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

JCSM-99-68

15 FEB 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Optional Near-Term Action Programs (U)

1. (S) Reference is made to:

a. Your "Optional Near-Term Action Programs," dated 13 February 1968, which provided four optional programs for personnel and financial actions in connection with the recently directed deployments to South Vietnam.

b. JCSM-91-68, dated 12 February 1968, subject: "Emergency Reinforcement of COMUSMACV (S)," which provided an analysis of three plans for emergency reinforcement of COMUSMACV and recommended certain actions in connection therewith.

c. JCSM-96-68, dated 13 February 1968, subject: "Emergency Reinforcement of COMUSMACV (C)," which provided recommendations on actions relating to the callup of Reserves in connection with the recently directed deployments.

2. (S) Comments are provided in Annexes A, B, C, and D, hereto on the four "Optional Near-Term Action Programs" referred to in reference 1a.

3. (S) In summary, the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

a. Concur in deferral of additional reinforcements of US forces in South Vietnam until requested by General Westmoreland.

b. Do not concur in deferral of a callup of Reserve units. To sustain the one brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division and the Marine regimental landing team, a callup of about 46,300 Reserves (32,000 - Army, 2,300 - Navy, and 12,000 Marine Corps) must be made immediately. A total of 137,000\* additional Reserves (58,000 - Army, 11,700 - Navy, 28,300\* - Air Force, 39,000 Marine Corps) should be brought to a high state of readiness for probable call to active duty on a short notice.

\* This figure differs from the total cited in JCSM-96-68 and includes units (Air Force) subsequently indicated as necessary.

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c. Recommend immediate action to:

(1) Obtain legislation and authority for needed personnel actions, specifically:

(a) Extension beyond 30 June 1968 of the authority to recall Reserve units.

(b) The authority to call up individual Reservists.

(c) The authority to extend the terms of service of individuals now on active duty.

(2) Secure supplemental financial authorization and appropriations as required to support the recommendations contained in reference lc (and as modified by this memorandum, JCSM-99-68). Additionally, eliminate quarterly expenditure ceilings.

(3) Prepare for additional requirements.

d. Note that your "Optional Near-Term Action Programs" paper refers to either the callup of about 40,000 or 130,000 Reserves. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended that 46,300 Reserves be recalled immediately and that another 137,000\* be brought to a high state of readiness, for a total of 183,300.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



EARLE G. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachments

\* This figure differs from the total cited in JCSM-96-68 and includes units (Air Force) subsequently indicated as necessary.

ANNEX A

OPTIONAL NEAR-TERM ACTION PROGRAMS

"Defer additional reinforcements of US forces in South Vietnam until requested by General Westmoreland. Defer 'callup' of Reserve units to replace the 6 battalions now being deployed until further information is available as to General Westmoreland's additional troop requirements, the extent of defections in the ranks of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, RF/PF and South Vietnamese security forces and the success of the Government of Vietnam in restoring services, coping with the refugee problem, etc. Defer request for new legislative authority."

VIEWS OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

1. While the Joint Chiefs of Staff agree that additional reinforcements of US forces in South Vietnam should be deferred until requested by General Westmoreland, it is necessary to prepare to meet anticipated requirements for support units in I Corps Tactical Zone. Moreover, COMUSMACV has urged that remaining elements of the 82nd Airborne Division and the 6/9 Marine expeditionary force be prepared to follow at a later date, and commanders have been notified to prepare these forces for possible deployment to Vietnam.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff do not concur in deferring a callup of Reserve units to replace the "six battalions" now being deployed. In JCSM-96-68, dated 13 February 1968, the Joint Chiefs of Staff noted the requirement for prompt reconstitution of forces to replace the loss of the combat-ready deployable ground forces. Further, it is not feasible to provide support nor to sustain their deployments without a callup of Reserves. Thus, there are specific requirements for additional forces resulting from the recently authorized deployments, independent of possible

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future requirements for Vietnam. A requirement may exist for 1  
additional tactical air support and intratheater air lift for 2  
the deploying ground forces. This requirement is currently under 3  
review by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and CINCPAC. As to deferring 4  
callup of Reserve units until an audit of the status and general 5  
condition of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces is completed, it 6  
is noted that General Westmorland has requested a complete report 7  
on these units. By the time this report is completed, all forces 8  
authorized for emergency deployment are scheduled to be in-place 9  
in South Vietnam. Thus, the reduction of CONUS-based readily 10  
deployable ground forces will have been made with no provision 11  
to replace or sustain them. 12

3. ~~TOP SECRET~~ As discussed in JCSM-91-68 and JCSM-96-68, the Joint 13  
Chiefs of Staff do not concur in deferring the request for new 14  
legislative authority. The authority to recall Reserve units to 15  
active duty expires on 30 June 1968 and should be renewed. In 16  
addition, authority should be obtained to call up individual 17  
Reserves to active duty and to extend the terms of service of 18  
personnel now on active duty. The first of these actions is the 19  
principal way to obtain promptly balanced forces in the active 20  
structure. The second and third actions are the primary means to 21  
overcome existing personnel deficiencies in the critical skills 22  
areas; e.g., pilots, both helicopter and fixed-wing, and techni- 23  
cians. In the case of the Marine Corps, the callup of individual 24  
Reservists is essential to provide necessary ranks and critical 25  
skills for the complete 4th Division Wing Team. 26

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ANNEX B

(14) "Call up now a relatively small number of the Ready Reserves, approximately 40,000 recognizing that additional callups may be required later. This can be done without additional legislative authority. This callup could be accomplished by a Presidential speech noting that a further callup may become necessary depending upon developments in Southeast Asia, but that for the time being no legislative action is being requested on either personnel or financial matters."

VIEWS OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

1. (15) The Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended that about 46,300 Reserves be called to active duty and that another 137,000\* Reserves be brought to a high state of readiness for probable callup to active duty.

2. (15) The Joint Chiefs of Staff agree with the suggestion that a Presidential speech note that further callup may be necessary depending upon developments in Southeast Asia. By callup of units, the 46,300 Reserves can be obtained without additional legislative authority. However, inasmuch as such a callup of units does not provide the individual skilled personnel required, legislative actions on personnel matters should be made a part of any action selected for the reasons stated in Annex A.

\* This figure differs from the total cited in JCSM-96-68 and includes units (Air Force) subsequently indicated as necessary

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ANNEX C

"Call up either a small (40,000) or large (130,000) number of Reserves and concurrently request Congress to authorize additional personnel actions to strengthen the Armed Forces. Defer request for supplemental financial authorizations and appropriations, but indicate these will be required."

VIEWS OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended that about 46,300 Reserves be called to active duty immediately and another 137,000\* Reserves be brought to a high state of readiness for probable call to active duty on a short notice. They agree that Congress should be requested to authorize the additional personnel actions to strengthen the Armed Forces as listed in the "Optional Near-Term Action Programs." However, as recommended in JSCM 96-68, supplemental appropriations should be requested now to cover the contemplated costs of the approved and probable deployments of forces. Presently programmed funds are insufficient to support the additional deployments to Southeast Asia and to meet the additional expenses incurred in a callup of Reserves: e.g. costs associated with procurement of needed material, with the operation and maintenance of expanded facilities, and with additional deployments and force buildup.

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ANNEX D

(TS) "Call up either a small (40,000) or large (130,000) 1  
number of Reserves and concurrently request from Congress both the 2  
authority to take the needed personnel actions and the supplemental 3  
financial authorizations and appropriations required." 4

VIEWS OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF 5

The Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended that about 46,300 6  
Reserves be called to active duty immediately and that another 7  
137,000\* Reserves be brought to a high state of readiness for proba- 8  
ble call to active duty. The Joint Chiefs of Staff agree that there 9  
should be a concurrent request from Congress for both the authority 10  
to take needed personnel actions and the supplemental financial 11  
authorizations and appropriations required. 12

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and includes units (Air Force) subsequently indicated  
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