

INITIAL COMMENTS ON CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. See attached for suggested changes on first page.

2. Questions on list of possible actions:

-- Why must the mining provide "long duration closure"? We then lose control -- there would be no way to reward good behavior. Wouldn't medium duration -- say 2-3 months -- give us more flexibility? We could then promise to allow reopening or threaten to reseed as the situation required.

-- Each "package" will be politically more difficult in the U. S. The first must therefore be as tough as possible to gain as much psychological effect as it can. Would it be physically impossible to carry out all of 1, 2 and 3 as the first package? Of these actions, the following seem most dubious, however:

* Ground actions in North Vietnam would run a very high risk of Chinese ground reaction, and we do not have the resources -- especially in the face of Vietnamization -- to carry them out on a scale which would pose much threat to Hanoi.

* Bombing the dikes will raise particular problems here in the U. S. It would be best, I believe, to save this for later, but somehow imply its possibility during the first actions.

* A permissive channel into Sihanoukville could face us with the daily decisions we wish to avoid, if the Russians chose to force the issue there.

-- Under (4), would there be any geographical restrictions on these high value target systems?

3. Other possible actions:

-- What would be our concurrent movements of ships to the area, our state of strategic readiness, our posture in Korea and Berlin?

-- If we go as far as the interdiction measures in (4) and (5), what other actions should we take at this very high level of escalation once the precedent is established?

-- What would we do if these actions fail?

-- What counter-actions would we take in various contingencies?