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JS

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

JCSM-687-67

9 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Military Operating Authorities During  
Holiday Standdowns for Christmas 1967 and  
New Year's and Tet 1968 (U)

1. (S) Reference is made to:

a. American Embassy, Saigon, message to State, 11714/  
221700Z November 1967, JCS IN 32691, in which Ambassador  
Locke presented the GVN position for holiday standdown  
periods of 36-36-72 hours and recommended that, if acceptable  
from a military standpoint, the proposal be accepted.

b. Joint State/Defense message to American Embassy,  
Saigon, 74877, 260205Z November 1967, JCS IN 38981, in  
which the Secretaries of State and Defense desired to limit  
standdown periods to 24-24-48 hours and provided guidance  
for the Ambassador in his negotiations with the Government  
of Vietnam and the Seven-Nation Ambassadors.

c. JCSM-567-67, dated 23 October 1967, subject: "Holiday  
Standdowns in Vietnam (U)," in which the Joint Chiefs of  
Staff opposed any holiday standdowns and further opposed a  
total freeze on logistics, force repositioning, and rotation  
and replacement of personnel.

d. JCS message to CINCPAC and CINCSAC, 3879/281441Z April  
1967, which provided the military instructions to be  
followed during the standdown for Buddha's birthday on  
23 May 1967.

2. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff note that the Government  
has made a decision to institute standdowns of military activity  
of 24 hours at Christmas and New Year's and 48 hours at Tet.

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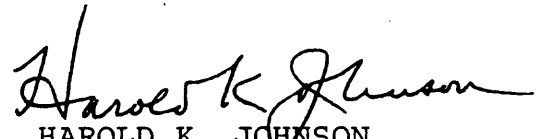
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In the past, the enemy has demonstrated to our detriment his ability to capitalize on military standdowns; therefore, the rules of engagement promulgated last year should be modified in accordance with the draft message contained in the Appendix hereto.

3. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend your approval of the attached draft message.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



HAROLD K. JOHNSON  
Acting Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment

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APPENDIX

DRAFT

IMMEDIATE  
PRIORITY

FROM: JCS

TO: CINCPAC  
CINCSAC

INFO: COMUSMACV  
AMEMB SAIGON  
AMEMB VIENTIANE  
AMEMB BANGKOK  
WHITE HOUSE  
STATE DEPT

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JCS send.

Subj: Military Operating Authorities During Holiday  
Standdown for Christmas 1967 and New Year's and  
Tet 1968 (U)

1. ~~(S)~~ Following instructions will govern military operations in SEA during any agreed upon holiday standdown for Christmas 1967 and New Year's and Tet 1968. Exact dates and times will be promulgated when firm.
  - a. In SVN
    - (1) Initiate no military offensive operations except in response to:
      - (a) Enemy initiatives endangering the safety of US/RVN/PWMA forces.
      - (b) Significant enemy resupply or infiltration into the southern part of the DMZ and the area immediately south thereof.
      - (c) Major enemy resupply activities other than in subpara 1a(1)(b), above, which fulfill any of the following criteria:

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1. Are in such proximity to friendly units 1  
and/or installations as to constitute a direct 2  
threat to friendly forces. 3

2. Are taking place in a well-known established 4  
enemy base area. 5

3. In other locations, involve supplies in 6  
quantities sufficient to indicate major resupply 7  
operations. 8

(2) CINCPAC is authorized to react to the above 9  
enemy actions in accordance with his existing 10  
authorities. Report actions taken under this 11  
authority immediately to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 12

(3) Assume full alert posture and continue all 13  
security precautions, to include patrol activity. 14  
Be prepared with ready reaction forces to 15  
respond to any VC/NVA initiative. 16

(4) Forces in contact with VC/NVA forces will 17  
not break contact unless VC/NVA effort to withdraw 18  
is clearly evident or until the operation concerned 19  
is otherwise concluded. 20

(5) Continue MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN. 21

(6) Conduct intensified aerial reconnaissance 22  
throughout period, and continue search and rescue 23  
operations as required. 24

(7) If deemed necessary for security of 25  
US/RVN/PWMA forces, appropriate air and/or naval 26  
operations are authorized in support of the above 27  
operations. For this purpose, ARC LIGHT may be 28  
requested through normal channels. 29

(8) Operations conducted pursuant to foregoing will avoid, whenever possible, hamlets and villages in order to minimize impact on civilian population.

b. In NVN

(1) Suspend normal armed reconnaissance, air strikes, and SEA DRAGON operations during period.

(2) South of 20°N latitude, CINCPAC may authorize SEA DRAGON operations, air strikes, and artillery fire against observed substantial military resupply and against any activities that pose a direct threat to friendly forces. SEA DRAGON ships will not deliver fire against fixed shore targets except in self-defense.

(3) North of 20°N latitude, CINCPAC may authorize air strikes against any targets that pose an immediate and direct threat to our forces, such as movement of SAMs to extend additional SAM defenses south of 20°N latitude.

(4) Conduct intensified aerial reconnaissance and continue search and rescue operations as required.

(5) High-priority FRANTIC GOAT operations may be conducted at discretion of CINCPAC.

(6) Report immediately to the Joint Chiefs of Staff results of any reconnaissance which discloses substantial military resupply activity in NVN and any actions taken under the authorities of subparagraph lb(2) or (3) above.

2. ~~(b)~~ Continue normal operations in Laos and Cambodia.

3. ~~(c)~~ US commanders, for the safety of their forces, have full authority to act to protect them, including reinstatement as necessary of any military actions suspended by these instructions.

4. ~~(d)~~ Report fully and immediately on VC/NVA hostile acts during period.

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5. (C) Resume all normal operations at conclusion of each period. 1

6. (B) Be prepared to resume all normal operations at any time, without delay, during the standdown period, should enemy initiated attacks and/or incidents reach such proportions as to cause the RVN, United States, and their allies to terminate the standdown for cause. 2  
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7. (C) Coordinate any public comment relating to these instructions with US Ambassador, Saigon. GP-3 8  
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WRITER:

Captain W. L. Spann, USN  
Pacific Division, J-3  
Extension 57008

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