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

JCSM-687-67

9 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Military Operating Authorities During
Holiday Standdowns for Christmas 1967 and
New Year's and Tet 1968 (U)

1. (S) Reference is made to:

a. American Embassy, Saigon, message to State, 11714/221700Z November 1967, JCS IN 32691, in which Ambassador Locke presented the GVN position for holiday standdown periods of 36-36-72 hours and recommended that, if acceptable from a military standpoint, the proposal be accepted.

b. Joint State/Defense message to American Embassy, Saigon, 74877, 260205Z November 1967, JCS IN 38981, in which the Secretaries of State and Defense desired to limit standdown periods to 24-24-48 hours and provided guidance for the Ambassador in his negotiations with the Government of Vietnam and the Seven-Nation Ambassadors.

c. JCSM-567-67, dated 23 October 1967, subject: "Holiday Standdowns in Vietnam (U)," in which the Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed any holiday standdowns and further opposed a total freeze on logistics, force repositioning, and rotation and replacement of personnel.

d. JCS message to CINCPAC and CINCSAC, 3879/281441Z April 1967, which provided the military instructions to be followed during the standdown for Buddha's birthday on 23 May 1967.

2. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff note that the Government has made a decision to institute standdowns of military activity of 24 hours at Christmas and New Year's and 48 hours at Tet.

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In the past, the enemy has demonstrated to our detriment his ability to capitalize on military standdowns; therefore, the rules of engagement promulgated last year should be modified in accordance with the draft message contained in the Appendix hereto.

3. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend your approval of the attached draft message.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



HAROLD K. JOHNSON
Acting Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment

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APPENDIX

DRAFT

IMMEDIATE
PRIORITY

FROM: JCS

TO: CINCPAC
CINCSAC

INFO: COMUSMACV
AMEMB SAIGON
AMEMB VIENTIANE
AMEMB BANGKOK
WHITE HOUSE
STATE DEPT

DISTRIBUTION:

CJCS DIA
DJS J-3
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CSAF
CMC
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JCS send.

Subj: Military Operating Authorities During Holiday
Standdown for Christmas 1967 and New Year's and
Tet 1968 (U)

1. (1) Following instructions will govern military operations in SEA during any agreed upon holiday standdown for Christmas 1967 and New Year's and Tet 1968. Exact dates and times will be promulgated when firm.
 - a. In SVN
 - (1) Initiate no military offensive operations except in response to:
 - (a) Enemy initiatives endangering the safety of US/RVN/PWMA forces.
 - (b) Significant enemy resupply or infiltration into the southern part of the DMZ and the area immediately south thereof.
 - (c) Major enemy resupply activities other than in subpara 1a(1)(b), above, which fulfill any of the following criteria:

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1. Are in such proximity to friendly units and/or installations as to constitute a direct threat to friendly forces.

2. Are taking place in a well-known established enemy base area.

3. In other locations, involve supplies in quantities sufficient to indicate major resupply operations.

(2) CINCPAC is authorized to react to the above enemy actions in accordance with his existing authorities. Report actions taken under this authority immediately to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(3) Assume full alert posture and continue all security precautions, to include patrol activity. Be prepared with ready reaction forces to respond to any VC/NVA initiative.

(4) Forces in contact with VC/NVA forces will not break contact unless VC/NVA effort to withdraw is clearly evident or until the operation concerned is otherwise concluded.

(5) Continue MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN.

(6) Conduct intensified aerial reconnaissance throughout period, and continue search and rescue operations as required.

(7) If deemed necessary for security of US/RVN/PWMA forces, appropriate air and/or naval operations are authorized in support of the above operations. For this purpose, ARC LIGHT may be requested through normal channels.

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(8) Operations conducted pursuant to foregoing will avoid, whenever possible, hamlets and villages in order to minimize impact on civilian population.

b. In NVN

(1) Suspend normal armed reconnaissance, air strikes, and SEA DRAGON operations during period.

(2) South of 20°N latitude. CINCPAC may authorize SEA DRAGON operations, air strikes, and artillery fire against observed substantial military resupply and against any activities that pose a direct threat to friendly forces. SEA DRAGON ships will not deliver fire against fixed shore targets except in self-defense.

(3) North of 20°N latitude, CINCPAC may authorize air strikes against any targets that pose an immediate and direct threat to our forces, such as movement of SAMs to extend additional SAM defenses south of 20°N latitude.

(4) Conduct intensified aerial reconnaissance and continue search and rescue operations as required.

(5) High-priority FRANTIC GOAT operations may be conducted at discretion of CINCPAC.

(6) Report immediately to the Joint Chiefs of Staff results of any reconnaissance which discloses substantial military resupply activity in NVN and any actions taken under the authorities of subparagraph lb(2) or (3) above.

2. ~~(b)~~ Continue normal operations in Laos and Cambodia.

3. ~~(b)~~ US commanders, for the safety of their forces, have full authority to act to protect them, including reinstatement as necessary of any military actions suspended by these instructions.

4. ~~(b)~~ Report fully and immediately on VC/NVA hostile acts during period.

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5. (C) Resume all normal operations at conclusion of each period. 1
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6. (B) Be prepared to resume all normal operations at any time, without delay, during the standdown period, should enemy initiated attacks and/or incidents reach such proportions as to cause the RVN, United States, and their allies to terminate the standdown for cause. 3
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7. Coordinate any public comment relating to these instructions with US Ambassador, Saigon. GP-3 8
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WRITER:

Captain W. L. Spann, USN
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