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Also attached are 51-63, 50-63 and 49-63.

[R] - ITEM IS RESTRICTED

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Page # of Postponement

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Reason for Postponement IAW Section 6 of JFK Act

6 (1) (C)

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and release subject to*

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- 2) NSA review at yellow tab*
- 3) CIA review of all pages.*

for 10 Feb 98

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Reviewed on 7/21 *[Signature]*

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE
JOINT STAFF
Washington 25, D. C.

~~DECLASSIFIED BY [scribble]~~

26 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Subject: Southeast Asia Situation Report (U)

Attached hereto is the Southeast Asia Situation Report
Number 52-63 covering the period from 180800 to 250800 December
1963.

FOR THE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS:

For
John B. Kidd
C. M. MOUNT, JR.
Colonel, USA
Chief, Pacific Division
Operations Directorate

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demonstrates that the US Government will give protection to the "so-called Malaysia" and that the US, with the approval of the Indian Government, is inviting danger to Southeast Asia.

(2) On 24 December, a Communist-led youth demonstration was conducted in the square across from the US Embassy to protest the US 7th Fleet extension into the Indian Ocean.

(3) The Indonesian Navy and Air Force may replace their Western transport and ASW aircraft with Soviet equipment. Defense Minister General Nasution reportedly bought six Soviet AN-12/Cub transports during his recent trip to Moscow. He allegedly also said when he was in Washington that the Navy would replace its ASW-configured Fairey Gannets with Soviet Bloc ASW-aircraft. Indonesia is said to claim that it can get out of the AN-12 contract if allowed to purchase five more Lockheed C-130 s. This suggests that any deal with the Soviets is tentative. The acquisition of AN-12 s and ASW counterparts of Indonesia's 14 Gannets would require additional Soviet technicians to provide local maintenance.

(4) The Indonesian Air Force (AURI) visualizes only a limited role in the event of an open conflict with British and Malaysian forces; operations would mainly consist of

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air drop of troops, equipment, and supplies. Despite this judgment, the Army has requested that the AURI be prepared to furnish air support to the ground troops in Borneo -- a request which it is reported, has angered the AURI. Lacking suitable airfields in Indonesian Borneo (Kalimantan) from which to mount jet fighter escort missions, the AURI is extremely reluctant to make unescorted TU-16/Badger strikes against Malaysian Borneo targets.

c. Malaysia/New Zealand/Australia. The Malaysian Government asked the New Zealand Government, on 19 December, for aid in training its Army and for assistance in Sarawak and Sabah, to include special service units, AAA units and assist at airfields New Zealand is prepared to allow its transport aircraft now at Singapore, and perhaps others, to be used for ferrying to and within Sarawak and Sabah, to commit a naval frigate and make one battalion available if the situation in Borneo deteriorates. However, the New Zealand Government, like the Australian, is reluctant to commit forces directly in defense of Malaysian Borneo. Both believe that such involvement would reduce greatly or destroy their political influence with Indonesia and perhaps stimulate Djakarta to take even more aggressive action against the territories.

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d. Cambodia

(1) Prince Sihanouk apparently has reached the stage where he is preparing to cut all ties with the West, except France, and to align Cambodia more closely with the Communist Bloc. His recent directives reportedly are spreading consternation, even among Cambodia's royal family. On 22 December, a wealthy Cambodian, Songsakd Kitchpanich, president of the Banque de Phnom Penh, landed in South Vietnam and asked for political asylum.

(2) On 22 December, the Cambodian Government announced the signing of a civil air agreement with North Vietnam. Both countries announced that an airline would link Phnom Penh with Hanoi.

d. Thailand. The Thais have already stated that any US action to agree with the reconvening of the Geneva Conference to discuss Cambodian neutrality would be a critical phase in US/Thai relations and cause the Thais to re-evaluate their foreign policy commitments.

e. Republic of Vietnam (RVN)

(1) As many as 29,000 Viet Cong (VC) may have entered the Republic of Vietnam from North Vietnam in the last four years according to a CINCPAC recapitulation. From 1960 through 1962

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confirmed Viet Cong infiltrators numbered 10,397. The 1963 figure is low but is expected to catch up with last year's 4,247, as more evidence comes in. CINCPAC estimates that twice as many Viet Cong infiltrate as are eventually confirmed.

(2) MACV reports no change in VC capabilities in the past week. In view of the Viet Cong "National Resistance Day" holiday on 19 December and the anniversary of the formation of the National Liberation Front on 20 December, both falling under favorable weather conditions for guerrilla activities, an increase in VC action can be expected in the near future. VC propaganda now centers around neutralism as the solution for saving the country.

2. OPERATIONS

a. Laos

(1) Pathet Lao forces, bolstered by North Vietnamese, that recaptured Lak Sao on 16 December, have also re-occupied Kham Keut. The advance apparently was made against negligible opposition from the Royal Lao (FAR) defenders.

(2) On 22 December, Communist artillery shelled the airfield at Muong Kheung for the first time. The airfield was being utilized by FAR forces to airlift the FAR 6th Infantry Battalion to Muong Kheung to replace the 24th Infantry

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Battalion. The replacement was halted when half completed because of the Communist shell fire.

b. Republic of Vietnam (RVN)

(1) A comparison of the Viet Cong and RVNAF activities for the period 11-16 December and the previous period of 4-11 December follows:

	<u>4-11 Dec</u>	<u>11-18 Dec</u>	<u>Change</u>
Viet Cong			
Incidents	403	402	- 1
Armed Attacks	59	66	+ 7
Casualties	475	348*	-127
(KIA)	(370)	(277)	(- 93)
Defections	23	24	+ 1
Weapons Lost	138	96	- 42
RVN			
Initiated actions			
Bn or larger	51	58	+ 7
Small Unit:			
Contact	135	114	- 21
No contact	<u>4,420</u>	<u>4,405</u>	- 15
Total Actions	4,606	4,577	- 29
Casualties	396	396*	
(KIA)	(89)	(90)	(+ 1)
Weapons Lost	115	230	+115

* RVN and VC personnel and weapon losses are for the period
10 - 16 December

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(2) Viet Cong-initiated incidents for the week of 11-18 December were at the same level as the previous week. However, activity in the important delta area declined. The II Corps Tactical Zone had a 25 per cent rise in insurgency incidents, with the coastal Binh Dinh Province bearing the brunt of the actions. VC attacks on strategic hamlets in that province have increased sharply since the 9th RVN Army Division deployed to the delta area last September. The one company-size attack during the week was the first large-scale operation in December, as compared to 17 in November and a 1963 monthly average of 12. In this assault of two strategic hamlets in Phuoc Thanh Province on 14 December, the government forces suffered one killed, 2 wounded, and 13 missing in action. Also lost were 27 weapons and radios. No enemy casualties were reported. There is no indication that the VC stepped up their efforts in connection with National Resistance Day on 19 December.

(3) Military control of two critical provinces has been shifted to strengthen antiguerrilla operations in the delta area as follows: The 7th Division, III Corps, took over the Kien Hoa sector from the 9th Division, IV Corps on 16 December. At the same time, the VC-infested Long An Province was removed

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from the 7th Division control and made a special sector under the Airborne Brigade which reports directly to the III Corps Commander.

(4) Three US Army aircraft crashes during the week took the lives of 10 US personnel. In IV CTZ on 12 December, a CH-37 was hit by VC ground fire while evacuating a downed OV-1. Although the pilot jettisoned the sling-loaded plane, he could not control the CH-37 and it plunged to the ground burning on impact. In another incident, three US personnel were killed and one is missing and presumed dead as a result of a U-1A crashing into the side of a mountain approximately 200 miles northeast of Saigon. On 14 December, a UH-1B crashed into the sea about one-half mile off the shore of the Binh Dinh Province. The co-pilot swam to shore but the remaining crew members drowned. Causes of the latter two accidents have not been determined.

(5) In order to meet requirements for additional artillery in the delta area, certain 105-mm howitzer batteries have been increased from 4 to 6 tubes each. Forty-two additional 105-mm howitzers were airlifted to South Vietnam by 22 December to meet this requirement.

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c. Indonesia

(1) Evidence continues to suggest that Indonesia intends to pursue its confrontation policy with Malaysia while attempting to stay clear of overt military exchanges with British forces. However, serving to heighten the already tense situation was the shooting down of a British aircraft on 18 December. A British Auster liaison aircraft on a mail drop mission in the Sarawak-Borneo border area was hit by automatic weapons small arms fire and crash landed in Sarawak. The pilot was injured and a passenger, an RAF chaplain, was killed. On 13 and 15 December, RAF helicopters were hit by small arms fire.

(2) Indonesian Air Force C-130 aircraft have been observed carrying out airdrop operations on the Kalimantan/Sarawak border on 10 and 15 December. Paratroopers and supplies were observed in the operation.

(3) Air raid warning drills are currently being conducted in Surabaya. Attempts are made to black-out the whole city during the drills. In addition, preparations for war are being made such as deploying 57-mm AA guns around key areas and airfields.

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d. Cambodia

(1) Prince Sihanouk has asked for the speedy withdrawal of US aid missions but nonetheless he had expected that US aid in the pipeline would arrive and is reported annoyed to learn that it had been diverted. All US MAAG personnel and dependents will depart Cambodia not later than 31 December except for a small clean-up detail which will depart by 15 January 1964.

(2) The US mapping program in Cambodia has been declared part of the US military and technical aid by a Cambodian official and the official states that the mapping program must be terminated.

e. Burma. The FY 64 training of Burmese military personnel has been reduced from 118 to 22. The cancellation of projected training reaches 90 per cent for Army, 93 per cent for Air Force and 44 per cent for the Navy. The explanation of this reduction is given that personnel are required for a planned major offensive against insurgents.

f. Pacific Area. On 21 December, a Soviet Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (probably an SS-7) was fired into the 6,500 nautical mile Pacific impact area. The missile was tracked by Alaskan BMEWS and re-entry was observed by US facilities in the impact area.

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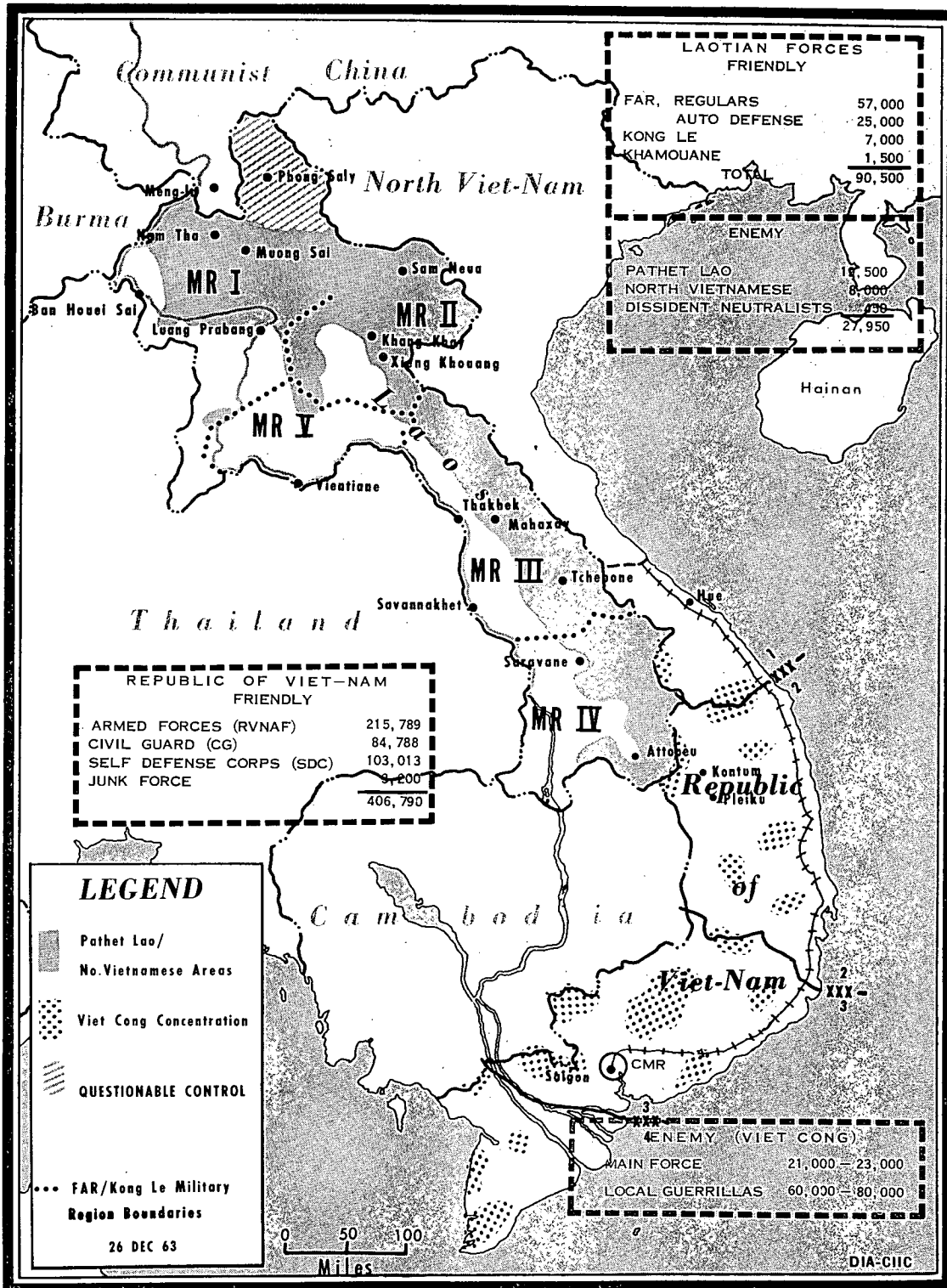
g. Republic of China (GRC). Joint GRC-US Amphibious Exercise BIG DIPPER ended with all units satisfied that their training objectives had been accomplished. All units proved that they are capable of conducting combined arms exercises involving air, naval gunfire, artillery, tanks and other ground weapons in a team effort.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA SITUATION

SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION



SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE
JOINT STAFF
Washington 25, D. C.

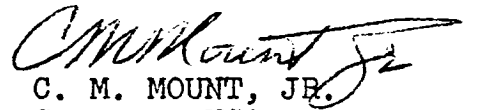
18 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Subject: Southeast Asia Situation Report (U)

Attached hereto is the Southeast Asia Situation Report
Number 51-63 covering the period from 110800 to 180800 December
1963.

FOR THE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS:


C. M. MOUNT, JR.
Colonel, USA
Chief, Pacific Division
Operations Directorate

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE
JOINT STAFF
Washington 25, D. C.

SOUTHEAST ASIA SITUATION
REPORT NUMBER 51-63

18 December 1963

1. INTELLIGENCE

a. Laos:

(1) Royal Lao Army (FAR) forces have taken Lak Sao, an important road junction on Route 8, main Communist supply line to central Laos from North Vietnam.

(2) In the north, FAR, Neutralist and Meo leaders have been planning a coordinated effort against Xieng Khouang and Tha Lin Noi. Although this operation was planned for 8 December, there has been nothing to indicate the attack had begun.

(3) The Pathet Lao have yet to manifest a strong reaction to recent FAR successes. However, they are unlikely to allow many positions of the caliber of Lak Sao and Xieng Khouang to be lost without reacting.

b. Republic of Vietnam (RVN)

(1) COMUSMACV has added the 310th Battalion to his Viet Cong (VC) order of battle, with a strength of 380 men thereby raising the number of confirmed VC battalions in South Vietnam

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to 38. COMUSMACV has also accepted another group of 40 infiltrators from North Vietnam; this brings the confirmed 1963 infiltration total to 954. This unit was formed last January, worked its way south through Laos, and entered Quang Ngai Province last May. Seven members later formed part of a 57-mm recoilless rifle platoon to provide fire support for rifle elements of the 310th Battalion.

(2) DIA estimates that in spite of an increase in number of RVN offensive operations, the government has been unable to reduce the strength of the VC to any appreciable extent. Available evidence indicates that while the VC have not made spectacular gains, they have prevented the government from gaining effective control over much of the countryside. It is apparent that the VC are maximizing their present capabilities, aided substantially by resources captured from the government. It is further evident that the VC have sustained, and in some instances, improved their combat capabilities despite RVN advantages in firepower, armor, mobility, communication and airborne operations. The VC have demonstrated extensive capability to exploit the provisional government's preoccupation with its political reorganization.

(3) The provisional government of the RVN replaced its air force and marine brigade commanders recently in another

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move to sack politically unreliable commanders and assign potential troublemakers to desk jobs abroad. Colonel Nguyen Cao Ky is the new commander of the Vietnamese Air Force and succeeds Colonel Do Khac Mai who is the military attache designated to Bonn. Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Ba Lien, the former chief of staff and deputy commander of the marine brigade, has stepped up to the top job as commander to replace Colonel Le Nguyen Khang.

c. Indonesia:

(1) The US Air Attache in Djakarta states that the Indonesian Air Force neither confirms nor denies the press-reported shutdown of British aircraft over Indonesian territory. UK Government spokesmen have officially denied Indonesian claims of four British aircraft shot down. The Air Attache in Djakarta considers that, had the shutdown occurred, the Indonesians would have publicized it extensively.

(2) Indonesia is reportedly planning to step up its efforts against some 2,000-3,000 rebels on Celebes. The 17 infantry battalions and one mountain artillery unit on the island have been reinforced by eight mobile brigade police battalions; security forces there now total about 18,000. Rebel activity in Celebes could interfere somewhat with the campaign against Malaysia by tying down considerable Indonesian strength.

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(3) Pro-Communists are to receive their first ministerial posts in the cabinet as Minister of Justice and Minister of State; the latter is assigned to the cabinet presidium which consists of three Vice Prime Ministers. This will be a blow to the anti-Communist army. President Sukarno, however, will continue his longstanding practice of maintaining his dominant position by playing the army and the Communist Party against each other.

d. Malaysia:

(1) The British plan to augment their ground forces in Malaysia by one battalion.

(2) London plans to recall a 70-man Special Air Services Squadron from Malaysia in late December and replace it by a similar unit from England. The marine commando battalion now on Sarawak will be relieved by a Gurkha infantry battalion in January; the commandos there now will return to Singapore. The 8th Battalion, Royal Malay Regiment, will leave for the Borneo territories within the next few weeks. This unit was activated only last January but is well trained and fully operational.

(3) The Australian Government is reluctant to send its forces to Sabah and Sarawak since it believes that the current situation does not warrant such a course of action and that

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good relations with the Indonesians are desirable. Relations between Indonesia and Australia seem normal. Australian aircraft regularly overfly Indonesia, and some troops land at Djakarta while en route to the Butterworth base in Malaysia.

(4) British officials are deeply concerned over Indonesia's potential to sponsor terrorism in Singapore and Malaya and the inability of local police to cope with the threat. Singapore authorities recently arrested the Malayan leader of a saboteur group which had been trained in the nearby Indonesian Riau Islands. He admitted that he was accompanied by seven others and revealed the location of a cache of explosives near the residence of the British High Commissioner in Singapore. The bombing of an automobile in Singapore on 9 December was probably a "trial run" by Indonesian-sponsored saboteurs as yet incapable of hitting a military target.

e. Cambodia:

Prince Sihanouk continues irrationally to isolate Cambodia from its Free World contacts and to move closer toward Communist China. At the same time, however, he is seeking expanded aid from France and he continues to press for an international conference to "guarantee" Cambodia's neutrality. Both France and Communist China have responded only cautiously to Sihanouk's appeals for aid although Peiping has promised

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