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**SECRET**

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FILE

*SAVA 2, JDD/AIR, JDS 2*

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~~SECRET~~ 260431Z

26 JAN 66 14

DIR INFO SAIG CITE

*\* RE ARMING AIRCREWS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.*

REF DIR

1. IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUE ARISING AND

REVIEWED MATTER RIGHT AFTER THE ACCIDENT AND

WENT TO SAIGON TO DISCUSS WITH SAIG.

2. THERE REMAINS PROS AND CONS TO ARMING CIVILIAN AIRCREWS BUT ON THE BALANCE THE TREATMENT OF B929S CREW ARGUES FOR PROVIDING SUCH PROTECTION AS ARMS WILL PROVIDE. THE NEGATIVE SIDE REMAINS THE FACT THAT WE CAN EXPECT THE OCCASIONAL MISUSE OF A WEAPON TO PRECIPITATE INCIDENTS. ALTHOUGH PURELY DEFENSIVE, THE BEARING OF ARMS LENDS A MILITARY FLAVOR TO SOMETHING THE PRESS TRIES TO PLAY UP AND WE TRY TO PLAY DOWN.

3. SHOULD IT BE DECIDED THAT AIRCREWMEN SHOULD BE ARMED WE THINK WE SHOULD ESTABLISH A SMALL ARMORY, WHICH MUST BE SECURE, AT EACH MAIN BASE INVOLVED IN CHARGE OF A TECHNICIAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INSPECTION, DAILY MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE OF THESE ARMS. AIRCREWMEN WOULD DRAW GUNS AND AMMUNITION FROM THE ARMORY PRIOR

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: UPON RETURN TO THE BASE.

14-Sep-2009

*SECRET*

4. SAFE AND PROPER STOWAGE ABOARD THE ACFT WILL BE A PROBLEM TO BE WORKED OUT. ALSO, THERE WILL BE A PROBLEM OF WHAT THE AIRCREWMAN DOES WITH HIS WEAPON WHEN HE LEAVES THE PLANE AT OUTPOINTS FOR EATING, RONS, DURING REPAIRS ETC. TRAINING WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO AIRCREWMEN ON HOW TO USE THE ARMS EFFECTIVELY AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM SAFELY. (ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO WE HAD AN H34 GROUNDED WHEN A PASSENGER LET AN M1 RIFLE GO OFF IN THE CABIN - - WE ARE LUCKY IT HAPPENED ON THE GROUND AS THE DAMAGE DONE WAS DISABLING). SAIG HAS OFFERED TRAINING FACILITIES.

5. ALTHOUGH OPEN TO THE SUGGESTIONS OF THOSE MORE EXPERT THAN OURSELVES IN THE FIELDS OF ARMS AND DEFENSE OUR THINKING IS THAT WE SHOULD NOT AUTHORIZE PISTOLS, GRENADES AND BURP GUNS BUT RATHER SOMETHING LIKE THE AI-18 OR EQUIVALENT RIFLE WHICH SHOULD BE EFFECTIVE AND READILY HANDLED BUT A TYPE LEAST LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN INCIDENTS. THE INTENT WOULD BE TO ENABLE AN AIRCREW TO DOWN UNFRIENDLIES FOR A LIMITED TIME PERMITTING ARRIVAL OF RESCUE FORCES.

6. INEVITABLY, SOME WILL WANT THE PRIVILEGE OF TAKING ARMS HOME WITH THEM IN SAIGON FOR PROTECTION. GUNS AND AMMO WILL BE LOST OR STOLEN.

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TYPE 203  
IN

7: CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT SHOULD INCLUDE LAOS AND  
THAILAND (UDORN). IF ARMS ARE AUTHORIZED ONE PLACE AND NOT THE  
OTHER MUCH DISSATISFACTION WILL BE GENERATED.

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CFN  SAIGON PROS CONS B929S A

A A A RONS ETCNA H34 A M1 AR-18 A A LAOS THAILAND UDORN NOT THE

BT

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