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Executive Registry
68-788

12 February 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Robert S. McNamara
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT : RVNAF Tet Leave Arrangements and Strength

1. Per your request, we cabled our Station and asked for their immediate answer to the questions you raised about RVNAF Tet leave arrangements and present RVNAF strength with respect to a 23 January base line.

2. The Station's response, received at 1400, 12 February, Washington time, is as follows:

"Have tried Station and MACV sources with very limited results. Will pursue questions in morning and MACV hopes to be able to give us more at that time.

"General impression is that leave plan varied. The II Corps more notably alert than other areas. A principal difficulty was absence of regimental and battalion commanders.

"MACV liaison with JCS advises that ARVN strength now up to or higher than pre-Tet level.

"Regarding RF and PF strength, Ambassador Komer raised similar question yesterday and field has been tasked with providing answer which is not expected to be forthcoming for a few days."

3. The above adds little to the information in the DIA memorandum "Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces" which we discussed this morning, and to which this Agency made an input over the weekend. We expect additional information and will, of course, advise you promptly whenever it is received. On the basis

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of evidence available in Washington, we have serious reservations about the claim that "ARVN strength now up to or higher than pre-Tet level." Since we know ARVN has suffered something on the order of 10,000 casualties (KIA, WIA and MIA) since 31 January, this would be a hard statement to credit even apart from the complication of personnel on Tet leave.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

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