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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

JCSM-382-67  
5 July 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Demilitarization of the DMZ and a Bombing Halt in North Vietnam ~~(S)~~

1. ~~(S)~~ Reference is made to:

a. Your memorandum, dated 20 June 1967, subject as above, which forwarded a State Department memorandum on the above subject and which requested the comments of the Joint Chiefs of Staff thereon.

b. JCSM-648-66, dated 10 October 1966, subject: "Proposals for a New International Control Commission for Supervision of a Peace Treaty in Vietnam (S)."

c. JCSM-107-67, dated 27 February 1967, subject: "A Settlement of the Conflict in Vietnam (U)."

d. JCSM-286-67, dated 20 May 1967, subject: "Operations Against North Vietnam (U)."

e. JCSM-288-67, dated 20 May 1967, subject: "Worldwide US Military Posture (U)."

f. JCSM-312-67, dated 2 June 1967, subject: "Air Operations Against NVN (U)."

2. ~~(S)~~ In response to your request in reference 1a, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have studied the memorandum by the Department of State and the Canadian proposal upon which it rests. Their views are expressed in detail in the Appendix and Annexes hereto. In summary, these views are:

a. A prerequisite for an effective international control commission (ICC) force is the organization of an ICC free of the existing deficiencies described in reference 1b. It

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should be noted that, historically, ICCs have been ineffective. Assuming an acceptable ICC can be formed, the key factor in determining the composition of an ICC force for the demilitarized zone (DMZ), when linked with a proposal for cessation of US bombing in North Vietnam (NVN), is whether it should be capable of preventing, by force if necessary, violations of the DMZ or whether it should be only a detecting and reporting organization. In the absence of demonstrated good faith among the belligerents and with a mission of preventing violations of the DMZ, the Joint Chiefs of Staff estimate that a force built around the equivalent of three US divisions, with appropriate tactical air support, would be required. This force could be reduced to brigade size if good faith were demonstrated.

b. An effectively closed DMZ would limit the maneuver room of North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong (NVA/VC) units in the northern portion of the I CTZ and might permit the deployment of some US/Free World forces to more critical areas in the I CTZ. However, it would also permit NVA/VC forces to intensify their efforts in the more difficult terrain along the Laotian border.

c. Reference 1c describes the conditions which should attend a halt of the bombing in NVN. Prominent among the criteria is ". . . a cessation by NVN of its infiltration of personnel and materiel into SVN and Laos . . . ." Closure of the DMZ would eliminate some infiltration routes but would not have a significant over-all effect on infiltration. Routes through Laos and Cambodia and Vietnamese coastal waters would still be available to the communists. Thus, the military value of an effectively closed DMZ would be limited.

d. Air operations against NVN are an essential element of the US strategy in Southeast Asia. The Canadian proposal will in no way alter this requirement. In references 1d, 1e, and 1f, the Joint Chiefs of Staff describe the need for an expanded air campaign against NVN, designed to reduce drastically its ability to continue the war. If adopted, the Canadian proposal would require the United States to abandon this portion of its military strategy, and an important "blue chip" negotiating asset would be forfeited without commensurate gain.

e. With respect to certain other US programs in Southeast Asia, the Canadian proposal would:

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~~TOP SECRET~~

941103-355

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(1) Eliminate the requirement for that portion of ILLINOIS CITY in South Vietnam and result in increased NVN pressure on that portion designed for emplacement in Laos.

(2) Increase the importance of PRAIRIE FIRE.

(3) Probably force the cessation of that portion of SEA DRAGON operations involving naval bombardment of targets ashore.

(4) Probably make justification of continued bombing in Laos more difficult.

f. Weather and seasonal factors are relevant only to the timing of the proposal. Political events will also affect the timing. If an approach is to be made to Hanoi, the least undesirable time for implementation of the proposal would be after the national elections in South Vietnam but taking into account the timing of monsoon weather in Laos, at the DMZ, and in NVN (see Annex H).

3. ~~(S)~~ In consideration of the foregoing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff conclude that to halt combat air operations against NVN in exchange for effective closing of the DMZ is clearly disadvantageous to the United States and its Allies, and they recommend that the Canadian proposal not be adopted.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



EARLE G. WHEELER  
Chairman

Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachments

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941103-356

~~TOP SECRET~~

APPENDIX

<u>Consisting of:</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Annex A - Recapitulation of Questions and Conclusions	2 - 4
Annex B - Discussion of Question a	5 - 9
Annex C - Discussion of Question b	10 - 11
Annex D - Discussion of Question c	12 - 17
Annex E - Discussion of Question d (1)	18 - 19
Annex F - Discussion of Question d (2)	20 - 21
Annex G - Discussion of Question d (3)	22 - 23
Annex H - Discussion of Question d (4)	24 - 25
Annex I - Discussion of Question e	26 - 27
Annex J - Discussion of Question f	28 - 29

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JCSM-382

941103-357

ANNEX A

RECAPITULATION OF QUESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

QUESTION

a. What would constitute an effective ICC force for the DMZ?

CONCLUSIONS

- a. The present ICC for Vietnam is denied free movement in communist-held territory and lacks organic transportation and communications. In addition, its composition and rules of procedure have hindered its functioning. Effective inspection and verification in these circumstances cannot be expected.
- b. If the United States is to accept an international presence in Vietnam, a new organization must be developed, free of the serious deficiencies of the present ICC.
- c. Past communist behavior patterns indicate there is serious doubt that any form of international control commission could deter or prevent violations of the DMZ unless good faith prevails on the part of the belligerents.
- d. The ICC force required for effective control of the DMZ will vary according to the degree of good faith shown by the belligerents.
- e. The size of an effective ICC force may range from a reinforced brigade to a three-division force.
- a. Effective demilitarization of the DMZ would:
- (1) Reduce enemy pressure on friendly forces in northern I CTZ.
  - (2) Require NVA units to infiltrate via Laos and Cambodia.
  - (3) Deny NVA forces a relatively safe sanctuary.
  - (4) Not stop or seriously inhibit over-all NVN support of communist forces in SVN.

- b. What would be the value to us of an effectively closed DMZ:
- (1) In limiting the maneuver room of NVA units in northern I Corps?
  - (2) In limiting infiltration of men and supplies?

QUESTION

- c. If our bombing continued in Laos and South Vietnam, what advantages of our bombing programs would we be giving up?

CONCLUSIONS

- a. Cessation of the bombing of NVN would forfeit the principal means controlled by the United States for carrying the war to the enemy in NVN and would relinquish a valuable "blue chip" negotiating asset.
- b. The relaxation of pressure inherent in the foregoing would adversely affect the over-all strategy for attainment of US objectives.
- c. The enemy would be provided an additional incentive to sustain and increase his support of the aggression in SVN, thus prolonging the war. The proposal would be beneficial to NVN morale and detrimental to US/Free World morale in SVN.
- d. Our allies in SVN would consider the United States irresolute in its determination to force the Hanoi government to cease its support of the insurgency.
- e. The GVN would suffer a loss of stature at home.
- f. Some 300,000 NVN LOC maintenance and construction workers would be released for other work.
- a. Should the DMZ be closed effectively by forces supporting the ICC, the strong point/obstacle portion of the anti-infiltration system below the DMZ would be redundant.
- b. Under similar circumstances, the air-supported anti-infiltration system in the pan-handle region of southern Laos would be under pressure from NVN.
- c. Cessation of bombing in NVN would increase the NVA's ability to counter the air supported barrier in Laos.
- d. In addition, if bombing in Laos should be suspended as a consequence of the shutdown of operations against NVN, ILLINOIS CITY cannot be supported.
- a. Closing of the DMZ and cessation of combat air operations against NVN would increase VC/NVA use of and defensive deployments in the Lao corridor, and thus increase the need for PRAIRIE FIRE operations, while rendering execution more difficult.
- b. Should bombing be halted in Laos, PRAIRIE FIRE operations would be curtailed in scope and deprived of their principal means of combat support, with a consequent increase in vulnerability to enemy counteraction.

- d. What is the relevance of the proposal to:

(1) ILLINOIS CITY?

(2) PRAIRIE FIRE?

QUESTION

What is the relevance of the proposal to:

(3) SEA DRAGON?

(4) Weather and seasonal factors?

e. If the proposal is to be made, what should be the timing?

f. What will be the effect of the proposal on the bombing in Laos?

CONCLUSIONS

- a. SEA DRAGON operations have been effective in interdicting infiltration of military material along the coastal waterways of NVN south of 20°N latitude.
- b. Should the bombing of NVN be halted, as stated in the proposal, SEA DRAGON operations against enemy watercraft should continue.
- c. Despite the foregoing, it is judged that cessation of bombing in NVN would be accompanied by restraints against naval surface operations against NVN.
  - a. The least undesirable time for demilitarizing the DMZ would be at the onset of the southwest monsoon, usually in the month of May.
  - b. For the termination of bombing in NVN the least undesirable time would be the onset of the northeast monsoon or late October.
  - c. The enemy's system of base areas and prestocks tends to compensate for reduced throughput of material in bad weather.
    - a. If the proposal is to be made, it would be least undesirable, from the viewpoint of GVN stability, to wait until the newly elected government has taken office, following the September election.
    - b. If adopted, the proposal should be timed to follow approval of new and adequate terms of reference for an ICC and organization of a DMZ force.
      - a. Should a decision be reached to halt air operations against NVN, the United States may also be subject to pressure to halt the bombing in Laos.
      - b. Should airstrikes into Laos continue, increased anti-air defense along the LOCs can be expected, with consequent increases in aircraft losses.

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ANNEX B  
DISCUSSION OF QUESTION A

1. (C) QUESTION. What would constitute an effective ICC force for the DMZ? 1  
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2. (TS) BACKGROUND 3
- a. An interdepartmental group is currently developing principles and guidelines for an effective inspection and verification system. 4  
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- b. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have proposed\* that the findings of this group provide the basis for a Department of Defense study of an appropriate ICC structure. Such a study would: 7  
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- (1) Evaluate manning, equipment, procedures, techniques, and employment. 11  
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- (2) Conduct field tests as feasible and required to determine the composition, techniques, and employment of an investigation and reporting system. 13  
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3. (TS) DISCUSSION 16
- a. Mission. Basic issues associated with defining an effective ICC force are to identify the missions of such a force and the level of capability desired. Should the force do more than detect, investigate, and report on actions of the belligerents? For instance, should the force be capable of preventing by force, if necessary, significant violations of the DMZ? 17  
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- b. Minimum Capabilities. While the United States has publicly stated that the ". . . Geneva Agreements of 1954 and 1962 are an adequate basis for peace in Southeast Asia . . .",\*\* it will be necessary to remodel and revitalize the international means for supervision if meaningful guarantees are to be obtained. Toward this end, effective, workable supervision of 24  
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\* JCSM 648-66, dated 10 October 1966  
\*\* State Department Press Release No. 4, dated 17 January 1966, "14 Points for Peace in Southeast Asia."



the DMZ, under ICC auspices, would require the 1  
following minimum capabilities not possessed by the 2  
present ICC: 3

(1) That an ICC possess full authority for 4  
investigating and reporting violations in the 5  
DMZ; 6

(2) Sufficient forces to assure the security of all 7  
ICC operations and to accomplish assigned mission; 8

(3) That issues be decided by majority rather 9  
than unanimous vote; 10

(4) That an appropriate international agency 11  
assume the functions presently delegated to the co- 12  
chairmen designated by the 1954 Geneva Conference; 13

(5) That forces assigned to the international 14  
agency be completely responsive to that agency; 15

(6) That reporting procedures be prescribed 16  
specifically to include minority reporting on all 17  
issues; 18

(7) Full and unrestricted access by inspection 19  
teams to all areas and facilities in the DMZ; and 20

(8) That inspection teams be self-sufficient in 21  
logistics, transportation, and communication- 22  
electronic support. 23

c. Size and Organization. The size of an effective 24  
ICC force will be related directly to the mission assigned 25  
and is influenced by the good faith of the belligerents. 26  
It is recognized that the present ICC is an investigative 27  
and reporting agency and is not charged with enforcement 28  
of the Geneva agreement. However, to be effective, a 29  
control commission and its attached forces should 30  
function as a buffer between and deterrent to the bel- 31  
ligerents, provide for its own security, and accomplish 32  
the mission assigned. A preliminary estimate of the 33

magnitude of such forces under various assumptions 1  
 as to the intent of the belligerents is: 2

<u>Component</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	
Headquarters	450	Provide operational, administrative, logistical, transportation, and communication support.	3 4 5 6 7 8
Intelligence	50	Collate, evaluate, and interpret information provided by both sides.	9 10 11 12
Inspection and Verification	600	Field team functions to include air reconnaissance.	13 14 15
Military	a. Minimum Force (3 battalions with appropriate support)*	If good faith prevails, these battalions could provide security for field teams and serve as a limited buffer between opposing sides. Its inspection and verification effectiveness would depend upon freedom of movement throughout the DMZ. Adequate tactical air support (including air fields) would be required.	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
	b. Median Force (1 1/3 divisions with appropriate support)*	If the good faith of the belligerents is questionable, this force could detect and deter infiltration through the DMZ. The size force is similar to the estimates by COMUSMACV for ILLINOIS CITY. This force would have the ability to establish and man a strong point system in the DMZ. Adequate tactical air support (including air fields) would be required.	30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46
	c. Maximum Force (3 Division Force with appropriate support)*	If good faith does not exist and compliance with the agreement appears unlikely, provision must be made to control the entire DMZ. This force could effectively prevent violation of the DMZ throughout its length and provide for its own security. Adequate tactical air support (including air fields) would be required.	47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

\* US equivalents

4. FEASIBILITY: Having estimated the size and composition of 1  
an effective ICC force, an assessment of the practicability of 2  
creating and deploying such a force is a pertinent issue in 3  
weighing the merits of the Canadian proposal. The international 4  
authority for such a force would have to be the UN or some formally 5  
convened and recognized international agency such as the one 6  
emerging from the Geneva Conference of 1954. Past experience with 7  
international forces of this nature - e.g., the ICC force in the 8  
Vietnam DMZ and the UN Expeditionary Force in the Gaza Strip area 9  
has highlighted the practical problems of obtaining political 10  
agreement to create the force initially and, after deployment of 11  
the force, of its taking effective enforcement action against 12  
belligerents. The mission of these forces has almost always been 13  
passive in nature. The problems associated with forming and deploy- 14  
ing an international combat force of up to three US divisions, 15  
which would deter or take action against a belligerent during con- 16  
ditions of continuing conflict, appear to be insurmountable, 17  
Thus, an ICC force which merely detected and reported violations 18  
without a significant capability to deter or prevent violations 19  
would be the most likely result. Past experience indicates that 20  
such a force would be of little use in the present conflict. 21

5. (TS) CONCLUSIONS 22

a. The present ICC for Vietnam is denied free movement 23  
in communist-held territory and lacks organic transportation 24  
and communications. In addition, its composition and 25  
rules of procedure have hindered its functioning. Effective 26  
inspection and verification in these circumstances cannot 27  
be expected. 28

b. If the United States is to accept an international 29  
presence in Vietnam, a new organization must be developed, 30  
free of the serious deficiencies of the present ICC. 31

c. Past communist behavior patterns indicate there is 1  
serious doubt that any form of international control 2  
commission could deter or prevent violations of the DMZ, 3  
unless good faith prevailed on the part of the belligerents. 4

d. The ICC force required for effective coverage of 5  
the DMZ will vary according to the degree of good faith 6  
shown by the belligerents. 7

e. The size of an effective ICC force may range from 8  
a reinforced brigade to a three-division force. 9

941103-365

ANNEX C

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION P

- 1. (C) QUESTION. What would be the value to us of an effectively closed DMZ:
  - a. In limiting the maneuver room of NVA units in northern I Corps?
  - b. In limiting infiltration of men and supplies?
- 2. (S) BACKGROUND. To date, two instances of large-scale infiltration across the DMZ have been confirmed: the 324B NVA Division in the summer of 1966 and a regiment of the 325th NVA Division and 5th NVA Regiment in March/April 1967. However, continuing infiltration on a lesser scale has occurred. In addition, the NVA has employed the DMZ area extensively as a sanctuary, as well as an avenue for resupply of forces in Northern I CTZ. NVA artillery has been positioned in the area immediately north of the Demarcation Line.
- 3. (S) DISCUSSION
  - a. An effective demilitarized zone, closed to personnel and logistical infiltration would:
    - (1) Deprive communist forces located in northern I CTZ of a relatively safe sanctuary and thus limit somewhat their ability to maneuver.
    - (2) Deny enemy forces in northern I CTZ artillery support from across the DMZ.
    - (3) Make resupply and replacement of losses somewhat more difficult in that the enemy would be restricted to the infiltration network in Laos and to water craft.
    - (4) Reduce the likelihood of tactical surprise and permit the reorientation of some US/RVN forces presently deployed at the DMZ.
  - b. Other than the uses described in paragraph 2, above, there has been no major shift in the pattern of infiltration from the Laos network to the DMZ. It is estimated

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that closure of the DMZ would have little effect on the 1  
bulk of the infiltration from NVN to SVN but could 2  
affect the support of enemy forces in the immediate area 3  
of the DMZ. Infiltration over any given route appears 4  
to be regulated by the needs of the enemy in the South, 5  
scheduled areas of operation, the missions assigned, and 6  
the friendly situation. The bulk of enemy resupply 7  
appears to pass through the Laos infiltration system. 8

4. (S) CONCLUSIONS. Effective demilitarization of the 9  
DMZ would: 10

- a. Reduce enemy pressure on friendly forces in 11  
northern I CTZ. 12
- b. Require NVA units to infiltrate via Laos and 13  
Cambodia. 14
- c. Deny NVA forces a relatively safe sanctuary. 15
- d. Not stop or seriously inhibit over-all NVN 16  
support of communist forces in SVN. 17

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941103-367

ANNEX D TO APPENDIX

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION C

1. (S) QUESTION. If our bombing continued in Laos and South Vietnam, what advantages of our bombing programs would we be giving up? 1  
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2. (TS) BACKGROUND 4

a. A key element of the US strategy for Vietnam has been, through the air campaign, to apply increasing pressure against NVN. The over-all military operations are designed to force NVN to halt its support of the communist insurgency in SVN and to come to the negotiating table. 5  
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b. Operating under various restraints, combat air operations against NVN have effectively reduced that country's warmaking capacity. Among targets destroyed or neutralized are 60 percent of NVN POL storage, 70 percent of its ammunition storage, and 46 percent of its power plant capacity. Despite improved anti-air defenses, the aircraft loss rate over NVN for CY 1967 is less than for the last six months of 1966. NVN support of the war in the South has continued; however, there is no doubt that the air war over NVN has slowed and made more difficult the resupply of men and materiel to SVN. 10  
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c. Since February 1967, additional targets and improving weather have improved the effectiveness of the air campaign in the northeast quadrant of NVN, increasing the level of damage in that area more than during the entire previous ROLLING THUNDER program. In the interdiction program, 21  
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941103-368

damage inflicted on vehicles, watercraft, and rolling stocks 1  
 has reached a new high. Railway system capabilities have 2  
 deteriorated. The truck replacement rate has been lower 3  
 than the destruction rate. Port congestion is increasing, 4  
 as shown by pileup of materials and increased offloading 5  
 time for ships. The cumulative results of our strikes have 6  
 caused multiple management, supply, and distribution problems. 7  
 New weapons, particularly the CBU-24 and WALLEYE, which add to 8  
 our effectiveness, are reaching the field. 9

3. (TS) DISCUSSION 10

a. The current air campaign against NVN is an integral part 11  
 of the over-all US strategy in SEAsia. Identifiable changes in 12  
 the air operations in NVN have developed and are having 13  
 important effects on the efficiency of our operations and 14  
 the further degradation of the enemy's capability to support 15  
 the war. It is most significant that these changes are recent 16  
 and have occurred since early May when air operations in the 17  
 North were stepped up, bringing the enemy's rear support area 18  
 under much more continuous pressure. These changes indicate 19  
 an upward trend of strategic impact against NVN. It is 20  
 important to note that there is no lack of critical targets 21  
 in NVN. It is believed that high sortie rates and improved 22  
 weapons, techniques, and targeting concepts are paying off. 23

b. The war cannot properly be compartmentalized. Combat 24  
 operations of various types, in several countries, are con- 25  
 tributing to the achievement of US military objectives. It 26  
 is against this background that the suspension of air operations 27  
 in NVN should be examined. Although hypothetical, such an 28  
 examination should indicate any change in the course of the war 29  
 which might occur. 30

c. The bombing campaign has created a number of problems for 31  
 NVN leaders: 32



(1) In obtaining necessary war supplies and moving them to SVN; and

(2) In maintaining the nation's economy at a level sufficient to feed and supply its population and its forces.

d. Suspension of bombing without substantial, reciprocal deescalation would provide Hanoi with evidence that the United States is tiring of the war and is abandoning the initiative. It would indicate to Hanoi that the United States had decided it could not obtain its objectives through the bombing of NVN and had yielded to the critics of its bombing policy. Such indications should increase the determination of the North Vietnamese people. Hanoi would be encouraged to pursue the war in SVN and to probe further into our resolve. Similarly, the suspension of bombing could also check any inclination in NVN to negotiate for peace.

e. Hanoi is aware that the United States has linked cessation of the bombing with reciprocal deescalation. To offer up a "blue chip" negotiating asset for a concession that is neither substantial in the eyes of the international community nor related to Hanoi's ability to continue the war would represent a retreat from our announced position. Time would be afforded NVN to prepare for another phase of the war in SVN, repair the damage suffered, and increase its defenses, should bombing be resumed. A major lesson learned from the Korean armistice talks was that no concession should be made on major items\* since the communists would regard it as a sign of weakness.

f. In addition, cessation of bombing would weaken the US position in other SEAsia countries. Thailand would be concerned about the revision of US policy. In Laos, the Government would be under greater pressure to halt in-country bombing. To further placate Hanoi and Peking,

\* CINCPAC msg to JCS, 042030Z June 1967, JCS IN 55604

941103-370

Cambodia would become more militant in opposing the US 1  
presence in SEAsia. Free World troop contributors would 2  
be under internal pressures to bring home their troops in 3  
anticipation of an early end to the war. In SVN, the extent 4  
of the political and psychological repercussions would be 5  
difficult to gauge. However, a decision by the United 6  
States to halt the bombing could cause a major reorientation 7  
by the SVN Government away from US military and political 8  
objectives. Within the United States, these pressures 9  
would strengthen those factions which advocate a political 10  
solution short of stated US objectives. 11

g. Military risks are attached to any standdown of 12  
offensive military operations. Experience has demonstrated 13  
the ability of the enemy to react rapidly to improve his 14  
military posture. Based on this experience, some specific 15  
results we could expect are: 16

(1) Use of all lines of communications throughout 17  
NVN would be restored. Bridges, roads, and railroads 18  
would be repaired and normal schedules resumed. Port 19  
discharge rates would be improved. Manpower and 20  
materials could be made available for other tasks. 21

(2) The training of personnel for NVA units would 22  
proceed at a more rapid pace. Able-bodied males of 23  
military age, previously used for repair and maintenance 24  
functions, would become available as replacements for 25  
military units and probably to expand NVN's activities 26  
in Laos. At present, this maintenance and repair 27  
force numbers some 300,000 NVN workers. NVA and 28  
civilian morale and determination would improve. 29  
The bombing cessation could be interpreted as a 30  
military victory by the North Vietnamese. 31

941103-371

(3) With the threat to NVN eliminated, resources would be released for use in SVN. The North Vietnamese would probably redeploy some air defense units in such a way as to protect their remaining infiltration routes to the South, with consequent increases in aircraft losses in Laos and decreased effectiveness in the interdiction program.

(4) A standdown of air operations against enemy forces in southern NVN could jeopardize the security of friendly forces in the vicinity of the DMZ.

(5) A bombing suspension would be damaging to SVN morale.

(6) The air campaign in the north is a major military activity in which the United States retains the initiative and controls the intensity of combat.

4. (TS) ADVANTAGES FORFEITED

a. NVN should not be allowed to export insurgency from a complete sanctuary. The results of airstrikes are tangible proof to NVN of the consequences of its actions.

b. Improved targeting, stepped-up combat air effort over northeast NVN, and the continued high sortie rate against enemy infiltration are gradually paying off. Halting the bombing against NVN would remove an important source of US attrition of the enemy.

c. The air campaign is a continuing deterrent to full-scale invasion of SVN by major NVA forces.

d. Substantial NVN manpower resources are committed to air and coastal defense, repair and reconstruction, and support of a dispersal program.

e. Continued air operations against NVN reflect the determination of the United States to seek negotiations without preconditions and will retain for it an important trading asset, once negotiations have begun.

941103-372

f. In terms of timing, the most favorable weather for US  
air operations in NVN has commenced. Increased pressures  
can be imposed on NVN to increase the cost to Hanoi of its  
support of the war in the South.

5. (TS) CONCLUSIONS

a. Cessation of the bombing of NVN would forfeit  
the principal means controlled by the United States for  
carrying the war to the enemy in NVN and would relinquish a  
valuable "blue chip" negotiating asset.

b. The relaxation of pressure inherent in the foregoing  
would adversely affect the over-all strategy for attainment  
of US objectives.

c. The enemy would be provided an additional incentive  
to sustain and increase his support of the aggression in  
SVN, thus prolonging the war. The proposal would be  
beneficial to NVN morale and detrimental to US/Free World  
morale in SVN.

d. Our allies in SVN would consider the United States  
irresolute in its determination to force the Hanoi  
government to cease its support of the insurgency.

e. The GVN would suffer a loss of stature at home.

f. Some 300,000 NVN LOC maintenance and construction  
workers would be released for other work.

ANNEX E

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION D (1)

1. (C) QUESTION. What is the relevance of the proposal to ILLINOIS CITY? 1  
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2. (TS) BACKGROUND. COMUSMACV has provided two inter-related plans for interdicting the flow of personnel and material into South Vietnam. One plan would establish a strong point/obstacle system located just south of the DMZ, extending approximately 22 miles from the coast to the mountains with a possible extension to the Laotian border. The second plan would create an air-supported anti-infiltration system to interdict IOCs in the Laos Panhandle, which, if it were to prove effective, could be extended into the western DMZ area. Some of the forces and specialized equipment required are being readied and deployed to protect a 1 November 1967 initiation of construction (IOC) should execution of the plans be ordered. 3  
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3. (TS) DISCUSSION 16

a. Effective demilitarization of the DMZ would make the strong point/obstacle system redundant. Programmed forces and resources procured for the system could be used elsewhere. 17  
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b. If bombing in NVN were halted, the air-supported anti-infiltration system in the Laos Panhandle would assume greater importance; however, operation of this system is dependent on continued airstrikes in this area. Should the DMZ be closed, infiltration and logistic support through Laos would undoubtedly increase, providing additional targets. Cessation of the air campaign against NVN will release manpower, material, and technical resources to counter the air-supported anti-infiltration system. A greater number of antiaircraft weapons would become available for use against aircraft in Laos. 21  
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941103-374

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4. (TS) CONCLUSIONS

- a. Should the DMZ be closed effectively by the ICC, the strong point/obstacle portion of the anti-infiltration system near the DMZ would be redundant.
- b. Under similar circumstances, the air-supported anti-infiltration system in the panhandle region of southern Laos would be under pressure from NVN.
- c. Cessation of bombing in NVN would increase the NVA's ability to counter the air-supported barrier in Laos.
- d. In addition, if bombing in Laos should be suspended as a consequence of the standdown of operations against NVN, ILLINOIS CITY cannot be supported.
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941103-375

ANNEX F

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION D (2)

1. (C) QUESTION. What is the relevance of the proposal to PRAIRIE FIRE? 1  
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2. (TS) BACKGROUND 3
  - a. PRAIRIE FIRE consists of reconnaissance and interdiction operations in a strip of Laos 20 kilometers wide, adjacent to the Laos/SVN border. 4  
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  - b. The limited assets available to this program restrict the scope of PRAIRIE FIRE activities to approximately three reconnaissance and two exploitation force missions per week. Planned expansion of the program should treble this capability within the next 12 months. 7  
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  - c. Operations depend heavily on combat air operations to support teams engaged with the enemy and to attack targets developed by the teams. PRAIRIE FIRE operations average ten supporting tactical air sorties per mission. 12  
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  - d. PRAIRIE FIRE reporting provides the best, and often the only, hard intelligence of enemy activity in this area of southeastern Laos. 16  
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3. (TS) DISCUSSION 19
  - a. The proposal would highlight the importance to the enemy of the Lao infiltration route and thus enhance the importance of PRAIRIE FIRE operations. 20  
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  - b. However, if bombing is halted in Laos, the survivability and effectiveness of PRAIRIE FIRE teams would be impaired considerably. The teams would be incapable of operating in some areas without combat air support and the benefits presently accruing from ground-vector airstrikes would be lost. 23  
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4. (TS) CONCLUSIONS 29
  - a. Closing of the DMZ and cessation of combat air operations against NVN would increase VC/NVA use of and defensive deployments in the Lao corridor and thus increase the need for PRAIRIE FIRE operations, while rendering execution more difficult. 30  
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b. Should bombing be halted in Laos, PRAIRIE FIRE opera- 1  
tions would be curtailed in scope and deprived of their 2  
principal means of combat support, with a consequent 3  
increase in vulnerability to enemy counteraction. 4

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DISCUSSION OF QUESTION D (3)

1. (U) QUESTION. What is the relevance of the proposal  
to SEA DRAGON? 1 2
2. (TS) BACKGROUND 3
- a. SEA DRAGON denotes naval surface operations against  
logistic watercraft, selected NVN military installations,  
and land lines of communication between 17 and 20 degrees  
north latitude. 4 5 6 7
- b. These interdiction operations commenced in late  
October 1966 against military logistic waterborne craft. 8 9  
On 22 February 1967, additional authority was granted to  
fire at suitable military targets ashore, within the above  
latitude limits. 10 11 12
- c. US surface forces assigned to SEA DRAGON operations  
currently include one or two cruisers and from five to  
seven destroyers. 13 14 15
- d. To date, over 643 NVN waterborne logistic craft have  
been destroyed and another 910 damaged in SEA DRAGON  
operations. Additionally, storage areas, warehouses,  
military areas, a SAM site, railroad sidings, POL storage  
areas, and other targets have been destroyed. 16 17 18 19 20
- e. Sightings by naval surface elements of coastal water-  
borne traffic are currently equal to or greater than those  
observed before February 1967, which is indicative that  
infiltration along coastal waterways south of 20°N is  
continuing. 21 22 23 24 25
3. (TS) DISCUSSION 26
- a. Since SEA DRAGON operations were initiated, NVN has  
taken full advantage of various holiday standdown periods  
to move military supplies southward towards the DMZ without  
fear of attack. The volume of traffic observed during these  
periods reflects a throughput capability of up to 5,000 tons  
per day. 27 28 29 30 31 32

b. Should a decision to halt the bombing in NVN extend 1  
to curtailment of SEA DRAGON operations, the North 2  
Vietnamese would be free to resume watercraft movements in 3  
coastal waters towards the DMZ. Logistic stocks could thus 4  
be assembled adjacent to the DMZ, infiltrated into SVN 5  
by watercraft, or transshipped around the DMZ through Laos. 6

c. Should the bombing of NVN be halted, it is assumed that 7  
SEA DRAGON bombardment of shore targets would also cease. 8  
However other SEA DRAGON operations should continue. 9

4. (S) CONCLUSIONS 10

a. SEA DRAGON operations have been effective in 11  
interdicting infiltration of military material along 12  
the coastal waterways of NVN south of 20° N latitude. 13

b. Should the bombing of NVN be halted, as stated in 14  
the proposal, SEA DRAGON operations against enemy water- 15  
craft should continue. 16

c. Despite the foregoing, it is judged that cessation 17  
of bombing in NVN would be accompanied by restraints 18  
against naval surface operations against NVN. 19

ANNEX H

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION D (4)

1. (S) QUESTION. What is the relevance of the proposal 1  
to weather and seasonal factors? 2

2. (S) BACKGROUND 3

a. The southwest monsoon prevails from May through 4  
October. It tends to be strongest in July and August. 5  
The southwest monsoon is characterized by frequent showers, 6  
high humidities, high temperatures, numerous thunderstorms, 7  
and extensive cloudiness in the southern lowlands and the 8  
interior highlands and generally good weather for air 9  
operations over NVN. 10

b. The northeast monsoon predominates from November until 11  
mid-March. For the northeast coastlands of SVN and the 12  
coastal plain and Red River delta in NVN, this monsoon is 13  
the wet season. Persistent low clouds, rain, and drizzle 14  
are characteristic of the weather in this region. The 15  
frequency of precipitation along the northeast coast is 16  
high; however, precipitation amounts are normally small. 17  
For the rest of the SVN and the Laotian Panhandle, the 18  
northeast monsoon is the dry season. 19

c. In NVN, the period of favorable weather extends 20  
generally from May through October. 21

3. (S) DISCUSSION 22

a. The primary route for the infiltration into South 23  
Vietnam of personnel and materiel remains through the 24  
Laos/Cambodia trail complex. The heavy rains during the 25  
southwest monsoon affect the movement of supplies, 26  
particularly those transported by truck through Laos and 27  
Cambodia. Widespread heavy rain, coupled with airstrikes 28  
and cratering of roads, stops most truck movements in the 29

Laotian Panhandle. Some short shuttle movements may continue over segments of good road structure. Although through truck service is severely limited during the southwest monsoon, waterways, bicycle trails, and human porters are used to continue logistic movements. The enemy has established a series of base areas to serve in resupplying his forces. These base areas have been identified just north of the DMZ, in Laos and Cambodia along the border, and throughout South Vietnam. The enemy's ability to prestock these base areas tends to compensate for reduced throughput due to poor weather and air interdiction.

b. The weather does not stop or greatly hinder the movement of personnel. The movement of the 324B NVA Division and elements of the 341st NVA Division across the DMZ took place during the dry season in the DMZ area, whereas that of the 325th NVA Division and 5th Regiment occurred during the northeast monsoon and spring transition periods of poor operational weather in the DMZ.

c. In NVN, the months of May through October are generally favorable for air operations against the LOCs and in the northeast quadrant. November through April are predominantly unfavorable. If the bombing of NVN is to cease, the greatest advantage to the United States will be obtained by halting air operations at the conclusion of a period of good weather, such as in late October.

4. (S) CONCLUSIONS

a. The least undesirable time for demilitarizing the DMZ would be at the onset of the southwest monsoon, usually in the month of May.

b. For the termination of bombing in NVN, the least undesirable time would be the onset of the northeast monsoon or late October.

c. The enemy's system of base areas and prestocks tends to compensate for reduced throughput of materiel in bad weather.

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ANNEX I

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION E

1. (U) QUESTION. If the proposal is to be made, what should be the timing? 1 2

2. (S) BACKGROUND. The Canadian proposal envisages, as a first step in physical disengagement, an approach to Hanoi that would call for US cessation of bombing and, concurrently, the reestablishment of the DMZ as an effective buffer, controlled by the ICC. The Canadian Government believes that such a scheme, if implemented, would lead to a cessation of hostilities under effective international guarantees and revised control procedures, within the parameters of the Geneva settlement. 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

3. (S) DISCUSSION 12

a. Weather conditions would be a secondary consideration since the enemy could continue infiltration operations via alternate routes if such is his intention. From a weather standpoint, the most desirable period would be at the onset of the northeast monsoon, when conditions become less favorable for air operations over NVN. 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

b. To halt the US bombing campaign against NVN at this time would probably induce psychological and morale effects in the GVN and among US/Allied Forces. Lacking adequate concessions by the enemy, the standdown could cause a reduction of the RVN/Allied war effort. In SVN, public interest in the Presidential election scheduled for September 1967 probably would not reach the proportions presently expected, and some of the recent progress in political and social matters could be lost. 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

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c. A feeling that the United States had decided to 1  
terminate the war short of its objectives would be diffi- 2  
cult to avoid, and further political instability in SVN 3  
could result. A major consideration in the timing of the 4  
proposal would, therefore, be the September elections in 5  
SVN. 6

d. The ICC has proved ineffective in the past. The 7  
standdown in NVN should be deferred until satisfactory 8  
terms of reference for a control organization have been 9  
adopted and that organization has been formed and deployed. 10

4. (S) CONCLUSIONS 11

a. If the proposal is to be made, it would be least 12  
undesirable, from the viewpoint of GVN stability, to 13  
wait until the newly elected government has taken office 14  
following the September election. 15

b. If adopted, the proposal should be timed to follow 16  
approval of new and adequate terms of reference for an 17  
ICC and organization of a DMZ force. 18

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ANNEX J

DISCUSSION OF QUESTION F

- 1. (S) QUESTION. What will be the effect of the proposal  
on the bombing in Laos? 1
- 2. (TS) BACKGROUND 2

  - a. The bombing in Laos has never been publicly  
acknowledged and, in its present form, is permitted by  
Premier Souvanna Phouma, on behalf of the Royal Loation  
Government (RLG), against the backdrop of the greater  
bombing effort in NVN. 3
  - b. The US Ambassador to Laos has stated that he  
considers that Premier Souvanna Phouma could not allow  
continued bombing in Laos if the bombing in NVN were  
halted. 4

- 3. (TS) DISCUSSION 5

  - a. If the bombing were stopped in NVN but continued  
in Laos, with or without RLG acquiescence, the United  
States could expect strong pressures from all quarters,  
but particularly from the Soviet Union, to cease air  
operations over Laos. 6
  - b. Premier Souvanna has expressed grave concern\* over  
the political consequences for Laos if the DMZ were  
effectively closed. Sealing the DMZ would, he stated,  
make it obvious to all the world that the only route  
from NVN to SVN was through Laos. Although Souvanna  
has stated that the Lao military leaders would like to  
ask for outside assistance to "clean out the panhandle,"  
nevertheless, Souvanna is firmly committed to a policy  
of neutrality.\*\* Therefore, if a situation developed 7

\* Vientiane msg 6419 to Sec State, 181000Z April 1967,  
JCS IN 46148  
\*\* Vientiane msg 6968 to Sec State, 110300Z May 1967,  
JCS IN 92405

941103-384

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which forced him to acknowledge his acquiescence in 1  
US military operations in Laos, he might interpret this 2  
as abandonment of the 1962 Geneva Accords, in which 3  
case he would probably resign. 4

c. In these circumstances, if bombing in Laos resulted 5  
in the resignation of Souvanna or the overthrow of his 6  
government, it is doubtful that his replacement would 7  
be as effective. 8

d. The operations of the Forces Armees Royales, 9  
CAS, and PRAIRIE FIRE depend heavily on tactical air 10  
support. 11

e. Cessation of bombing in NVN would release antiair- 12  
craft weapons for use in Laos, should NVN desire to deploy 13  
them, thus rendering air operations over Laos more 14  
hazardous. 15

4. (TS) CONCLUSIONS 16

a. Should a decision be reached to halt air operations 17  
against NVN, the United States may also be subject to 18  
pressure to halt the bombing in Laos. 19

b. Should airstrikes into Laos continue, increased 20  
antiair defenses along the LOCs can be expected with 21  
consequent increases in aircraft losses. 22

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