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EXHIBIT
Use March 16
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100-222-70
14 May 1970
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Use of Herbicide ORANGE (U)

1. (C) Reference is made to a memorandum by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, dated 12 April 1970, subject as above, which temporarily suspended the use of 2,4,5-T (ORANGE) in all military operations.

2. (S) Herbicide operations with agent ORANGE have been suspended. As of 1 May 1970, there were 1,047,650 gallons of ORANGE on hand in the Republic of Vietnam and en route to the Republic of Vietnam. In addition, there are 865,765 gallons of ORANGE in the COMUS earmarked for the Republic of Vietnam. These quantities represent approximately 15 months of supply, at the requirement rate established by COMUSMACV, and a dollar value of approximately \$11.4 million. Herbicide operations are continuing with agent WHITE; however, only 25,748 gallons of WHITE (approximately 35 sorties) were on hand as of 1 May 1970. When this is consumed, all defoliation operations will cease.

3. (S) In view of the situation outlined above, the following alternatives involving defoliants ORANGE and WHITE should be considered:

- a. Termination of defoliation operations.
- b. Procurement of agent WHITE or another suitable substitute, and resumption of defoliation operations with this agent.
- c. Removal of the suspension on the use of herbicide ORANGE.

4. (S) Each of the above alternatives is evaluated below:

a. Termination of Defoliation Operations. Termination of defoliation operations could deny the military commander a significant capability to:

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(1) This has caused the enemy to move his forces back to the interior and to abandon the storage areas. The increased aerial observation has made it difficult for the enemy to mass forces for large attacks, has restricted his daylight movement of combat forces, and has required enemy use of circuitous, less desirable routes for infiltration of men and supplies.

(2) Reduce the number of concealed potential ambush and indirect fire sites. This has resulted in decreasing enemy interdiction of friendly LOCs and indirect fire attacks on population centers and friendly base camps.

(3) Clear areas surrounding US and RVNAF base camps, fire support bases, and airfields, including mine fields and wire entanglements. This has discouraged sapper attacks and has strengthened perimeter defenses through increased ground visibility and fields of fire.

In summary, the defoliation program in the Republic of Vietnam has helped eliminate enemy concealment along LOCs, river banks, and around base areas and airfields. It has also permitted reductions in the number of personnel used for perimeter security of fire support bases, base camps, and airfields. Both offensively and defensively, the defoliation program has reduced the number of men required for combat operations and has helped save many allied lives. This program, as well as any program which contributes to the reduction of casualties and troop requirements, should be continued.

B. Procurement of Agent WHITE

(1) The Air Force could reprogram sufficient funds for herbicide procurement to supply approximately 3.6 months of the agent WHITE requirement stated by COMUSMACV following the suspension of ORANGE. Additional funding in the amount of \$6.6 million would be required within the FY 1971 budget to fill the remaining 7.4 months' requirement for the period ending 1 July 1971. Production and shipping leadtime would impose a 3-month gap in defoliation operations.

(2) Compared with agent ORANGE, WHITE is less effective in that about 4 weeks are required for visible effects to occur after application. After 6 weeks, most of the leaves are dead, but it takes up to 4 months to be able to see through to the ground. Agent ORANGE is quicker reacting, with its effects beginning in 4 to 7 days and with defoliation occurring in 3 to 4 weeks.

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(1) Herbicide operations with agent ORANGE in the Republic of Vietnam by helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft are conducted only in jungle or forested areas of low population (less than eight inhabitants per square kilometer) under control of the Viet Cong or North Vietnamese Army. This limitation was expressly stated by President Thieu and has been rigorously adhered to. No herbicide under the control of US military forces is used in any weed control program in connection with Government of Vietnam agricultural efforts. Herbicides are used for tactical purposes in remote areas which are being used as enemy base areas or infiltration routes.

(2) The 15 April 1970 announcement by the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, and Health, Education, and Welfare specified the immediate suspension by the Department of Agriculture of the registrations of liquid formulations of the weed killer 2,4,5-T (a component of ORANGE) for uses around homes and on lakes, ponds, and ditch banks. The Secretaries also announced that the Department of Agriculture intends to cancel registered uses of nonliquid formulations of 2,4,5-T around the home and on all food crops intended for human consumption. The suspension does not eliminate use for control of weeds and brush on range, pasture, and forests or on rights-of-way and other nonagricultural land.

(3) Comparison of the rules for use of ORANGE in Vietnam with the announced limitations on domestic use indicates that the US military applications have been subjected to more stringent criteria than those provided to protect the health of the US population.

5. (U) In view of the above considerations, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the temporary suspension on the use of agent ORANGE in the Republic of Vietnam be rescinded.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

T. H. Moore
T. H. MOORE
Acting Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

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