

WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#38a notes	Meeting with Congressional Leaders and Policy Advisers 10 pp. Secret [sanitized per NLJ/CBS 46] <i>sanitized NLJ 92-142</i> <i>sanitized per NLJ 83-13, 8-2-88 10-5-99</i>	1/31/68	A
#38b memcon	Conversation with General Eisenhower 3 pp. Secret <i>open 3/4/02 NLJ/RAC 99-239</i> [sanitized per NLJ 85-339]	1/29/68	A
#38c memo	CM-2948-68 3 pp. secret Wheeler to Pres. <i>sanitized 5-5-89 NLJ 87-210</i> <i>same as Washington 12-18-88 NLJ/RAC 99-240</i>	1/30/68	A
#38d cable	Saigon 17179 re Senator Kennedy's Speech 17 pp. Secret <i>open 8-18-92 NLJ 92-145</i>	1/28/68	A

FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings, Box 2

RESTRICTION CODES

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37

PUEBLO 13

January 31

1968

8:40 a.m.

Breakfast with Congressional Leaders
and Foreign Advisors

SERVICE SET

XERO;

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 31, 1968

8:45 p. m.

FOR THE PRESIDENT

Tom

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your meeting on January 31, 1968 with Congressional leaders, held in the Mansion.

Those who attended were:

Secretary McNamara	Senator Carl Hayden
Secretary Rusk	Senator Margaret Chase Smith
General Earle Wheeler	Congressman Rivers
General Maxwell Taylor	Congressman Bow
CIA Director Helms	Congressman Bates
Mr. Clark Clifford	Congressman Mahon
Walt Rostow	
George Christian	
Tom Johnson	
Senator Stennis	
Senator Milton Young	

The meeting began at 8:40 a. m. The meeting ended at: 10:15 a. m.

Attachment.

FILED IN 10-25-82
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING

by DCit 10-25-82

VICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

Meeting began: 8:10 a.m.
Meeting ended: 10:15 a.m.

38a

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S
BREAKFAST MEETING
WITH
CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS
AND
POLICY ADVISORS

January 31, 1968
In the Mansion

SANITIZED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6
NLJ 92-142
By ck, NARA Date 9-16-99

The President: I appreciate your coming here. I hope Senator Russell can be out of the hospital as quickly as possible.

Our people have talked with General Eisenhower. In addition, we have talked with Senator Russell, McGeorge Bundy, George Ball, Henry Cabot Lodge and General Taylor. I have discussed this matter with my senior foreign policy advisors and with many of the men I have mentioned who are outside of government. I intend to ask General Ridgeway to come in to discuss this with me.

I want to review the problems of the Nation with you. There is not a war spirit in the country, but we do have more sympathizers and "agents of the enemy" in this country working against us.

I have always felt that man's judgment is no better than his information. We have spent a great deal of time on this situation. I have received reports from 90 ambassadors. I asked Clark Clifford, George Ball, Henry Cabot Lodge, and General Taylor to come in Sunday and go over this. We are calling on men like Mark Clark and Admiral McDonald to look at it. We have talked to Senator Smith, Senator Stennis and Senator Russell.

A desperate attack is being launched against us in Vietnam. At the same time the number of incidents has changed from 57 to more than 570 during the past year in and around the DMZ in Korea. This Pueblo seizure was well planned.

The JCS reviewed the military plans and have told me they have done everything we can for Westmoreland. Everything he has requested we have granted. All of them believe he is prepared to handle the situation in Vietnam.

General Wheeler: I will read to you excerpts received at 4:18 this morning from General Westmoreland.

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In it he reports on the country's wide attacks throughout South Vietnam. There were heavy attacks in Saigon. The DMZ and Khesanh are quiet.

We have inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy. At Kontun 300 enemy were killed.

We estimate the enemy has lost 3,000 men killed in action in the last two days. This compares with about 300 allied losses, including 100 U.S. We know they are prepared for a major offensive at Khesanh.

The President: We still face a big challenge at Khesanh. At home many people want to destroy confidence in your leaders and in the South Vietnamese government. I ask you to measure your statements before you make them. The greatest source of Communist propaganda statements is our own statements.

We are going to stand up out there. We are not about to return to the enclave theories.

President Eisenhower said, what I want most for the President is for him to win the war.

(A copy of the telephone conversation with General Eisenhower is attached as Appendix A.)

The enemy has about 40,000 men around Khesanh. You won't hear much in the press about how bad the enemy's bombing in Saigon was last night. You won't hear many speeches about the North Korean's attempt to cut off President Park's head and to kill the American Ambassador. All we hear about is how bad our bombing is.

We see both of these actions in Vietnam and in Korea as a coordinated challenge.

General Wheeler: The key times on this Pueblo incident are as follows:

8 January 1968

Pueblo sent to station off North Korea.

Objective: To collect communications and electronics intelligence.

22 January, 1968

6:15 a.m. Pueblo cites two North Korean ships, one passing within 30 yards. (This report was filed three hours later.)

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~~SECRET~~
SECRET

23 January, 1968

12 noon Pueblo encountered North Korean patrol craft. Received signal "heave to or I will open fire." Pueblo replied, I am in international waters. (This information was not radioed until 52 minutes later, at 12:52.)

12:10 pm North Korea's ship to shore radio read, "Approaching 300 ton American vessel which is used for radio operations and is not armed."

North Korean craft reported its position as 18 miles from coast. Pueblo had reported its position as 17 miles from coast.

1 p. m. Pueblo reported that North Korean sub chaser had been joined by three other craft. Two MIGs circling. Sub chaser backs toward Pueblo with fender rigged and armed boarding party on bow. Pueblo turned away with intention to depart area.

1:05 pm North Korean sub chaser reported it was going to board the Pueblo, silence her communications and tow the ship to Wonsan.

1:20 pm Sub chaser ordered PT boats out of the way because she was going to fire on U. S. vessel.

1:45 pm Pueblo reported we are being boarded, request help.

2:10 pm Pueblo reported have been requested to follow into Wonsan. Have three wounded and one man with leg blown off. How about some help? Destroying all key equipment.

2:32 pm Have been directed to come to all stop. Destruction incomplete. Several publications will be compromised

You should keep in mind that the weather was bad. There was overcast and snow flurries. Sun-set comes at 5:09. Twilight ends at 5:34. In addition there is a MIG base at Wonsan with between 65 and 75 MIGS.

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There were eight MIGs overhead although the Pueblo only saw two.

Why was the Pueblo on this mission?

To get necessary intelligence concerning the activities of armed forces which have been increasingly aggressive over the past year.

Why was the Pueblo not escorted?

It was on the high seas. If we apply the principle of escorting vessels in international waters, the scale of our naval and air forces would have to be greatly expanded; intelligence missions would become much more provocative; the chances of incidents would increase; and the minimum principles of international law and order would be undermined.

Why did Captain Bucher delay in asking for assistance?

He thought he was being harassed, not seized. The Pueblo sister ship, the S. S. Banner, was harassed seven times over the last year. In the past four years, there were more than a hundred such harassing incidents.

Why did the naval base at Yokohama not respond to the first message from the Pueblo?

It believed that message reflected harassment, not seizure.

Why did the 5th Air Force not respond in the period between its notification that the Pueblo was in danger and the arrival of the Pueblo in Wonsan port?

The commander of the 5th Air Force made the judgment that air operations would be ineffective or imprudent. Poor weather, poor late afternoon visibility, and the presence of substantial numbers of hostile aircraft made it, in the air commander's judgment, unlikely that his aircraft could do anything useful for the Pueblo and its crew: in fact, the outcome might have been an ineffective operation against the PT boats in which U. S. aircraft and crews would have been lost, the Pueblo and its crew additionally endangered.

Why were only four U. S. aircraft in Korea?

We have greater flexibility for the whole Pacific area if we do not tie down our aircraft in Korea itself, but keep them in Japan and Okinawa for swift deployment. As the movements of aircraft after the Pueblo attack indicate, they can be moved into Korea in a matter of hours.

The President: Some people are trying to convince the South Koreans that they are over committed, just as some people have tried to make us believe we are over committed.

We may have to ask you for \$100 million or so to beef up military assistance to South Korea. South Korea has a good ground force but not much air force.

We may want to extend enlistments. We are considering these moves.

Secretary McNamara: Summarizing the political actions, we have found no military means to obtain the release of the crew. We are taking actions to move North Korea to release them by political means.

Some of the military actions we are considering are as follows:

1. Move the Banner to the same location.
2. Sending salvage teams to the site of capture.
3. Mining Wonsan harbor. This could be done with a small number of sorties.
4. Seizing one of their vessels. They don't have much.
5. Making retaliatory strikes against valuable targets. We have reconnaissance information.
6. Raids across the DMZ (RoK and U.S. troops.)
7. Quarantine and naval blockade of the entire coast, east and west. This would confront us with the Soviet Union and North Korean patrol boats.

Congressman Rivers: There was no guarantee you would have used planes if they would have been there, was there?

The President: I don't know that captain. I don't know what he would have done. In retrospect we can look back and say we should have done something or not have done something.

The President then read a memo from General Wheeler on why it was best that the aircraft not be used. This memo is attached as Appendix B.

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The President emphasized the conclusion: "Therefore, I conclude that aircraft would have been of little use in aiding the Pueblo. Their use could have been more harmful than helpful. Signed, General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

Congressman Rivers: Wouldn't it have been wise to engage this crowd at this time?

General Wheeler: The enemy had many more MIGs than we.

If the senior officers had the means and the time I am sure they would have made an attempt.

Secretary Rusk: If we had the aircraft and if the skipper had sounded the alert and if we would have put the aircraft in before the MIGs got there, we might have got them back.

Clark Clifford: One of the questions being asked was why the ship was there at all. Some don't think that a democracy should "spy".

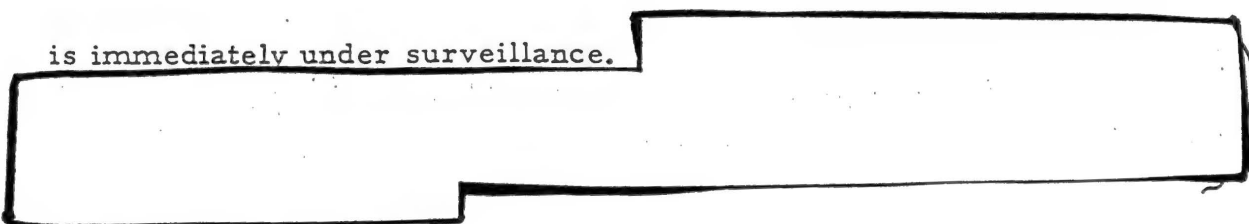
The reason for the ship was because it had to be there. It would be a very serious lack of responsibility if the President did not know what the other nations are doing. We must know what the Soviets are doing with their missiles. We need to know if there was any sort of build-up above the DMZ in Korea. In 1966 there was something like 50 incidents along the DMZ. In 1967 there were more than 500. This was a 10 times increase. We cannot make decisions in the dark. We must know what is going on.

We cannot penetrate spies into North Korea when the country is under the control of a totalitarian government.

3.4(b)(1)

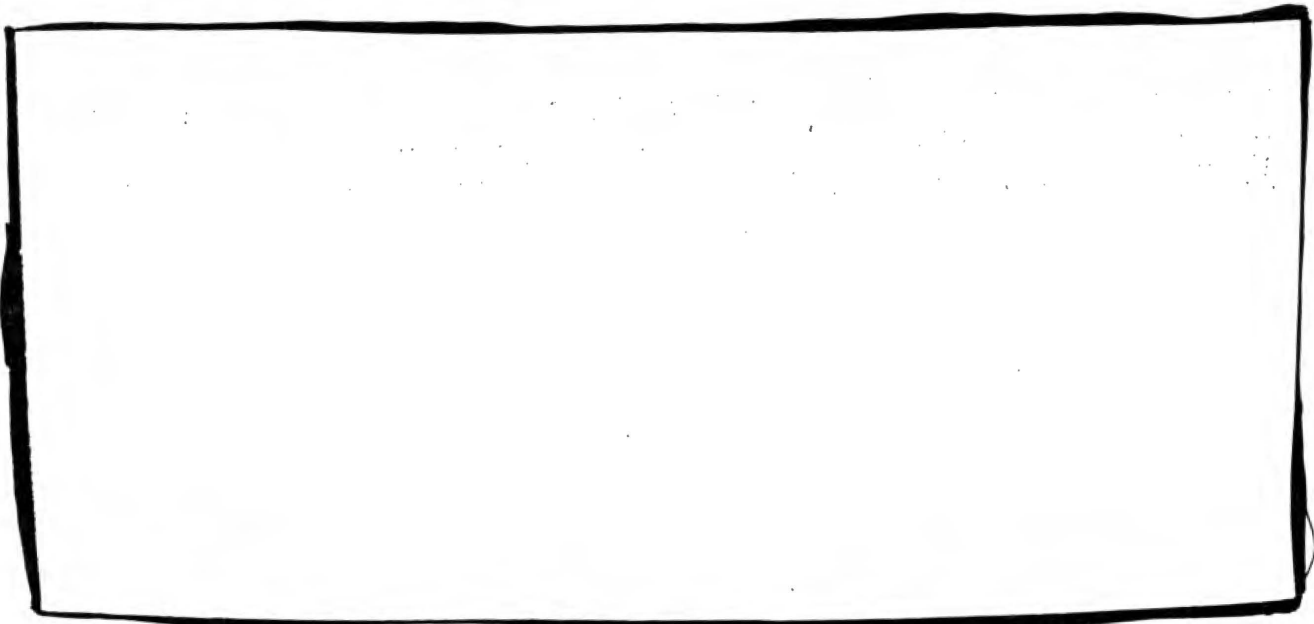
Clark Clifford: Totalitarian governments are organized with a town leader, a block leader, a precinct leader, and even a house leader. Any new individual

is immediately under surveillance.



3.4(6)

We must know what is going on. In North Korea, it was necessary for us to know if they were about to launch an attack on South Korea. Both the U.S. and the Soviets use these intelligence ships. The Soviets have 18. We have 5. We must continue to use them. The central question is how we can get our men and our ship back. This is our primary objective. Military actions probably will not get the men out alive. In addition North Korea has a mutual assistance pact with both the Soviets and Red China. We need to find the means to get the men back.



3.4(b)(i)

Congressman Rivers: The Soviets have gone so close to Charleston that they get in the way of fishing vessels every time Polaris submarines come in.

Secretary Rusk: You will recall that we picked up a fishing vessel off Alaska. We also drove two war ships off the coast of Puerto Rico.

The President: We believe we were in international waters. Even if there were a chance this ship strayed into territorial waters at one point, they still had no right to seize it.

Secretary Rusk: We are keeping in close touch with the Soviets. They are being urged to press this matter with the North Koreans.

The President: I ask each of you to keep in mind that what you say will always be listened to here. If you have any proposals or any ideas, I am glad to hear them.

Secretary Rusk: In addition to the channel through the Soviets, we have a second channel through the Military Armistice Commission in Panmunjon. The meeting of the Armistice Commission was called the same day to protest the attempt by the North Koreans to assassinate President Park.

Confidentially, we are in contact with the North Koreans. We expect to meet in two days.

The third channel is through the Security Council of the U.N.

The President: We do have some hopes that this will be successful. But we do not know.

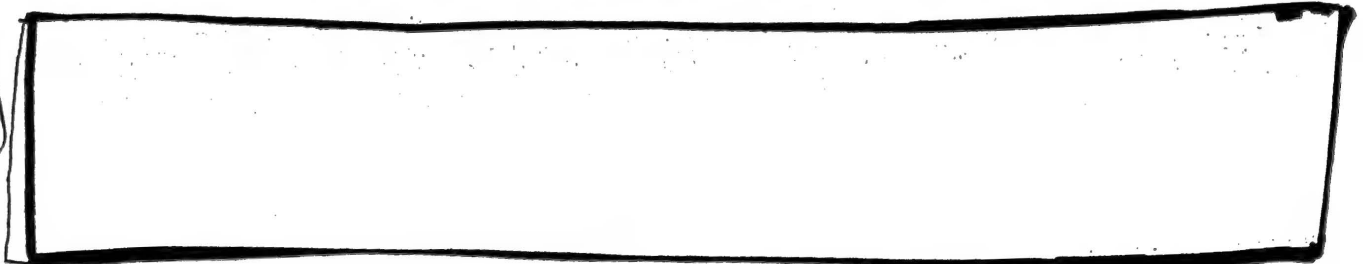
Secretary Rusk: The U.N. has a particular involvement with Korea. I am inclined to think that the U.N. Security Council may dispatch men to North Korea to try to get our ship and men free.

A fourth channel is the diplomatic channel. We have had reactions from 90 countries. We know the Soviets have been contacted by the Japanese and the British. In 1960 there was the shooting down of a RB-47 in the Berian Sea. These two pilots were held for seven months by the Soviets. We cannot wait that long. 83 men are a lot different from two.

If we were to start military action we would get back bodies and not live men. I believe that the chances are 50-50 of us getting the men back by diplomatic means. I do see a little progress.

Congressman Rivers: Where are the men now?

Secretary Rusk: We believe the crew is still in Wonsan. The officers may have been taken to an interrogation center. We are told that one man died.



There is not much doubt that there is a connection between the incursion along the DMZ and the seizure of the Pueblo. The reasons for these actions are to divert attention from the attacks in Vietnam and to keep South Korea from sending more troops to South Vietnam.

There has been no movement of Chinese.

General Wheeler: After going over all the evidence for several days I have nothing really useful to suggest that has not been mentioned.

The mission of the ship was essential. We could not prevent the capture of it under the circumstances.

The time and space factor would not permit it. It is undesirable for these ships to have escorts. If they did, they would not be able to get the information.

We cannot afford a military diversion. We cannot have a split with South Korea. They are our strongest allies.

And we cannot let the Pueblo be a dividing factor with us.

The President then read a cable from Ambassador Bunker which ended with a quote by Thomas Paine beginning, "These are the times that try men's souls."

The text of that cable is attached as Appendix C.

These have been trying times. We have had the incident along the Cambodian border. The B-52 craft with A bombs aboard. There was increased infiltration and the assassination attempt in South Korea. The Pueblo was seized. We are being attacked heavily in Saigon and in South Vietnam. We are going to get our most experienced men and get their advice. We will be talking with you more. Meanwhile the Joint Chiefs will get us any information you need.

I want you to provide leadership. Senator Stennis did an excellent job in speaking on this matter on TV Sunday.

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If somebody launches a tirade against our people I hope you will tell them to be responsible. We may have to extend enlistments. We may have to have 100 million dollars for Korea. We may need further call-ups.

But if you have further ideas, I hope you come and talk to me.

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~~SECRET~~
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

38

29 January 1968

APPENDIX A

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Telephone conversation with General Eisenhower,
27 January 1968

As requested by General Wheeler on 26 January, I talked by telephone with General Eisenhower on the 27th. General Wheeler had asked me to raise with him, at the President's request, several key questions concerning the North Korean seizure of the Pueblo.

The President was concerned over problems that might face him if he were impelled at the end of diplomatic efforts concerning the Pueblo to take some kind of military action. The two key questions would be: What actions could be taken; how should the Congress be associated with these actions (the experience in the Dominican Republic and in Vietnam is pertinent). In presenting these questions to General Eisenhower I stressed that the discussion was entirely confidential and that he was in no sense being put "on the spot".

His initial comments were exploratory and tentative. Later he offered specific suggestions. He first asked if North Korea has much maritime trade. I told him it was limited but that they do a good deal of fishing. He then asked if any thought was given to a quarantine, commenting that this would be about the least provocative of any military action and that, if it did not suffice the Congress would then have to consider stronger action. He thought it was important to act "while the iron is hot" and while the Pueblo affair is fresh in peoples' minds. He said we should be careful not to demand or threaten anything that we can't back up. Next he raised the possibility of bombing the bridges over the Yalu. I pointed out that these lie on the border with Red China, and that this action would tend to be a challenge to the Chinese. I suggested that there might be critical points on the communications routes south of the Yalu. He commented that a key question is whether we would be prepared to use atomic weapons, particularly since these would give assurance of destruction of bridges, for example, and could be utilized in places where no civilian losses would be involved.

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Authority ERUS 64-68, vol 29 #239
By *jc* NARA Date 2-19-02

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General Eisenhower said that if he were sitting in the President's place he would have the staffs consider every possible thing that might be done, not excluding anything out of hand, as a basis for top level consideration and decision. He commented that he doesn't see much danger of a nuclear holocaust arising over this affair. (I had previously mentioned to him the treaties of the USSR and the CHICOMS with the North Koreans.) He thought that the Russians and the Chinese would be guided by their own interests.

After further discussion he said his idea would be to take action generally as follows and generally in the order indicated:

- a. Quarantine
- b. Strengthening of defense arrangements along the DMZ (possibly including some patrolling into North Korea).
- c. Attack of some critical targets along the North Korean main lines of communication
- d. Movement of U.S. Air reinforcements into Korea; action to bring the whole command in South Korea to a feasibly high state of readiness; ground units should be brought up to strength, but without bringing in additional major units.

He did think that the plan to take these actions should be spelled out to the Congressional leadership. It could be pointed out that some of them at least could be initiated on the President's own authority but that, in a matter of this kind it is important to have the Congress associated with the President, and that this is why he is consulting them. The Congressmen should be asked to keep specific details confidential, although the general intentions would of course become known.

Finally, General Eisenhower said that we should do everything possible to press for action on the diplomatic front and in the U. N. Security Council, and should even ask for a special session of the General Assembly if we thought anything useful could be achieved. He would intensify the bombing in Vietnam to a maximum at this time, and let it be known that this step up was related to the North Korean incident.

He concluded by asking me to convey to the President his

~~SECRET~~

personal hope for the President's success in this matter.

b

A. J. GOODPASTER
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army

~~SECRET~~

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

CM-2948-68
30 January 1968

38c

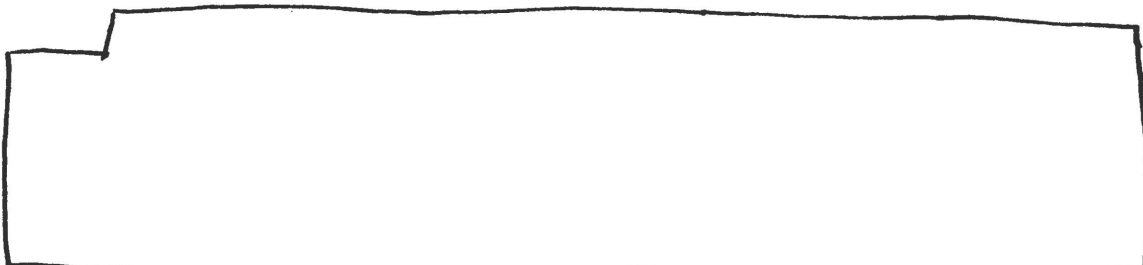
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Aircraft Support to PUEBLO

What aircraft were available to provide help to the PUEBLO, and why was no help provided?

As shown on the attached map there were US aircraft in Japan, at sea aboard the ENTERPRISE, in Okinawa, and in Korea. Incidentally, there were no US combatant naval vessels close enough to have rendered assistance to the PUEBLO.

Aircraft were not sent to help the PUEBLO for the following reasons:



2. The United States aircraft in Japan and Okinawa were not used because the scene of action was at such distance that they could only have responded by staging through Korea. Movement to Korea and arming there would not have permitted them to reach the scene of action in time. Twelve F-105 aircraft were sent to Korea but were not sent to help the PUEBLO because they would have been too late.

3. The situation at the scene of action was unfavorable to employment of aircraft. The weather was poor, 6000 ft. broken, occasional overcast with lower scattered clouds at 3000 ft., with occasional snow showers and visibility 7 miles. MIG aircraft were reported to be above the PUEBLO. The surface action occurred only 25 miles from a major North Korean airfield on which were based 75 MIG aircraft. Lastly, the action occurred

SANITIZED

E.O. 13292, Sec. 3.5

NLJ/RAC 99-240

By isl, NARA, Date 3-8-06

APPENDIX B

~~SECRET~~

well within the North Korean air defense control net, so that their radar coverage and ground control of fighters would have been very effective even at low altitude.

4. Were aircraft to have been used in such a situation, they would be required in numerical strength. Aircraft would be needed to "cap" the MIG base at Wonsan to "pin down" the MIGs. Additional fighter aircraft would be needed to protect the attack aircraft aiding the PUEBLO from MIGs which might be airborne.

5. From the time (1345 Korean time) the PUEBLO requested assistance and while being towed one or more of the Korean boats was always near the PUEBLO and Koreans were aboard the PUEBLO. If friendly aircraft had been sent, and if they could have found the PUEBLO, there is reasonable doubt that they would have been able to drive off the North Korean boats without sinking one or more with serious risk of sinking the PUEBLO in the process.

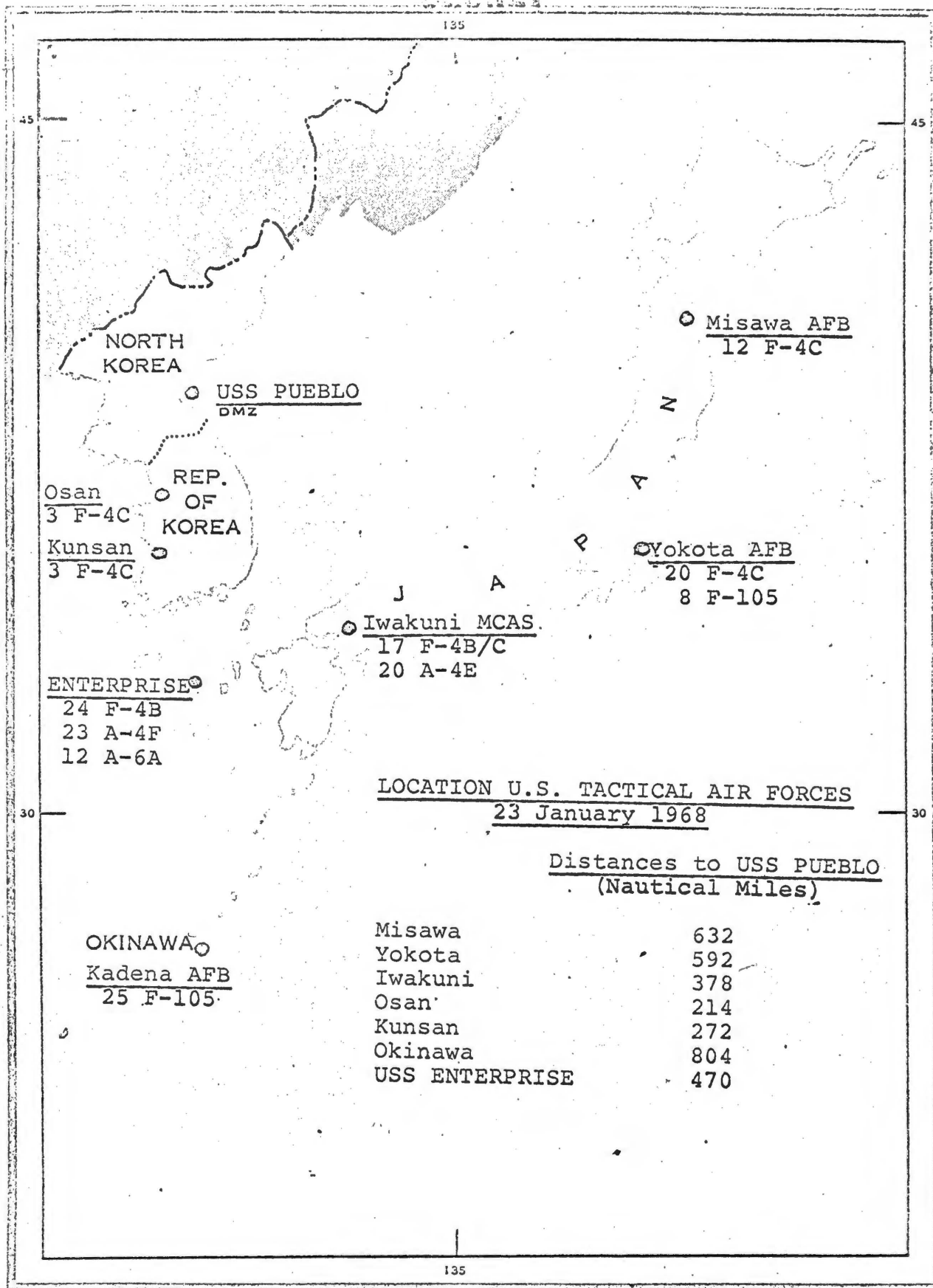
6. It is unlikely the mere presence of aircraft in support of the PUEBLO would have caused the North Korean boats to have freed the PUEBLO, since it must be assumed that the MIG aircraft would have been active in repelling the US aircraft.

Therefore, I conclude that aircraft would have been of little use in aiding the PUEBLO. Their use could have been more harmful than helpful.

Earle G. Wheeler

EARLE G. WHEELER
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment
map



SERVICE SET

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~

OO RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 17179/1 0281415
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1968 JAN 28 AM 9 42

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 1 OF 6 SAIGON 17179

NODIS

SUBJ: SENATOR KENNEDY'S SPEECH

REF : STATE 10597

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12856, Sec. 3.4

NJ 92-145

By JW, NARA, Date 8-12-92

A. GENERAL

1. I DISCUSSED THE KENNEDY SPEECH THIS MORNING WITH SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE U.S. MISSION HERE. WE ARE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT IT IS A MOST UNFORTUNATE STATEMENT, APPARENTLY BASED IN LARGE PART ON INCOMPLETE, BIASED OR FALSE INFORMATION. IT

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 17179/1 ~~SECRET~~
APPEALS HEAVILY TO THE EMOTIONS, AND IS IN NO SENSE A SOBER EVALUATION OF OUR POLICY, OUR TACTICS, AND OUR PROGRESS IN VIET-NAM. IT IGNORES COMPLETELY SOME VERY IMPORTANT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS AND SOME MAJOR FACTS ABOUT THE SITUATION AND THE ENEMY. IT CONTAINS,

REGRETTABLY, INDISCRIMINATE AND IN MY VIEW UNWARRANTED ATTACKS ON THE ELECTED LEADERS OF THIS NATION. THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF FACTUAL ERRORS IN THE SPEECH, THOUGH MANY OF THE IMPORTANT POINTS ARE FLAT ASSERTIONS OF OPINION OR EVEN RUMOR ADVANCED WITH LITTLE OR NO SUPPORTING EVIDENCE AND SELECTED, IT WOULD APPEAR, MAINLY TO FIT AN ALREADY CONCEIVED THEME AND WITHOUT REGARD TO A BALANCED PICTURE OF THE SITUATION.

2. IN THIS MESSAGE I WILL MAKE SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE KENNEDY SPEECH AND ITS PRINCIPAL POINTS WHICH MAY BE HELPFUL IN FRAMING AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO IT. A SECOND MESSAGE, TO FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY, WILL DEAL IN DETAIL WITH SOME OF THE FACTS AND WITH ERRORS OF INTERPRETATION IN THE SPEECH.

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

-2- SAIGON 17179, JANUARY 28 SECTION 1 OF 6

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 17179/1 ~~SECRET~~

3. WITH THE THOUGHT THAT IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A STATEMENT ON THE RECORD FROM THE MISSION, WHICH COULD BE USED INITIALLY IN WASHINGTON AND THEN PUT OUT HERE, WE HAVE PREPARED THE FOLLOWING GENERAL COMMENT: QUOTE THE U.S. MISSION GENUINELY REGRETS SENATOR KENNEDY'S MISCONCEPTIONS AS TO THE REAL SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND THE EFFORTS OF ITS PEOPLE AND ITS GOVERNMENT TO DEFEND THEIR FREEDOM WHILE REBUILDING THEIR NATION. THE SENATOR QUITE NATURALLY SPENT MOST OF HIS LIMITED TIME IN VIETNAM LOOKING INTO THE PROBLEMS WITH WHICH HE WAS MOST CONCERNED, CIVILIAN WAR CASUALTIES AND REFUGEES. THE U.S. MISSION THEREFORE UNFORTUNATELY WAS UNABLE TO CONVEY TO HIM -- IN THE REMAINING TIME HE HAD AVAILABLE -- A ROUNDED PICTURE OF WHAT IS ACTUALLY BEING DONE BY THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, GOVERNMENT, AND ARMED FORCES. HAD THE MISSION BEEN ABLE TO DO SO, IT BELIEVES THE SENATOR WOULD NOT HAVE LEFT OUT OF CONSIDERATION THE MANY CONSTRUCTIVE AND HEARTENING THINGS BEING DONE. END QUOTE

4. IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT AT THE OUTSET THAT SENATOR KENNEDY HAS CITED A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PICTURE OF VIETNAM (AFTER

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 17179/1 ~~SECRET~~

ONLY 10 DAYS IN COUNTRY) THAN THAT AVAILABLE TO THE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE IN THE U.S. MISSION HERE. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS NO BASIS FOR HIS STATEMENT THAT QUOTE LITERALLY 25 PERCENT END QUOTE OF THE PEOPLE ARE REFUGEES, OR THAT ESTIMATE FIRST STATED BY SENATOR KENNEDY HIMSELF BEFORE COMING TO VIETNAM. NOR ARE HIS SWEEPING ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION IN ANY WAY DEMONSTRABLE. HE CLEARLY ACCEPTED A LOT OF HEARSAY ALLEGATIONS FROM THOSE QUARTERS ALWAYS EAGER TO DENIGRATE THE GVN OR THE U.S. EFFORT IN VIETNAM. IN SUM, SENATOR KENNEDY SAW AND HEARD MOSTLY WHAT HE WANTED TO SEE AND HEAR.

5. AS I READ IT, THE SPEECH MAKES TWO MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS: (A) WE SHOULD WITHDRAW TO THE CENTERS OF POPULATION AND GIVE UP OFFENSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST THE ENEMY IN ORDER TO REDUCE CASUALTIES; (B) WE SHOULD TRY TO FORCE THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TO TAKE ENERGETIC ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION AND WASTE BY THREATENING TO WITHDRAW ALTOGETHER IF THEY FAIL TO DO SO. OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS IN THE SPEECH ARE THE REPEATED IDEA

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 17179/1 ~~SECRET~~

THAT THE LEADERS OF THIS NATION ARE HEARTLESS MEN WITH NO

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CONCERN FOR THEIR OWN PEOPLE, CORRUPTION IS UNIVERSAL, AND THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR AND DON'T WANT TO FIGHT THE COMMUNISTS.

6. I THINK IT IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE SPEECH IS BASED ON THE UNSPOKEN ASSUMPTION THAT WE ARE IN VIET-NAM ONLY TO HELP THE VIETNAMESE. THE FACT THAT WE ARE ALSO HERE BECAUSE OUR OWN SECURITY IS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE OUTCOME OF THIS STRUGGLE IS NOT MENTIONED, MUCH LESS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED AS A MAJOR ELEMENT IN THE VIET-NAM PROBLEM. THE ATTITUDE OF OTHER ASIAN NATIONS IS EQUALLY IGNORED. THE FACT THAT THEIR LEADERS CONSIDER OUR ROLE HERE HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO THEIR OWN SECURITY HAS EVIDENTLY NOT ENTERED INTO THE THINKING BEHIND THE SPEECH. THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HAVE REPEATEDLY EXPLAINED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR VIET-NAM POLICY AND OUR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS AND THE SECURITY OF FREE ASIA, BUT THE KENNEDY SPEECH MAKES NO REFERENCE TO THESE STATEMENTS. IT IS AS IF VIETNAM EXISTED ALONE, QUITE OUTSIDE THE WORLD WE LIVE IN, AND I BELIEVE OUR RESPONSE SHOULD DEAL WITH THIS

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VITAL ASPECT OF OUR ROLE AND PURPOSE HERE.

7. THERE SEEMS ALSO TO BE THE UNSPOKEN ASSUMPTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TODAY IS THE SAME GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS IN POWER IN 1965 WHEN THE SENATOR LAST VISITED THIS COUNTRY. NOWHERE IN THE SPEECH DOES IT APPEAR THAT ANY CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO THE FACT THAT THIS NEWLY ELECTED, CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN IN POWER LESS THAN THREE MONTHS, THAT IT IS JUST BEGINNING TO CREATE AND TEST OUT THE NEW INSTITUTIONS PROVIDED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION, AND THAT BOTH THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS HAVE GIVEN HIGH PRIORITY TO DEALING WITH THE VERY PROBLEMS THE SENATOR STRESSES: CORRUPTION, MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES, AN IMPROVED AND EXPANDED MILITARY EFFORT, THE REFUGEE PROBLEM, AND MEANS TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE WAR.

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8. ALSO STRIKINGLY ABSENT IS ANY REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT THIS NEW GOVERNMENT IS AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT. THE SPEECH DOES NOT MENTION THAT THE MEN ACCUSED OF BEING QUOTE COLONIALISTS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY END QUOTE AND CHARGED WITH SYSTEMATICALLY LOOTING THEIR OWN PEOPLE WERE A FEW SHORT MONTHS AGO FREELY CHOSEN AS THE LEADERS OF VIETNAM BY THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS IN WHAT IS GENERALLY CONCEDED TO HAVE BEEN A VERY FAIR AND DEMOCRATIC ELECTION. I SHOULD ADD IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THIS BLANKET ATTACK ON THE ENTIRE LEADERSHIP OF THE NATION, WHICH CHARGES THEM WITH BEING UNFEELING AND HEARTLESS MEN CONCERNED ONLY WITH THEIR OWN WELFARE, IS SURE TO RAISE

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A STORM OF INDIGNATION IN THE VIETNAMESE ASSEMBLY, THE PRESS, AND NATIONALIST CIRCLES GENERALLY. NOT ONLY SUPPORTERS OF THE REGIME, BUT MOST SENSITIVE VIETNAMESE - AND THEY ARE A PROUD PEOPLE - ARE GOING TO BE DEEPLY OFFENDED. THERE WILL LIKELY BE UNFORTUNATE EFFECTS ON OUR WORKING RELATIONS WITH MANY PEOPLE AT MANY LEVELS AS A RESULT. THIS IS AN ASPECT OF THE SPEECH WHICH WILL PLEASE NO ONE HERE BUT THE COMMUNISTS.

B. MILITARY

9. AS REGARDS THE FIRST OF THE TWO RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE SPEECH, I.E. THAT WE SHOULD ADOPT A MORE DEFENSIVE MILITARY POSTURE DESIGNED TO PROTECT AND HOLD AREAS OF HEAVY POPULATION RATHER THAN TO SEEK OUT THE ENEMY. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT KENNEDY MEANS BY THIS. IF HE MEANS A STRATEGY THE PURPOSE OF WHICH IS, AMONG OTHERS, TO ASSURE THE ULTIMATE PROTECTION OF THE MAJORITY OF VIETNAMESE FROM THE COMMUNISTS, WE ARE ALREADY DOING THIS. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, HE MEANS

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WITHDRAWING OUR FORCES FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE TO THE CENTERS

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OF POPULATION AND THE CESSATION OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS, THEN I MUST SAY THAT I CAN SCARCELY THINK OF A POLICY BETTER CALCULATED TO JETTISON MOST OF THE GAINS WE HAVE MADE AND TO BRING INCREASED MISERY AND CASUALTIES TO BOTH AMERICANS AND VIETNAMESE. THE COMMUNISTS WOULD AT ONCE CONCLUDE THAT MILITARY VICTORY WAS IN SIGHT AND OUR WHOLE EFFORT TO BRING THEM TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE WOULD HAVE BEEN VIRTUALLY NULLIFIED - IN FACT WE WOULD HAVE AUTOMATICALLY CREATED A SITUATION WHICH COULD HARDLY FAIL TO ASSURE AN ULTIMATE OUTCOME FAVORABLE TO THE COMMUNISTS. FOR THEIR PART, VIETNAMESE NATIONALISTS WOULD IN MANY CASES CONCLUDE THAT WE WERE ABOUT TO REALIZE THEIR WORST FEARS AND TURN THEM OVER TO A COMMUNIST REGIME. THEIR MORALE AND THAT OF THE GVN WOULD BE DANGEROUSLY UNDERMINED, AND THE NEW DEMOCRATIC GVN WOULD BE PLACED IN A POSITION WHERE ITS RIGHT TO CLAIM TO REPRESENT ALL SOUTH VIETNAMESE WOULD BE SERIOUSLY CHALLENGED. IF IT COULD SURVIVE AT ALL UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD BE REMARKABLE. CASUALTIES WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE INCREASED. WITH THE VIET CONG IN A POSITION TO OPERATE MUCH MORE FREELY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, THERE WOULD MOST CERTAINLY

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BE AN UPSWING IN REVENGE KILLINGS OF VILLAGERS FOR PAST ASSOCIATIONS WITH US AND THE GVN. WITHDRAWING TO POPULATED ENCLAVES WOULD GIVE THE COMMUNISTS THEIR FAVORITE SITUATION: A CHOICE OF MANY THINLY DEFENDED TARGETS SUITABLE FOR ALL KINDS OF STRIKES, FROM TERROR MORTARING TO COMPLETE SEIZURE AND DESTRUCTION BY LARGE REGULAR FORCES. MOREOVER, THE FIGHTING WOULD TEND TO MOVE FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE TO THE SUBURBS AND EVEN INTO THE CITY STREETS. CAN ANYONE BELIEVE THAT FIGHTING IN CITIES WILL PRODUCE FEWER INNOCENT CASUALTIES THAN FIGHTING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE?

10 GENERAL WESTMORELAND ALSO HAS SOME VERY FIRM VIEWS ON THIS SUGGESTION AS PUT FORWARD BY KENNEDY AND THEY FOLLOW: SENATOR KENNEDY'S ATTACK ON U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY IN VIETNAM, IS ESSENTIALLY A SUGGESTION THAT THE U.S. ADOPT SOME VERSION OF THE SO-CALLED QUOTE ENCLAVE STRATEGY END QUOTE. IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING HIS RECOMMENDATION THE SENATOR CLAIMS SOME SUPPORT FROM MILITARY LEADERS IN VIETNAM AND IMPLIES THAT SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSIONS ARE CONDUCTED TO PRODUCE A FLOW OF STATISTICS AND THAT THESE STATISTICS ARE IN FACT OUR GOAL IN VIETNAM.

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11. THE SENATOR'S BASIC COMMENT CONCERNING MILITARY STRATEGY IS CONTAINED IN THIS SENTENCE: QUOTE THE ADOPTION OF A MORE DEFENSIVE MILITARY POSTURE, ONE DESIGNED TO PROTECT AND HOLD AREAS OF HEAVY POPULATION RATHER THAN TO SEEK OUT THE ENEMY, HAS, I FOUND, SOME SUPPORT AMONG OUR MILITARY LEADERS IN VIETNAM END QUOTE.

12. THIS PROPOSAL IS SO UNSOUND MILITARILY THAT IT IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE THAT IT WOULD RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM ANY COMPETENT MILITARY MAN WHO IS IN POSSESSION OF THE FACTS. SUCH A STRATEGY WOULD SURRENDER THE MILITARY INITIATIVE TO THE ENEMY--AN ACTION WHICH HAS PROVED FATAL, ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, IN ANY WAR IN RECORDED HISTORY. MOREOVER, SUCH STRATEGY WOULD PRODUCE IN SOUTH VIETNAM THE SAME SITUATION AS NOW EXISTS IN LAOS--A DE FACTO PARTITION WITH VC CONTROL OF A LARGE PORTION OF THE COUNTRY FULLY ACCEPTED. IT WOULD, IN FACT, PRODUCE AN IMMEDIATE STALEMATE, WITH THE ENEMY HAVING THE BEST CHANCE TO BREAK THE STALEMATE.

13. AS TO THE MATTER OF MILITARY SUPPORT OF THE SENATOR'S

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A SAMPLING HAS BEEN TAKEN OF THOSE GENERAL OFFICERS WHO TALKED WITH KENNEDY AND NO DIRECT DISCUSSION OF THIS DEFENSIVE STRATEGY THESIS WAS DISCOVERED. MOST OF THOSE CONTACTED POINTED OUT TO THE SENATOR THAT SECURITY WAS A PREREQUISITE FOR PACIFICATION. SOME ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE NEED TO SEARCH OUT AND DESTROY THE ENEMY IS A BASIC INGREDIENT OF SECURITY. OTHERS SAID THE MATTER DID NOT COME UP AT ALL. THE SENATOR TAPED ALL OF HIS CONVERSATIONS AND IT IS THEREFORE POSSIBLE THAT HE COULD PRODUCE AN OUT OF CONTEXT STATEMENT WHICH MIGHT SEEM TO SUPPORT THE DEFENSIVE STRATEGY CONCEPT.

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14. FINALLY, THE FOLLOWING QUOTE DESERVES COMMENT: "OUR OVER-
RIDING GOAL SHOULD BE TO MAXIMIZE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF
THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND OUR OWN SOLDIERS, RATHER THAN TO
SEARCH OUT THE ENEMY IN HIS TERRORITY AND ON HIS TERMS. TO
PRODUCE A FLOW OF STATISTICS OF ENEMY KILLED, ROADS OPENED,
HAMLETS SECURED IS NOT OUR GOAL IN VIETNAM, AND IT IS NOT
WORTHY OF OUR EFFORT".

15. THE INFERENCE THAT OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO PRODUCE A FLOW OF
STATISTICS IS RIDICULOUS. FURTHER, IT IS NOT THE OBJECTIVE OF
SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS TO PRODUCE A FLOW OF STATISTICS.
THE PURPOSE OF SUCH OPERATIONS IS TO DESTROY THE ENEMY MAIN

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FORCES, BOTH NVA AND VC, WHO OPERATE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY
AND WHO POSE THE CHIEF THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF THE POPULATION
OF SVN AND TO THE INTEGRITY OF THE COUNTRY. IF LEFT UNCHALLENGED,
THESE MAIN FORCES WOULD SOON ACHIEVE COMPLETE SUCCESS IN
CONSOLIDATING ENEMY MILITARY POWER ON SVN TERRITORY.

16. THE CURRENT STRATEGY OF APPLYING MILITARY PRESSURE AGAINST
THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF ENEMY FORCES AND BASE AREAS IS THE ONLY
STRATEGY THAT CAN PRODUCE MILITARY VICTORY. TO WITHDRAW TO THE
HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS WOULD NOT ONLY REMOVE ANY HOPE OF MILITARY
VICTORY, BUT WOULD ALSO WEAKEN OUR POSITION IN NEGOTIATIONS AND
WOULD SURELY PROLONG THE WAR INDEFINITELY.

17. ON THE MATTER OF DESTRUCTION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, WHEN
A WAR IS FOUGHT ON A BATTLEFIELD THAT EMBRACES THE ENTIRE
GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE OF A COUNTRY, INCLUDING THE POPULATED
AREAS, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT DISLOCATION AND DESTRUCTION OF
FIELDS, HOMES, AND INNOCENT CIVILIANS WILL OCCUR. HOWEVER,
ANY ACTION ON OUR PART TO PREVENT THIS WILL BE REMEDIAL ONLY

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TO A LIMITED EXTENT, BECAUSE IT IS THE ENEMY WHO IS DETERMINED

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TO FIGHT THE WAR IN THESE AREAS. FOR OUR PART, WE INSURE THAT ALL OF OUR OPERATIONS ARE CONDUCTED WITH THE GREATEST RESTRAINT, AND OUR WEAPONS USED WITH EXTREME PRECISION TO REDUCE DESTRUCTION TO AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE DELIVERY OF SUPPORTING FIRES, IN THE CONDUCT OF FOREST CLEARING, AND IN OUR CROP DESTRUCTION AND DEFOLIATION PROGRAMS.

18. WITH REGARD TO KENNEDY'S STATEMENTS ON THE DRAFT AND MOBILIZATION, THE FACT IS THAT THERE IS ALREADY ON THE BOOKS A MOBILIZATION DECREE WHICH COVERS MEN FROM AGE 18 TO 33. PRESENT PLANS CALL FOR DRAFTING OF 18 AND 19 YEAR OLDS IN THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR, ALONG WITH THE RECALL OF RESERVISTS AND THE "MOBILIZATION IN PLACE" OF CIVILIANS WITH ESSENTIAL SKILLS. IF WE MAKE A COMPARISON WITH THE U.S. EFFORT, WE MAY NOTE THAT OUR OWN DRAFT LAW COVERS ONLY MEN FROM 18 TO 26. MORE IMPORTANT, THE GVN NOW HAS 770,000 MEN UNDER ARMS; TO EQUAL THIS EFFORT WITH OUR MUCH GREATER POPULATION, WE WOULD HAVE TO HAVE 10 MILLION MEN IN OUR ARMED FORCES, ABOUT THE NUMBER WE HAD UNDER ARMS IN WORLD WAR II; AND WE WERE A COUNTRY FAR MORE HIGHLY ADVANCED IN EVERY SENSE THAN VIETNAM.

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19. KENNEDY SAID THAT WHILE THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS FIGHTING IN VIET-NAM THE POLICE HERE MUST MAKE A HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH FOR DRAFT ELIGIBLE MEN. IN FACT THERE IS A VIGOROUS EFFORT BY THE POLICE TO APPREHEND DRAFT DODGERS. IT IS ALSO A FACT THAT OF THE 142,562 MEN INDUCTED INTO THE VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES LAST YEAR 101,317 OR MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS WERE VOLUNTARY ENLISTMENTS. THIS FACT IS ALSO A COMMENT ON THE STATEMENT THAT THE VIETNAMESE DO NOT HAVE THEIR HEARTS IN THE STRUGGLE.

20. IF WE COMPARE CASUALTIES WE GET A SIMILAR PICTURE. THE U.S. LOST 9,357 MEN KILLED IN ACTION LAST YEAR. THE VIETNAMESE LOST 12,716 NOT COUNTING THE VERY HEAVY CIVILIAN CASUALTIES INFLICTED BY THE VIET CONG. FOR THE U.S. TO SUFFER COMPARABLE LOSSES IN TERMS OF OUR MUCH LARGER TOTAL POPULATION, WE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE MORE THAN 162,000 KIA.

C. GVN PERFORMANCE

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21. AS REGARDS THE SECOND RECOMMENDATION, THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO FORCE THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO PUT ITS HOUSE IN ORDER UNDER THREAT OF OUR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL, THERE ARE THREE BASIC COMMENTS TO BE MADE. IN THE FIRST INSTANCE,

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WE HAVE LONG HOPED THAT THE VIETNAMESE WOULD BE ABLE TO FORM A STRONG, POPULARLY SUPPORTED GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD ENJOY BOTH THE CONFIDENCE OF ITS OWN PEOPLE AND THE RESPECT OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS. FOR US TO DICTATE POLICY TO THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO THE DEGREE SUGGESTED BY KENNEDY WOULD DESTROY THE VERY THING WE HAVE TRIED TO NURTURE. NO PATRIOTIC VIETNAMESE WOULD HAVE ANYTHING BUT CONTEMPT FOR HIS OWN GOVERNMENT IF HE BELIEVED THAT A FOREIGN POWER, ALBEIT A FRIENDLY ONE, WAS GIVING HIS GOVERNMENT ORDERS. NO OTHER GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER SERIOUSLY DEALING WITH SUCH A PUPPET. IN SHORT, I CAN SEE NO POLITICAL ADVANTAGE FOR US IN TRYING TO ESTABLISH JUST ANOTHER COLONIAL REGIME HERE, AND IT RUNS AGAINST A TRADITION OF TWO CENTURIES IN WHICH WE HAVE THROWN OFF OUR OWN COLONIALISM AND SOUGHT TO ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE UNDER VIALBE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR OTHER COLONIAL AREAS.

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22. THE SECOND COMMENT ON THIS POINT IS SIMPLY THAT THIS GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED ON BOTH THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE SIDES THAT IT FULLY INTENDS TO TACKLE SUCH PROBLEMS AS CORRUPTION, REFUGEES, AND MEDICAL FACILITIES. SUCH THINGS AS THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF NEW PROVINCE CHIEFS, SCHEDULED TO START FEBRUARY 2, AND THE NEW INSPECTORATE PROVIDED FOR IN THE CONSTITUTION ARE DESIGNED TO ROOT OUT CORRUPTION. OTHER PLANNED MEASURES ARE DIRECTED AT THE BASIC CAUSES OF CORRUPTION, AS FOR EXAMPLE THE IMPROVEMENT OF SALARY SCALES FOR MILITARY AND CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES ALIKE. THE ASSEMBLY HAS COMMITTEES CHARGED WITH LOOKING INTO CORRUPTION AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE. NUMBERS OF PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS HAVE ALREADY BEEN RELIEVED AND/OR CHARGED BECAUSE OF CORRUPTION OR INCOMPETENCE. THERE IS GOOD REASON TO HOPE THIS YOUNG GOVERNMENT WILL ACT EFFECTIVELY AGAINST CORRUPTION. WE MUST GIVE THEM A LITTLE TIME AND ENCOURAGEMENT IF THIS EFFORT IS TO SUCCEED, HOWEVER.

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23. KENNEDY CHARACTERIZES THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET-NAM NOT ONLY AS CORRUPT BUT AS LISTLESS AND INERT. HE SUGGESTS TODAY'S LEADERS AND THEIR PREDECESSORS -- IN CONTRAST TO THE VIET CONG -- POSSESS NO DESIRE OR ABILITY TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICE FOR THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. THIS IS A GROSS MISCHARACTERIZATION.

24. THERE IS, OF COURSE, CORRUPTION, INEPTITUDE, INCAPABILITY AND INERTIA WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. BUT THERE ARE ALSO EXAMPLES WHICH ABUND OF SLOW, STEADY AND CUMULATIVE IMPROVEMENT IN THE GVN'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE VIETNAMESE. A GOOD EXAMPLE IS THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE AND IS CONTINUING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION. IN THE EARLY

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1950'S, LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF VIETNAMESE CHILDREN OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE WERE ENROLLED IN PRIMARY SCHOOL. IN TWO YEARS, 85 PERCENT WILL BE ENROLLED. INERTIA AND INCOMPETENCE ARE NOT THE QUALITIES THAT HAVE ENABLED THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO APPROACH UNIVERSAL ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN THE MIDST OF WAR. THE GOVERNMENT HAS HAD MUCH ASSISTANCE FROM US, OF COURSE, IN ACHIEVING THESE LEVELS AND COULD NOT HAVE DONE AS WELL WITHOUT OUR ASSISTANCE. BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT THERE ARE MORE AND MORE VIETNAMESE CHILDREN IN VIETNAMESE SCHOOLS, TAUGHT BY VIETNAMESE TEACHERS, USING VIETNAMESE TEXTS.

25. IN ADDITION TO SUCH EFFORTS TO PROVIDE MORE SERVICE FOR ITS PEOPLE, THE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO NOW GIVING MORE THAN A LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE NEED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENT AND REFORM.

26 AN INTERAGENCY CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM, CHAIRED BY AN ABLE, RESPECTED ACADEMICIAN-ADMINISTRATOR, HAS UNDER SERIOUS AND SYSTEMATIC STUDY FOUR MAJOR AREAS REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT AND REFORM. THESE ARE: PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT; CIVIL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION; PUBLIC FINANCE; AND JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION.

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27. THE MODERNIZATION AND REFORM OF ARCHAIC GOVERNMENT MACHINERY IS A SLOW AND DIFFICULT PROCESS. PROGRESS CANNOT BE RAPID. THE ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATION HERE IS THAT SERIOUS AND GENUINE EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE.

28. AS A THIRD COMMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATION THAT WE THREATEN TO PULL OUT IF THE VIETNAMESE DO NOT REFORM THEIR GOVERNMENT, I WOULD SAY THIS IS SIMPLY NOT A CREDIBLE THREAT. AN AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL, LEAVING THE VIETNAMESE TO THE COMMUNISTS, WOULD HAVE SUCH AN EFFECT ON OUR POSITION IN THE PACIFIC AND WOULD SO DEVALUE OUR COMMITMENTS EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD THAT WE CANNOT SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATE PAYING THAT PRICE IN AN EFFORT TO DISCIPLINE THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. SOME CRITICS WILL DISAGREE WITH THIS EVALUATION, BUT THE IMPORTANT POINT IS THAT THE VIETNAMESE DO NOT. THEY BELIEVE, RIGHTLY I THINK, THAT THIS STRUGGLE INVOLVES THE SECURITY AND THE FUTURE OF ALL OF THE FREE WORLD. THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT AMERICANS WILL DELIBERATELY ENDANGER THAT SECURITY AND THAT COMMON FUTURE.

29. I SHOULD ADD IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE

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A VERY PROUD PEOPLE AND THEY ARE AN ASIAN PEOPLE WITH A SENSE OF FATALISM THAT HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH OCCIDENTAL RATIONALITY. IF TO TRY TO FACE US DOWN ON THE ISSUE REGARDLESS OF ITS ULTIMATE EFFECT. DIEM WAS NOT THE ONLY VIETNAMESE LEADER WHO COULD BE ADAMANT WHEN HE THOUGHT VIETNAMESE SOVEREIGNTY WAS AT STAKE. THERE ARE MANY HERE WHO MIGHT TRUTHFULLY SAY THEY WOULD RATHER BE RIGHT THAN PRESIDENT, OR RATHER BE RED THAN DEAD IN A MORAL AND NATIONAL SENSE.

30. WITH RESPECT TO KENNEDY'S COMMENTS ABOUT SAIGON, IT IS TRUE THAT THERE ARE RICH PEOPLE IN SAIGON WHO HAVE PROFITED FROM THE WARTIME BOOM. THIS IS AN INEVITABLE BY-PRODUCT OF A THRIVING WARTIME ECONOMY - ONE I VERY EVIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES IN WORLD WAR II AND THE KOREAN CONFLICT. WHAT IS NOT TRUE IS THAT ONLY THE RICH ARE BENEFITTING FROM THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN VIET-NAM. IN GENERAL, PEOPLE OF EVERY SOCIAL CLASS IN VIET-NAM TODAY, OUTSIDE OF THOSE IN REFUGEE CAMPS OR IN THE MOST ISOLATED AND INSECURE RURAL AREAS, ARE BETTER OFF ECONOMICALLY THAN THEY WERE FEW YEARS AGO. UNEMPLOYMENT, PREVIOUSLY VERY MARKED, HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO LABOR SHORTAGE AND WAGES ARE

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HIGH. THE RURAL ECONOMY, PARTICULARLY IN THE DELTA, IS IN THE MIDST OF AN ECONOMIC BOOM AND SHOWS CLEAR SIGNS OF THE BEGINNING OF AN AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION AS PEASANTS BUY AND USE MORE FERTILIZER, PESTICIDES, MACHINERY AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL INPUTS.

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IN ADDITION TO REFUGEES AND OTHERS DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE WAR, GVN CIVIL SERVANTS HAVE SEEN THEIR REAL INCOMES HURT BY INFLATION AND THEIR RELATIVE ECONOMIC STANDING IN THE COMMUNITY FALL AS OTHERS DO BETTER. CERTAINLY, THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF SAIGON - HOUSING, REFUSE, ETC. -- HAVE BEEN GREATLY AGGRAVATED BY THE INFLUX OF POPULATION. BUT MUCH OF THAT INFLUX HAS COME IN RESPONSE TO THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES SAIGON OFFERS.

31. GVN EFFORTS TO INCREASE TAXATION NEED TO BE STEPPED UP - FOR BOTH SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REASONS. THE GOVERNMENT IS ATTEMPTING TO DO SO. BUT SIMPLY BECAUSE THERE ARE A FEW WHO ARE VISIBLY MORE PROSPEROUS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE MANY ARE GETTING POORER. QUITE THE CONTRARY: THE SAME FACTORS BENEFITTING THE RICH ARE ALSO BENEFITTING THOSE ON THE LOWER END OF THE ECONOMIC SCALE - AND TODAY'S PROSPERITY IN VIET-NAM IS WIDELY SHARED - NOT JUST FOR CHOLON MERCHANTS, BUT THE SAIGON

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CYCLO DRIVER AND THE PEASANT IN THE BA XUYEN ARE EARNING AND PRODUCING MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.

D. CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

32. KENNEDY SPEAKS OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AS VICTIMS OF THEIR GOVERNMENT'S LACK OF CONCERN FOR THEIR PLIGHT. THIS HAS THINGS TURNED AROUND. THEY ARE VICTIMS OF A WAR DELIBERATELY UNDERTAKEN BY A CRUEL AND MURDEROUS COMMUNIST ENEMY WHOSE VICIOUSNESS THE SENATOR ELSEWHERE DESCRIBES WITH AWE. THE SUFFERINGS OF CIVILIAN AS WELL AS MILITARY CASUALTIES ARE DIRECTLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND VIET CONG, NOT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF AN UNDERDEVELOPED SOCIETY THAT SEEKS ONLY TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. IT IS NECESSARY TO REMEMBER THAT THE WAR-TIME

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INFLUX OF CIVILIAN INJURED HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE BEYOND VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN MEDICAL CAPABILITY AND THAT THAT CAPABILITY CANNOT BE RAPIDLY INCREASED. SOME OF KENNEDY'S CRITICISM IS DEFENSIBLE, HOWEVER. THE VIETNAMESE HAVE NOT MADE OPTIMUM USE OF THEIR TOTAL MEDICAL STAFF AND RESOURCES; TOO MANY DOCTORS, NURSES, AND PARAMEDICAL PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN CONSCRIPTED; ARVN FACILITIES ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY USED TO ACCOMMODATE CIVILIAN INJURED; THE VIETNAMESE MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME SENSE OF COMPASSION FOR PATIENTS THAT THEIR AMERICAN HELPERS HAVE. THEY ARE THE HEIRS TO A DIFFERENT TRADITION, THAT OF ASIA. THIS IS CHANGING, TOO, BUT THE CHANGE IS NOT COMPLETE.

33. KENNEDY'S STATEMENT THAT THE GVN INTENDS TO DIVERT MANY OF THE MEAGER NUMBERS OF PHYSICIANS NOW SERVING IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IS WITHOUT FOUNDATION. ON THE CONTRARY, THE MINISTER OF HEALTH HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING THE RE-ASSIGNMENT OF RVNAF DOCTORS TO THE PROVINCIAL

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HEALTH SERVICES, AND HE HAS RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE THAT AN ADDITIONAL 12 TO 15 PHYSICIANS AND A NUMBER OF PHARMACISTS WILL BE DETAILED TO THE MOH. TODAY, THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 250 PHYSICIANS IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH SYSTEM, RATHER THAN THE 150 SENATOR KENNEDY REFERS TO.

34. WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE SENATOR'S FIGURES ON CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, WHICH HE PRESENTS AS FACTS, RATHER THAN THE ROUGH AND EXAGGERATED ESTIMATES THEY ARE. THERE IS NO RELIABLE STATISTICAL BASIS FROM WHICH OVERALL CIVILIAN WAR CASUALTY DATA MAY BE PROJECTED. IN 1967 THERE WERE 48,724 CIVILIANS ADMITTED TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH HOSPITALS FOR WAR-RELATED INJURIES. THE MISSION'S BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN APPROXIMATELY AS MANY CIVILIAN WAR CASUALTIES

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IN 1967 WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ADMITTED TO A HOSPITAL AS THERE
ARE WHO HAVE BEEN, MAKING AN ESTIMATED TOTAL
FOR 1968 OF AROUND 100,000. WE CANNOT FURTHER
SUPPORT THIS ESTIMATE, BUT IT IS FAR MORE REASONABLE THAN
KENNEDY'S FIGURE OF 150,000, WHICH HE DID NOT SUBSTANTIATE
IN ANY WAY. SIMILARLY, HIS ESTIMATE OF 25,000 ANNUAL DEATHS

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IS NOTICEABLY HIGHER THAN OUR ROUGH ESTIMATE OF 20,000 BASED ON
A SAMPLING PROCESS.

35. SINCE THE VIETNAMESE ARE NOT CAPABLE, IN ANY CASE, BY
THEMSELVES OF MINISTERING TO THE NEEDS OF THOSE PEOPLE, LARGE
EXTERNAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE. THE USAID-RV
SUPPORTED PUBLIC HEALTH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAS MAINTAINED
APPROXIMATELY 200 AMERICAN AND FREE WORLD PHYSICIANS, 600
KEY TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE HEALTH PERSONNEL, AS WELL
AS UP TO 400 LOGISTICAL AND OTHER SUPPORT PERSONNEL. IN
ADDITION, 400 BEDS IN U.S. MILITARY HOSPITALS ARE IN USE
NOW FOR VIETNAMESE WITH WAR-RELATED INJURIES.

36. IN THE MIDST OF WAR, THE GVN IS CARRYING OUT A
COMPREHENSIVE COMBINATION OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL
TRAINING PROGRAMS WHICH, IN TIME, WILL GREATLY EXPAND THE
NUMBERS OF WELL-TRAINED DOCTORS, DENTISTS, NURSES, AND
OTHER MEDICAL AND PARAMEDICAL PERSONNEL REQUIRED
BY THIS SOCIETY BUT DENIED IT DURING ITS COLONIAL PAST.

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E. REFUGEES

37. AS REGARDS REFUGEES, PRESIDENT THIEU DEVOTED PART
OF HIS STATE OF THE UNION MESSAGE TO THIS PROBLEM. HE
STATED THAT QUOTE IN THE SOCIAL FIELD, THE MOST IMPORTANT
PROBLEM IS THAT OF ANTI-COMMUNIST REFUGEES END QUOTE.
HE WENT ON TO OUTLINE BOTH EMERGENCY AND LONG-
RANGE EFFORTS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE REFUGEES.

38. I MUST SAY THAT I FIND IT MOST DISTRESSING THAT KENNEDY
SHOULD SAY WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING THE FLOW OF
REFUGEES WITH ITS ATTENDANT HUMAN SUFFERING. BOB KOMER
TELLS ME THAT AMERICAN OFFICIALS WORKING ON THE REFUGEE
PROBLEM AND FAMILIAR WITH IT FROM A COUNTRYSIDE POINT OF
VIEW AGREE IT IS A GROSS EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT QUOTE OVER
80 PERCENT END QUOTE OF THE REFUGEES WERE DEPOSITED IN
THE CAMPS BY AMERICAN FORCES OR FLED TO THE CAMPS IN FEAR
OF U.S. PLANES AND ARTILLERY. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, THE SENATOR

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SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT IT IS THE VIET CONG AND THE FORCES OF NORTH VIETNAM WHICH STARTED THIS CONFLICT, AND IT IS THEY

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WHO NOW PROLONG IT. THE SUFFERINGS OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE REFUGEES, FLOW FROM THE ACTIONS AND DECISIONS OF HANOI.

29. I AM ALSO AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE QUOTE FACTS END QUOTE AND FIGURES ON REFUGEES USED BY SENATOR KENNEDY. THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES IS NOT REMOTELY CLOSE TO 25 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. THERE ARE 17 MILLION PEOPLE IN SOUTH VIETNAM. AT THE END OF 1967 THERE WERE 800,000 REGISTERED AS REFUGEES, AND ONLY ABOUT HALF OF THESE WERE LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS. IF WE TAKE AN OVERALL FIGURE, WE MAY SAY THAT THE GVN ESTIMATES TOTAL REFUGEES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 1964 AT TWO MILLION - LESS THAN 12 PERCENT, NOT 25 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION - AND 1.2 MILLION OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN RESETTLED, RETURNED TO THEIR VILLAGES, OR OTHERWISE ABSORBED INTO THE ECONOMY.

40 AS FOR THE STATEMENT THAT ONLY HALF OF THE U.S. SUPPLIES REACH THE REFUGEES, THIS IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE. NOR IS IT TRUE THAT 75 PERCENT OF THE RESETTLEMENT FUNDS ARE SIPHONED OFF BEFORE

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THEY REACH THE REFUGEES. IN SOME INSTANCES, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS IN THE MISUSE OR DIVERSION OF FUNDS, BUT TO SUGGEST THAT THEY REACHED ANY SUCH DIMENSIONS COUNTRYWIDE IS PREPOSTEROUS.

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NODIS

F. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

41. I HAVE SAID THAT THE KENNEDY SPEECH APPEALS HEAVILY TO THE EMOTIONS. IN RESPONDING TO IT WE MUST OF COURSE, IN AN OBJECTIVE WAY, BRING FORWARD THE FACTS AND CONSIDERATIONS WHICH THE SPEECH TENDS TO OBSCURE OR IGNORE. I THINK, HOWEVER, THAT WE SHOULD NOT HESITATE AT THE SAME TIME TO APPEAL ALSO TO THE EMOTIONS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. SENATOR KENNEDY HAS CHOSEN TO PAY TRIBUTE TO OUR FIGHTING MEN. HE HAS IN EFFECT ALSO IMPLIED THAT THOSE WHO HAVE DIED HERE WERE SACRIFICED NEEDLESSLY AND THAT WE SHOULD HALT SUCH SACRIFICES. I BELIEVE THEIR

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SACRIFICE WAS NOT AT ALL NEEDLESS, THAT THEY DIED DEFENDING OUR PEOPLE AND OUR BELIEFS. I THINK WE SHOULD SAY SQUARELY THAT WE OWE THEM A SOLEMN DEBT, AND THAT IS TO BE SURE THAT THEIR SACRIFICE IS NOT WASTED, THAT WHAT THEY DIED FOR WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED. WE SIMPLY CANNOT IN CONSCIENCE HOLD THEIR LIVES CHEAP AND LET HISTORY RECORD THAT THEY DIED IN VAIN AND THAT THE U.S. SUFFERED A HUMILIATING AND DEEPLY DANGEROUS DEFEAT IN VIETNAM WHICH COULD UNDERMINE THE ENTIRE FREE WORLD POSITION.

42. SENATOR KENNEDY HAS ENDED HIS SPEECH WITH WHAT SEEMS TO ME TO BE AN IRONIC STATEMENT OF THE VALUE OF OUR PLEDGED WORD. WE HAVE INDEED MADE SOME COMMITMENTS HERE WHICH WE MUST HONOR, AND WE CANNOT HONOR THEM IF WE FOLLOW THE SENATORS'S PRESCRIPTION.

43 THERE REMAINS ONE MORE IMPORTANT COMMENT WHICH I WANT TO MAKE. THAT IS THE REPLY TO THE ASSERTION THAT THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THEIR OWN SURVIVAL AS A FREE PEOPLE. IT IS CURIOUS THAT A NATION THAT HAS RESISTED

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COMMUNISM FOR SO MANY YEARS, AT SUCH A HIGH PRICE IN BLOOD AND MONEY, SHOULD SO OFTEN BE ACCUSED OF NOT CARING ENOUGH AND NOT FIGHTING HARD ENOUGH. THE VIETNAMESE NATIONALISTS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING COMMUNISM HERE EVER SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II. WE HAVE NO ACCURATE FIGURE ON THE NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE WOUNDED OR KILLED IN THIS EFFORT OVER THE YEARS, BUT I KNOW IT IS IMMENSE. A GREAT MANY OF THESE PEOPLE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT THEY WERE FIGHTING AND WHY THEY SHOULD RISK THEIR OWN LIVES AGAINST IT. THE VIETNAMESE HAVE IN FACT HAD EXCELLENT INSTRUCTION IN THE MEANING OF A COMMUNIST REGIME. TODAY IT IS NOT ONLY THE VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS WHO ARE FIGHTING - AND THEY ARE CERTAINLY FIGHTING, OFTEN WITH GREAT VALOR - BUT MANY CIVILIANS AS WELL. IN THE CASUALTY FIGURES THERE IS A STEADY STREAM OF HAMLET AND VILLAGE OFFICIALS, RD WORKERS, SCHOOL TEACHERS, HEALTH WORKERS, AND LOCAL POLICEMEN. THEY ARE NOT DRAFTED INTO SERVICE. THEY DO NOT HAVE TO FIGHT UNLESS THEY CHOOSE TO DO SO, AND THEY ARE USUALLY NOT KILLED BECAUSE THEY WERE CAUGHT BETWEEN OPPOSING ARMIES. THEY ARE ASSASSINATED BY THE VIET CONG BECAUSE THEY STAND IN THE WAY OF A

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COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF THEIR HAMLET OR VILLAGE. THEY ARE THE SMALL HERODS WHO TAKE THE GREAT RISK AND KNOW IT AND EXPECT NO HONOR FOR IT. THEIR NAMES ON THE CASUALTY LISTS ANSWER SUFFICIENTLY THOSE WHO SAY THE VIETNAMESE DO NOT HAVE THEIR HEARTS IN THIS STRUGGLE.

44. I MUST SAY THAT REREADING THE KENNEDY SPEECH I AM REMINDED BY HIS QUOTE FROM THOMAS PAINE OF PERHAPS THE BEST KNOWN QUOTATION BY THAT GREAT MAKER OF PHRASES: QUOTE THESE ARE THE TIMES THAT TRY MEN'S SOULS. THE SUMMER SOLDIER AND THE SUNSHINE PATRIOT WILL, IN THIS CRISIS, SHRINK FROM THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY; BUT HE THAT STANDS IT NOW, DESERVES THE LOVE AND THANKS OF MAN AND WOMAN. TYRANNY, LIKE HELL, IS NOT EASILY CONQUERED; YET WE HAVE THIS CONSOLATION WITH US, THAT THE HARDER THE CONFLICT, THE MORE GLORIOUS THE TRIUMPH. WHAT WE OBTAIN TOO CHEAP, WE ESTEEM TOO LIGHTLY; 'TIS DEARNESS ONLY THAT GIVES EVERYTHING ITS VALUE. HEAVEN KNOWS HOW TO PUT A PROPER PRICE UPON ITS GOODS; AND IT WOULD BE STRANGE INDEED, IF SO CELESTIAL AN ARTICLE AS FREEDOM SHOULD NOT BE HIGHLY RATED. END QUOTE.

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