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OCTOBER 14, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR:
FROM:
SUBJECT:

THE PRESIDENT
HENRY A. KISSINGER
INFORMATION ITEMS

MORI/CDF

OSD review completed

INDOCHINA MILITARY SITUATION: IN NORTHERN MILITARY REGION 1, AIRBORNE DIVISION ELEMENTS SOUTH OF QUANG TRI CITY PROGRESSED TOWARD FIRE SUPPORT BASE ANNE AGAINST WELL-ORGANIZED ENEMY DEFENSES. IN SOUTHERN MILITARY REGION 1, ARVN FORCES CLEARING ROUTE 4 BETWEEN DUC PHO AND HO DUC IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE ARE NEARING LINK-UP AGAINST MODERATE ENEMY RESISTANCE. TO THE WEST, THE SITUATION AT BA TO HAS IMPROVED WITH ARVN FORCES NOW CONTROLLING THE HIGH GROUND NEAR THE TOWN.

IN MILITARY REGION 2, ACTIVITY REMAINED AT A LOW LEVEL, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A FLARE-UP OF ENEMY ACTIVITY IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS. TWO BORDER RANGER CAMPS IN KON Tum PROVINCE REPORTED ATTACKS-BY-FIRE YESTERDAY, AND ONE OF THEM IS AGAIN RECEIVING HEAVY ATTACKS-BY-FIRE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENEMY GROUND ATTACK. U.S. AND VNAF TACTICAL AIR SUPPORT ARE HELPING THE CAMP DEFENDERS. THE ONLY OTHER SIGNIFICANT ACTION IN THE REGION WAS AN ENEMY GROUND ATTACK IN WESTERN PLEIKU PROVINCE.

ENEMY ACTIVITY IN MILITARY REGION 3 DECLINED BUT CONTINUED TO CENTER IN SOUTHERN BINH DUONG PROVINCE, WHERE ENEMY FORCES STILL OCCUPY HAMLETS. FRIENDLY FORCES HAVE MADE SPORADIC SMALL CONTACTS AS THEY SWEEP THE AREA. OTHER FRIENDLY FORCES ARE BEING SHIFTED GENERALLY SOUTH INTO POSITIONS ASTRIDE THE APPROACHES TO SAIGON.

ENEMY ACTIVITY IN MILITARY REGION 4 REMAINED MODERATE AND SCATTERED WITH NUMEROUS SMALL GROUND CONTACTS.

IN THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA OF CAMBODIA, TUN LOAP DISTRICT TOWN ON ROUTE 2 WAS REOCCUPIED BY AN ARVN RANGER BATTALION YESTERDAY.

SOUTH OF THE PLAINE DES JARRES IN LAOS, THREE ENEMY TANKS MOVED THROUGH IRREGULAR POSITIONS AFTER AN ARTILLERY ATTACK. ALTHOUGH TANK FIRE HAS BEEN REPORTED SEVERAL TIMES, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE ENEMY HAS ACTUALLY MADE A TANK ASSAULT SINCE THE START OF VANG PAO'S CURRENT OFFENSIVE.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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A TOTAL OF 229 U.S. TACTICAL AIR SORTIES WERE FLOWN IN SOUTH VIETNAM BY U.S. AND 207 USAF TACTICAL AIR SORTIES WERE FLOWN. NINETY-SEVEN MISSIONS WERE FLOWN IN NORTH VIETNAM, NONE IN CAMBODIA, AND FOUR IN LAOS.

A MORE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IS AT TAB A1

ALLEGED BOMBING OF FRENCH MISSION, HANOI: VARIOUS SOURCES CLAIM TO BE EYEWITNESSES TO THE ALLEGED BOMBING OF THE FRENCH MISSION IN HANOI. HOWEVER, U.S. PILOTS WHO EARLIER STRUCK THE GIA LAM RAIL YARD AND CAR REPAIR AREA REPORT THAT ALL THEIR ORDNANCE WAS ON TARGET, AS EVIDENCED BY THE SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS AND FIRES IN THE RAIL YARD. AT THEIR DEBRIEFING THEY SAID THERE WERE NO BOMB SYSTEM MALFUNCTIONS, NO LATE BOMB RELEASES, AND NO BOMBS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN TOSSED. EXAMINATION OF POST STRIKE PHOTOGRAPHY HAS VERIFIED THE PILOTS' VISUAL BOMB DAMAGE REPORTS AND HAS SHOWN NO BOMB DAMAGE OR SMOKE FROM THE AREA OF THE FRENCH MISSION, WHICH IS SOME THREE MILES TO THE SOUTHEAST OF GIA LAM.

THE PILOTS REPORT THAT EIGHT SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES WERE FIRED AT THEIR AIRCRAFT AND THAT ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY FIRE WAS HEAVY. U.S. AIRCRAFT FIRED THREE SHRIKE MISSILES TO SUPPRESS THE SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE SITE RADARS. THE SHRIKE MISSILE IMPACT AREAS HAVE BEEN ESTIMATED AT A MINIMUM OF FIVE MILES FROM THE FRENCH MISSION SITE.

REDUCED SECURITY CONDITIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM: ACCORDING TO STATISTICS DERIVED FROM THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT'S HAMLET EVALUATION SYSTEM, SOME SIGNIFICANT SETBACKS IN RURAL AND URBAN SECURITY HAVE OCCURRED IN SOUTH VIETNAM DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE CURRENT COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE. THERE HAS BEEN NO MARKED CHANGE IN THE PERCENTAGES OF URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENTS, DESPITE THE HEAVY FIGHTING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE INCREASE IN REFUGEES. NEVERTHELESS, ALMOST A HALF-MILLION OF THE 6.5 MILLION URBAN RESIDENTS AND CLOSE TO A MILLION OF THE 11.5 RURAL RESIDENTS LISTED AS LIVING UNDER FULL OR PARTIAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL BEFORE THE OFFENSIVE HAVE EXPERIENCED LESS SECURE LIVING CONDITIONS. THE NUMBER OF RURAL RESIDENTS NOW LIVING UNDER FULL OR PARTIAL COMMUNIST CONTROL HAS DOUBLED FROM 802,200 TO OVER 1.7 MILLION.

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THE EFFECTS OF THIS SLIPPAGE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PACIFICATION PROGRAM WILL BE SEVERE, SINCE SOME KEY PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN KILLED, CAPTURED, OR FORCED TO MOVE ELSEWHERE. THE COST OF REBUILDING IN PROVINCES SUCH AS BINH DINH, QUANG TRI, BINH LONG, KONUM, AND CHUONG TRIEN WILL BE IN THE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS. IN THE MEANTIME, THE DESTRUCTION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL SERVE AS A REMINDER TO THE LOCAL POPULATION OF THE FRAILTY OF LOCAL SECURITY IN MANY AREAS AND OF THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF THE COMMUNISTS.

AUSTRALIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS: PRIME MINISTER MCMAHON ANNOUNCED OCTOBER 10 THAT AUSTRALIA'S GENERAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD DECEMBER 2, AND BOTH SIDES PLAN TO GET THEIR CAMPAIGNS UNDERWAY IN MID-NOVEMBER. THE MOST RECENT GALLUP POLL (LATE SEPTEMBER) SHOWS MCMAHON'S GOVERNING LIBERAL PARTY-COUNTRY PARTY COALITION BEING RETURNED WITH ABOUT ITS PRESENT MAJORITY OF SEVEN SEATS IN PARLIAMENT. THIS IN ADDITION TO THE PRESENT BALANCE OF THE REGULAR VOTE SHOWN BY THAT POLL (LIBERAL-COUNTRY COALITION WITH 45 AS AGAINST THE LABOR PARTY'S 46) INDICATES THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS SLOWLY BUT STEADILY PICKED UP STRENGTH SINCE ITS LOW POINT OF 37 LAST APRIL (AT WHICH TIME LABOR HAD 50).

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