10, NARS, Date 5-21-79

REF: DEPTELS 2039 AND 2084

IN RESPONSE DEPTEL 2084 PROPOSE TO TAKE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO BINH DINH CROP DESTRUCTION SCHEDULED BEGIN MARCH 26. REFERENCES ARE TO TARGETS LISTED EMBTEL 3004. IN VIEW FACT IT ALREADY PARTIALLY HARVESTED, NO. 7 WILL BE CANCELLED. NO. 5, TO WHICH COMPARATIVELY POPULATED AREAS CONTIGUOUS, WILL ALSO BE CANCELLED. WILL THEN BEGIN SPRAYING LEAST CONSPICUOUS AREAS CFN 3089 1862 (25 1205Z) 2039 2084 2084 BINH DINH 26 3004 7 5

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 1311A ~~SECRET~~

FIRST, STARTING WITH NOS. 1 AND 2 WHICH ARE MOST REMOTE, OVER 3-4 DAY PERIOD. WILL THEN RE-EVALUATE BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH NO. 3 OVER 3-4 DAY PERIOD. WILL THEN WAIT AS LONG AS POSSIBLE PRIOR TO ANTICIPATED HARVEST BEFORE SPRAYING NO. 6 WOULD BE PREPARED. INTERRUPT SPRAYING AT ANY POINT, OF COURSE, IF ANY ADVERSE REACTION OBSERVED. SPRAY PLANES WILL OPERATE FROM NHATRANG AND QUI NHON. AGREE IT DESIRABLE AVOID PUBLICITY DURING OPERATIONS AND WILL ATTEMPT TO TAKE ALL APPROPRIATE MEASURES TOWARD THAT GOAL.

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE AT THIS TIME INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE ON WHICH TO BASE DETAILED EVALUATION OF CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS, SECTOR ADVISORS ARE TO SUBMIT TO MACV IN APRIL RESULTS OF SIX-MONTH ANALYSIS OF ALL HERBICIDE OPERATIONS. THUS WE HOPE IN NEAR FUTURE TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS THESE OPERATIONS.

IN MEANTIME, WE OFFER FOLLOWING TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS ON RESULTS OF CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS:

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-2- 3089, March 25, 8 P.M., From Saigon

1. ALTHOUGH RURAL GROUPS HAVE FROM TIME TO TIME PROTESTED (OFTEN UNDER VC PRODDING) TO PROVINCIAL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES AGAINST USE OF ARTILLERY AND AIRCRAFT IN OPERATIONS AGAINST CFN 1 2 3-4 3 3-4 6 NHATRANG QUI NHON MACV 1. VC

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 1311A ~~SECRET~~
ENEMY, WE HAVE RECEIVED NO RPT NO REPORTS OF GRASS ROOTS PROTESTS AGAINST CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS;

2. THERE HAS BEEN SOME MOVEMENT OF VC UNITS OUT OF VC-CONTROLLED AREAS AFTER CROPS DESTROYED, NOTABLY IN BINH THUAN PROVINCE, OCCASIONALLY TO ATTACK HAMLETS FOR SUPPLIES AND SOMETIMES TO BUY RICE IN HAMLETS;

3. WE HAVE SOME EVIDENCE OF FOOD SHORTAGE AS RESULT OPERATIONS CONDUCTED IN ZONE "D" AND IN I CORPS, AND LIBERATION RADIO LAST AUGUST BLAMED CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS FOR SHORTFALLS IN VC AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN WESTERN DELTA.

ALTHOUGH MISSION HAS MADE CONTINUING EFFORT DETERMINE WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN ANY STRONG INTERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTION TO CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS, ON BASIS AVAILABLE INFO, WE BELIEVE THAT POPULATION REACTION TO OPS REMAINS AS DESCRIBED BY MACV-EMB TEAM IN ITS OWN EVALUATION OF HERBICIDE OPERATIONS DATED OCTOBER 10, 1963: "THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT INTERNALLY OR EXTERNALLY GENERATED COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA ON DEFOLIATION/ CROP DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS HAS HAD ANY REAL IMPACT ON THE VIETNAMESE POPULATION."

IN REGARD EXTERNAL REACTION TO BINH DINH PROJECT, WHILE WE WOULD CFN NO 2 VC VC-CONTROLLED BINH THUAN 3. "D" I VC MACV-EMB 10 1963 NO BINH DINH

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 1311A ~~SECRET~~
NOT PROPOSE TO MAKE OPERATIONS PUBLIC WHILE THEY ARE IN PROGRESS, IN ORDER FORESTALL SUBSEQUENT ADVERSE PRESS COMMENT BASED ON INSUFFICIENT OR INCORRECT INFORMATION, WOULD RECOMMEND LOW-KEY REFERENCE BE INCLUDED IN DAILY BRIEFING BY MISSION REP FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF OPERATIONS, MAKING FOLLOWING POINTS:

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-3- 3089, March 25, 8 P.M., From Saigon

1. GVN HAS LONG HAD PROGRAM OF DENYING FOOD TO VC BY MANUAL CHOPPING, BURNING AND USE OF CHEMICALS. ON MARCH 20, 1963, THE DGI OFFICIALLY STATED THAT ONE OF PURPOSES OF GVN HERBICIDE PROGRAM WAS TO DENY FOOD TO ENEMY BY DESTROYING VC CROPS AND PREVENTING MOVEMENT OF VC FOOD SUPPLIES.
2. CHEMICALS USED ARE HARMLESS TO HUMANS, ANIMALS, SOIL AND WATER.
3. CHEMICAL CROP DESTRUCTION NORMALLY CARRIED OUT BY VIETNAMESE WITH HANDSPRAY OR SPRAYED FROM VNAF AIRCRAFT. IN VIEW LIMITED NUMBER OF VN PILOTS AVAILABLE FOR SUCH PURPOSES, AT REQUEST OF GVN AT TIMES SPRAYING NOW BEING DONE BY US PILOTS.
4. EXPECTED THAT SOME NON-VC POPULATION WILL BE PERMITTED, OR FORCED, BY VC TO LEAVE AREAS. GVN HAS PLANS AND EXPECTATION OF HANDLING THEM WITHIN PROGRAM ESTABLISHED FOR OTHER REFUGEES.

WE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE FULL RATIONALE, CFN NOT 1 GVN VC 20 1963 DGI GVN VC VC 2 3 VNAF VN GVN NOW US 4 NON-VC VC GVN

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 1311A ~~SECRET~~

INCLUDING MEASURES TAKEN TO PROVIDE FOR INHABITANTS OF AREA, ON BACKGROUND BASIS. IF QUERIED DURING OPERATIONS WOULD BE PREPARED REPLY ALONG ABOVE LINES.

TAYLOR

BT

NOTE: PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA 8:45 A.M., 3-25-65.

ADVANCE DELIVERY TO S/S-O AT 8:25 A.M., 3-25-65.

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