

U.S. to Expand Defoliation in South Vietnam

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Associated Press

The Air Force is preparing to dump 10 million gallons of vegetation-and crop-killing poison over South Vietnam in the year beginning this July, officials say.

The move represents a broadening of the chemical warfare effort to strip jungle cover from and deny food to throughout the South.

And it may result in a shortage of lawn and garden weed-killers used by American homeowners. Chemical produc-

ers last year were reported strapped just to keep up with defense orders.

Air Force officials told Congress last week the chemicals required for Vietnam operations in fiscal 1969 will cost \$70.8 million, an increase of \$24.9 over the fiscal 1968 figure.

In 1967 the Air Force bought \$38.8 million in defoliants and herbicides to spray over enemy-held or enemy-used territory in South Vietnam.

Defense Department statistics give this breakdown of

acres treated with defoliants and, in parentheses, acres treated with crop-killing chemicals:

1962 — 17,119 (717); 1963 —

34,517 (297); 1964—53,873 (10,136); 1965—94,726 (49,637); 1966—775,894 (112,678); 1967—January through September only, 843,606 (121,400).

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