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Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

In accordance with General Clifton's request, listed below are some of the more important actions taken in recent weeks in the general field of counter-insurgency. There has not been time to coordinate this paper with the members of the Special Group (Counter-Insurgency); however, it has been distributed to the Group today, and any significant comments or additions will be forwarded to you.

A. Organization

1. The Special Group (Counter-Insurgency) was established by NSAM 124, 18 January 1962. The regular members are:

General Taylor, 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.

Other key officials are invited to meetings as appropriate. Meetings are held weekly and last a minimum of two hours, usually considerably longer.

2. The Group has brought Laos, Vietnam and Thailand under its direct cognizance. Cambodia was considered carefully and it was decided that that country was not appropriate for the specific attention of the Group. At the request of the State Department, the Ambassador has written a comprehensive survey of conditions in the country. Colombia is currently being examined, and the Group will meet with the Ambassador. The Yarborough Report on Colombia has been reviewed.

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Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
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B. Specific Subjects Considered by the Special Group (CI)

1. Training

a. General Taylor visited the following schools, to stimulate reorientation of their curricula toward counter-insurgency: National War College; Special Warfare Center, Fort Bragg; Strategic Intelligence School; Military Assistance Institute; Foreign Service Institute; CIA Training Center.

b. NSAM 131, "Training Objectives for Counter-Insurgency" was issued on 13 March 1962. Appropriate departments and agencies were directed to establish adequate training for their officers of junior, middle and senior grades, with provision for cross-training.

c. Preliminary plans for a "modernization Institute" have been discussed with you. Details, and alternatives, are being developed by the Bureau of the Budget. Interim summer courses have been approved. Emphasis is being placed on the development "political sophistication" in military officers, in connection with the approach to counter-insurgency training.

2. Vietnam

a. Weekly reports of the inter-agency Task Force are reviewed by the Special Group at each meeting. Corrective action along counter-insurgency lines is directed by the Group on a continuing basis. Special attention has been focused on: improvement of the military command structure; prisoner of war interrogation; provincial surveys; and Border Ranger Forces. The economic programs in South Vietnam have been under review to assure that they are properly oriented toward counter-insurgency.

b. The Hilsman Report was reviewed and a copy sent to General Harkins.

3. Thailand

All programs have been reviewed with the Ambassador. Special attention has been given to: reorientation of the Thai military forces; strengthening and re-equipping of the Border Police; new roads and irrigation projects; political communications programs; telecommunications networks. Projects in all of these fields are under way.

4. Police Programs

a. AID was directed by a Presidential letter of 19 February 1962 to examine all these programs and to strengthen them as required.

b. A schedule has been established for the opening of the Inter-American Police Academy, in Panama (1 July 1962).

c. The Department of State has submitted an interim report on the United States policy toward internal defense in foreign countries, as required by NSAM 114. A report of an interdepartmental assessment team which made a survey of the internal security situation in ten South American countries was forwarded to the White House on 20 February 1962. Africa is now under review.

5. Miscellaneous

a. The Group has recommended approval of the policy principles outlined by the Department of State, with reference to NSAM 118, "Participation of U. S. and Latin American Armed Forces in the Attainment of Common Objectives in Latin America."

b. A committee is at work defining various terms relating to counter-insurgency, and assuring that understanding of them is uniform throughout the government.

c. The South America Assessment Team's report was considered by the Special Group (CI). It was believed to be outside of the terms of reference of the Group, and was referred to the Department of State for coordination of departmental responses.

d. An Army report on Cold War Programs in Latin America has been noted by the Group.

e. In response to NSAM 115, on Civic Action, special assessment teams are now returning to Washington after surveys in Korea, Burma and seven Latin American countries. A report is to be made to you before the end of March on the additional projects which can be implemented by AID and DOD during the remainder of FY 1962.

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f. The Special Group (CI) has agreed that counter-insurgency matters relating to Latin America should be the responsibility of the projected Latin America Policy Committee, except for individual countries which may be assigned to the Group for special consideration.

C. Other Activities. The Special Group (CI) has monitored the following activities in the counter-insurgency field. These were initiated, at your direction, before the establishment of the Group.

1. A military command has been set up in South Vietnam, under the direction of General Harkins.

2. The Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg has been enlarged and more foreign students are being provided for.

3. The Special Forces have acquired a distinctive article of uniform (green beret).

4. The scope of guerrilla warfare training in the armed services has been expanded.

5. South Vietnam is being used as a training command for selected senior colonels and some brigadier generals.

6. Senior officers are being educated in counter-insurgency, and steps are under way to assure that such training and aptitudes are taken into account in future promotions to general officer and flag rank.

7. Officers selected for NAAG and attache assignments are receiving counter-insurgency training.

8. The rank of the Commander of the Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg has been raised to Brigadier General.

9. Specially qualified general and flag officers have been appointed in each of the services and in the Joint Staff, to coordinate counter-insurgency matters.

10. Senior staff officers are being sent to three geographical areas which have counter-insurgency problems, for the purpose of acquiring direct area knowledge which can be of use in carrying out their duties in Washington.

11. An inventory of U.S. and indigenous paramilitary assets (NSAM 56) is almost complete.

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- 5 -

12. Test centers have been established in South Vietnam and in Thailand to field test Research and Development items applicable to counter-guerrilla warfare. DOD has initiated a review of counterinsurgency material requirements. A preliminary report will be ready within a week.

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