

VIETNAM CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Concept of Operations

U. S. military forces will conduct operations against North Vietnam in order to demonstrate U. S. resolve to apply whatever force is necessary to achieve basic U. S. objectives in Southeast Asia.

Such operations will be designed to achieve maximum political, military, and psychological shock, while reducing North Vietnam's over-all war-making and economic capacity to the extent feasible. The campaign will be conducted in a series of separate and distinct actions, each signalling an increasing or escalating level of military intensity.

Domestic and international pressures, and the possibilities of Soviet or Communist Chinese reaction, will be important factors, but will not necessarily rule out bold or imaginative actions directed toward achievement of the primary objective.

In undertaking actions to achieve these objectives, military forces will be employed in periodic, short but intensive military operations of 48-72 hours each during a period of approximately six months. Continuous military actions, such as armed reconnaissance over North Vietnam, or naval blockade of Haiphong, are not envisioned except to substantially maintain the effects achieved by the previous operation(s).

Subsequent to each phase of this campaign, North Vietnamese military and diplomatic responses will be evaluated before initiating the next major military action.

The initial campaign of military action against North Vietnam will be commenced on order and no later than 1 November in order to take maximum advantage of the transition period between the Northwest and Northeast monsoon seasons. Thereafter, operations

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probably will be conducted with reduced visibility because of deteriorating weather conditions. Initial actions will include, but not be limited to, the mining of Haiphong, Hon Gai, and Cam Pha, and a major anti-war campaign to reduce the enemy ability to resist further military actions against NVN. In addition and to the maximum extent possible, enemy supply operations in support of VC/NVA activities in SVN will be degraded. Thereafter, subsequent operations will include consideration of the following military actions, as well as others which may be applicable:

| <u>Possible Washington Decision Points</u> | <u>Possible Action</u> |
|--|---|
| 1 | Mine NVN ports (complete and long duration closure). |
| 1 | Conduct major air strikes against NVN air order of battle, imposing collateral damage as practicable against NVN airfields. |
| 1 | Conduct selective anti-SAM/AAA operations south of 19 degrees N. |
| 1 | Attack military supplies south of 19 degrees N. |
| 1 | Conduct ground sweep in DMZ south of Ben Hai River. |
| 2 | Reseed NVN minefields. |
| 2 | Conduct major air strike against Haiphong port complex. |
| 2 | Remove B-52 attack restrictions on certain supply concentrations/sanctuaries in Laos. |
| 2 | Attack military supplies and LOCs in North Vietnam. |

| Possible Washington Decision Points | Possible Action |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 2 | Conduct ground sweep across the Ben Hai River within the limits of the DMZ. |
| 2 | Quarantine or mine Sihanoukville (with permissive channel). |
| 2 or 3 | Partial destruction of Red River dikes (or during period of optimum flooding). |
| 3 | Conduct major air strikes against high value targets in Thanh Hoa and Vinh. |
| 3 | Conduct ground sweep through the DMZ into NVN, employing reinforced ARVN division, supported by U. S. air. |
| 3 | Cross border operations (brigade size) into Laos and/or Cambodia. |
| 3 or 4 | Complete breaching of dike system. |
| 4 | Conduct major air strike against high value target systems (electric power, war supporting industry, transportation support facilities, military complexes, POL and air defense). |
| ④ | Clean nuclear interdiction of three NVN-Laos passes. ✓ |
| ⑤ | Nuclear interdiction of two NVN-CPR railroads. ✓ |
| 5 | Amphibious landing near Vinh, draw NVA forces, and generate killing zone. |

(P. 343)



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