

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: DRUM FIRE I

*R-45/38-9 Dictator
x Drum Fire I*

1. PROBLEM: To provide reference information to CSAF concerning DRUM FIRE I.

2. BACKGROUND:

a. After deployment in Feb 1965 the ARC LIGHT force went on alert for operations in SEA, primarily targeted for strikes in NVN under night/all weather conditions. In early March questions arose as to whether or not the B-52 force could effectively be used for operations in SVN wherein area/saturation type bombing would be employed against VC concentration areas. Although not favored initially by either CINCPAC, CINCSAC or the Air Staff, the subject was kept alive and interest was rejuvenated in late April following the relatively successful tactical saturation bombing North of Saigon. The JCS tasked SAC to develop area bombing techniques, in conjunction with PACOM. After joint conferences, a system was developed whereby the ARC LIGHT forces could be employed for area/saturation bombing of isolated VC areas.

b. The force was executed against an area in War Zone Delta (WZD) on 18 June (ARC LIGHT I).

c. On 2 July, MACV requested maximum effort attacks by ARC LIGHT forces in two areas in WZD. Time over the first target (TOT) was 05/0100 Saigon time to 05/0500 Saigon time. A definite break between two waves was requested in an attempt to lead the Viet Cong into believing the strike was completed after the first wave. TOT for the second target was requested for 07/0800 Saigon time with TOT ending at 07/0845 Saigon time (no break). Additional background information is in Tab 3.

d. The mission plan for target No. 1 was finalized by SAC FRAG, Order 104 (TAB 3A).

e. Mission accomplishment is summarized at TAB 3B.

3. RECOMMENDATION: That you use the attached background papers, TABS 3, 3A and 3B as reference material for discussions you may have concerning DRUM FIRE I.

M. Moses
Colonel L. E. Moses/gr/71666
6 July 1965

AFXOPJ *Brahan*

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BACKGROUND PAPER

on

B-52 STRIKES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- BACKGROUND

- 12 Feb 65 - ARC LIGHT force deployed
 - Postured to strike PHUC YEN
- Executed 18 June against area north of Saigon (WAR ZONE DELTA)
 - 2 B-52s crashed in air refueling
 - 1 B-52 pre-target abort
 - 1530 bombs programmed
 - 1299 dropped
- Alerted for 22 June strike on area target in War Zone Delta (WZD)
 - "NIGHT RUN"
 - Pre-strike recce - No VC
 - Cancelled 21 June
- 2 Jul 65 - MACV requested (TAB 5) maximum effort attack on two areas in WZD
 - No. 1 TOT 05/0100 Saigon to 05/0500 Saigon (04/1300 EDT) (04/1700 EDT)
 - Two waves with definite break between them
 - No. 2 TOT 07/0800 Saigon to 07/0845 Saigon (06/2000 EDT) (06/2045 EDT)
 - Both targets - .54 miles wide
1.64 miles long
 - Radar beacon at PHUOC VINH
 - 17 miles range from No. 1 target - Bomb Release Point
 - 13 miles range from No. 2 target - Bomb Release Point

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- Exceeds SAC guidelines to MACV for Beacon Placement
- SAC accepted Beacon Location (TAB 6)
- 2 July 65 - JCS issued planning message (TAB 7)
 - SAC issued frag order 104 (TAB 8)
- 3 July 65 - JCS executed (TAB 9)

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MISSION PLANNING FOR "DRUM FIRE I"

- SAC FRAG ORDER 105, Annex S, Supl 3, SAC OPLAN 52-65
(TAB 8)
- Bomb data
 - 30 acft (1530 bombs)
 - 27 internal
 - 24 external
 - all M-117 750 lb GP
 - Fuzing
 - Each wave leader - instantaneous
 - All other aircraft - .01 delay
 - BRIC
 - Internal 200 ft
 - External 750 ft
- Command & Control
 - B-52 Primary "RANT" (#1)
Deputy "RANT 2" (#6)
 - KC-135 Primary "HICK" (#1)
Deputy "HICK 2" (#6)
 - NO MACV airborne coordinator (night)
 - If no beacon or in wrong location ABORT
 - Cross check radar return from BIEN HOA
- Bombing tactics
 - Altitude 20,000
 - Speed/track 375 KTAS/253.5
 - Bomber stream

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- 2 waves, 2 hrs 38 min between
- each wave - 5 three-ship cells
 - 1 min between acft
 - 10 min between cells
- 4 impact points
 - 4 cells on 2
 - 6 cells on 2
- Air Refueling
 - 1:1 ratio
 - 90,000 lb off-load
 - Do NOT abort if missed AR
 - Post strike AR if possible
 - If no AR, can land Clark with 21M fuel
- Planned fuel reserve
 - B-52 Guam 20M
 - KC-135 Kadena 12M
- SEA Emergency Alternate
DON MUANG

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MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR "DRUM FIRE I"

- LAUNCH

- 1st Wave - as scheduled
 - 1st Acft - 1121Z (0721 EDT)
 - Last Acft -1203Z (0803 EDT)
- 2nd Wave - as scheduled
 - 1st Acft - 1441Z (1041 EDT)
 - Last Acft -1523A (1123 EDT)

- AIR ABORTS - PRE-TARGET

- 1st Wave
 - #4 Acft (LDR. No. 2 CELL) 25 minutes prior to target
BNS out
- 2nd Wave
 - #6 Acft (No. 3 in No. 2 CELL) after take-off -
BNS out
 - Replaced by ground spare launched 1 minute after
last acft in wave.
 - #31 Acft (ground spare above) just prior to target
BNS out

- AIRCRAFT OVER TARGET

<u>SCHEDULED</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>DROPPED</u>
30	28	27

1 Acft no release - BNS out

- BOMBS ON TARGET

- Scheduled: 1530
- Dropped: 1317

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- | <u>NOT Dropped:</u> | <u>BOMBS</u> | <u>REASON</u> |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| - 2 acft pre-tgt abort | 102 | BNS |
| - 1 acft over target | 51 | BNS |
| - 1 acft over target | 9 | Internal |
| - 3 acft over target | 3 (1 Ea) | External |
| - 2 acft over target | 48 (24 Ea) | " |
- RECOVERY
- All B-52s returned to Guam as scheduled
 - All KC-135s have landed at Kadena
 - 2 landed Clark for fuel - then to Kadena
- AIRCRAFT MALFUNCTIONS
- KC-135
 - 4 Ground Aborts
 - 1 Generator - Constant Speed Drive
 - 2 Water Control Drive
 - 1 Water Pump Circuit Breaker
 - B-52
 - 4 Air Aborts
 - 1 After T. O. Radar 150 Volt Power Supply
 - 2 Pre-target 1 Radar Hi-voltage Power Supply
 - 1 Computer Failure
 - 1 Over Target Intermittant Beacon - Hi-voltage Pulse Cable
 - OTHER
 - 2 Aircraft shutdown 1 engine for low oil pressure
 - 2 Aircraft require engine change
- MISSION RESULTS
- MACV telecon: All bombs in target area except:
 - One string 500-1000 ft north and parallel
 - One string 500-1000 ft south and parallel(Above comments based on initial look at RF-100 medium and high altitude photos)

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- 3ADIV initial look at recon photographs (Type not identified) indicates 759 craters in the target area, 209 outside (total 968). This leaves 349 of the 1317 bombs dropped unaccounted for.

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