

PROCESSING NOTE

NSAM 325 was not originally included in the National Security File, National Security Action Memorandums File. On July 21, 1999, a copy of NSAM 325, along with a supporting memo, was filed in this file. The original documents are filed in the National Security File, Memos to the President, Walt Rostow, Volume 9, Box 3.

Regina Greenwell
Senior Archivist

11 87

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

NLJ 96-300

By vis, NARA Date 4-8-97

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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March 17, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Carl Rowan's report to you of his mission (Tab 2) is a good document and it is possible that you will want to read it all the way through. But here is a summary:

1. We need unified control and direction of psychological warfare under USIA.
2. We need a substantially increased effort which can be supported largely by other agencies, but will need additional money within USIA.
3. There will be a difficult and continuing problem of getting the Vietnamese to do their minimum necessary part of the job.

Within this general framework Rowan makes a number of sensible administrative recommendations and proposes increased personnel and equipment for propaganda in the field.

He also asks for:

a high priority on loud-speaker-equipped aircraft and helicopters;

an increased administrative role for his people in the field (there is doubt in other departments about his particular solution, but none about the need to improve matters);

increased broadcasting, both radio and television;

increased training of Vietnamese broadcasters;

increased GVN propaganda abroad;

a greatly improved program to encourage and use defectors from the Viet Cong;

increased Pentagon efforts in training psychological warfare officers;

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- 2 -

and a start on a new Embassy building to prove that we are in Saigon to stay (this is really not a USIA matter, but Taylor agrees with Rowan).

Rowan is going to send you a separate memorandum reporting on the stiffness of existing relations between the United States and Vietnamese Governments at the top level. This is a problem which I think you already recognize.

I have checked with State and Defense and I find general support for Rowan's approach and a readiness to encourage USIA in going forward. Kermit Gordon agrees that these things will need more money, but he is not yet prepared to accept Rowan's suggestion of a FY-66 supplemental, since he thinks you may wish to have Rowan find the money elsewhere in his own budget. (That of course always dampens a man's enthusiasm.)

I have drafted a memorandum from you to Rowan at Tab 1 which gives him a general order to get cracking on his program, while reserving the necessary rights and interests of yourself and others. In particular, I have reserved the question of control of the program for Viet Cong defectors because this extremely important and neglected matter may well be too big to go under Zorthian, good as he is.

This is a first step in response to your general instruction at luncheon yesterday. It is designed to be consistent with additional recommendations that will come next week, and I think you may not want to lose seven days in capitalizing on Rowan's good report and his readiness to act.

McG. B.

McG. B.

Memo to Rowan approved and signed _____

Memo not approved and not signed _____

Speak to me _____

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876

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 325

TO: THE DIRECTOR, U. S. INFORMATION AGENCY

1. I have reviewed your memorandum of March 16 on the informational and psychological warfare programs in South Vietnam. With the exception noted in paragraph 5, I hereby give my general approval to the rapid and effective execution of the improvements you propose. This approval is subject to review and concurrence by Ambassador Taylor. I am sending the Ambassador a private message to indicate my own interest in the strongest possible information and psychological warfare program, but I shall also inform him that I do not wish to override his judgment on the effectiveness of particular programs and particular patterns of administration.

2. By copy of this memorandum I request the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Administrator of the Agency for International Development to give all possible support to an intensified information and psychological warfare program along the lines developed in your report.

3. By copy of this memorandum I request the Director of the Bureau of the Budget to review with you and as necessary with other agencies the financial implications of such an intensified program and to make his recommendation to me as to the best way of meeting any additional costs.

4. Meanwhile, you are directed to proceed with all necessary actions on the firm understanding that it is my fixed policy that no worthwhile undertaking shall be inhibited or delayed in any way by financial restrictions. We can and will find the resources we need for all good programs in Vietnam.

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

NLJ 96-300

By us, NARA Date 5-5-98

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- 2 -

5. This memorandum does not cover the problem of Viet Cong defectors discussed in paragraphs 11 and 13 of your memorandum. I agree that this problem is of high importance, but I do not at present wish to make a judgment on the best arrangements for U. S. action to deal with it.

Copies to:

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Administrator of the Agency for International
Development
The Director of the Bureau of the Budget