

sup.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

April 12, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Haiphong Operation

Attached is a modified version of the Haiphong mining feint operation which has been cleared for feasibility with the Navy and with General Wheeler. Before discussing this personally with Mel Laird this morning, I wanted you to see it in its final form. I intend to seek Mel's agreement to proceed with it commencing today. Step Four operations would not be initiated until they are processed through the Joint Chiefs since the movement of unified forces would be involved.

ARMY, NAVY Reviews Completed

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ attachment

JCS completed review for PACOM

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

TOP SECRET

PLAN FOR A MINING FEINT OF HAIPHONG HARBOR

Objective: To create indecision within the Government of North Vietnam with regard to intended U.S. military actions, specifically as they relate to the mining of Haiphong harbor.

General Cover Story: U.S. Navy conducting a Pacific-wide test of its mining plans, including logistic procedures, training, mine readiness and reaction times. The exercise includes movement of mines from storage areas to ships operating in the South China Sea.

Assumption: That increased U.S. military activity in certain specific areas of preparedness will come to the attention of the Hanoi government through the communist intelligence and espionage systems.

General Concept: To undertake a series of military actions which separately or collectively create the impression that the U.S. is making plans for or giving consideration to the mining of Haiphong. Each action will:

- a. be deniable, both publicly and within the U.S. government.
- b. have a suitable cover story which would permit denial of any actual mining plan in the event of unintentional public disclosure.
- c. be relatively low key when taken alone.
- d. be credible in both near and far term.

Sequence: The following sequential actions provide a scenario of events designed to transmit signals to the North Vietnamese government. These actions provide an increasing order of activity. The earlier steps are more deniable both publicly and within the U.S. government as being part of any master mining plan. The supplementary actions at the higher end of the spectrum have both an increased threat potential and are less deniable as a function of time:

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

- 2 -

Step One --

1. CNO transmit message inquiries to Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (normal information addressees), to:
 - a. confirm actual on-board inventory and location of Pacific Command mine assets. (Message could be transmitted UNCLASSIFIED, then upgraded next day to SECRET in order to focus attention.)
 - b. report material condition of mines and estimated manhours necessary to bring to operational readiness.
 - c. verify quantity of MK-36 destructor mines on-board deployed carriers.
 - d. report state of mining readiness of embarked aircraft squadrons.
2. Direct Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, to make ready 50 MK-52 mines, 50 MK-50 mines, and 50 MK-55 mines, and hold in high state of readiness at Subic.
3. Airlift fifty MK-52 mines each from Yokosuka, Atsugi, Iwakuni, and Naha to the Naval Ammunition Depot, Subic Bay, Philippines.
4. Airlift all available MK-52 training-configured, inert mines from locations in Western Pacific to Naval Air Station, Cubi Point, Philippines for pilot/crew training and indoctrination.

Step Two --

1. Airlift mines and mine personnel from Cubi Point to attack carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin.
2. Load ammunition ship in Subic Bay with replenishment mines, and sail to Tonkin Gulf. (This ensures exposure to local stevedores.)

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

- 3 -

Mon 3. Load attack carrier in Subic Bay with mines.
21 Apr

Step Three --

Tues 1. Conduct mine plant exercises from Naval Air Station,
22 Apr Cubi Point, for carrier air wing personnel.

Tues 2. Provide suitable number U. S. Marine Corps A-6 pilots
22 Apr temporary additional duty from Danang to Naval Air Station,
Cubi, for mine qualification.

Fri 3. Move 1,000 mines from Yokosuka to Subic by ship.
25 Apr

Step Four -- Supplementary actions for further study and consideration;
dates to be determined.

1. Move North SAR (Sea Air Rescue) and PIRAZ (Positive Indent Radar Advisory Zone) ships from present southern positions to pre-bombing halt stations. Provide suitable escort, CAP (Combat Air Patrol), etc.
2. Increase reconnaissance over coastal approaches to Haiphong.
3. Initiate continuous and intensive surveillance of sea approaches to Haiphong with P-3 and ASW (antisubmarine warfare) aircraft.
4. Drop empty mine drogue parachutes in area of ostensible mine-field off approaches to Haiphong. (Time permitting, soluble mine shapes could be manufactured.)
5. Position squadrons of destroyers in area 20 miles off Haiphong to simulate threat of blockade.
6. Load and sail submarine from Subic with mines.
7. Replenish or increase West Pacific mine stocks from U. S. depots.
8. Initiate low-key procurement discussions with U. S. mine manufacturers.