ANNEX L

to

APPENDIX B

COMMENTS BY THESE INTERVIEWEES

ON THE MACSOG - 1970

(In Chronological Order)

Name	Association with MACSOG	Tab
Col Clyde R. Russell, USA	Chief, MACSOG Jan 1964 - Jun 1965	A
Col William R. Becker, USAF	Chief, MACSOG Air Operations Jan 1964 - Dec 1964	B
Cdr Kenneth N. Babb, USN	Staff Officer, Special Plans, MACV J-5 Apr 1965 - May 1966 Chief, PsyOps Office, Special Operations, J-3, Hq PACOM June 1963 - Apr 1965	C
Col John J. Windsor, Jr., USMC	Chief, MACSOG Operations Jun 1965 - Jun 1966	D
Col Donald D. Blackburn, USA	Chief, MACSOG Jun 1965 - May 1966	E
Col John T. Moore, Jr., USAF	Deputy Chief, Operations Branch, MACSOG Jun 1965 - Jun 1966 Chief, Special Plans Office Directorate of Plans, Headquarters, USAF Jun 1966 - to date: Jul 1969	F
Col John K. Singlaub, USA	Chief, MACSOG May 1966 - Aug 1968	G
LTC Jonathon D. Carney, USA	Deputy Director, Operations-35 (SHINING BRASS/PRAIRIE FIRE, DANIEL BOONE/SALEM HOUSE, IGLOO WHITE) Aug 1966 - Jul 1967	H
Col Robert C. Kingston, USA	Chief, Operations-34, MACSOG Mar 1967 - Aug 1969	I
Col Robert L. Gleason, USAF	Deputy Chief, MACSOG Mar 1968 - Mar 1969	J

[redacted]

COMMENTS DATA

BY

COLONEL CLYDE R. RUSSELL, USA

. . . . I was . . . the original . . . Chief, SOG. . . . Orders were published in January 1964 and . . . designated me as the Chief with four officers and two enlisted assistants. Upon receipt of the orders, I went to MACV #2 Compound.

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. . . . I was not provided with a desk or an in-and-cut box or anything else without demanding same. It was a much different setup than had I gone into a military organization as the commanding officer; I'm sure I would have been treated with more courtesy and cooperation in getting the job done. . . .*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Clyde R. Russell, USA, p. 1.

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL WILLIAM R. BECKER, USAF

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* (TS) Interview of Colonel William R. Becker, USAF, pp. 1-2.

COMMENTS

BY

COMMANDER KENNETH H. BEBB, USN

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* (TS) Interview of Commander Kenneth H. Bebb, USN, p. 5.

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL JOHN J. WINDSOR, USMC

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.. Our missions were under final control of the US Ambassador. Our direct contact while I was there was Mr. Habib, a foreign service officer. Whenever we went to talk to him, there was complete cooperation and we had little difficulty. . . .**

* (TS) Interview of Colonel John J. Windsor, USMC, p. 7.
** Ibid., pp. 7-8.

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL DONALD D. BLACKBURN, USA

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Also of significance were the following general problems. Certain Staff Heads at Hq MACV wanted to integrate SOG within the staff. General Stilwell was MACV J-3 when SOG was organized and had a full appreciation for the sensitivity of the operation. When he went from J-3 to C/S, he retained control over the operation in the interest of security and maintaining its cover. However, on his departure, attempts were made to put SOG fully under control of the Staff. I managed to maintain my position as a subordinate commander but had to try using the MACV staff system. One of the first papers tried was the Front Organization. This paper was supposed to be properly staffed by a specially designated staff member-cleared for the purpose. It wound up being handled in a routine manner and was brought to the surface in some staff officer's basket in JUSPAO.

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* (TS) Interview of Colonel Donald D. Blackburn, USA, pp. 2-3.
** Ibid., p. 3.

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* Ibid., p. 3.

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL JOHN T. MOORE, JR., USAF

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* (TS) Interview by Colonel John T. Moore, Jr., USAF, p. 13.
** Ibid., pp. 13-14.
*** Ibid., p. 14.

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* Ibid., p. 14.

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* Ibid., p. 14.

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL JOHN K. SINGLAUB, USA

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(TS) Interview of Colonel John K. Singlaub, USA, pp. 31-32.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

Ibid., p. 32.

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

* Ibid., p. 32.
** Ibid., p. 33.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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* Ibid., pp. 34-35.

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* Ibid., p. 35.

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* Ibid., p. 30.

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* Ibid., pp. 33-34.

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* Ibid., p. 34.

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL JONATHON D. CARNEY, USA

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* (TS) Interview of Colonel Jonathon D. Carney, USA, p. 11.

[redacted]

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* (TS) Memorandum for the Record by Colonel Jonathon D. Carney, USA, "Lessons Learned in SOG (U)," 26 November 1968, pp. 7-8.

** Ibid., p. 8.

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The military devises means to develop and maintain true, ready proficiency for the initiation of black/gray psyops on very short notice.

The military abrogates its role of performing subversion of enemy governments and people.

* Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[redacted]

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL ROBERT C. KINGSTON, USA

[redacted]

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[redacted]

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Robert C. Kingston, USA, pp. 5-6.

ANNEX M

to

APPENDIX B

COMMENTS BY THESE INTERVIEWEES

ON

COMMAND AND CONTROL

(In Chronological Order)

Name	Association with MACSOG	Tab
Col Clyde R. Russell, USA	Chief, MACSOG Jan 1964 - Jun 1965	A
Col William B. Becker, USAF	Chief, MACSOG Air Operations Jan 1964 - Dec 1964	B
Cdr Kenneth M. Bebb, USN	Staff Officer, Special Plans, MACV J-5 Apr 1965 - May 1966 Chief, PsyOps Office, Special Operations, J-3, Hq PACOM Jun 1963 - Apr 1965	C
Col Donald D. Blackburn, USA	Chief, MACSOG Jun 1965 - May 1966	D
Col John T. Moore, Jr., USAF	Deputy Chief, Operations Branch, MACSOG Jun 1965 - Jun 1966 Chief, Special Plans Office Directorate of Plans, Headquarters, USAF Jun 1966 - to date: Jul 1969	E
Col John K. Singlaub, USA	Chief, MACSOG May 1966 - Aug 1968	F
LTC Jonathon D. Carney USA	Deputy Director, Operations-35 (SHINING BRASS/PRAIRIE FIRE, DANIEL BOONE/SALEM HOUSE, IGLOO WHITE) Aug 1966 - Jul 1967	G
Capt Bruce B. Dunning, USN	Special Operations Division OSACSA, Staff Officer and Division Chief Aug 1966 - Nov 1969	H

Name	Association with MACSOG	Tab
Col Robert C. Kendrick, USA	Chief, Special Operations Branch, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (J-3) Headquarters PACOM Dec 1966 - to date: Jul 1969	I
Col Robert C. Kingston, USA	Chief, Operations-34, MACSOG Mar 1967 - Aug 1969	J
Col Harold K. Aaron, USA	Commander, 1st SFG Jun 1967 - May 1968 Commander, 5th SFG Jun 1968 - May 1969	K
Col Robert L. Gleason, USAF	Deputy Chief, MACSOG Mar 1968 - Mar 1969	L
Col Herbert Q. Graeser, USA	Staff Officer, Special Operations Branch, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (J-3), Hq PACOM Jan 1969 - to date: Jul 1969	M

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL CLYDE R. RUSSELL, USA

. . . . We had to take OPLAN 34A and draw up our operations for the next 90 days at one stage, 60 days for another stage. 30 days for another stage, depending upon the . . . powers that be. . . . Then we had to get them in-country concurrence; we had to get with DATA the Ambassador or his Deputy, then military approval. By the time we got a program out of country, it had been whittled quite a bit. That program then would go to CINCPAC and they would whittle it some more, then it would go to the Joint Chiefs of Staff where it would be further sniped at. By the time we got it back, we were out of implementation time and the restraints were too many and too frequent. I feel that we should have given COMUSMACV; General Harkins or General Westmoreland, broad guidance and let them do what they saw fit with the concurrences of the Ambassador ... DATA I don't feel that everything needed to be cleared with CINCPAC and with Washington officials. . . .*

It was a tremendous operational handicap to have to get these missions cleared all the way, in some instances, to the White House. The restraints were numerous. We had a mine plan to close Haiphong harbor with dummy mines. It was a good operation and we never got off the ground; papers and repapers, and it was always disapproved and we never knew who or why except the mission was disapproved. In the early days,

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Clyde R. Russel, USA, p. 9.

we couldn't get permission to shoot from off the boat unless we were fired upon. This didn't really make a lot of sense when you're off a man's coast and you have to go in and draw his fire before you can shoot back. If we were going to shoot, we should have been given permission to shoot from a position of safety instead of almost running the boats aground before we could shoot. It seems that everybody had different ideas on how to run these operations.*

We were never restrained in the PsyOps Program. This is the one program that we knew was getting to all the North Vietnamese people on their radio system. We knew the beam was getting through and yet we were never restrained nor ever encouraged in the PsyOps Program, although we asked for guidance on several occasions, but it never came through. So, we didn't know what to say and we didn't use one of our most valuable weapons in the program.**

Unfortunately, we didn't have a program to present to the North Vietnamese. We couldn't present guerrilla warfare to them; we couldn't present a front to them; we couldn't present eventual unification of the country; we just had no national aims to present to them. We couldn't tell them anything of our aims or desires in the time frame of 1969 and 1970. . . Had we been able to put that out in 1964-1965, I'm sure we would have been in a better position at the bargaining table today.***

Maybe some of the problems that I pose here are beyond the realm of solution but I don't feel that they are.

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* Ibid., pp. 9-10.
** Ibid., p. 10.
*** Ibid.

Guidance must come from the national level. I feel that it is essential that the military have such guidance in the future. However, the military must be given freedom in implementation. We could have done anything that we were directed to do, but we could not operate in a vacuum without guidance. This was what we were forced to do in the early days of SOG. I felt that had we been able to get the country team together more frequently and come up with a unified country plan, we would have been better off. This happened on very rare occasions during my time in Vietnam.*

I'd like to talk about how to put a program of operations of this type together. We had to put a 30-day program, a 60-day program, a 90-day program together and then run around to get the concurrence of the individual members of the country team. This was a method of operation that couldn't function. If we had a nonconcurrence from one member of the country team, then we had to take that nonconcurrence to the other members. I felt that those representatives were much more capable of presenting their nonconcurrences than we. We were caught in the middle.

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I hope that we represented DATA nonconcurrences in all cases, but you're bound to be biased when you put together a program and a man says, "I don't buy it;" you're bound to be biased in your presentation to the other members of the country team. I felt that had we been able to get these busy, busy men together to go over this thing for the next two or three months or for 90 days in advance, we would have had much smoother sailing. Unfortunately, it didn't work that way during my time in Vietnam.**

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* Ibid.
** Ibid. pp. 10-11.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL WILLIAM R. BECKER, USAF

In regard to a national level planning and coordinating agency, I think we obviously need one, and one should be called into existence once we have acknowledged the fact that we do wish to participate in clandestine type operations. The organization itself has to be responsive to the needs of the people in the field. It does have to be relied upon by the people in the field to coordinate the mission. It is quite obvious that the people in the field do not, nor should they, have full knowledge of all of the associated operations. This does require then that there be a place secure within the United States that can coordinate and make sure that all of the other operations being conducted within a particular area are coordinated. The other principal use of a high-level agency or interdepartmental agency is to secure the necessary high-level approval for the type of operation you wish to conduct. I am a firm believer that high-level approval, in principle and in some cases on specific missions, is absolutely essential if you are going to conduct successfully this type of operation. So, I would see then that the high-level coordinating office here would be a coordination and approval agency and one that is responsive to the needs of the field. A single agency within Washington to conduct the planning for operations I don't think is necessarily useful. The planning, I feel, is still more adequately accomplished by the field under the direction of the Ambassador. . . . I think that the actual planning of the operation is much more effective in the field and that high-level organizations here within the Washington area should be primarily the coordinating agencies necessary to make sure that we are not interfering with other operations being conducted in the area.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel William R. Becker, USAF pp. 23-24.

[redacted]

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COMMANDER KENNETH N. BEBB, USN

. . . It was extremely frustrating for the Naval officers DATA personnel in Danang to run delicate missions with people who were inexperienced and yet the Americans were responsible for the success of these operations. This frustration extended all the way to Washington, D. C.*

The planning for the maritime missions in North Vietnam was carried out by the Naval Advisory Detachment (NAD) in Danang. All of the proposed missions had to be worked out in detail and submitted to MACV. Then these requests for proposed missions were forwarded to CINCPAC for approval, disapproval or modification and then all the way up to Washington, SACSA, and other agencies in town. It is obvious how this long, extended chain of command affected current operations of such a small nature. It was extremely frustrating to the NAD operations people who planned some of these missions in detail only to have them rejected by CINCPAC or JCS. It is my personal opinion after monitoring this program and working with it at CINCPAC for a little over a year. . . that the approval system and the extended chain of command caused a certain amount of lack of motivation to SOG planners. They lost incentive to plan in detail after they were shot down so many times. Under Admiral Felt we supported SOG as much as possible and most of the time we would approve the mission if it appeared at all feasible. We then forwarded it to higher command for final approval in Washington.**

* (TS) Interview of Commander Kenneth N. Bebb, USN, p. 2.
** Ibid., pp. 2-3.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL DONALD D. BLACKBURN, USA

Tight control from Washington "hamstrung" the operation. I can appreciate the problems faced in Washington. However, this stringent control affected timeliness. It seemed strange that authority to conduct some particular operations had to come directly from the White House. Sometimes it took three to four weeks for decisions. However, I don't know how to avoid the necessity for tight control of clandestine operations in view of the political aspects. An agency is needed in Washington which could provide direction, and effect coordination and support between State, ~~DIA~~ DOD and other pertinent government agencies.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Donald D. Blackburn, USA, p. 2.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL JOHN F. MOORE, JR., USAF

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Attempts to have all these operations under one authority, of course, were never realized and probably could not have been realized considering the political factors involved. [redacted] DATA DATA [redacted] and as long as MACV was running the operations in South Vietnam, with CINCPAC in the middle and responsible for both operations but having very little to say about the Laotian ones, the command relationship was such that I don't think you would have ever been able to have a single authority to conduct these operations, even though they were geographically on top of one another.**

. . . . . .

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[redacted]

* (TS) Interview by Colonel John T. Moore, Jr., USAF, pp. 8-9.
** Ibid., p. 9.

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[redacted]he more you proliferate the information or knowledge that the military is conducting a covert operation DATA DATA , the more susceptible the operation becomes to compromise. There are just too many people who become involved in it following the normal channels of communication. Sooner or later you are going to spring a leak DATA .

There has to be a system to provide safeguards against this. We do have a system in existence today but it is only for communicating with one another. In my opinion, there should be an office other than SACSA (SACSA is not in a position to do this) at the DOD level made up of the necessary military expertise across-the-board. We should have comptroller type people in it; we should have logistics type people, communications people, and all the other various experts needed so that approvals for budgeting and funding, and for exercise of operational control can be handled in such a way that the operation is not subject to compromise. The Services should have a comparable staff to carry out their functions*.

As to the interdepartmental machinery needed at the national level to plan for, conduct and coordinate covert

* Ibid., pp. 17-18.

operations, I think you have to go back to where the requirement for a covert operation comes from. [redacted]

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[redacted] We either want to support our side to take over the government or we want to preserve the government in power against subversion. We could be called upon then to [redacted]

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[redacted] commander of that area, and if we had military assistance in there, it could come from the military assistance commander or from a military mission that might be in that country. These groups of people making up the country team would generate a requirement for the United States to conduct covert operations in that country. The only other source that I know of for a covert operation is connected with intelligence. [redacted]

[redacted] It may involve either the covert introduction of

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[redacted] d

[redacted]

Assuming that a requirement for a covert operation is generated from one of these sources,

* Ibid., p. 18.

the nature of the operation itself requires that it have complete interdepartmental coordination. This is done now, of dourse; there is already an organization set up to do this. We sometimes call it the Special Group and at other times the 303 Committee. It consists of the deputy departmental heads of DATA DOD, State, and Bureau of the Budget. This is adequate, in my opinion, for getting the approval from the White House to run a covert operation. However, I don't believe that we have a good capability in the DOD and Military Services for conducting and planning covert operations which involve more than one Service. The reason for this is, as I pointed out previously, that a covert operation demands the utmost in security. The requirements for staffing the support needed for these, getting the funds, equipment, etc., to support such an operation are not compatible with the requirement for confining access to this information to the limited number of people that security requires. Therefore, a prerequisite, in my opinion, for any organization created for this purpose would be that the people who are doing the planning and the coordinating of the operation must have timely access to the decision authority. The decision authority himself, if you take it to be the Deputy Secretary of Defense in whom it is now vested, needs to have a small staff to review this for him. At the present time, this is SACSA. However, SACSA, as presently organized, has no capability to fund the project, contract procurement, or establish the cover arrangements. So, one of the first requirements has to be access into the OSD Comptroller and eventually into the Bureau of the Budget.

This means that you can either do this in one of two ways. You can specially clear certain people in the OSD Comptroller shop and in the Bureau of the Budget to deal on a so-called action officer level. Then the action officers who are working this thing out should bypass everybody in between themselves and the decision authority. This is the only way you can keep any kind of security on a project. This is what is actually being done unilaterally, at least in the Air Force. For coordination and for funding of the project, for example, we go directly to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller). We also have specific individuals in the Bureau of the Budget who are specially cleared.

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So, we have the same people, in other words, cleared for both sides of the operation. You have to have this personal direct access to the people who are in a position to review your programs, funding requests, and your operation, and who are also in a position to satisfy the decision maker. This means that you have to be dealing directly with the top men.*

* Ibid., pp. 19-20.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL JOHN K. SINGLAUB, USA

A . . . problem area that was a direct result of the overall organization for the command and control of SOG was the security problem of keeping limited the knowledge of SOG activities and operations. The nature of the command and control arrangements required that certain staffing be performed at MACV and CINCPAC. This required individuals, perhaps points of contact, to be pretty well briefed on SOG operations. In most cases, you could not get a coordination chop from that individual unless his senior boss was also completely knowledgeable.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel John K. Singlaub, USA, p. 12.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

LT. COLONEL JONATHON D. CARNEY, USA

. . . this kind of business has to have a more simple and more responsive authorization route than the one we used in SOG. The necessity to obtain CINCPAC approval to be followed by obtaining JCS approval was a procedure which would frequently take three to four months. Repeated correspondence back and forth attempting to justify and explain, etc. I fully understand the sensitivity and the considerations involved in the operation, [redacted]

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[redacted]

* (TS) Interview of Lt. Colonel Jonathon D. Carney, USA, p. 8.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

CAPTAIN BRUCE B. DUNNING, USN

. . . Beyond the . . . DATA NSAM 57, the missions, tasks and organization within DOD, including OSD and OJCS, for covert actions are very, very vague. The Secretary of Defense has assigned to SACSA and DIA certain staff responsibilities and functions incident to the Washington level management and direction of covert action matters. The split between SACSA and DIA poses no problem. For a long time, a DIA element has been colocated with SACSA and the system works very well. We have a problem, however, in that the SACSA action division for these SecDef assigned responsibilities is the Special Operations Division. This is a very small division at the lowest level of the Joint Staff and it has, by terms of the functions assigned by the Secretary of Defense, a dual role in serving both as a normal Joint Staff element at the lowest level and as a highly specialized element reporting directly to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. Conceivably, such a dual role could work all right provided that the entire Joint Staff hierarchy understood and recognized it as a legimate dual role. Further, the hierarchy should understand and recognize that those people way down at the bottom of the Joint Staff do have responsibilities to the Chairman, Deputy Secretary, and Secretary in highly sensitive matters which cannot be, and should not be, handled administratively within the normal Joint Staff bureaucratic machinery. This does not mean that certain actions should never be coordinated; they should but, in such cases, coordination must be on a close hold need-to-know basis.

Therefore, the hierarchy must have confidence in the judgment of the Special Operations Division in SACSA to determine what coordination is necessary.*

Another problem faced by the Special Operations Division is one of staffing. The division, with a total of [redacted] DATA is looked upon by the UW planners in most of the CINC staffs and by a lot of Joint Staff people as the central focal point for all UW special operations matters worldwide. [redacted]

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[redacted]

As to whether anybody in ISA gets involved in our daily activities, the answer is no. In the field of covert actions, ISA has not been involved. In the FOOTBOY Program, ISA is aware, on a very limited basis, of the covert actions and has not participated in the staffing process. We have had our own direct channel into the State Department. In the case of the cross-border operations which, of course, are not covert actions, ISA is in the channel and they serve as the liaison link between DOD and State. By and large, however, ISA simply acts as a mail drop between State and DOD.**

I've painted an exceedingly grim picture and I mean that. It is very disturbing. The question then arises as to what we should do about it. I'm basing this largely on my experience

* (TS) Interview of Captain Bruce B. Dunning, pp. 39-40.
** Ibid., p. 40.

in the management or SOG operations, combined with the handling of a great number of day-to-day problems which have arisen in the UW planning field with a lot of the CINCs. I don't have all the answers. We have done some studies in the division and have come up with some alternative plans for a Special Operations Directorate and various other types of entities. We've done some studies on possible staffing. I'm not sure that our answers to these studies are the right ones yet. I think a lot more work needs to be done but it is a start. In essence, I think there are several characteristics necessary in any effective organizational entity for the management and direction of covert actions and the broader field for unconventional warfare. First of all, the entity must be highly enough placed in the organizational structure. The entity must be headed by an individual of sufficient rank so that he can have prompt access to the decision-making level. He simply cannot do his job if he has to go through layer after layer of conventional hierarchy. I emphasize that it is the word CONVENTIONAL hierarchy which causes the problem. Secondly, this organization has to be appropriately staffed, both in terms of number and rank of personnel, to handle the workload on a worldwide basis. In terms of functional capability, the UW and Special Operations planning assets must, in my opinion, be consolidated into one organization. This means that, if you are going to be professional in such operations, you not only have to have some operational planners but such people as a comptroller, security personnel, logistic personnel, personnel managers and communicators. All of these must be super-specialists in the field of covert actions within their functional fields. In other words, logisticians must be experts in covert logistic support. They must have experience in covert procurement.

The comptroller must have expertise in the management of covert funds and covert funding systems, and so on down the line. This need for functional capabilities is not only to enable the development of comprehensive and detailed UW plans and guidance but to provide a reservoir of expertise. That expertise can be used to provide the initial guidance for organizations established in the field in contingency situations so that those organizations can get started off on the right foot. The mistakes that are so often made in the field, and the rush to begin operations could be avoided.*

Another characteristic of an effective organization for management and direction of covert actions is, of course, that it be secure. It must be compartmented and have the capability to handle actions in a secure manner outside of the automatic functioning, wide dissemination characteristic of most actions within the Joint Staff and the joint arena. I think that this type of entity, properly placed, is an absolute necessity if we are going to get professional in the covert actions business to the point that we can effectively use these actions to influence conflict situations without major risks of embarrassment to the US Government. I see this as a requirement which is not generally recognized. We still go about this business as kind of a toy to play with in a rather superficial manner. There is too much of the World War II analogy of guerrilla operations, too much tendency to think of unconventional warfare, special operations, including covert actions, in terms of really nothing but small military actions conducted by rather unreliable and hair-brained individuals. This is not the case. If we are going to meet this requirement, we are going to have to get good at it. We are going to have to put grease into it to

* Ibid., pp. 40-41.

support it properly.

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They are US national actions, US national requirements. In this field, it is almost inevitable that the operations developed will be joint at one level or another.*

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* Ibid., pp. 41-42.
** Ibid., p. 42.

. . . . . .

Essentially, the policy making and coordinating machinery at the top national Level is probably all right. You have an existing high level committee at almost the highest level of government which approves covert action proposals. This is fine. DATA State and DOD, among others, participate in the committee. It has functioned well for a long time. I think the breakdown comes immediately below that level. This breakdown is primarily because DOD hasn't properly configured its internal organization to handle this type of action. . . Partially as a result of this inadequate organization within DOD, the channel from the military-covert action planners (SACSA/SOD) to this high-level committee has broken down completely. There is virtually no link between SACSA/SOD, and the committee. The link should operate through the Deputy Secretary of Defense but, because of the increasing isolation of SACSA and SACSA/SOD, at the bottom of the Joint Staff insulated by layer after layer of conventional thinking, it is practically impossible to get anything on covert actions up to the Deputy Secretary of Defense or to the committee. DATA

That same type of every day functioning should exist between the committee and the planners in DOD, wherever they are placed. At the top level, the coordinating machinery is probably very good but on the DOD side the link between the top level and the action officers has broken down completely. It is virtually non-existent. There again, I think the answer to the problem lies in developing a professional staff and placing it organizationally at an appropriate level so that it can DATA have relatively direct access to the committee through the Deputy Secretary of Defense.*

* Ibid., p. 43.

. . . too few of the hierarchy in the Joint Staff understand exactly what SACSA/SOD is charged with. In fact, the whole Joint Staff tends to see SACSA/SOD as simply another very small, very low-level, little Joint Staff entity down there that damned well ought to heel and get in line like everybody else. When we try to get a paper up to the appropriate level of government for approval of a significant covert action, we have to go to the J-3 (probably the Deputy J-3), then to the Director, Joint Staff, then to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and, finally, to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. In most cases, at each of those levels, and despite all kinds of sensitive labels, the paper gets lateral distribution to all sorts of action officers who may or may not have a real need-to-know. It gets spread out all over the place and you end up with a great number of people having access to it. Also, you have the worst situation where a great many conventional planners and conventional action officers are hacking at your concept from a purely conventional standpoint. It either gets stopped enroute or by the time the paper gets to the top, it's so waffled as to be meaningless.*

I can give specific examples of this. Sometime ago, a requirement was levied by a very high level of the government asking what was our capability to conduct guerrilla-type warfare in North Vietnam. The first problem was that nobody was quite sure whether this high-level authority knew what he was talking about when he said guerrilla-type warfare. Nonetheless, the requirement was passed out to COMUSMACV and CINCPAC. COMUSMACV came in with a list of about a dozen capabilities, all using SOG assets. Listed, for example, were capabilities of this type: the capability to conduct a heloborne raid on the

* Ibid., p. 44.

coast of North Vietnam utilizing resources drawn from the PRAIRIE FIRE Program; the capability to conduct maritime cross-beach raids using the CADO teams from the FOOTBOY Program. This apparently was the closest COMUSMACV could come to what he thought the requiring authority meant in regard to guerrilla-type operations. In listing these capabilities, COMUSMACV expressed the opinion that none of them would be likely to produce results worth the cost, with the possible exception of maritime operations along the coast. This answer went to CINCPAC. CINCPAC discussed these capabilities and generally agreed that we had the capability to do these things, but he said that none of them was really worth the cost in his opinion and he expressed the additional opinion that none of them would achieve anything more than a very short-range and limited impact on the Hanoi regime.*

This paper from CINCPAC was sent to the Joint Staff and actioned to SACSA/SOD, as I recall at about 0200 hours. We concurred in CINCPAC's evaluation. Our feeling was that these would be largely harassment operations, a repetition of 1964 all over again. They were a reflection of a frustration syndrome at the highest levels of the government. This type of hit-and-run raid and harassing operation would not have any long-range or significant impact on the Hanoi regime unless tied to a larger objective aimed at the exploitation of identified vulnerabilities. We said in our response that we concurred with CINCPAC and that we did not believe these operations would really pay off. Then we added a "however," saying that we do have the capability to develop a broadly based program designed to exploit identified psychological vulnerabilities through the use of covert actions. Essentially, we outlined a couple of alternative concepts similar to those that had been developed in FOOTBOY just prior to the

* Ibid., p. 44.

standdown. Characteristically enough, our response, despite the fact that it was on a highly sensitive subject and a highly specialized one, was required to be consolidated into a massive J-3 paper which covered a wide spectrum of capabilities against the enemy. Consequently, our work was just an input to a J-3 paper and did not go directly to an entity responsible for approving covert actions or considering covert actions. J-3 looked at the input and immediately eliminated our "however" on the grounds that it was not responsive to the specific question that had been asked. Essentially, what went to this high authority as an answer was that we have a capability to conduct certain specific operations against North Vietnam (rather low-level and elemental types of operations), but none of these will pay off, period. In other words, we were telling them, "There is not a damned thing you can do up there." This simply was a misleading answer.*

We have run into this sort of situation on several occasions. What we are getting is the wrong questions: specific questions being asked from a high level; the wrong questions being asked and a lack of willingness on our part to say, "Here is the specific response to your question but we think you asked the wrong question, and here are some other things you should consider." In this regard, I am convinced that the decision-makers are getting some very, very bad information.*

A side-comment here. Not too long ago we were, on occasion, able to talk with people of pretty high level. For instance, I was called in on a couple of occasions to talk with -

* Ibid., p. 45.

Mr. Rostow. This was not an "end run." I was called in along with some OSD people and with the full knowledge of the Director and others to discuss certain ideas with Mr. Rostow. This never happens now and, moreover, it is highly unlikely to happen because the special warfare, special operations, and unconventional warfare people are more and more being kept out of sight, put back in the corner and forced to screen everything they do through a conventional sieve. We are not going to get anywhere on this basis.*

* Ibid., pp. 45-46.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL ROBERT C. KENDRICK, USA

As far as we are concerned here at CINCPAC, once we send a concept or proposal requesting approval or disapproval, etc., to SACSA, that office has handled it fast and timely; we at CINCPAC are completely satisfied with their support and help. Here at CINCPAC, the different concepts and proposals have to be staffed like any other action. I actually see nothing wrong with this. Staffing is accomplished pretty fast. I do feel very strongly that once these concepts are approved at CINCPAC, and Washington, the JCS and CINCPAC should not hang on to any strings or control and try to run operations from either here or from Washington. Once the plan or concept is approved, MACV should be allowed to conduct operations under approved rules. Unless they violate these rules, they should be left alone. Of course, when the situation changes, then rules would change. As long as the rules do not change and the concepts do not change, MACV should be left alone and allowed to run operations and just keep our headquarters and Washington informed.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Robert C. Kendrick, USA, p. 16.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL ROBERT C. KINGSTON, USA

We did one insert while I was there. It was in North Vietnam along the Laotian border. A team was sent into what we thought was a relatively secure uninhabited area. They were detected almost immediately. We made an exfiltration after several days. Upon investigation, we determined that they may have been bugged by the presence of a friendly team operating from the Laotian side of the border into the area. The possibility of two such teams running into each other was established. The actuality of the two teams running into one another never came out, of course. This again brings up a requirement for coordination in this type business much more than is being conducted., i.e., more than visits cross-border between the people in Laos and SOG personnel. This again brings in the whole business of intelligence operations controlled on a worldwide basis. I am not trying to suggest that anybody superimpose a control over an American ambassador or an American field commander, particularly in Laos or South Vietnam, but there is, in my opinion, a requirement to establish in the intelligence field a national interagency command headquarters staffed by the military, State DIA in which coordination of intelligence operations can be conducted to insure no overlap, no duplication, and proper and adequate control of assets, particularly when these assets are limited.

DATA

Command in operational areas can be worked out. If this is ever taken as a suggestion, the details could be worked out later.*

* (TS) Interview of Col Robert C. Kingston, USA, pp. 2-3.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL HAROLD K. AARON, USA --

. . . . in the development of national policy which would enhance MACSOG covert operations, I received the impression while I was in SACSA that it was a rather laborious process. I think that in the Joint Staff area and in the Services the process was pretty well streamlined and a position could be forumlated. The problem was to get the position accepted, particularly by State, as it pertained to cross-border operations in Cambodia and Laos for example. Here was where we encountered the greatest difficulty. It would appear to me that there should be a covert committee established that would deal with such operations that would be on a high level that could address policy questions and take them up rapidly, perhaps on a weekly or ad hoc basis.*

* (TS) Interview of Col Harold K. Aaron, USA, p. 12.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL ROBERT L. GLEASON, USAF --

I think we always have to look at unique command and control problems in UW operations. Here again, when you start moving up through various military commands with these UW programs, decisions that must be made in conjunction with them, it's only a matter of time until you run into what I refer to as the conventional military mind. The individual may be a general, regardless of Service, who has bever been associated with UW in his entire career. He immediately tries to evaluate the situation in light of conventional risks both military and political, and conventional returns, both military and political, and doesn't understand the new odds. Therefore, you are going to get either negative decisions where positive ones are warranted, or else you're going to end up with some type of a large-scale discussion or donnybrook that really isn't worth the effort until you can get above him to another commander who probably has a better feel for the effort. This is particularly true in the MACV Staff at the J-2 or J-3 level. When you get up into J-2 or J-3 themselves, in some cases, you had no problem but quite often you had trouble getting up there and even when you did in the more sensitive programs, the appreciation wasn't there and the end result was that you had to go over their heads to the Chief of Staff or to the COMUSMACV himself. You evoke hostility and hard feelings doing this.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Robert L. Gleason, USAF, p. 11.

I think we should go back to something like the old OSS where you had military technicians, the operators, actually military people on loan to some other agency, whether it be DATA a special agency formed for this purpose. But the policy guidance would be other than through DOD. The military heads, generals in the Pentagon, CINCPAC, MACV would not be asked to put their careers on the line by endorsing a lot of these programs and making the necessary decisions that are required to keep them going. This is not always fair to them. You would have a rapid reaction chain of command that would rapidly get you to the highest authorities whether it be the Joint Chiefs of Staff or this other agency and you would be able to take advantage of the military knowhow as far as the operators go, the doers, with an organization which can take a much greater political risk than maybe DOD can. This is probably not too practical to pursue because it is probably not within the realm of possibility. I, therefore, advocate as an alternative a streamlined military chain where you go direct from the Chief, UW, whether it be a JUWTF or a MACSOG type operation, up to the theater commander and from him directly to the next higher authority, whatever it may be, and then to the Washington level. In this regard, I think the establishment of SACSA did a tremendous amount of good in having a place in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest purely military level, where their whole purpose in being is to promulgate, disseminate, pursue and support UW programs.*

* Ibid., pp. 11-12.

COMMENTS ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

BY

COLONEL HERBERT O. GRAESER, USA

. . . In any event, the lines of intelligence dissemination and command and control need to be clearly delineated; this has not always been the case in the past. The operation has been run along personality rather than organizational lines.

Another aspect of the operation which I think needs clarification in the field is that of the responsibilities in the operational areas. The MACSOG-controlled teams live in Special Forces bases which are within the areas of some other commander, either US or Vietnamese. Because of the closely held programs, it is not clear in many cases as to what the command lines are. For example, if one of these camps comes under attack, to whom can the commander go for help? The Vietnamese say, "No, these are US mercenaries." Americans say, "No, these are Vietnamese mercenaries." Unless this is clearly delineated, then it may be too late to make this kind of an arrangement after the particular installation comes under attack. This has occurred in the past. It has probably been worked out by now but it is a lesson which needs to be heeded in case we go into this sort of thing again.*

* (TS) Interview of Col Herbert O. Graeser, USA, pp. 6-7.

[redacted]

COMMENTS

BY

COLONEL ROBERT L. GLEASON, USAF

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* (TS) Interview of Colonel Robert L. Gleason, USAF, pp. 2-3.
** Ibid., p. 3.