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Project CHECO was established in 1962 to document and analyze air operations in Southeast Asia. Over the years the meaning of the acronym changed several times to reflect the escalation of operations: Current Historical Evaluation of Counterinsurgency Operations, Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations and Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations. Project CHECO and other U. S. Air Force Historical study programs provided the Air Force with timely and lasting corporate insights into operational, conceptual and doctrinal lessons from the war in SEA.

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PROJECT CHECO
Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations
REPORT

ATTACK ON UDORN

27 DECEMBER 1968

HQ PACAF

Directorate, Tactical Evaluation
CHECO Division

Prepared by: CAPT E. VALLENTINY
TSGT D. G. FRANCIS
Project CHECO 7th AF, DOAC

[redacted]

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PROJECT CHECO REPORTS

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia has resulted in the employment of USAF airpower to meet a multitude of requirements. The varied applications of airpower have involved the full spectrum of USAF aerospace vehicles, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, there has been an accumulation of operational data and experiences that, as a priority, must be collected, documented, and analyzed as to current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activity that would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction, and would provide timely and analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations, was established to meet this Air Staff requirement. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements at Hq 7AF and 7/13AF, Project CHECO provides a scholarly, "on-going" historical evaluation and documentation of USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine in Southeast Asia combat operations. This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and evaluation which is being accomplished. Along with the other CHECO publications, this is an authentic source for an assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in SEA.

Milton B. Adams

MILTON B. ADAMS, Major General, USAF
Chief of Staff

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS PACIFIC AIR FORCES
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Warren H. Peterson

WARREN H. PETERSON, Colonel, USAF
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USAFE (OPL) ..... 2 Cys
USAFSO (BIOH) .... 1 Cy
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USAFSS (COI-5) ... 1 Cy

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AFAITC ..... 1 Cy
SRAFREP (SWC) .... 1 Cy

PACAF

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56SOW ..... 1 Cy
315SOW ..... 1 Cy
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366TFW ..... 1 Cy
388TFW ..... 1 Cy
432TRW ..... 1 Cy
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483TAW ..... 1 Cy
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FOREWORD	vii
INTRODUCTION	viii
USAF Operations and Thai/US Relations	viii
Threat to USAF in Thailand	viii
CHAPTER I. PRE-ATTACK SITUATION	1
Arrangements for Base Defense	1
External Defense	2
Internal Defense	7
Thai Guards	9
PACAF Security Guidance	13
Local Changes	15
CHAPTER II. THE ATTACK	16
Base Security Posture	16
Hostile Action	17
Base Security Reaction	20
CHAPTER III. POST ATTACK CHANGES	25
U.S.-Thai Reaction	25
Review of Inadequacies	25
Changes in Equipment	26
Meetings with Thais	27
Commit the RTAF	29
Improved External Defense Plan	30
Field Recommendations	32
Concepts Tested at NKP	33
CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS	36
FOOTNOTES	
Introduction	39
Chapter I	39
Chapter II	42
Chapter III	44
Chapter IV	47

APPENDIXES

Page

I. Personnel and Equipment Requirements After Udorn Attack 48
II. Results of Udorn Attack 50

GLOSSARY 51

FIGURES

Follows Page

1. Major U.S.-Tenanted RTAF Bases & Communist Activity Areas viii
2. Major Ethnic Groups x
3. External Base Defense Responsibility 6

FOREWORD

From a number of Thai air bases, the USAF waged air campaigns against enemy targets, troops, and supply lines in North Vietnam, Laos, and South Vietnam. The security of these bases was an extremely important matter.

On the night of 26 July 1968, the first attack was launched against one of these bases. While the assault was repelled and the resulting damage was not excessive, a number of inadequacies in base defense were clearly indicated.

This CHECO report outlines the concepts of base security, which existed before the attack; describes the assault on Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base (RTAFB); and explains how the defensive plans were implemented. It profiles changes and improvements effected in security arrangements subsequent to the attack. To better understand how planners grappled with the problems and evolved solutions, it is necessary to view base security against the background of a mounting threat, limited funding, and certain restrictive Thai/US agreements.

INTRODUCTION

USAF Operations and Thai/US Relations

With permission granted by the Royal Thai Government (RTG) to position U.S. Air Force aircraft and launch strikes from Thai bases, the United States was able to accrue a number of advantages. One obvious benefit was that Thai bases were closer to enemy targets in North Vietnam and Laos (Fig. 1), than most Allied bases in South Vietnam. Another favorable factor was that USAF forces in Thailand enjoyed relative immunity from enemy attacks as compared to those based in South Vietnam.

These advantages were gained through numerous diplomatic and military agreements with the Royal Thai Government (RTG). As a cornerstone of U.S. policy, retaining excellent working relationships with the Thai Government and its people continued to be important. To pursue U.S. policies with a proud nation, and a government particularly conscious of its sovereignty, called for dexterity, not only in the diplomatic arena, but in day-to-day contacts among Thais, U.S. commanders, and personnel.

Threat to USAF in Thailand

Thailand had long been recognized as a prime target of Communist expansion, and the interest of the Communists was intensified by the USAF presence. Accordingly, not only the RTG, its facilities, and officials, but also U.S. personnel and resources were marks for their activities.

The threat to the American presence in Thailand, especially against the Thai bases utilized by USAF aircraft, was seen to come from three possible

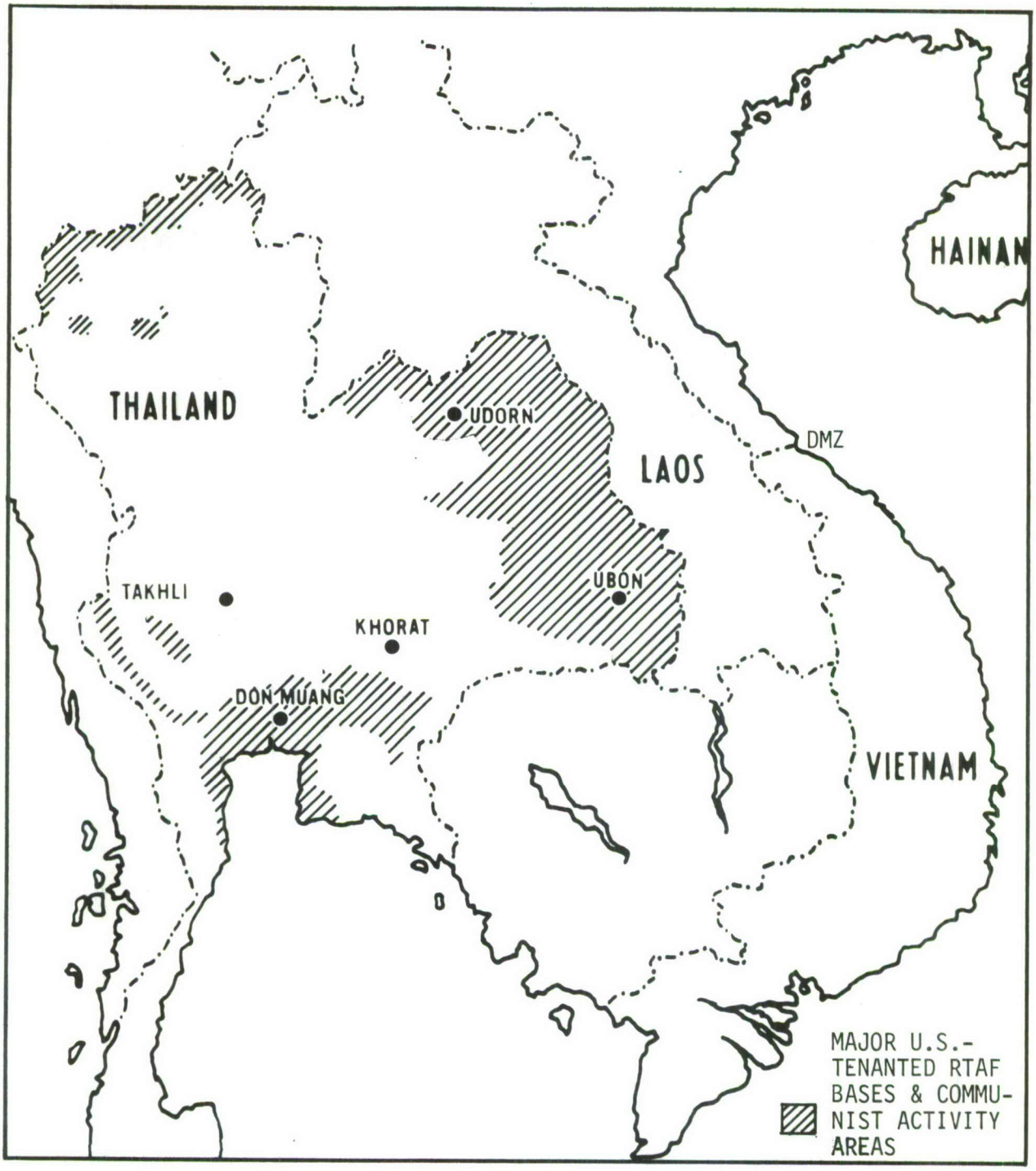

HAINAN
THAILAND
UDORN
LAOS
DMZ
UBON
TAKHLI
KHORAT
DON MUANG
VIETNAM
MAJOR U.S.-TENANTED RTAF BASES & COMMUNIST ACTIVITY AREAS

FIGURE 1

sources:[1/]

- Communist offensive air capability;
- Potential overt forays by Lao-based enemy forces;
- In-Country dissident or insurgent forces.

While neither of the first two could be ignored, the third--posed by in-country dissidents or insurgent forces--generated the most immediate and pressing concern among American and Thai officials.[2/] Because Thailand had dissatisfied ethnic and minority groups within the population, it would have been incorrect to credit all dissident or insurgent activity to Communists. However, most of the activity was either directly or indirectly inspired by them. (Fig. 2.)

Communist insurgents in Thailand were called Communist Terrorists (CTs). Cumulative data on CT strength since December 1965 indicated:[3/]

HARD CORE/INDEGENOUS RECRUITS:

Northeast	1,500
North	300
South	700
TOTAL	2,500

SYMPATHIZERS:

Northeast	7,000
North	3,500
South	2,500
TOTAL	13,000

GRAND TOTAL: 15,500

For a similar period, the CTs experienced the following losses:[4/]

DEATHS ----------	758
ARRESTS ----------	2,632
SURRENDERED -------	2,337
TOTAL	5,727

Despite these losses, the number of CTs was increasing and they were becoming generally more active:[5/]

YEAR	1966	1967	1968 (Jan-Jun)
ASSASSINATIONS	131	150	50
ARMED ENCOUNTERS	154	505	428
FORCED PROPAGANDA MEETINGS	81	154	90

Thai and U.S. officials were aware that the threat to U.S. tenanted bases was growing and certain steps had been taken to cope with the possibility of an attack. In late July 1968, however, there were no indications of an imminent attack on any of the bases.

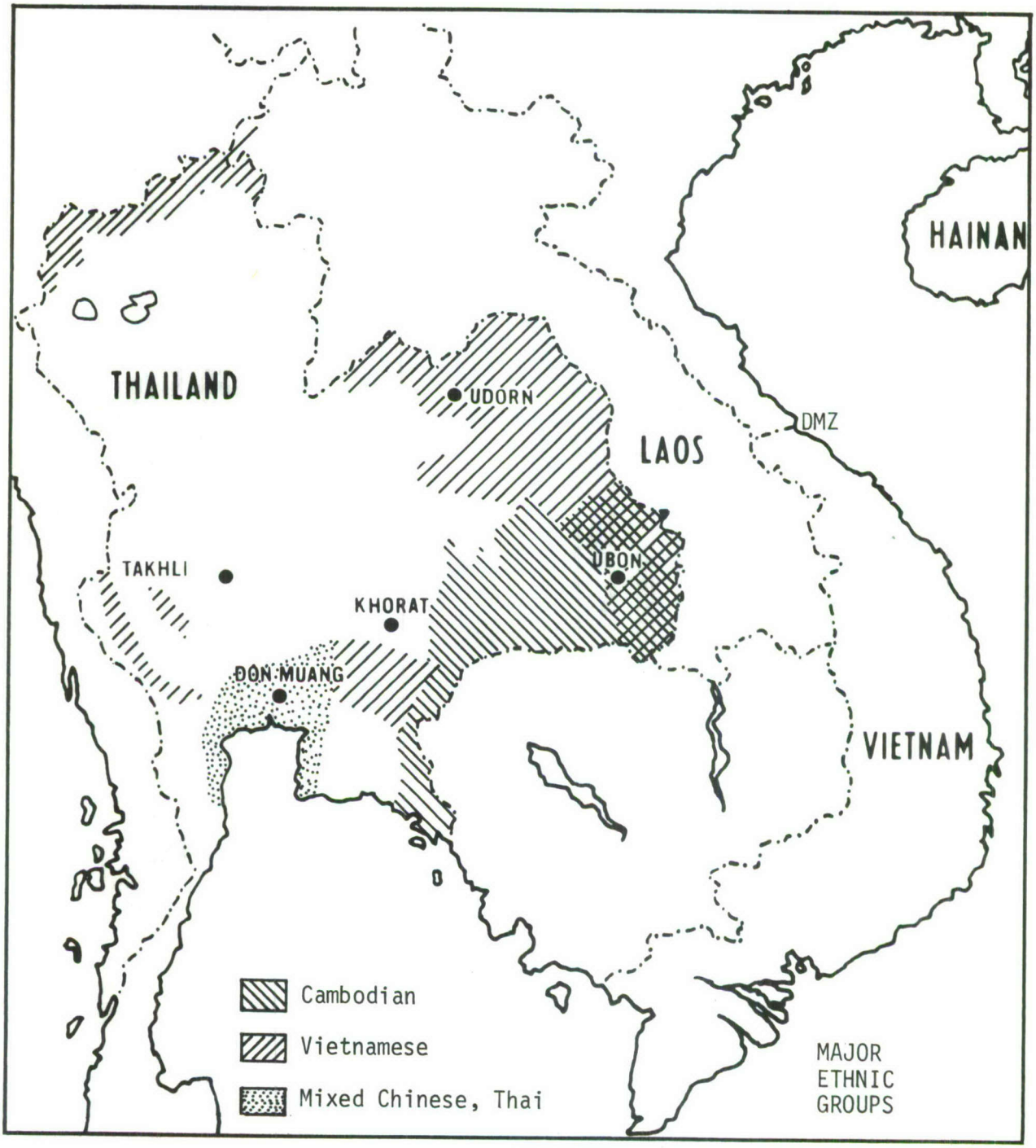

HAINAN
THAILAND
UDORN
LAOS
DMZ
UBON
TAKHLI
KHORAT
DON MUANG
VIETNAM
Cambodian
Vietnamese
Mixed Chinese, Thai
MAJOR
ETHNIC
GROUPS

FIGURE 2

CHAPTER I

PRE-ATTACK SITUATION

Arrangements for Base Defense

Under the agreements between the two countries, the responsibility for all defense except the internal security of priority USAF resources was vested in the Royal Thai Government. The main reason for this was that no foreign force could bear arms on Thai soil. In the case of USAF-tenanted air bases, the USAF Security Forces were, by the agreements, responsible for only the internal security of primary USAF resources.

During the USAF build-up in Thailand, however, which increased those resources by 300 percent during 1966, it became apparent through a continuous review of defense requirements, the USAF Security Forces were accomplishing the bulk of the internal security with only token assistance from the responsible Thai agencies. This was because the Thai military were ill-equipped, and those forces primarily responsible for the internal security generally were, in comparison to U.S. standards, untrained and did not aggressively pursue their responsibility. Accordingly, the USAF Security Forces were, by necessity, providing base-wide security rather than merely the intended role of protecting U.S. resources and supplementing the Thai effort when required.[1/]

The same problems confronting the Thai internal security effort were also being faced by the RTG agencies responsible for external defense. That situation could not be eased by the U.S. Air Force Security Forces, due to

restrictions derived from the RTG's army policy (which withheld authority for U.S. Forces to function outside the base perimeter), and the agreements between the Thai and U.S. Governments in general.

Specific recommendations had been made by USAF and the Military Assistance Command, Thailand (MACTHAI) officials concerning improvements required to maintain an adequate base defense posture against the existing threat. The Thai Supreme Command Headquarters Forward (SCHQF), which was responsible to the RTG for the overall defense program, maintained that coordinated security and defense plans existed and were adequate to deter any offensive initiated by Communist or dissident forces.[2/]

External Defense

The RTG, in which the responsibility to defend bases tenanted by the USAF was vested, had directed the Royal Thai Army (RTA), Royal Thai Navy (RTN), Marines, and RTAF, plus Border and Provincial Police units, to develop and enact coordinated plans to fulfill that requirement. By July 1968, the plans were still in various stages of development. At best, they ranged from uncoordinated or untested proposals to a lack even of suggestions from some agencies.[3/]

In the meantime, the RTG directed the Provincial Governors to cooperate with the USAF officials at the bases and make temporary arrangements for external defense by utilizing the Provincial Police as a primary force. Some proposals had been implemented but they proved to be ineffective due to insufficient coordination and education of the other forces, who had the

actual long-range responsibilities. In reality, the plans resulted in such confusion that the agency having the specific responsibility for Udorn RTAFB reacted to the 26 July attack by merely stating it was the problem of the police.

Various U.S. officials, from the lowest level in the field upward, including COMUSMACTHAI and the Ambassador in Bangkok, had made attempts to insure adequate plans existed.[4/]

The desired plans would have allowed responsible agencies to cope with the variety of actions which could conceivably be taken against the U.S. presence. The plans were to be designed to protect the U.S. resources from the greatest threat, the mortar, recoilless rifle, or rocket barrage, which most likely would be accomplished on a large scale, and which could be accompanied by a coordinated sapper or suicide attack.

The enemy was to be denied unhindered operational access to all areas within a 10,000-meter radius of each base. The most significant area to be denied was the 5,000 to 10,000-meter belt, where the enemy could employ 81-, 82-, and 120-mm mortars, and 122- and 140-mm rockets. That was the area from which they could hit each base with a resultant high level of damage and, due to the long range, be almost undetectable. The enemy could also, in the absence of adequate, coordinated external defense, occasion considerable damage through harassment from within 3,000 meters, with Communist terrorists forces trained in the use of 60-, 81-, 82-, and 120-mm mortars, and 57- and 75-mm recoilless rifles.[5/]

In conjunction with denying the enemy the operating area, in itself costly and difficult from the point of view of manning and equipment, there were to be cross-tell intelligence efforts through base internal and external coordinating centers in which all responsible agencies would be represented. Observation posts in the higher threat areas, flareships and gunships on alert, free-fire zones around the bases, and forces readily available for prompt and decisive countermeasure deployments to conduct ambushes and offensive ground action against enemy training areas and hide-outs were envisioned.[6/]

By mid-1968 those external defense plans, which some agencies claimed to have implemented, showed a lack of coordination. Also, the external defense forces were hindered by the same problems as the USAF internal security forces, shortages in equipment and personnel. Coupled with these were jealousies among the responsible external defense agencies, which were evident in contacts made between internal and various external defense representatives.[7/]

Until the spring of 1968, all agencies concerned with the defense of the bases maintained, though on an irregular basis, a good circulation of intelligence information. At Udorn, the Directors of Intelligence and Security Police continued to maintain regular contact with the off-base agencies. The content of information they received, however, deteriorated to reports which stated there was no change in the situation during the last three-to-four months prior to the attack. A local Intelligence gathering system, the USAF OSI Area Source Program for Thailand (ASP-T), had long been a key to base defense planning, but the exchange of information between that agency

and local Thai agencies (including the RTAF on base) had been neither adequate nor timely.[8/]

While the USAF security forces had responsibilities inside the base perimeter, they were blocked from participating in the external defense efforts by the Thais' long-standing policies to maintain a low American profile off base. Where the USAF could provide vehicles, radios, weapons, and even unarmed American personnel to supplement the Thais' external effort, this assistance was generally refused on grounds that to employ such assistance, even on a temporary basis, would provide a degree of credence to the Communist propaganda line of an American take-over in Thailand.[9/]

Furthermore, Safeside Units and Quick Reaction Teams are designed to counter enemy action at the base perimeter or within the confines of the base. The latter consisted of 50-to-100 fully-equipped men on alert at various locations. For this reason, there could be no USAF-controlled reconnaissance and search/destroy missions, or assistance to primary external forces in hot pursuit of an attacking enemy force.

U.S. interest and participation in the overall defense organization had been labeled the only thing that had inspired any effectiveness at all. While limited to internal security, the USAF did exert some influence in the external defense sphere.

One example of the influence of continuing U.S. interest in external defense, but which also pointed out the lack in coordination in the Thai

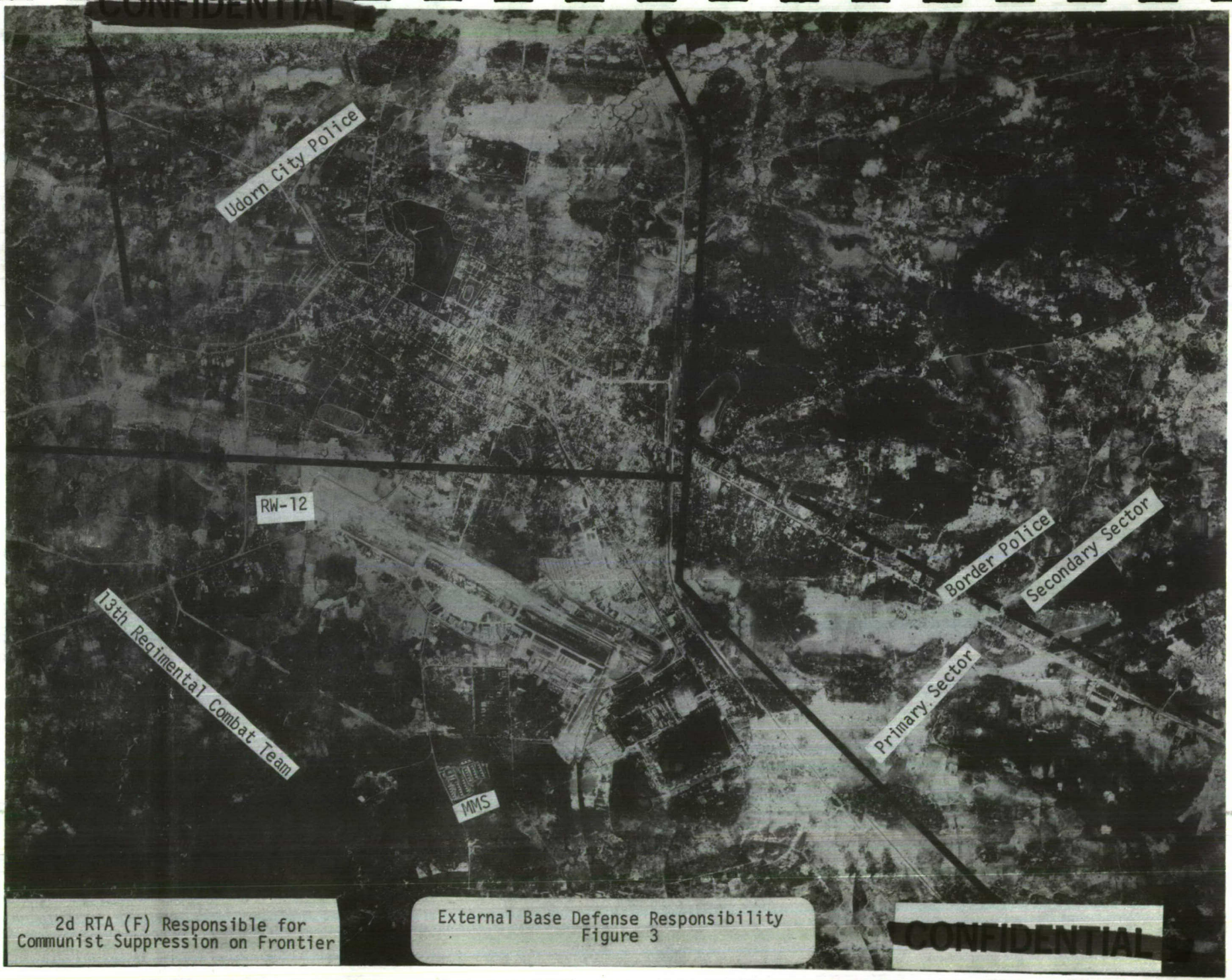
external defense plans, occurred in early July 1968. As a result of USAF concern over the security of an area along the southwestern perimeter of Udorn RTAFB, the Thai Provincial Police conducted a sweep operation in this area.[10/]

The sweep operation, carried out solely by the police, extended over a three-week period and a number of suspects were arrested or detained. However, it was later learned the operation took place in an area which was not the responsibility of the Provincial Police. The area to the southwest of Udorn had been assigned, via written agreement, to a Thai Army unit, the 13th Regimental Combat Team.[11/] (Fig. 3.)

Also, the sweep was designed for Communist suppression, an action delegated specifically to the 2d RTA (Forward). Neither of those agencies participated in the police operation.

While willingness of the police to perform was demonstrated, and a measure of effectiveness was shown, the fact that they operated in an area assigned to another agency pointed out a lack of understanding and coordination among the various agencies responsible for external defense.

As has been already stated, the OSI/Security Police area source program failed to provide warning of an attack. It had been recognized that the ASP was a capable intelligence gathering system, but a lack of manpower detracted from its effectiveness. The 7/13AF Director of Security Police stated, after the attack on Udorn, that the program had failed to produce any important information for several weeks prior to the attack.



2d RTA (F) Responsible for Communist Suppression on Frontier

External Base Defense Responsibility
Figure 3

In addition to the ASP, warning of an attack in the form of intelligence inputs was to come, under the planning which had been done, from several sources. These were the Thai Suppression Command, the various Thai military, Border, and Provincial Police, and other agencies under the Ministries of Interior and Defense. However, they proved to be ineffective, either because they were not exchanging information, or the information they were exchanging was insignificant.[12/]

Throughout Thailand, few proposals for external defense were implemented such as aggressive patrol and ambush programs, observation posts in the higher threat areas, installation defense coordinating centers, free fire zones around the bases, dawn-to-dusk reconnaissance patrols (both ground and air), and flare aircraft and gunships on nightly missions or at least on ready alert. Finally, no provision was established for better training of the responsible forces by testing their reliability.[13/]

Internal Defense

The RTAF Base Commander had been delegated the responsibility for internal defense at the bases tenanted by USAF forces, with the exception of U-Tapao where the RTN was responsible. Under various agreements, the USAF was to supplement the Thai internal security effort through the employment of Security Police Squadrons, contract Thai Security Guard (TSG) companies, and augmentees (non-security police USAF personnel specifically trained for emergency security support). This combined USAF-provided force was intended to give on-base protection to the USAF's priority resources and other U.S. facilities, equipment, and personnel.[14/]

The objective of all internal defense planning was to maintain the capability to counter hostilities within the boundaries of the base. The greatest threat posed was the possibility of sabotage and infiltration by small teams.[15/]

Joint U.S./Thai defense plans were in existence for some time prior to the attack on Udorn. These plans appropriately assigned respective roles to the Thai and USAF security forces at each base. Except for the training given to the USAF provided forces, however, there was no means of evaluating the overall USAF/Thai capability to effectively counter hostile actions.[6/]

USAF security forces throughout Thailand, when considered in line with the authorized manpower, were relatively well equipped with weapons, vehicles, and communications equipment. However, when examined from the point of view of having the capability to accomplish their actual responsibilities, or meet USAF/PACAF security standards, all security police units in Thailand were undermanned.[17/]

As an example of the manning problem, the Udorn squadron was authorized 195 men and assigned only 160 in July 1968. Although justification for an additional 405 men had been put forward, only 50, mostly sentry dog handlers, were provided. Though the dogs and handlers provided a much needed improvement, there still remained the valid justification for the 355 additional security policemen. Due to manpower ceilings imposed on the USAF by the Thai Government and shortages in other fields, the request of the security police was not filled.[18/] While this was a recent example, there had always been a shortage of USAF security personnel in Thailand.

Thai Guards

In light of the restrictions on the number of U.S. personnel in Thailand, some means of protection for U.S. resources had to be devised. With the Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Thailand (COMUSMACTHAI), acting on behalf of the U.S., and the Supreme Command Headquarters (Forward), representing the RTG and Ministry of Defense, a memorandum of understanding was drawn which established a Thai paramilitary force for internal base security. The force was known as the Thai Security Guard (TSG) Regiment. A contract to carry out the agreements of the memorandum was signed on 21 January 1966.[19/]

The Thai Security Guard program was organized under the SCHQF, which was directly responsible to the Ministry of Defense. The Guard had no other connection with the Thai military. To provide the appropriate administrative control and services to the Thai Security Guard Regiment, regular RTAF officers and NCOs were assigned for one-year tours with the TSG detachments located at each of the U.S. tenanted bases. Operational control of the TSGs was vested in each of the U.S. Base Commanders, who delegated responsibility for organization, assignment, training, and duty scheduling to his Chief of Security Police.

Actions of the USAF Commander were carried out with the assumption that he had an integrated security force. All personnel, whether U.S. or Thai, received the same treatment according to rank, and other U.S. military customs and courtesies. Directives were exercised through the Thai Commander or Senior Thai Supervisor at each installation. The Thai Commander or Senior

Supervisor was responsible for all command and administrative matters necessary to insure unit operational effectiveness. COMUSMACTHAI was responsible for the overall supervision of the TSG program.[20/]

To fill the ranks of the regiment, initially, the Ministry of Defense recalled military reservists, on a voluntary basis, to perform duty in the security program. However, as the USAF combat operations from Thailand expanded, so did the requirement for additional Thai Guards. Seemingly, the U.S. Government could put as much military equipment and as many facilities into the country as it desired, but the stringent personnel ceiling forced the U.S. to monitor closely the numbers not directly associated with carrying out the combat mission. The ability to expand the Thai Guard program, therefore, was both a blessing and a curse. While the number of Thai Guards could be increased to accommodate greater security needs for enhanced USAF resources and activities, increases requested in USAF security personnel received lower priority ratings.[21/]

The Thai Guard program was intended to meet the security requirements set forth by each U.S. Base Commander. The performance of the guards was judged by U.S. standards, and they were provided the same supervision, training, and treatment as U.S. military personnel at each installation.[22/]

The one real advantage in the TSG program was that it did provide an element of armed protection for U.S. resources. There still were problems and disadvantages in the program which continued to require adjustments.

After establishing a well-rounded program, which provided for phased refresher training, and qualifying enough guards to carry out a base defense mission, the security force posture at each base had to be revised. This posture was changed to provide dual manning of all operations, from static posts and roving patrols to the joint Central Security Control (CSC).[23/]

After the Thais became a part of this posture and were qualified in the use of the assigned weapons, there were still obstacles such as the language barrier. While the language barrier had little effect on communications between individuals, it became significant when the Thai supervisors made spoken transmissions on the security radio net. This was already overloaded with transmissions aimed at maintaining coordination of a base-wide security force deployment. Serious consideration had to be given to the possibility of establishing a dual radio network, with Thai language training provided USAF personnel.[24/]

Though some security commanders complained of lethargy among the Thais, the revised force posture, with almost around-the-clock dual manning by USAF and Thai personnel, provided extensive USAF police supervision. Lethargy might have been better controlled had there always been a full-time complement of RTAF supervisors, but this was seldom the case.[25/]

Perhaps the most worrisome problem was the cloudy backgrounds of the personnel employed in the TSG program. Initially, all guards hired were recalled military reservists. With the expansion required in conjunction with the USAF buildup, however, the SCHQF began approving nearly all applications, with the reservists getting priority on job vacancies. For some time,

many non-reservists were hired, because there were not enough applicants in the preferred category. The cloudy backgrounds of these personnel created an air of uneasiness among some U.S. officials. Security background investigations were conducted by the Thai Armed Forces Security Center, but the U.S. did not receive even a courtesy copy of the final clearances.[26/]

If there were any doubt that the applicants were not being fully investigated, it was at least temporarily quelled in June 1968. The RTG police and personnel of the RTG Armed Forces Security Center arrested 127 applicants for jobs with the TSG Regiment. It had been discovered that a ring of forgers was selling RTAF reserve cards to individuals seeking jobs with the regiment. Though the card was no longer a prerequisite for employment, the emphasis on hiring reservists first (and for the better jobs) made the cards desirable. COMUSMACTHAI, though not ruling out the possibility, determined that Communist terrorists had not infiltrated USAF tenanted bases by that method. It was believed that forgers and users of the cards were motivated solely by monetary gain.[27/]

The 7/13AF Director of Security Police stated he had no reason to question the loyalty of any of the Security Guards, especially at Udorn. He said they were all "straight-up"; he had nothing but praise for their response on the night of the attack.[28/]

Although considerable improvements had been realized in the quality of the TSG program since its inception, it was not deemed the final answer. More USAF security police were needed, as well as sentry dogs and handlers. Also,

the efficiency of the program had been effectively tested only once.[29/]

PACAF Security Guidance

PACAF Manual 207-25, "Security Police Guidance for Guerrilla/Insurgency/Limited War Environments", issued in May 1968, completely revised USAF security standards of the AFM 207 series. Primarily, it pointed up a stronger need for additional USAF security personnel. Little could be done, however, without lifting the personnel ceiling limitations.[30/]

Basically, the directive put into detailed written form the guidance for adopting a security force posture to meet the needs of the local situation. This posture was already in effect at the major USAF tenanted installations, though the status of American manning made adoption of some procedures difficult. For example, the manual suggested that daytime Security Alert Teams (SATs) were to be made up of one American and one Thai, while at night, the team would consist of two Americans and one Thai. The manpower restrictions resulted in an almost complete reversal of this desired composition.

As pointed out in the manual, the paramount security threat confronting USAF units operating in an insurgency environment was that of overt enemy attacks against USAF forces, weapons systems, or other essential resources committed to the war effort. The threat consisted mainly of the possibility of active ground force infiltration or attack, and attack by standoff weaponry. The flexible, mobile, and fluid nature of unconventional and limited war was such that there could be no guarantee that external forces

would be capable of providing complete defense in depth at all times.[31/]

In compliance with the manual, it was necessary for a commander to plan for, equip, train, and organize a ground defense force capable of protecting the installation from hostile groups. Assigned security police were to provide a force sufficient for accomplishment of the defense mission under normal conditions of operation.[32/] Defense plans already in effect provided the desired degrees of augmentation to increase protection during the intensified threat conditions and to counter actual attacks.[33/]

Restrictions resulting from the Thai arming policy prohibited the supply of heavy weapons to USAF security personnel. The Thai Security Guards were armed with M-1 and M-2 carbines, while the American personnel had M-16s. The need for full-time American supervision and adherence to PACAF desires, resulted in the Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs) and SATs being dually manned. The Thais and Americans on these mobile teams had M-16s. M-60 machine guns were mounted on their alert vehicles; M-148 grenade launchers were also available.[34/]

Physical internal security facilities were also inadequate country-wide. There was a general lack of boundary fencing, outpost lighting, bunkers, and watch towers. Each Base Director of Security, officials at MACTHAI, and the American Ambassador in Bangkok had submitted numerous requests for funds to provide the required improvements.[35/]

Furthermore, the overall status of security force manning and equipment, both internal and external, did not provide the fullest protection necessary to safety for priority resources, facilities, equipment, and personnel.[36/]

Local Changes

Some changes in the actual accomplishment of the internal defense effort were realized prior to the attack on Udorn. USAF forces, including the TSGs and augmentees, assumed responsibility of the primary internal security for the entire base. It was believed the responsible Thai forces (RTAF or RTN) were inadequately equipped and manned. Accordingly, a higher degree of coordination was effected.

In essence, the forces themselves, through need, reversed the intentions of the U.S.-Thai agreements. The RTAF security element assumed the role of protecting their own priority resources almost exclusively.[37/]

With these actions came changes in the internal force posture. Available forces had to be spread thinly across the base. At Udorn, for example, during emergency situations, few additional static sentries could be posted. One hundred augmentees and all off-duty security police were placed on immediate recall, with another 400 augmentees available on back-up. The immediate recallees formed extra Security Alert Teams and Mobile Security Reaction Teams. This is the basic concept of PACAFM 207-25.[38/]

CHAPTER II

THE ATTACK

Base Security Posture

On the night of 26/27 July 1968, there were two factors which held the key to countering the unexpected attack on the unfenced, unrevetted, and darkened north-northwest corner of Udorn RTAFB. One factor was a special mission C-141 Starlifter aircraft. The second, and interlocking factor, was the security posture for that portion of the base. A defense setup was established, which would not have been in existence had the C-141 been on its normal Aeromedical Evacuation mission.[1/]

The C-141 Starlifter was on a Sentinel Echo mission, the name given the special aeromedical evacuation of three American pilots whom North Vietnam officials had been promising to release. These pilots were to have departed Hanoi on a regular Friday night International Control Commission (ICC) flight to Vientiane, Laos. From there, they would have had the opportunity to go to the U.S. on either commercial or USAF aircraft. Had they chosen USAF transportation, they would have been taken to Udorn on 26 July at approximately 2230 hours. However, the pilots were not released in Hanoi until several days later.[2/]

The security provided for the C-141 was determined by the sensitivity of the Sentinel Echo mission. Expanded security would have been provided had the aircraft been on a routine air evac mission, but it would not have equalled that which was provided because of the extra caution involved.[3/]

Normal security for the northwest corner of the base would have been radio-equipped, sparsely posted, static sentries with a roving patrol traveling around the inside base perimeter road. (See Fig. 3.) Except on rare occasions, priority resources were not parked on Taxiway 4 or the trim pad adjacent to it. The two F-4 aircraft that were on the trim pad near Taxiway 4, though treated as priority resources, would not have required additional security in that area, because they were down for maintenance and the maintenance crews were providing 24-hour coverage. For that reason, there was no extra or close-in sentry posted on the trim pad. According to the Director of Security Police, the nature of the Starlifter's mission was more of a planning factor on that particular night than anything else. Additional security personnel included a close-in sentry at the aircraft, additional static sentries between the taxiway and the perimeter, and a special QRT positioned close by. The close-in sentry and one-half of the USAF members of the QRT were the only armed Americans in the immediate vicinity of the C-141. All other sentries were Thai Security Guards.[4/]

Hostile Action

A hostile force of unknown size attacked Udorn RTAFB at 2225 hours the night of 26 July 1968. The size of the force, which opened its attack with automatic weapons fire on the northwest end of the base, was estimated at eight to ten persons by Intelligence officers. The security police and the local Thai police, however, estimated there were up to 25 of the attackers.[5/]

The initial fire came from just outside the base perimeter at a point parallel to Runway 12 and perpendicular to Taxiway 4. The initial fire was

joined by hostile fire coming from two or more positions parallel to the taxiway and perpendicular to the runway, as well as from a point almost exactly opposite the position of the initial fire. As part of the attacking force continued to fire from these positions, other members moved toward the special air evac Sentinel Echo.[6/]

Eyewitnesses have accounted for three intruders within grenade-throwing distance of the C-141, while other evidence indicates at least three others penetrated to within 30 yards of the aircraft. The enemy reached the immediate vicinity of the C-141 and an F-4D aircraft some 50 yards away on a trim pad. They were in the area for approximately 20 minutes before being driven back by mobile USAF/Thai Security Force Quick Reaction and Security Alert Teams.[7/]

According to eyewitness reports, one intruder penetrated to the parked aircraft. He was shot and killed just under the tail of the C-141 by the close-in USAF Security Guard. Another raider got to the same general area, only about 20 yards closer to the runway. He, too, was killed by the USAF guard.

A third man entered from across the runway, went toward the C-141, approached two vehicles parked just off the left wing tip, sprayed the area with AK-47 automatic fire, and ran into the grass off the taxiway to the front of the aircraft. He returned to the taxiway, going to the right side of the Starlifter, and there he lobbed an explosive charge under the aircraft and a second charge onto a mobile power unit. The first explosion ignited fuel pouring from the damaged number two engine on the C-141. He then ran the length of the taxiway, toward the trim pad where two F-4 aircraft were

parked. On the way there, he detoured slightly to a mobile security force truck. He evidently had seen USAF personnel using the truck for cover. He threw an explosive charge into the back of the truck and then continued on to the closest of the two F-4 aircraft.

On the trim pad, the third hostile was seen to circle a "D" model aircraft, throw something into the tail pipe, and run off into the grass. No explosion was seen or heard. The man returned to the F-4D, again throwing something into the tail pipe. After this second attempt, a muffled explosion was heard and flames shot from the exhaust of the Phantom II. Then the intruder ran back into the grass on the east of the taxiway, and reaching a point about halfway between the trim pad and the C-141, hurried toward the base perimeter, and disappeared.

Evidence found the following morning by investigating officers indicated at least three more enemy had been in the immediate vicinity of the C-141. Blood stains, ammunition clips, and drag marks further indicated that at least one of the three had been either killed or seriously wounded during the exchange of gunfire.[9/]

As the hostile group was pushed back toward the base perimeter, some of the attackers made one last concentrated effort, and unleashed a volley of automatic fire that pinned down a pursuing security alert team. A QRT arrived in the area, however, just northeast of Taxiway 4, and the hostile force continued to withdraw. The SAT, which had been pinned down, pursued the group toward the perimeter, but no further contact was made.[10/]

At 0205 and 0230 hours, small arms fire was reported in the area of the road leading to the Napalm and Munitions Storage site. (Fig. 3.) An investigation of the area by a QRT disclosed no further evidence that anyone had actually been firing from or into the area.[11/]

Base Security Reaction

At the time of the attack on Udorn, the close-in security guard, three maintenance men, and an aeromedical evacuation crew member were standing by a maintenance truck parked off the left wing of the C-141. They realized they were under attack when tracer bullets began passing overhead from a position across the runway. Before they could react, tracers were flying through air from several directions.[12/]

According to one maintenance man, they were under fire from every direction except down the runway and the parallel taxiway inside the base. An attempt was made to radio word of the attack to the maintenance shop, but no one answered the call.

After turning off the headlights on the maintenance vehicle, an attempt was made to turn the lighting unit shining on an aircraft, toward the hostile positions in an effort to light up potential targets. While trying to turn the unit around, the bulbs were shot out.

At that point, the medic made his way to the C-141 and called for the other medical and flight crew personnel aboard to get out. The medical and

flight crew members evacuated the aircraft and headed for cover in the grass. En route, one crew chief received abdominal wounds, which resulted in his death several days later, and the C-141 pilot was severely wounded in both hands.[13/]

While the evacuation was being accomplished, the number two engine of the C-141 caught fire. Immediately, an HH-43 "Pedro" helicopter with a fire suppression kit flew to the scene; its crew fought the fire. The chopper and fire hose took hits, but the Pedro crew remained in the area, using rotor blast and a trickle of foam to contain the fire until several fire trucks arrived to extinguish the fire.[14/]

In the meantime, the security guard was spraying first one area and then the other with M-16 automatic weapon fire. He observed three enemy approaching the aircraft, two of whom he is credited with killing.

Those killed carried AK-47 assault rifles, several extra clips of ammo, grenades and plastic type explosive charges. One of the killed did not die outright, but bled to death after being downed near the taxiway, because it was realized that he had satchel charges rigged on his body. He was kept under surveillance awaiting the arrival of EOD personnel. This individual was shot during the first few minutes of the attack, but he was not discovered until some six hours later during a sweep of the infiltrated area.[15/]

Within two minutes of the initial shots a joint USAF/TSG SAT, on standby for Sentinel Echo security, deployed from the taxiway and returned fire on the hostile positions. Within ten minutes of the first fire, the security leader,

a six-man QRT, and another three-man SAT from CSC had blocked off the north/northwest end of the base. The CSC had meanwhile effected a base recall of all off-duty security police personnel and augmentee forces. Several additional QRTs and SATs were quickly formed and some were dispatched to strategic areas for defense of the base. Other teams were kept in reserve at CSC.[16/]

Throughout the night a C-130, called in from Korat RTAFB, and an HH-43 continued to circle over the base; their crews dropped flares and served as reconnaissance spotters. The security forces, including USAF, RTG, and American augmentees, remained on alert. Several times during the hours of darkness a QRT or SAT responded and investigated reports of sniper fire and possible infiltration attempts. Flare drops were directed over the munitions storage area in the early morning hours as the SATs searched the area, but the enemy was not discovered again. The expanded security operation was terminated at 0700 hours on 27 July after the USAF, RTAF Base Commander, and security leader determined the base was clear, and that there would be no further contact with hostile forces.[17/]

The immediate and effective reaction by the close-in USAF Sentry and the first SAT had blunted the infiltration. With the arrival of additional security personnel, the invaders began a hasty retreat, leaving trails of grenades, loaded ammo clips, and other explosives.[18/]

Later, during an interview on base defense, the 7/13AF Director of Security Police was asked about the performance of security personnel during

the attack, and about the trustworthiness of the Thai Security Guards. He commented that the forces had reacted effectively, like professionals. He said there was no reason to question the loyalty of the Thai guards, and that their performance on 26/27 July was outstanding. The TSGs had deployed and carried out their duty of repulsing the infiltrators with professional initiative.[19/]

On notification of the attack, the Central Security Control and other pertinent agencies on base smoothly accomplished their duties. The fire department had dispatched the necessary equipment and extinguished the flames at the parked C-141. The Pedro helicopter had been able to contain the fire until the arrival of fire trucks, despite its fire suppression kit having been rendered almost ineffective, due to a gash torn in the hose by hostile fire.

A C-130 flareship, requested through the 432d Wing's Tactical Unit Operations Center (TUOC) and the 7/13AF Tactical Air Control Center (TACC), arrived one hour after the attack began and commenced flare drops. The drops continued until daybreak, allowing the security forces to conduct a sweep of suspected areas. Base hospital personnel responded rapidly, taking the wounded and other personnel out of the area to the safety of the hospital compound.

CSC had announced the attack by radio and had issued appropriate defense instructions to all security personnel. There was no effort to communicate by radio with any of the static perimeter guards, because it was estimated this would have endangered their lives by tipping their position and detracting

from their effectiveness. A post-by-post inspection was begun during a sweep of the area, while the flare drops continued.

When security forces reached the northernmost corner of the base, during a more extensive sweep and security operation, which began at daybreak, they found one of the Thai Security Guards had been killed by hostile AK-47 gunfire at the time of the initial outbreak. It was believed this TSG had attempted to sound the alarm when he was shot, thereby prematurely triggering the attack. His radio had been turned on and was in the transmit position; his carbine had been loaded and cocked.[20/] (See Appendix II.)

CHAPTER III

POST ATTACK CHANGES

U.S. - Thai Reaction

Various officials, both Thai and American, had discussed the subject of protecting USAF resources and personnel in Thailand against attack. The accomplishment of many of the suggested improvements depended upon additional funding. However, two days after the attack, it was learned the latest request for funds to finance improvements had been denied earlier. It had been agreed a concentrated effort was needed to finalize defense plans, and to make long delayed improvements in facilities, such as the construction of watch towers and bunkers and the erection of perimeter fences.[1/] After the attack, there was no longer just a danger from a variety of suspected forces; the threat had become real.

Review of Inadequacies

Within a few hours of the attack, the Commanders in Chief of PACOM and PACAF, the Commanders of Seventh and Thirteenth Air Forces, the Deputy Commander of 7/13AF, COMUSMACTHAI, and the U.S. Ambassador to Thailand stressed preparations for additional hostile offensive acts. Their positions and policies on base defense were reiterated and field commanders were directed to study defense posture and capability, to make recommendations, and to take corrective action within local capabilities.[2/]

Commanders and Security Police officers at each base and site in Thailand surveyed their resources; all of them possessed the necessary capabilities to protect and react within their agreed and assigned realm of

responsibility; i.e., the protection of priority resources. No base, according to surveys, however, was equipped or manned to accomplish its assumed or actual role of base defense.[3/]

The same problems prevailed at all USAF-tenanted bases in Thailand. First, as stated, the realm of responsibility had long been overshadowed by the actual defensive role. There were practically no free fire zones around any of the bases. In the general area of low priority static sentry posts, shanty towns had been erected as close as 50 yards to base boundaries. Communist sympathizers were known to be living in them. There was a shortage of manpower (See Appendix I). There was no perimeter fencing and few, if any, reinforced defense bunkers. There were neither watch towers nor an effective defoliation program. Furthermore, the attainment of one of these improvements would be inadequate without the others.[4/]

Funds had been requested many times through the military construction program, as well as from operational and maintenance budgets, but without success. The attack on Udorn was the added justification needed in the next request for funds, which possibly might have won approval to increase the number of USAF security men, and provide newer and more equipment.[5/]

Changes in Equipment

As an example of their needs, the 81-mm mortar was ordered for Udorn and Nakhon Phanom in mid-August 1968. This item had long been considered desirable for base defenders, but its introduction to Thailand had been denied because it was classified as a "heavy weapon". Therefore, it had been on

the "not allowed" list of the U.S. Ambassador. Nevertheless, as demonstrated by the Udorn attack, an immediate flare requirement existed at many bases. Since the 81-mm mortar could fire a flare round, the weapon, if used strictly for that purpose, was not considered heavy equipment and therefore was ordered into the arsenal.[6/]

Renewed backing of the Ambassador and higher USAF command echelons influenced immediate requests for more men, equipment, and facilities. The requests were consolidated at numbered air force headquarters. It was hoped the increased concern would be sufficient to procure the necessary improvements through USAF resources.[7/]

Meetings with Thais

The possibility of increased enemy activity did not go unnoticed by responsible Thai officials. In less than 24 hours after the attack on Udorn, the Deputy Commander of 7/13AF, the American Consul at Udorn, and the area Thai Military Commander had scheduled a review and planning conference. Subordinates of the military officials had held preliminary discussions the morning after the attack, while they conducted a joint investigation. While this conference was in session at Udorn, the American Ambassador informally conferred with the RTAF Commander in Bangkok. The RTAF officer asked for a subsequent meeting in Bangkok, under auspices of the Supreme Command, to bring together the pertinent responsible officials, including the Americans from the field. This meeting was held on 30 July.

Because the meeting took place so soon after the attack, and most of the intervening time had been taken up by investigations, reviews, and

surveys to prepare recommendations for local corrective action, the larger meeting served only as a stepping stone. However, it provided an opportunity for concerned officials to exchange their views, review past planning, discussions and agreements, and to present some new proposals to meet the modified situation. They also established meeting dates for further coordination.[8/]

Time was devoted to the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Thai Supreme Command Headquarters at the conference held on 30 July 1968. He provided some details on the visit of the Thai Prime Minister to Washington in May 1968. Among the topics discussed had been proposals for base defense and requests for additional U.S. Government help.

In essence, the RTG had asked for assistance in planning an effective program and for training and achieving a professional security force. The request included instructors to conduct the program, as well as materiel support through the provision of munitions, weapons, vehicles, and communications equipment.

The Royal Thai Air Force security organization offered another prime example of its needs. With many of the RTAF security units on Thai air bases severely undermanned, they were ineffective. Even those units, however, which were fully manned were poorly trained and equipped. Certain USAF officials were in agreement that no real RTAF commitment existed to provide internal defense of its own bases against ground attack. Neither was there an effective Military Assistance Program (MAP) to help achieve an expedient capability within the authorized RTAF security forces.[9/]

Since the attack on Udorn did not bring immediate relief of restrictive policies on USAF security forces--even with more men and equipment--they could assume only a little more responsibility. Nevertheless, as a result of the attack, and in support of the Thai request for assistance, the Deputy Commander, Seventh/Thirteenth Air Forces, supplied COMUSMACTHAI with a number of recommendations which committed the USAF to certain actions. They concerned not only internal defense measures, but also support of external forces.[10/]

Commit the RTAF

Among the recommendations listed, the RTAF security organization had the potential to man and equip ten well-trained security companies. The Deputy Commander of 7/13AF requested that COMUSMACTHAI obtain a commitment from the Royal Thai Supreme Command and RTAF to fully man, equip, and train one elite security company to be stationed at each USAF-tenanted base, plus two companies for reserve. MACTHAI was to initiate action to procure munitions, communications gear, and transportation. The RTAF was to provide experienced officers and NCOs to be trained by USAF security personnel. Priority was to be given to training and equiping heavy weapons squads and platoons. Each 7/13AF Base Commander would be tasked to provide instructions and advice to the RTAF company selected for his base.[11/]

On the external side of the defense effort, MACTHAI was to insure that the RTAF clearly accepted the responsibility of airlifting external defense forces to threatened locations, and that they planned and exercised that responsibility. MAP action was to provide additional airlift assets, when they were needed to meet requirements of the program. In the interim,

procedures were to be developed, so that the RTAF could request and receive USAF assistance in meeting airlift requirements. This combined effort required coordination at the highest level between the U.S. and Thai Governments.[12/]

As emphasized during meetings in Bangkok, irrespective of what was done by the USAF to get more men, equipment, and facilities, they could only minimize the possibility of base penetrations. Additions could neither prevent, nor necessarily cope with attacks by hostile forces from any distance off the base.[13/]

Daily meetings between SCHQ and the U.S. Mission to develop and coordinate joint measures for improving base security began 31 July in Bangkok. Meanwhile, Thai and USAF Base Commanders worked at their levels, under direction of COMUSMACTHAI and the Deputy Commander of 7/13AF, in their particular spheres of responsibility.[14/]

Improved External Defense Plan

In one of the daily Bangkok meetings, the SCHQ representative described to the U.S. officials the RTG plan for external base defense. The Thais proposed to cover the area from the base perimeter outward for 15km, as they had previously, but now they planned to make the area the responsibility of one Thai Commander at each base. General suppression and frontier defense activities remained an army responsibility. Other proposals were the same as recommendations made by an U.S. Mission base defense working group in March 1968. Implementation had been urged by the American Ambassador on

several occasions prior to the attack on Udorn. This time, the plan was scheduled to be presented to the RTG cabinet for approval at a 6 August 1968 meeting.

A slightly modified plan was introduced for consideration during the 13 August Thai cabinet meeting. It was an important step forward according to the American Ambassador, especially since the modified version contained two points desired by the U.S. One concerned deployment of RTAF forces off base and the other was to insure a key role in external defense for the Commander of the 2d Army (Forward).[15/]

Prior to the plan, the RTAF (RTN at U-Tapao) commanders had no authority to deploy forces outside the base perimeter, to intercept attacking forces at a sufficient distance to prevent mortar and rocket attack, or to pursue a force off base after it had attacked the base. The proposed SCHQ plan, upon implementation, would have authorized such actions. The U.S. had also been concerned about the apparent lack of command channel relations between the commanders of each base, as designated in the SCHQ plan, and the Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTAF) area command in Northeast Thailand. The RTAF Area Commander (the Commander, Second Army Forward) was the central intelligence gathering and coordinating agent for all forces in the NE, and the U.S. did not want him to be excused, even by implication, from playing an appropriate role in base defense. That commander also possessed overall authority in the NE for communist suppression. The SCHQ representative agreed to the U.S. view, and the Second Army was delegated a key role in the new defense plan. It was believed that if the plan passed the cabinet in that proposed form, it would

provide a good organizational framework in the RTG and RTARF for effective base defense.[15/]

The SCHQ also guaranteed that a meeting would be convened with the appropriate RTARF commanders and the means would be developed to increase officer and noncommissioned officer strengths in the Thai Security Guard units. This action was to insure authorized positions for regular RTAF officers and NCOs being filled on a full time basis at each base at which the TSG program was employed.[17/]

Field Recommendations

Along with base defense reviews and meetings designed to improve joint defense, several recommendations came from agencies in the field, which were not involved in base security. One recommendation was to modify available HH-3 and HH-43 helicopters to drop CBU-19As, and to test this concept at Eglin AFB. Because Air Rescue and Recovery Service resources were critical, this request was disapproved. It might have degraded the rescue mission to utilize helicopters for other than humanitarian and rescue purposes.[18/]

Starlight scopes, Xenon searchlights, and battery commander scopes were also recommended. Assistance had been requested in requisitioning and obtaining the necessary authorization for these items.[19/]

To insure airlift support for external defense forces, which could be shifted from base to base in an emergency, authority was granted for the use of USAF resources. Requests had to be fully justified by the situation before USAF aircraft could be used, and then, only if an RTAF aircraft were not

available. It was stressed that USAF crews could not, under any circumstances, fire on enemy targets outside a base in Thailand. If it were necessary to protect aircraft being utilized for RTG-force airlift, the crew was to withdraw from the hostile fire area and terminate the mission. The availability of USAF aircraft was not to be made known to the RTG, and they could be used only through authority of the Deputy Commander, 7/13AF, if required to prevent a standoff attack.[20/]

From one recommendation, it was decided to incorporate the capabilities of Radar Approach Control (RAPCON) units into the coordinated efforts. While it had a limited capability, the RAPCON could be utilized to some degree to spot mortar positions and to pinpoint the location of an attacking force.[21/]

Concepts Tested at NKP

In other efforts to provide an improved, coordinated Thailand-wide defense program, USAF and RTG officials took advantage of a tense situation which developed at Nakhon Phanom (NKP), a few days after the attack on Udorn. All internal and external security forces in the province around NKP were braced for an attack on the base. This situation was used to exercise and test several concepts of the SCHQ proposed plan. These were the employment of a joint USAF/RTAF base defense plan and the exercise of other proposals for a coordinated defense effort.[22/]

One of the proposals toward a coordinated Thailand-wide defense effort was the employment of a Quick Reaction Mobility Force (QRMF) comprised of a fully equipped 25-man force composed of 23 TSGs and two USAF security policemen. The procedure was tested by sending four teams to NKP beginning on

1 August 1968. The forces, drawn from available personnel at other bases, were rotated every fifth day, and, overall, the method proved to be an effective way to bolster the internal defense forces of a given base when the situation demanded.[23/]

The test was not carried out without problems, however, and refinements were recommended during the period the QRMFs were utilized. It was learned that radios issued at various bases operated on different frequencies, presenting communications problems when men and equipment were integrated into a QRMF. Establishment of parallel radio nets was forthcoming due to that test. Also, it was found that once the QRMF arrived at a base, the men and equipment had to be reintegrated with forces located at the base. This had to be done to provide control for area policy and local mission variations, and also for adequate supervision because of vast differences in terrain. The decision was made therefore to rotate the forces less frequently. It was also determined that for a faster response, all equipment necessary for a deploying QRMF should be packaged and stored in a central location to await airlift to a trouble spot.[24/]

RTAF aircraft were committed to the NKP operation--the first such commitment made to base defense. Four RTAF T-28 aircraft at Udorn and the same number at Ubon were placed on 15-minute scramble alert to provide air support to external forces. To provide additional support and to further test coordinated efforts, a USAF AC-47 was sent to NKP, where it was placed on airlift support alert along with an O-1 and a U-10 already assigned to NKP. The three USAF aircraft were not armed, but it was hoped their presence might

frighten CT mortar crews.[25/]

Also at NKP, a joint defense operations center (JDOC) was formed to fill the need for joint US/Thai command coordination. A base protection and security center under control of the 2d RTA (Forward) was also formed. The two centers provided the internal and external forces a central focal point for coordinating their activities and area intelligence. Similar centers were to be implemented at all bases in Thailand.[26/]

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Numerous Thai and U.S. agencies investigating the attack on Udorn, had differences of opinion. These varied as to the origin of the attackers, the identity of the attackers, what their target was, and what, exactly, their goal had been. Opinions were based on individual experiences, sources of information, and the intelligence available.[1/]

It had already been realized that additional perimeter defenses were vital in preventing the type of attack which was undertaken against Udorn on 26 July. Among these needs were adequate fencing, lighting, trip flares, additional USAF Security Police authorizations (to include sentry dogs and handlers), reinforced defense bunkers, more and better access roads, defoliation, free fire zones, and better equipment to include radios, transportation, and weapons. These were required to carry out day-to-day internal defense operations.

Externally, U.S. officials concerned with defending U.S. resources in Southeast Asia recognized that requirements existed for flare and gunships, as well as airlift capabilities in support of the responsible country-wide defense forces. The lack of adequate external defense planning had also been feared. This was the responsibility of the RTG, and the USAF continually showed its desire to see final plans in effect.

U.S. officials had consistently sought to gain these improvements;

however, with various restrictions imposed by the RTG and the limited funds available, all needs were not met.

Of real significance in base defense had been the establishment of the Thai Security Guard program. The advantage of that program has been emphasized many times. By utilizing Thais (armed, trained, and maintained by the U.S. and under control of USAF base commanders), an additional source was uncovered to provide base security in the Thai environment of strict personnel ceilings. This freed positions which could be filled by other priority specialists needed to wage the war from Thailand. While caution was required to guard against over-reliance on the TSGs, the concept might offer an alternate solution for future planners hindered by similar restrictions.

But at the same time it was readily admitted that considerable supervision was required, which detracted somewhat from the TSG's effectiveness. Nevertheless, on the night of 26 July, it was felt that the alertness and the professional reactions of the Thai Guards were vital in repulsing the attack.

Some improvements had to be made after the attack. Internal defense plans were reviewed and necessary updating was accomplished. At many bases, fences were erected, and communications, weapons, and transportation problems were being solved by the U.S. and Thais. External defense plans were being better coordinated and it appeared that the new concepts were to be implemented.

The steps required to press to fruition these improvements in internal and external defenses were detailed and stressed in a "Base Defense Survey -

Thailand" which was prepared by the 7/13AF AD Hoc Committee in September 1968. This report summarized:[2/]

> *"The lessons learned as a result of the Udorn incident reiterate the need for increased security measures. Available Intelligence information indicates that communist terrorists are now entering a new phase of operation directed towards well-planned and executed operations against specific targets. This increase in insurgent activities coupled with better organization poses a greater danger to United States facilities and personnel in Thailand...An increased and more effective security posture for U.S. resources will be a significant factor in deterring or repelling future communist attacks on Thailand bases."*

The attack was a small unit raid which seemingly had relatively limited objectives. No mass attack was carried out and the few aircraft which were damaged were repaired and operational a few days later. While two were killed on the friendly side (one Thai Guard and a C-141 crew chief), the enemy probably suffered heavier casualties.

More significant, however, was that long standing weaknesses in base defense posture were clearly pointed out and through greater emphasis and concentration on outstanding problems, it seemed obvious that the enemy would not again find Thai base defenses in similar conditions. The attack, whether or not the enemy accomplished his objectives, helped improve base defense plans, operations, and coordination.

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APPENDIX I

PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS AFTER UDORN ATTACK

Personnel	Authorized	Assigned	Additional Requirements
U.S. Security Police	1547	1438	932
Thai Security Guards	2007	2070	461

Weapons:

	Type	Requirement
1.	M-16*	3
2.	GAV-5A	121
3.	Shotgun	64
4.	81-mm Mortar (for flare capability)	18
5.	GAV-5	71
6.	.38 Cal Revolver	51
7.	M-60	23
8.	Carbine Magazines	1800

Munitions:

	Type	Requirement
1.	5.56-mm	1,522,498
2.	Flares	100
3.	40-mm	5,605
4.	Carbine	903,550
5.	M-26 Grenade	301

* This requirement may be increased proportionately to the number required to arm the TSGs.

	Type	Requirement
6.	Slap Flare	1,423
7.	Trip Flare	624
8.	.38 Cal	3,600
9.	12 Gauge	1,955
10.	.30 Cal	8,000

NOTE: All bases surveyed have inadequate all-weather base perimeter feeder roadway systems. Information furnished by respective base personnel indicated that prior attempts to develop an appropriate access road, tower, fencing, lighting, and defoliation program were unsuccessful due to lack of funds.

APPENDIX II

RESULTS OF UDORN ATTACK

U.S. AND FREE WORLD FORCES:

KIA - 1 U.S. Contract Thai Security Guard (4th Bn)
1 USAF Aeromedical Specialist

WIA - 5 USAF (1 shot/AK-47; two shrapnel and 2 fuel burn)

MIA - None

Aircraft:

Damaged: 1 C-141 - Heavy
1 F-4D - Moderate
1 HH-43 - Light

FACILITIES/MATERIEL:

Damaged: 2 USAF General purpose vehicles - light
1 USAF Fire truck - light
1 USAF Power unit - light
1 USAF Light-all unit - light

ENEMY:

KIA - 2 known
WIA - 1 (circumstantial evidence)
Captured - None

Equipment/Materiel losses: 2 AK-47 Assault Rifles
120 rounds incendiary ammunition
9 AK-47 Ammo clips
6 Satchel charges
3 Fragmentation Grenades (Soviet made)

GLOSSARY

AFB	Air Force Base
ASP	Area Source Program
ASPT	Area Source Program for Thailand
CBU	Cluster Bomb Unit
COMUSMACTHAI	Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Thailand
CSC	Central Security Control
CT	Communist Terrorist
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ICC	International Control Commission
JDOC	Joint Defense Operations Center
MACTHAI	Military Assistance Command, Thailand
MAP	Military Assistance Program
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NE	Northeast
NKP	Nakhon Phanom
OSI	Office of Special Investigations
PACAF	Pacific Air Forces
PACOM	Pacific Command
QRMF	Quick Reaction Mobility Force
QRT	Quick Reaction Team
RAPCON	Radar Approach Control
RTA	Royal Thai Army
RTAF	Royal Thai Armed Forces; Royal Thai Air Force
RTAFB	Royal Thai Air Force Base
RTARF	Royal Thai Air Reserve Forces
RTG	Royal Thai Government
RTN	Royal Thai Navy
SAT	Security Alert Team
SCHQ	Supreme Command Headquarters
SCHQF	Supreme Command Headquarters Forward
TACC	Tactical Air Control Center
TSG	Thai Security Guard
TUOC	Tactical Unit Operations Center