TOP SECRET [redacted]

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

JCSM-527-67
28 September 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: TIMBERWORK (C) - Modification of Concepts [redacted]

1. ([redacted]) TIMBERWORK ([redacted]) long-term agent teams may be delivered by US or VNAF helicopters to Laos for further overland infiltration into North Vietnam (NVN) or directly into NVN under currently approved concepts. Additionally, such teams may be delivered by parachute drop from fixed-wing aircraft directly into NVN.

2. ([redacted]) TIMBERWORK ([redacted]) short-time roadwatch and target acquisition (STRATA) teams may be delivered by US or VNAF helicopters into Laos for further overland infiltration into NVN or directly into NVN under currently approved concepts.

3. ([redacted]) There are instances when suitable drop zones in NVN are not available for the infiltration of TIMBERWORK (C) long-term agent teams or agent team reinforcements and where drop zones in Laos offer overland access to target areas in NVN. Additionally, future TIMBERWORK ([redacted]) STRATA team targets may lie in areas of NVN where helicopter infiltration of teams would be impractical because of the probability of helicopter detection by the local populace and subsequent search of the area by North Vietnamese security authorities.

4. ([redacted]) COMUSMACV has requested and CINCPAC has recommended additional authority to permit parachute delivery of TIMBERWORK ([redacted]) long-term agent teams to Laos for subsequent overland infiltration into NVN and modification of the STRATA team concept to include parachute delivery. Such authority would provide a full range of alternatives to COMUSMACV and CINCPAC in selecting the most advantageous means for infiltrating agents into NVN.

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5. (TS) The effect of granting the additional authorities, described in the preceding paragraph, would be to add the capability of effecting parachute delivery of agent teams and agent team reinforcements in cases where helicopter delivery is already authorized. The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the tactical risks, and consequently the risk of compromise and political involvement, are less in the case of parachute delivery than in the already approved case of helicopter delivery.

6. (S) The requirements for prior coordination with and approval by the American Embassies in Vientiane and/or Bangkok for operations involving staging through or flight over Lao or Thai territory are already established and will remain in effect. Moreover, the granting of this authority will not alter the requirement for Washington-level approval for the infiltration of new TIMBERWORK (C) long-term agent teams.

7. (TS) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that you approve, subject to the concurrence of the Department of State, the following:

a. Delivery by parachute drop of TIMBERWORK (C) long-term agent teams and agent team reinforcements to drop zones in Laos for further overland infiltration into NVN.

b. Delivery by parachute drop of TIMBERWORK (C) STRATA teams to drop zones in Laos for further overland infiltration into NVN or directly to drop zones in NVN.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

JOHN P. McCONNELL
Acting Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

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