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3. MAJOR COMMAND

a. TAC

(1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) XPSY 1
(b) DOC 1
(c) DREA 1
(d) IN 1

(2) AIR FORCES

(a) 12AF
1. DOO 1
2. IN 1
(b) T9AF(IN) 1
(c) USAFSOF(DO) 1

(3) WINGS

(a) 1SOW(DOI) 1
(b) 23TFW(DOI) 1
(c) 27TRW(DOI) 1
(d) 33TFW(DOI) 1
(e) 35TFW(DOI) 1
(f) 347TRW(DOI) 1
(g) 67TRW(DOI) 1
(h) 316TAW(DOX) 1
(i) 317TFW(DOI) 1
(j) 474TFW(DOI) 1
(k) 463TAW(DOX) 1
(l) 58TAC FTR TNG WG . 1
(m) 354TFW(DOI) 1
(n) 314TAW(DOI) 1
(o) 4410SOTG(DOI) . . . 1

(4) TAC CENTERS, SCHOOLS

(a) USAFTAWC(IN) 1
(b) USAFTFWC(DR) 1
(c) USAFAGOS(EDA) . . . 1

b. SAC

(1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) DOX 1
(b) XPX 1
(c) LG 1
(d) IN 1
(e) NR 1
(f) HO 1

(2) AIR FORCES

(a) 2AF(IN) 1
(b) 8AF(DOA) 2
(c) 15AF(INCE) 1

c. MAC

(1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) DOI 1
(b) DOO 1
(c) CSEH 1
(d) MACOA 1
(e) 60MANG(DOI) 1

(2) MAC SERVICES

(a) ARRS(XP) 1

d. ADC

(1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) DO 1
(b) DOT 1
(c) XPC 1

(2) AIR DIVISIONS

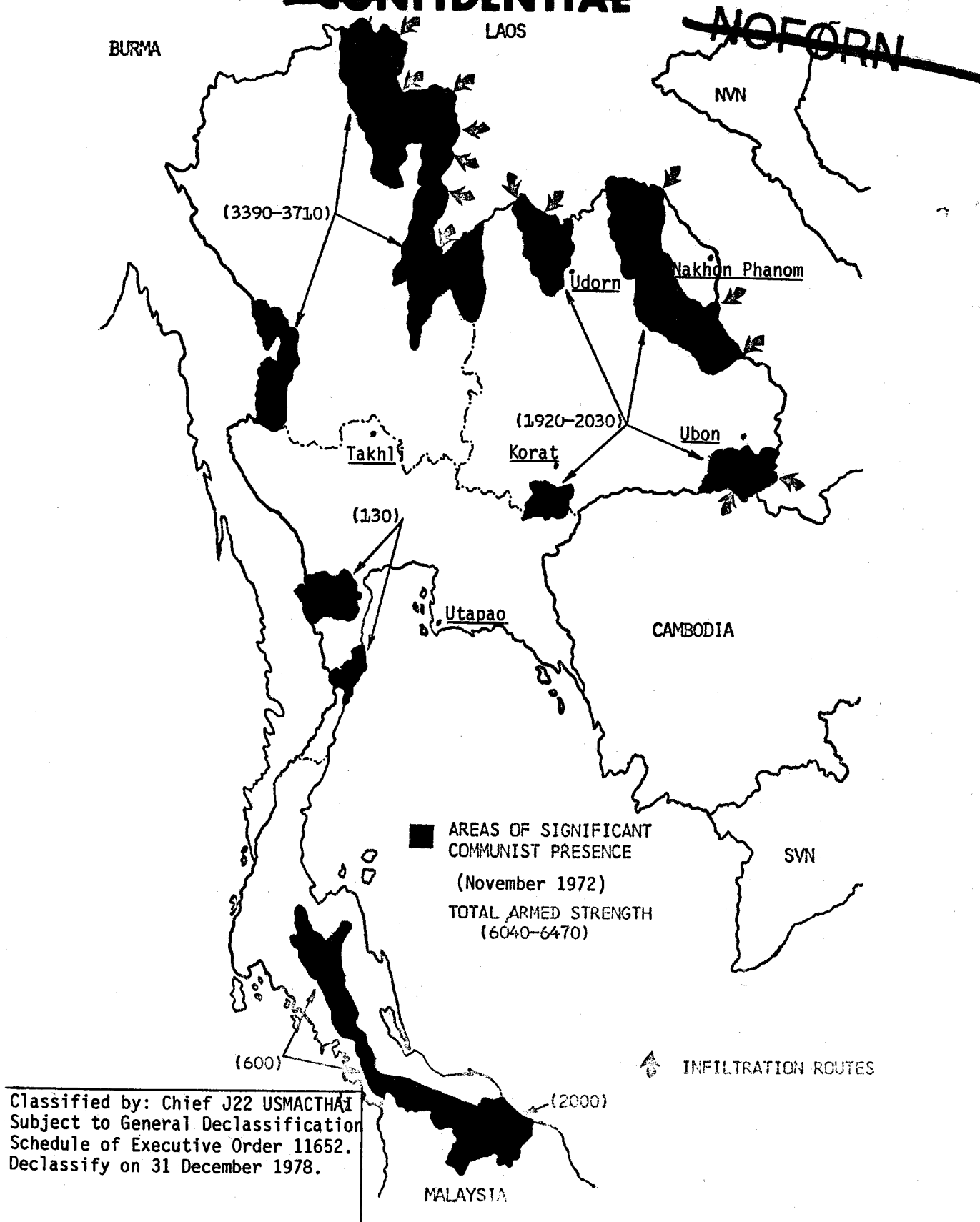
(a) 25AD(DOI) 1
(b) 20AD(DOI) 1

e. ATC

(1) DOSPI 1

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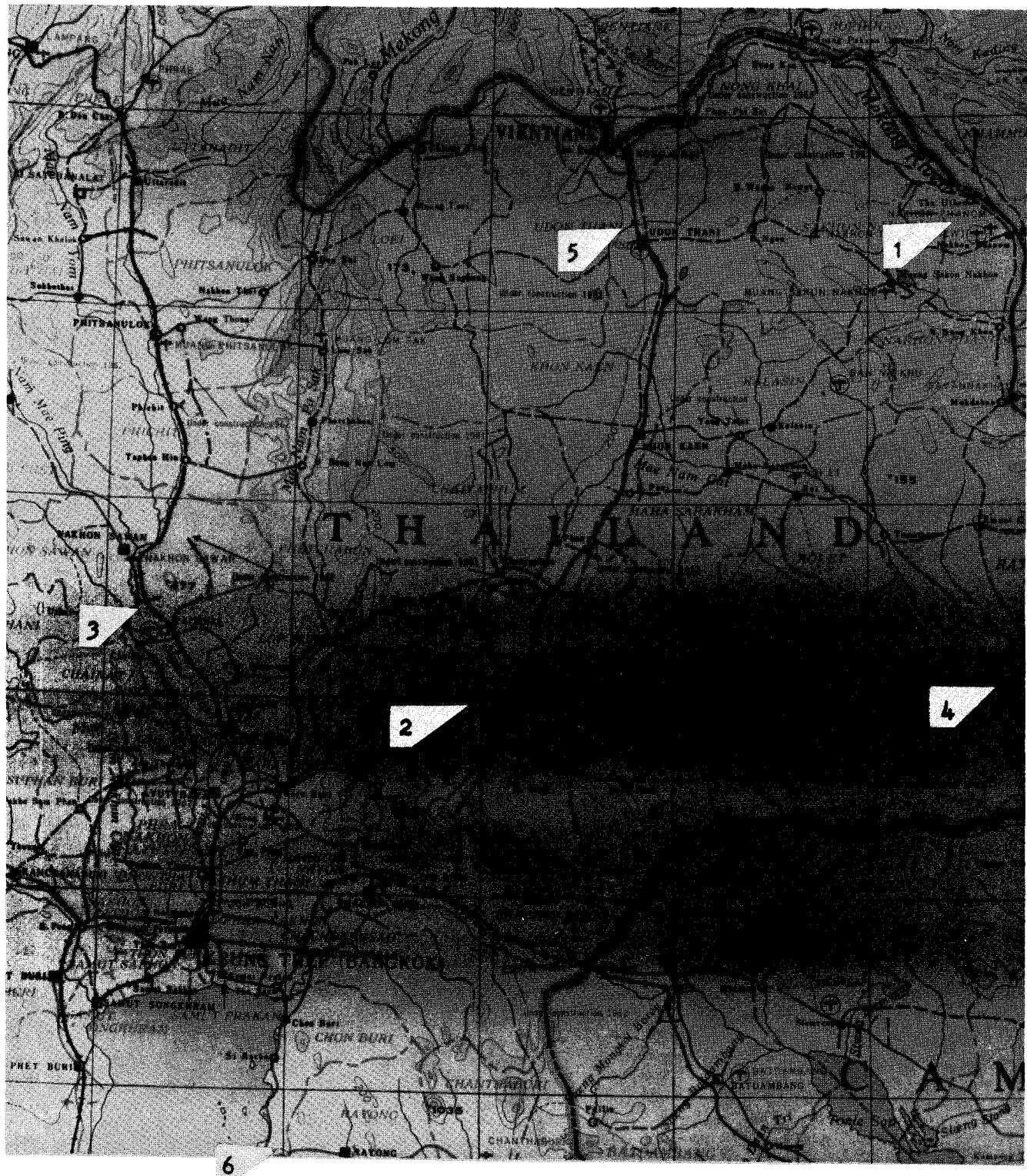


THAILAND: Areas of Significant Communist Presence

FIGURE 2

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Thailand: Military Airfields

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Nakhon Phanom | 4. Ubon RTAFB |
| 2. Korat RTAFB | 5. Udorn RTAFB |
| 3. Takhli RTAFB | 6. U-Tapao RTNAF |

FIGURE 3

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Advisory Group, Thailand (JUSMAGTHAI), indicated that standoff Rocket/ Artillery/Mortar (RAM) attacks at some of the bases could be expected any day.^{32/}

It was conceded that the threat of hostile actions directed against USAF forces by the local CT was relatively low, with the greatest danger coming from imported, highly trained, professional sapper units from Laos and North Vietnam.^{33/} Several different sources provided proof of the real danger from military units outside Thailand. After the attack on Ubon RTAFB in June 1972, there were three encounters with remnants of that communist sapper force. One came on 5 June when Thai police had an armed encounter with them, and a second occurred on 6 June when the sappers ambushed a Royal Thai Army (RTA) unit. Both incidents occurred east of Ubon near the Laotian border.^{34/} Then, on 10 June, two squads of the Royal Laotian Army engaged this force inside Laos, killing two of its members. Identification of the enemy indicated they were regular North Vietnamese Army (NVA) personnel.^{35/}

An OSI intelligence report relayed information from a reliable source that approximately 653,750 Baht (\$31,392) in donations had been raised from Vietnamese around Ubon for the support of teams targeted against U.S. bases in Thailand. The teams were composed of Vietnamese previously repatriated from Thailand to North Vietnam, where they were specially trained.^{36/} Other OSI sources in the Nakhon Phanom RTAFB area reported that NVA officers and advisors were making frequent river crossings from Laos into the northeastern provinces of Thailand during the first half of 1972.^{37/}

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lucrative targets that they invite sapper and stand-off attacks. I think we need to pursue this expression of willingness on the part of the Thai Government to participate more actively in base defense. The need for a more substantive commitment by the Thais existed well before the 4 June sapper attack on Ubon, and it has certainly been heightened by that event. A point of special concern is the lack of organized and aggressive patrolling by Royal Thai forces outside base perimeters. They are neither deterring nor detecting enemy sappers before they attempt penetration. Of even greater concern is the possibility of stand-off attacks employing rockets and mortars. Recent intelligence information indicates that some stand-off weaponry has been brought in-country and more can be brought in quickly. Defeat of the Ubon and U-Tapao sapper attacks, and the increased concentration of aircraft on our bases should increase the possibility of stand-off attacks in the future.

As you know, our authority for base defense operations does not extend beyond the perimeter. We are absolutely dependent upon the Thais for off-base defense actions. More emphasis is needed in getting the Thai Border Patrol and Provincial Police units to work with us in accordance with the November 1970 agreement between the U.S. Operational Mission and the Thai Department of Public Safety.

In this agreement, the Thais were allocated vehicles, weapons, and communications equipment for use by specified police units in the performance of defensive efforts external to our base perimeters. It is my understanding that some of this equipment has been put to other uses and that much of it is in a poor state of repair. In addition, off-base patrolling by Thai military and para-military forces is either sporadic and ineffective or nonexistent.

I would appreciate your strong and continued support in keeping the subject of air base defense before appropriate Embassy and Thai officials. We need far more off-base support from the Thais if we are to protect our resources from both sapper and stand off attacks. The threat of such attacks has never been greater than at present.

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The "recently expressed concern by General Kraiangsak" noted by General Searles occurred in an 11 May 1972 meeting between RTG officials and U.S. Embassy, COMUSMACTHAI, and USAF personnel during which the RTG admitted they had not provided command support nor had they supplied funds or resources needed by the units tasked with base defense missions. The Thais agreed to seek higher authority approval and support for the base defense mission of RTG forces.^{62/}

Command concern over the RTG forces' role in external base patrol was never greater than in mid-1972. General Searles summed up the problem:^{63/}

Air Force defense planners are handicapped because they are entirely dependent on the host government for external defenses and the host government is concerned with combating a communist-inspired insurgency. The people we depend on at the other side of the line cannot be depended on for a vigorous response to an emergency.

The RTG is either unable, or, in view of other problems such as insurgency, unwilling to defend USAF-tenanted bases. However, considerable progress has been made recently.

Civic Action Programs. In keeping with the philosophy of supporting the Thai government in its counterinsurgency (COIN) efforts without any direct U.S. involvement, the U.S. Embassy in 1968 restricted the wide range of civilian aid programs, known as "civic actions," being carried out independently by each base. Under the policy constraints imposed by the Embassy, direct USAF civic action programs were restricted to a 16 kilometer radius of the base and were subordinated to a base defense role. Any direct USAF

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support for RTG COIN operations was prohibited. The limited programs allowed were intended to create a favorable climate among the Thai citizenry around the bases and thus enhance their defense posture by denying the enemy close-in support. Civic action further provided grass routes intelligence sources which were available to USAF ground combat intelligence specialists assigned to local SP forces.^{64/} The intelligence value of civic action was revealed in the 1970 Ubon attack when a local villager notified police of the presence of armed strangers, thereby alerting the base to the imminent attack several hours in advance.^{65/}

Specific examples of local utilization of the civic actions programs are reserved for discussion under "Base Analysis" in this report.

Contingency Forces. The USAF entered the SEAsia conflict unaccustomed to a role of total base defense. A series of attacks on USAF facilities in the Republic of Vietnam in 1965 and 1966 underscored the need for a specially-trained reserve force of combat infantry tasked with the mission of base defense. As USA participation in such a role was difficult to coordinate under a combat environment, the Air Force Chief of Staff directed that a special USAF security police unit be created to provide additional security for USAF resources in insurgency environments. As a result, Operation "Safe Side" was developed in 1966. Its mission was the creation of combat SP squadrons. The history of this force, which saw emergency deployments throughout Vietnam, is discussed in a CHECO report titled 7AF Local Base Defense Operations, Jul 65-Dec 68.^{66/} This special contingency unit

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that limitation. The TSG program was developed in 1966 to augment the USAF security forces permitted in the country.^{73/} Because of the assignment of TSGs, CSPs did not suffer a lack of sufficient people; however, their defense role was limited by difficulties of communication with, and integration of, the TSGs, as well as their inadequate training and arms in earlier years. These problems were generally resolved by 1972 as a result of continued command interest.^{74/}

Entry Control. Control of entry of Thai nationals on the bases, and their movements while on-base, was one of the more serious problems faced by the USAF SPs. This resulted from RTG and U.S. Embassy insistence that the bases be controlled by the Thai base commander. With the exception of Korat RTAFB (discussed under "Base Analysis"), gates at all other bases were manned by RTAF or RTN guards. USAF and TSG were present in an advisory role only.^{75/} Entry to the bases was dependent upon the issuance of a pass by the Thai base commander.

An investigation of the applicant was supposed to be undertaken prior to the issuance of the pass, but USAF personnel felt that it was inadequate. The problem was particularly serious in light of the 1972 intelligence estimates of enemy plans to conduct internal sabotage on several RTAF bases. A partial solution to the dilemma was increased emphasis on close-in resource protection and stringent personnel circulation control around vital resources.^{76/}

Rules of Engagement. Of even greater significance to base defense activities were the series of political constraints known as the Rules

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of Engagement (ROE). These limitations were issued by the U.S. Embassy and COMUSMACTHAI/JUSMAGTHAI after periodic consultations with the RTG during the period 1968-1972.

Two political considerations gave direction to the continuing formulation of the ROE. One was U.S. responsibility to avoid any appearance of military domination or occupation of Thailand and thereby deny support to CT propaganda efforts. A second factor in the promulgation of the ROE was the existence of dense civilian population centers in the proximity of the bases. ^{77/}

The ROE relative to transportation of military forces and the prohibition of direct U.S. aid to RTG COIN operations have already been discussed. Several of the ROE, however, dealt directly with matters of daily concern to defense personnel. Some time before the Udorn RTAFB 1968 attack, USAF SP personnel were prohibited from carrying firearms; that was the prerogative of the TSG. When weapons were allowed, they could only be carried in an unobtrusive manner, totally concealed when possible. After the 1968 attack, the ROE involving personnel utilization and physical defense aids were modified. A description of the former is covered here and the limits on physical aids are discussed in Chapter III.

The first compilation of ROE occurred in late 1968. It was approved by the U.S. Ambassador and was "binding on all members of the mission until changed formally." Among other things, the ROE directed that "U.S. personnel and weapons systems must not be used outside the base perimeters." This

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was defined as meaning no U.S. weapons of any kind would be used so as to "take effect" (impact) outside the base.^{78/} Small arms, crew-served weapons, and air delivered munitions were all included.

The July 1969 Ubon RTAFB attack revealed several dangerous weaknesses with such a broad limitation. As a result, the ROE were modified in November 1969. The new ROE were much more detailed in what could and could not be done in base defense. Small arms fire, for example, directed off-base was permissible if the base was receiving fire from some point, but only if the hostile target could be clearly identified and engaged with no danger to innocent civilian personnel. The ROE reaffirmed that air power could not be employed in fire missions and that no crew-served weapons could impact off-base. Embassy approval was needed for each type of weapon brought into Thailand and was also required prior to any joint Thai/U.S. base defense exercises. No U.S./TSG forces could be dispatched to reinforce other USAF units without prior Embassy approval.^{79/}

In 1970, the ROE were republished, but with some changes. One change stated that certain Embassy personnel besides the Ambassador could grant the required clearances in special circumstances. Permission was also granted to dispatch reinforcements from one USAF base to another in Thailand in an emergency without advance Embassy permission.^{80/}

The next significant development came with the publication of COMUSMACTHAI guidance on the carrying of firearms off-base in dangerous areas for purposes of self defense and escort duties. The decision to permit this at all bases

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except U-Tapao RTNAF and Takhli RTAFB came about because of the severe insurgency problem in Northeastern Thailand. The final decision was left to USAF base commanders on a case-by-case basis.^{81/}

The last change to the ROE came in 1971, when the Embassy granted permission for U.S. commanders to use armed USAF SPs and TSGs to temporarily secure USAF off-base crash sites, ordnance drops, and similar sites involving U.S. equipment. This permission was limited to situations where RTG forces were unable to respond immediately, and was temporary, lasting only until their arrival.^{82/}

All of the ROE emphasized that under no circumstances would USAF or TSG personnel exercise any external base defense role, nor under any circumstances would they pursue any hostile forces off-base, even those withdrawing after an attack on the base.^{83/} PACAFM 207-25 was supplemented in 1971 to reflect these ROE and to avoid confusion in their application.^{84/}

Both the Deputy Commander 7/13AF and his Director of Security Police expressed concern in 1971 and 1972 over the fact that the ROE prohibited any USAF off-base patrolling activity and could severely handicap defense forces while compelling them to undertake a static defense role. The bases were cautioned on the need to seek ways to overcome the inherent weaknesses of such a role,^{85/} and several innovative base security officers developed programs which demonstrated that a static role need not be a stagnant one.

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between them. The RTAF had a 1000-man combat infantry regiment on its portion of Korat. The TPP 3d Region Headquarters was also located nearby in Korat City. It had a special TPP 50-man Special Actions Force (SAF).

The chief of the 388 SPS characterized RTG and USAF cooperation and support as "highly motivated, but largely untried." Joint Base Defense Exercises had been held with great success. The Base Defense Security Center (BDSC) was located in the RTA Fort and was manned jointly by USAF and RTA personnel 24 hours a day.

Thai Provincial Police provided five patrols consisting of two to three men each during the critical-threat hours of darkness within a 5km area outside the perimeter. The TPP SAFs also maintained a 50-man reaction force on call to respond to incidents occurring during critical-threat hours within a 16km radius outside the perimeter. Five more TPP were on alert at the USAF CSC for dispatch to any suspicious activity observed around the perimeter. The RTA maintained a full RTA company on "alert" at Fort Suranari during the night.^{88/}

Only the RTAF support was considered deficient. Unfortunately, the RTAF area comprised a large section of the perimeter which was not defended by the USAF. The RTAF agreed to provide security for that area, but only during daylight hours.^{89/} The only USAF security was provided by sentry dog teams in that area and patrolling SAT jeeps, unsupported by any in-depth defenses.^{90/}

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defense left the POL area extremely vulnerable. Circulation control in the flight-line and MMS areas consisted of entry control which required Thai nationals to be escorted into the areas. Once in the areas, however, supervision was lax. Thais with no close supervision were observed in close proximity to aircraft. Also, no one maintained any numerical accountability of Thai personnel in the MMS area, and, thus, there was no way of ascertaining whether some had remained hidden within the area at night. In light of the high risk of internal sabotage, the lack of effective circulation control and intensive "close-in" defense created a potentially serious threat to the defense posture.^{97/}

Takhli RTAFB. As mentioned previously, Takhli was closed to USAF operations from 8 April 1971 until early May 1972. Special contingency forces from within Thailand and, later, from other PACAF bases provided initial defense support for the newly-deployed F-4 wing and the KC-135 squadron. On 14 May, SPECS units from other bases were deployed to Takhli. By 30 June 1972, there were three permanently-assigned SPs, 340 SPs were there in a TDY status, and the base had 22 sentry dogs. There were no TSG forces at Takhli.

The RTAF had a 1000-man infantry unit in training at the base, and they provided the only perimeter security for the base. The TPP could not provide external support due to a lack of transportation equipment.^{98/}

At that time, there was no Joint Base Defense Plan, but the RTAF and USAF had nevertheless decided that RTG forces would be responsible for

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perimeter defense while the USAF would provide only "middle" and "close-in" site defense in the immediate vicinity of the USAF aircraft parking area. USAF also defended a portion of the joint USAF/RTAF MMS area and provided two sentry dog teams for the POL dump. Both the MMS and POL areas were outside the USAF defensive perimeter.^{99/}

There was little close coordination and planning between the RTAF and the SPECS forces. Also, no Base Defense Security Center had been established.^{100/}

The SPECS unit operated under two severe limitations. First, most of their personnel were SPs who had operated under AFM 206-1 and AFM 207-1 which were the references for resource defense in a non-SEAsia environment. These personnel were not familiar with PACAFM 207-25 tactics and concepts which were used in Thailand, and because of the newness of the program, few SPECS personnel had received any training for their role under PACAFM 207-25.^{101/} Secondly, equipment and physical defenses were lacking. These problems will be examined in Chapter III.

Ubon RTAFB. The danger to Ubon was best illustrated by the three attacks between 1969 and 1972, as well as its proximity to the Laotian border and CT activities in the area.

There were 363 SPs and 507 TSGs assigned to the 8th SPS on 31 May 1972. These included 35 SPs TDY from Clark AFB, assigned as a result of the deployment.^{102/}

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RTG cooperation in the Ubon area was mainly in intelligence gathering. There was no RTAF infantry, and few other RTG forces were available in the event of an attack, although the TPP did provide two regular three-man jeep patrols in the 16km area around the base perimeter. An unarmed USAF security policeman was allowed to accompany each of the "Liaison Patrols" for coordination and communication with the base CSC. These patrols facilitated RTG response to unexplained activity outside the perimeter. On the other hand, during the 4 June 1972 attack, it took more than an hour for the RTA "alert" forces to respond. The RTAF and RTA did not man the joint BDSC except during alert conditions, although they had cooperated in highly successful joint exercises. Additionally, the BPP frequently patrolled villages within the 16km circle, as did Special Actions Forces of the TPP. Local RTG commanders were anxious to assist in base defense, but they lacked the equipment and communication capabilities essential for a high level of effectiveness. 103/

Infrequent daytime use of the HH-43 fire-fighting helicopter stemmed from the SP approach, since the rescue unit had indicated a willingness to conduct regular night missions. The HH-43 was used for illumination the night of the 4 June attack.

In mid-1972, the Chief of Security Police at Ubon RTAFB indicated that the single greatest problem facing him as a defense planner was the gap between supervisory personnel and the SPs on post. This, he felt, was due to a lack of sufficient professional training which resulted in

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senior NCOs avoiding close supervision of their subordinates. He sought to remedy this problem by subdividing each main section of the base and assigning SP/TSG forces to a particular sub-section. This enabled each supervisor to make frequent post checks and maintain close contact with each man, thereby achieving better discipline, morale, and defense alertness.

To provide the needed "professionalism," frequent training exercises were held and job specialization was emphasized to a much greater degree than in normal SP squadrons. One such "specialty" was the Standboard, manned permanently by a senior NCO. This mission element was responsible for conducting exercises and standardizing the defense responses to given situations.^{104/} This emphasis on professionalism and close supervisory control was justified by the response this force showed in the 4 June attack.

The smallness of Ubon RTAFB made employment of the "three rings of defense" very difficult. In one sector, the AC-130 aircraft were but 200 meters from the fence. POL was only lightly defended by posted sentries. Both the on-base MMS and the MMS area located six miles off-base were defended in-depth and a sign-in/sign-out procedure maintained accountability of Thai nationals inside.

Circulation control on the flight line was provided by the usual entry controllers and random posts, including several built into strategic positions in the top of the aircraft revetments. A major weakness existed

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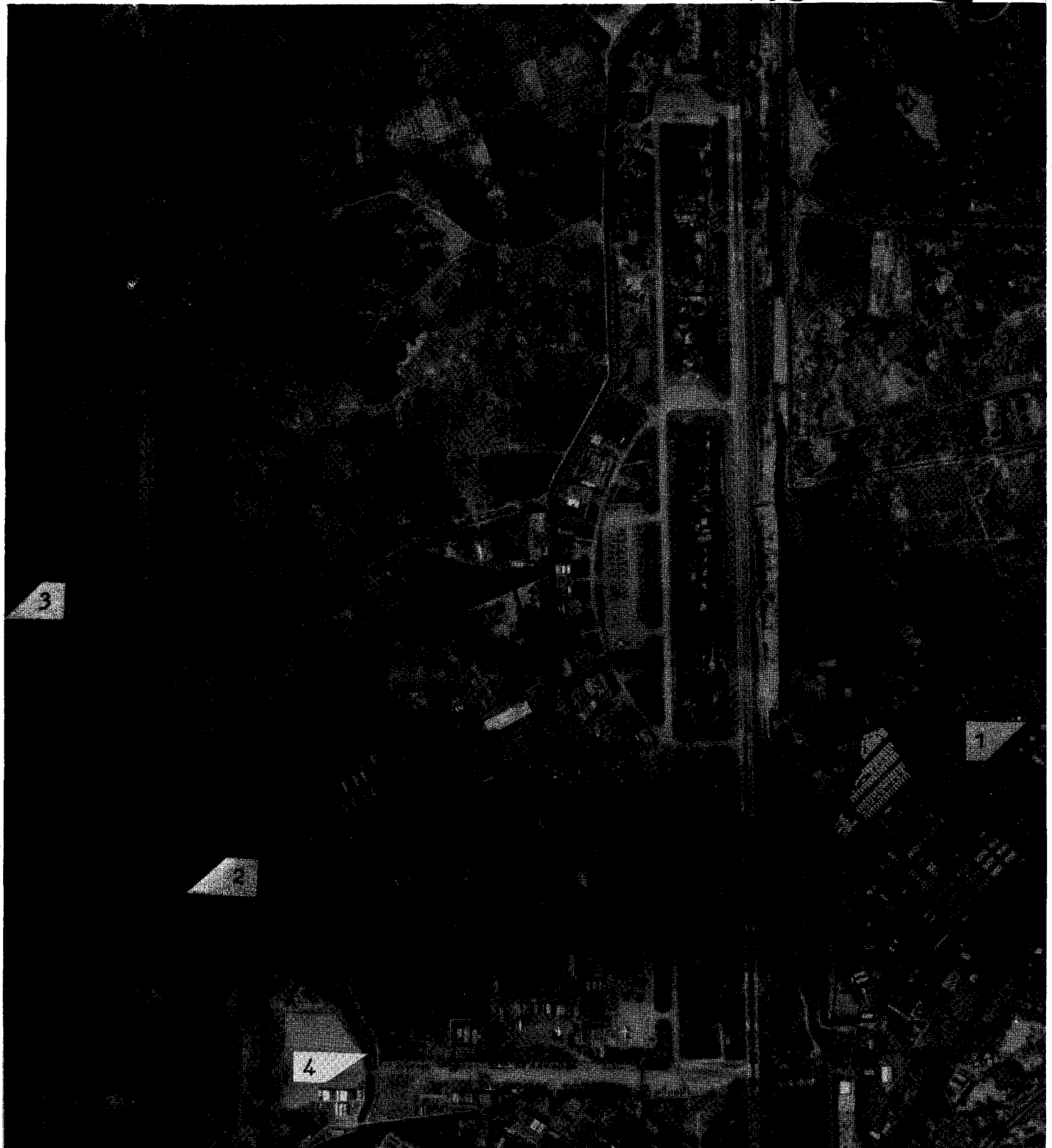
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during the deployment period in that several of the "close-in" defensive positions were manned by inexperienced augmentees with one to three days of training. This augmentation occurred during the "Yellow" security alert condition which followed the 4 June attack.^{105/}

Udorn RTAFB. In many respects, Udorn in 1968 and in 1972 was the base most vulnerable to attack. It contained large numbers of F-4 "targets," was in an area with a high concentration of CT, and had the worst geographic constraints of any base. (See Chapter III.) Furthermore, the serious lack of local RTG cooperation or support in the base defense mission jeopardized the defense posture. In October 1971, the Deputy Commander, 7/13AF, in a letter to the Commander, 432TRW, cited the base defense as "inadequate."^{106/}
This assessment was particularly grave in light of intelligence estimates:^{107/}

A representative of another United States Government Organization has furnished this Headquarters 7/13AF with a report alleging enemy (NVA) plans to attack Udorn RTAFB in the near future. . . . This report states the group will enter Thailand armed with heavy weapons such as mortars, B-40 rockets/rocket propelled grenades and other kinds of explosive ordnance.

Serious efforts at securing local RTG cooperation were continued and, in June 1972, the RTA Commander, Major General Chau, reissued a base defense plan and promised to hold exercises "in the future." Despite the fact that the RTAF had expressed a willingness to conduct regular off-base patrols within 5km around the perimeter, the new plan still prohibited RTAF troop deployment in support of base defense without the prior approval of the RTA commander in person.^{108/}



UDRON RTAFB

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. POL area | 3. Off-Base MMS Area #2, 1 mile |
| 2. Off-Base MMS area #1 | 4. Air America Operation |

FIGURE 9

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In January 1972, the RTA failed to provide external defense despite the fact that intelligence estimates indicated a strong possibility of enemy action.^{109/} The only reason ever offered for this lack of cooperation by local RTG authorities was that they needed POL support for their transportation. Thirteenth Air Force promptly authorized this support, but there was no increased cooperation.^{110/} When Ubon was attacked on 4 June, Udorn RTAFB entered a Red Alert Security Condition and urgently requested RTA support under the May 1972 joint-defense plan. None was forthcoming, and this prompted USA advisors to comment: "Advisors here feel that the quick reaction capacity committed to the RTAF base defense in the plan existed only on paper and did not, in effect, exist."^{111/}

Despite the apparent willingness of RTAF forces to assist in internal security of vital resources, USAF security personnel chose not to utilize the available infantry force in any direct defense role. The reason for this was the inadequate RTAF training and their lack of familiarity with the USAF tactics and positions.^{112/}

At Udorn, manning in mid-1972 stood at 297 USAF SPs and 427 TSGs. An additional 25 SPs were sent TDY from Clark AFB during the deployment.

As at Ubon, the Udorn POL area was inadequately defended. It was contiguous to civilian housing and to a major highway. This "indefensible" situation was recognized by base authorities.^{113/}

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had the desirable effect of catalyzing action aimed at the development of an effective defense concept tailored to the unique problems at U-Tapao RTNAF.

U-Tapao RTNAF was the largest USAF facility in Thailand, both geographically and operationally. As such, in June 1972, it had the largest security force: 450 SPs, including 46 SPs TDY from Clark AB sent during the deployment; 537 TSGs; and 49 sentry/patrol dogs.

RTG cooperation in base defense, both during the January attack and continuing through June, remained excellent. Royal Thai Navy Marines (RTNM) in 20-man units conducted regular, vigorous 24-hour patrols outside the base perimeter. The RTN conducted evening patrol-boat sweeps on the sea side of the perimeter. Thai Provincial Police also cooperated and patrolled the exterior area during increased security alert conditions. USAF and RTN personnel manned the BDSC 24 hours a day. Even though U-Tapao did not have a formal Joint Base Defense Plan by mid-1972, RTG emergency-response capability was considered significantly above average for Thai bases.^{117/} Despite all these efforts, however, the actual net effect was difficult to assess as indicated in a message from the CSP in July 1972:^{118/}

The external defense provided by the RTG and Provincial Police forces is adequate; however, their true capability and effectiveness is seriously limited. The Thai units . . . are highly motivated, adequately trained and willing to help . . . however, their combat capability is limited by adverse manning, outdated weapons, lack of communications equipment, limited vehicle fleet, and inadequate fuel allocation for their vehicles.

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sufficient quantities of vehicles, such as the armored personnel carriers (APC/113 and APC/706) and other rough terrain vehicles, made them the number one priority need of almost all bases.^{129/}

In addition to the foregoing, mines were another "response" device. The ROE prohibited "Claymore" mines in Thailand,^{130/} but in 1970 U.S. Embassy permission was given for limited use of A/E 25P-1 "pop-up" mines at all bases except Korat RTAFB and Don Muang Airfield, Bangkok.^{131/} These command-detonated mines were not in use as of June 1972, but 400 were programmed as part of the defenses of U-Tapao RTNAF, the Thai test base, for late 1972.^{132/}

Response capability to a stand-off RAM attack was extremely limited. The ROE prohibited employment of USAF firepower or aircraft in any suppression role.^{133/} Only close coordination with RTG units provided any form of active defense. However, most bases did not have the capability to direct RTG units to a suspected launch site. Several bases possessed mechanical triangulation devices known as "azimuth boards" that enabled a fairly accurate plot of RAM element sources if two observers located the launch site and used the plotting device correctly. Defense personnel, however, admitted that use of the board was not practical and field exercises emphasizing its use were not conducted. Further, except for Nakhon Phanom's HH-53 helicopter exercises, no serious practice of close coordination with external RTG forces targeted to a simulated RAM site was undertaken. Failure to utilize these potentially effective RAM countermeasures was a result of the perceived "low" threat.^{134/}

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perimeters, ^{139/} was scheduled for installation at U-Tapao RTNAF in late 1971. In November, PACAF directed that the tape be held for possible diversion to vulnerable Vietnam bases. ^{140/} Four days after the January 1972 attack, 13AF directed that the tape still at U-Tapao RTNAF be employed in that base's defense. ^{141/} Thirteenth Air Force further indicated that the tape sent to Vietnam would either be replaced or redirected back to U-Tapao. ^{142/}

Construction projects, such as fence barriers, defensive bunkers, and observation towers, frequently had to await the completion of higher-priority civil engineering work orders. The response to this difficulty often was an enormous SP self-help effort. Probably well over 50 percent of all defensive structures in Thailand were constructed solely by security police personnel. Higher headquarters, while commending such vigorous efforts, cautioned the field not to rely exclusively on self-help but to utilize regular Air Force supply and civil engineering channels whenever possible. ^{143/}

The U.S. Embassy's ROE also provided several limitations on physical defenses. The original 1968 ROE prohibited the use of flareships. This was changed in 1969, and flare drops and the use of 81mm mortars were approved for illumination as long as the "trash" didn't impact outside the base. Soil sterilization and herbicide use was also approved in 1969, but these were subject to extensive coordination with local RTG authorities and final permission from the Embassy. They could only be used on areas within the perimeter and under no circumstances could the vegetation control agents be used to clear areas of observation to fire off-base. ^{144/} This lengthy

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process, and the inability to go beyond the fences, significantly limited the use of those agents at many bases. ^{145/}

The 1969 ROE required advance approval of the Ambassador for all "new weapons" introduced into Thailand. ^{146/} This rule was used to limit the previously-discussed, command-detonated pop-up mines. The Embassy limited their installation to the launcher tubes. The actual mines and detonation circuitry could not be installed until a "Yellow" (or higher) Security Alert Condition was in effect. This stricture led CINCPACAF to cancel the planned use of such mines when several efforts to secure fewer limitations from the Embassy proved unsuccessful. ^{147/} Finally, in May 1972, PACAF permission was obtained to undertake a limited test of the mines at U-Tapao, subject to the ROE restrictions. CINCPACAF then requested that Headquarters USAF seek greater freedom in their use and directed that no further bases would be armed until the ROE were modified. ^{148/}

Base Analysis

Korat RTAFB. Vegetation control was a serious problem at this base in 1972, especially in the critical RTAF area near the end of the runway. The dense growth offered opportunity for concealment in the area contiguous to the unrevetted KC-135 parking ramp. Further, vegetation was thick in many sectors of the concertina wire on the perimeter. The base had received Embassy permission to use herbicides and had just begun that program in June.