

Merry-Go-Round

SFChronicle

APR 7 1972

Contingency Plans To A-Blast Vietnam



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IF THE Communist offensive should threaten the orderly withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam, President Nixon is prepared to use nuclear weapons against the attackers.

We reported on March 1, 1971, that contingency plans had been drafted for nuclear warfare in Indochina. Competent sources stressed that nuclear weapons would be used only as a last resort if the President concluded there were no other way to save our boys.

We can now report that the contingency plans have been constantly revised and updated. Like pre-written newspaper obituaries, they are ready in case the dwindling U.S. forces should be pushed into a Dunkirk-like corner.

The secret plans call for using "nukes" of different magnitude, depending on the targets. "An air blast or a ground blast" might be used, say our sources. This would be determined by how much we wanted to limit the destruction.

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OUR KEY SOURCES, for their own protection, have asked us to withhold their identities. But a former sergeant, who worked on the contingency plans, has agreed to let us name him.

He is James Walkley, a former Air Force sergeant, who used to work on target planning at Hickam Field in Hawaii. His specialty was Laos.

The nuclear targeting, he told us, is done in "a special little room. You have to have an SI (Special Intelligence) clearance to get inside."

"I worked with the people, so I knew what they were doing?" Walkley said. "With a nuke, you'd have to drop a certain type on a certain type of target."

The plans were constantly worked over, he said, although it sometimes seemed to him that the Air Force merely "wanted to keep the guys busy."

Walkley said he had provided target information to the nuclear experts, although his main job was targeting conventional bombing.

Footnote: The former sergeant was kicked out of his top-secret job in 1970 after he became distressed with his target-planning role and began to work against the Vietnam War. He was court-martialed but acquitted, and then given an honorable discharge.

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HUMPHREY'S WOMEN — Senator Hubert Humphrey has instructed his campaign staff to "include more and more women in our organizational structure and in our plans." In a confidential memo, he declared "I will condone no tokenism. In other words, we are not going to have just one woman for display in a top position, or one black or one youth. I believe in the involvement of people on the basis of their ability. And since women have been so selectively excluded not only in government but in industry and academic life, it will be necessary to place extra emphasis upon the appointment and selection of women. The same applies to racial minorities."