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

JCSM-532-67
2 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: ARC LIGHT Operations (U)

1. On 11 September 1967, CINCPAC requested authority to approve ARC LIGHT strikes in North Vietnam (NVN) in the area between the Provisional Military Demarcation Line and 17° 10' north latitude. This area is within 15 nautical miles of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and supports any rapid ingress of enemy forces into the I Corps Tactical Zone.

2. The enemy has maintained a formidable capability against allied positions in the I Corps Tactical Zone and has sustained the capability to attack these positions with artillery, rocket, and mortar fire. Indications point to an increased enemy effort to sustain and support these forces. In an effort to neutralize this threat, a coordinated reconnaissance and attack operation is underway in this critical area, utilizing all available intelligence resources, ARC LIGHT forces, and tactical air follow-up.

3. The adoption by the enemy of this area of NVN as an active support base integral to his efforts in SVN makes it necessary that appropriate commanders in the field be given authority to employ our total air assets to counter this threat. CINCPAC and CINCSAC, acting jointly, should be given authority to conduct B-52 strikes as requested. Extension of the CINCPAC/CINCSAC authority in this manner would recognize the existence of a single geographic area of intensive enemy operations extending from southern NVN through the DMZ and into SVN and would permit more timely reaction to targets of opportunity.

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4. ~~(S)~~ ARC LIGHT missions flown daily in the vicinity of the DMZ are exposed to the NVN surface-to-air missile threat. Surface-to-air missile protective measures will not be reduced by this request.

5. ~~(S)~~ The Joint Chiefs of Staff, therefore, request that authority be delegated to them to approve ARC LIGHT strikes in NVN south of 17° 10' north latitude. This authority will be further delegated to CINCPAC/CINCSAC, acting jointly.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



HAROLD K. JOHNSON
Acting Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

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