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INFORMATION

OCT 20 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Interdiction Operation in South Laos

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

You might be interested to know that in mid-September a significant interdiction effort was launched in South Laos against North Vietnamese LOCs and troop concentrations. Called Operation Gauntlet, it involved over 5000 guerrillas and continued until the first week in October.

The results of Operation Gauntlet are now in. CIA considers that it achieved its intended results, in that it brought about the seizure of a number of positions in the strategic Bolovens Plateau area and elsewhere from which observation and harassment of enemy LOCs can be continued with greater effect than before. In addition, it is estimated that the enemy suffered 600 killed and another 500 wounded. As a result of Operation Gauntlet, the enemy has been forced to deploy almost 10,000 troops in South Laos.

On the other side of the coin, only 23 short tons of rice and 1 ton of ammunition were destroyed by Operation Gauntlet. Moreover interdiction efforts had only a marginal effect on the movement of Communist supplies along the LOCs, primarily due to the fact that the level of logistical activity during this period was very low (the rains were very heavy). The real test still lies ahead. The friendly forces also suffered significant casualties and a decline in morale and combat effectiveness, and will need extensive retraining and regrouping before combat readiness is again achieved. 25X1

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