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DIA and JCS
reviews
completed.

Revision in Military Strategy?

The Cambodian Army General Staff has drafted a revised plan for military operations during the remaining months of the current dry season. Under the proposed plan, the country would be divided into three "zones," to which military resources would be allocated on a basis of priorities. First priority would go to the consolidation of government control over the densely populated and agriculturally rich area south of the Route 4 - Phnom Penh - Route 1 arc, called Zone 1. The army's goal would be to re-establish secure local administrations, to protect all major lines of communication, and to eliminate all enemy forces.

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Attached to memo Kennedy Memoranda to HAK, 16 Nov. 1972

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Zone 2 would encompass the territory north of Zone 1 to the so-called "Lon Nol line," which is roughly demarcated by Routes 6 and 7 from the Thai border in the west to the South Vietnam border in the east. The major objective in Zone 2 would be to defend major population centers such as Kompong Cham, Siem Reap, Battambang, and Pursat with territorial forces augmented by units from the army general reserve as required. A secondary objective would be to maintain the security of lines of communication at the present level. In Zone 3, which takes in all of the area above the "Lon Nol line"--the isolated and sparsely settled north and the Communist-controlled northeast, the government merely would try to maintain pressure on the enemy from the air.

According to the US defense attaché, Cambodian Army planners feel compelled to recommend a new plan because of the uncertainties surrounding South Vietnamese willingness to participate in campaigns remote from their own borders, because of the anticipated difficulty in eliminating the threat that Communist Phuoc Long Front elements in the proposed Zone 1 could again pose to Phnom Penh, and because of insufficient assets to support simultaneous large-scale operations in widely separated areas.

With only a few months remaining in the dry season, it is questionable if the tentative plan could actually be implemented--assuming that Lon Nol accepts it. Military planners may feel, however, that if Lon Nol agrees to their plan now they will have a headstart on waging a more effective dry season campaign in 1973. (SECRET)

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Lon Non's Activities



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