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Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
Date: 28 FEB 2013 Authority: EO 13526
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Declassify in Part: _____
Reason: _____
MDR: 12-M-3081

5052.552 THE WHITE HOUSE
Washington

18 January 1962

file

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 124

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Attorney General
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Administrator, Agency for International Development
The Director, United States Information Agency
The Military Representative of the President

Subject: Establishment of the Special Group (Counter-Insurgency)

To assure unity of effort and the use of all available resources with maximum effectiveness in preventing and resisting subversive insurgency and related forms of indirect aggression in friendly countries, a Special Group (Counter-Insurgency) is established consisting of the following members:

Military Representative of the President, Chairman
The Attorney General
Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Central Intelligence
Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Administrator, Agency for International Development

On invitation:

Other department and agency representatives, as deemed necessary

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Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: FEB 28 2013

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The functions of the Special Group (CI) will be as follows:

a. To insure proper recognition throughout the US Government that subversive insurgency ("wars of liberation") is a major form of politico-military conflict equal in importance to conventional warfare.

b. To insure that such recognition is reflected in the organization, training, equipment and doctrine of the US Armed Forces and other US agencies abroad and in the political, economic, intelligence, military aid and informational programs conducted abroad by State, Defense, AID, USIA and CIA. Particular attention will be paid the special training of personnel prior to assignment to MAAG's and to Embassy staffs in countries where counter-insurgency problems exist or may arise.

c. To keep under review the adequacy of US resources to deal with actual or potential situations of insurgency or indirect aggression, making timely recommendation of measures to apply, increase or adjust these resources to meet anticipated requirements.

d. To insure the development of adequate interdepartmental programs aimed at preventing or defeating subversive insurgency and indirect aggression in countries and regions specifically assigned to the Special Group (CI) by the President, and to resolve any interdepartmental problems which might impede their implementation.

In performing the above functions, the members of the Special Group (CI) will act on behalf of their respective departments and agencies, and will depend for staff support upon their own staffs, and upon such country or regional interdepartmental task forces (normally chaired by a State Department Assistant Secretary) as may be established. The Group will confine itself to establishing broad lines of counter-insurgency policy, subject to my direction and decision as appropriate, insuring a coordinated and unified approach to regional or country programs, and verifying progress in implementation thereof. It will also undertake promptly to make decisions on interdepartmental issues arising out of such programs.

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The critical areas initially assigned to the Special Group (CI) pursuant to paragraph d of this memorandum are set forth in the attached annex.

/s/ John F. Kennedy

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ANNEX TO NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 124

I hereby assign to the cognizance of the Special Group
(Counter-Insurgency) the following countries:

Laos

South Viet-Nam

Thailand

/s/ J. F. K.

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