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July 1970

MACSOG DOCUMENTATION STUDY (U)
ANNEX P
to
APPENDIX B

COMMENTS BY THESE INTERVIEWEES

ON

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

(In Chronological Order)

Name	Association with MACSOG	Tab
Col Donald D. Blackburn, USA	Chief, MACSOG Jun 1965 - May 1966	A
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	B
Col John K. Singlaub, USA	Chief, MACSOG May 1966 - Aug 1968	C
Capt Bruce B. Dunning, USN	Special Operations Division, OSACSA, Staff Officer & Division Chief Aug 1966 - Nov 1969	D
Col Eugene A. Wahl, USAF	Chief, MACSOG Air Operations Section Dec 1966 - May 1967 Deputy Operations Officer Jun 1967 - Dec 1967	E
Col Harold K. Aaron, USA	Commander, 1st SFG Jun 1967 - May 1968 Commander, 5th SFG Jun 1968 - May 1969	F
Col Robert L. Gleason, USAF	Deputy Chief, MACSOG Mar 1968 - Mar 1969	G

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COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

COLONEL DONALD D. BLACKBURN, USA

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The military should continue operations (ostensibly for intelligence purposes) into Cambodia and Laos.

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Perhaps the black/grey radio should be retained with a change of theme.

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can't really tell what the situation will be, but we should retain assets and gather information. This takes a lot of thought and detailed planning.*

There will be a need to work with the Kha and other tribal peoples to get them to do surveillance on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. We must keep the border areas under control. Where the enemy is trying to deny their operations, it gives us a free hand to operate against them and deny ours.*

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During previous periods of hostilities we have recognized the contribution of the OSS, guerrillas, Alamo Scouts, etc. But, when hostilities cease, we roll up the rug and assume everyone is going to behave . . . We then are not adequately prepared to cope with fomenting situations or actual outbreaks of trouble, for example: Laos where we needed WHITE

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Donald D. Blackburn, USA, p. 5.

STAR in the northern area and Special Forces operations in the Bolovens Plateau; the Congo situation; Cuba; and the early days in SVN when the situation dictated a need for an unconventional approach.*

Since operations such as these require resources from several departments, I feel we need some kind of independent national organization. This organization's directive authority would stem from the White House. It would be empowered to get its operational resources from the various departments and agencies which have the necessary expertise. As indicated, this organization would have the authority to coordinate and direct operations. From this concept it should not be implied, nor do I feel it necessary, that a large complex structure be evolved.*

The roles and missions would have to be carefully delineated so as not to infringe upon or duplicate the functions of other agencies. Some of the responsibilities might be:

Unconventional Warfare

Counterinsurgency

Psychological Operations

Civic Action

Police Field Forces

The organization could easily expand operations by drawing the necessary resources from the various departments and agencies. Since its roles in peace and war are related, it could develop the necessary experience to efficiently direct the varied tasks outlined above. It would be able to coordinate, plan, and direct operations. It would be able to organize, equip, and deploy cells to accomplish various tasks around the world.**

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* Ibid., pp. 5-6.
** Ibid., p. 6.

The above recommendation provides a point of departure. I would recommend assembling a group of experts -- men with experience in various types of special operations and organizations -- to study the problem in depth and come up with the optimum organization, concept and mission.*

* Ibid., p. 6.

COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

COLONEL JOHN T. MOORE, JR., USAF

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I don't foresee any requirement for covert operations after a cessation of hostilities. I say this because I don't think that we are in a position to organize anything in North Vietnam. As I see it, what is going to be required is a continuing capability to watch the Ho Chi Minh Trail and to counter any subversive forces, the Viet Cong in particular. I see a continuation of the PRAIRIE FIRE and the DANIEL BOONE operations but not a resumption of FOOTBOY. It has been dropped already and whatever assets we had, if any of them were loyal anyway, we have lost by now.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel John T. Moore, Jr., USAF, p. 22.

COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

COLONEL JOHN K. SINGLAUB, USA

. . . . . .

I don't think there will ever be a cessation of hostilities from the enemy's point of view. . . there is a definite place for MACSOG . . . under conditions of no overt conventional operations in SEAsia.*

Upon cessation of conventional operations, there are many of the current covert operations which would be altered or eliminated; there are others which should be strengthened and intensified. The latter relate to black covert PsyOps. I feel that there will be a need to continue the psychological pressures on the enemy. I believe that there is a requirement for the collection of human intelligence from enemy areas and although this mission might well be assigned to some other agency or activity, it is one that the SOG organization is equipped to handle and they could be used as an intelligence collection activity in addition to their UW operations. I feel that the organization would have to be renamed and relocated in the organizational setup of MACV. Depending upon what type of force was left behind, I feel that it would be possible to create a cover activity to conceal the prime mission of the SOG successor and that, under some advisory role, they could carry on the mission of conducting UW operations. It would have to be done in a more secure manner than is now the case. These operations could not be handled at the MACV level in the same

* (TS) Interview of Colonel John K. Singlaub, USA, p. 44.

way that they are now because the present activities of SOG will undoubtedly be included in the directive which specifies that operations against the enemy will come to a halt.*

To admit that there is a successor to SOG would suggest that we are violating the agreement. We should not give anyone that impression by having a successor to the SOG in name or in personnel. The new unit should be created and phased in by assigning people directly from the States to the new cover organization rather than making lateral transfers for maximum security. It could, of course, include personnel who have previously served in SOG but they would be going out with a different cover.**

* Ibid., pp. 44-45.
** Ibid., p. 45.

COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

CAPTAIN BRUCE B. DUNNING, USN

. . . . . .

I think we have to get a lot more sophisticated in our contingency planning for UW, that we have to make very thorough area assessments on which to base our UW planning, and that, when we start to employ these assets, they must be employed to achieve well thought-out, clearly identified objectives. I think much of our contingency planning now is extremely superficial, e.g., much of it comprises statements or words taken out of field manuals or that guerrilla operations will be conducted in the area in question. In the last instance, there may be no indication as to how, why, with whom, or anything else. We have to do a lot more planning. I think, too, that we have to give real thought to the definition of unconventional warfare, guerrilla warfare, escape and evasion, and subversion. We have to really think about subversion in a lot of areas because we may have to subvert the population before we have any chance of developing a base of support in which we can conduct guerrilla operations. We have to give a lot more attention to escape and evasion; I think we have stumbled rather badly in Vietnam on that.*

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. . . in the covert actions field at some given point in time, depending on how the cessation of hostilities proceeds, presumably CIA will again take over responsibility for covert actions against North Vietnam. In that case, with respect to covert actions, there probably will not be a need for a MACSOG-type organization for that particular type of operation.

* (TS) Interview of Captain Bruce B. Dunning, USN, p. 23.

However, there should continue to be close links, at least back here between the military and CIA as to what is going on. It is likely, however, that we are going to continue for some time to have a requirement for cross-border reconnaissance operations because, in a cease-fire or withdrawal or however this situation works out, we will have to monitor what the enemy is doing. You will have to keep him under surveillance and ensure that he is abiding by agreements, tacit or otherwise. This is going to virtually make it mandatory that we have some sort of cross-border operations for some time. In that role, certainly you will need some command and control entity, probably a continuation of a truncated SOG to handle those operations.*

There is another side to the coin, namely, that at the present time there is a considerable amount of resources (human and equipment) available to SOG and to its Vietnamese counterpart, the Strategic Technical Directorate (STD). The STD has a small army which it controls, hopefully, under the supervision and guidance of SOG. This could be a very dangerous situation, politically, in the future. The Director of STD, Colonel Ho, wants very much to retain all of those resources and I can't blame him. But I don't think we can afford to let him keep them if we can possibly avoid it. The present trend in planning is along the lines of ultimately disestablishing SOG, taking some of the SOG-type people and incorporating them into the MAAG or whatever US structure remains in a special operations advising capacity. In addition, we would try to

* Ibid., p. 46.

to influence the Vietnamese into doing away with the STD, and modifying those command resources into a special operations staff element within the JCS structure, not an operational command. We would prefer that the Vietnamese special operations resources be returned to the armed forces so that they could develop eventually, with appropriate US advisory elements, a modest UW capability in the Vietnamese Navy, the VNAF, and the ARVN. This looks to us to be the safest thing rather than an independent and possibly uncontrollable private military force.*

I think perhaps this question might be better answered if it didn't relate so much to Southeast Asia and Vietnam. A lot of this depends on what happens elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

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If things get hot somewhere in the world where you are going to have a requirement for the conduct of special operations, you will need a MACSOG-type organization. In that context, absolutely, there is a need for MACSOG-type organizations. You must have, where there is a requirement for special operations, a command and control entity. Whether it should be exactly like SOG, I'm not prepared to say. . . .**

* Ibid., pp. 46- 47.
** Ibid., p. 47.

COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

COLONEL EUGENE A. WAHL, USAF

. . . . . .

I definitely feel that at the conclusion of hostilities, the organization should be retained, should be tailored so as the nucleus is always available and you don't lose the organization completely. In the event you have to build or you have to reactivate the capability, you have the nucleus to work from.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Eugene A. Wahl, USAF, p. 8.

COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

COLONEL HAROLD K. AARON, USA

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Just prior to my departure, we were working with Chief, SOG on the post-hostilities posture of ARVN in terms of a JUWTF. Generally, Colonel Cavanaugh and I were agreed that the classic JUWTF concept would be a proper vehicle in which the Navy would be responsible for those clandestine Navy operations that might be conducted and the Army or the Vietnamese Special Forces would be concerned with unconventional warfare and other special operations. We were not trying to embellish the organization or make it any more exotic than was necessary. We wanted to keep it simple and based upon a reduced but efficient capability.*

* (TS) Interview by Colonel Harold K. Aaron, USA, p. 8.

COMMENTS ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

BY

COLONEL ROBERT L. GLEASON, USAF

. . . . . .

. . . . Chief, SOG has worked long and hard with our Vietnamese counterparts in trying to determine what the optimum posture is going to be for the post-hostilities UW capabilities of the RVNAF. It appears now that thinking was primarily to put these UW assets, the 219th helicopters, the MAROPS boats, some of the Army equipment, back into the respective Services; however, earmark them as UW dedicated type assets. Take STD which is now both a staff and a command agency for the Vietnamese UW effort, and convert it to a CINCLANT type staff-contingency command. Then when a requirement for a UW effort was necessary, this staff working under the JCS would task the appropriate Service for whatever UW assets were required within the capability whether it be one or two boats or a couple of helicopters, and then take command of those assets while they were doing a specific UW task. When that was over, then revert them to the Service for normal operation, of course, keeping their special UW training up for future operations.*

* (TS) Interview by Colonel Robert L. Gleason, USAF, pp. 8-9.