

WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#25 notes	Notes from 10/14/68 - 1:40 p.m. Foreign Policy Advisory Group meeting Top Secret 1 p. SECRET 713-05102-275 Open NLJ 82-273 ISCAP Appeal 12-19-12 SOME SANITIZATION 315-11 NLJ 82-273 APPEAL	10/14/68	A
#25a notes <i>pen 6/17/83 NLJ 82-271</i>	Notes from 10/14/68 meeting [Sanitized NLJ 87-38] Secret 14 pp.	10/14/68	A
#25b cable	Deptel to Paris Secret 6 pp.	10/14/68	A
#26 notes	Handwritten Notes from 10/14/68 meeting Top Secret 51 pp. <i>3/10</i>	10/14/68	A

FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings, Box 4

RESTRICTION CODES

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24
OCTOBER 14, 1968 - 1:40 p.m.

FOREIGN POLICY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

Secretary Rusk
Secretary Clifford
General Wheeler
Admiral Moorer
General Chapman
General McConnell
General Palmer
Bromley Smith

Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

Joining the meeting:

Senator Richard Russell
General Westmoreland

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH:

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CLARK CLIFFORD
SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK
GENERAL EARLE WHEELER
ADMIRAL THOMAS MOORER
GENERAL LEONARD CHAPMAN
GENERAL JOHN McCONNELL
GENERAL BRUCE PALMER
BROMLEY SMITH

WALT ROSTOW
GEORGE CHRISTIAN
TOM JOHNSON

JOINING THE MEETING:

SENATOR RICHARD RUSSELL
GENERAL WILLIAM WESTMORE-
LAND

OCTOBER 14, 1968

Cabinet Room

1:40 pm

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: There have been instructions issued on authority to release nuclear weapons in the event the President has been killed or cannot be found. This is to prevent a breakdown in the chain of command.

The project's code-name is "Futherance."

We recommend three major changes:

- (1) Under the former orders, a full nuclear response against both the Soviet Union and China was ordered if we were attacked. Under the change, the response could go to either country -- not both. There could be a small-scale or accidental attack. We do not recommend full attack at all times. This would permit a limited response.
- (2) Instructions on the response to a conventional attack would be conventional, not nuclear as is now in the plan.
- (3) There was only one document of instructions beforehand. Now there would be two documents.

We all recommend this.

WALT ROSTOW: We think it is an essential change. This was dangerous. We recommend going forward.

GENERAL WHEELER: All the Joint Chiefs of Staff and commanders have been consulted. We recommend approval.

GENERAL McCONNELL: I concur, Sir.

GENERAL CHAPMAN: I concur.

ADMIRAL MOORER: I concur.

#

EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NLS 02-273 ISCAP Appeal
By etm, NARA, Date 12-18-12

SERVICE SET

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CLARK CLIFFORD
SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK
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ADMIRAL THOMAS MOORER
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1:40 p. m.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6
NLJ 02-271
By isa NARA, Date 6-6-03

I I.

WALT ROSTOW: In the course of discussions with the Soviets on missile talks, the question of the Middle East and Vietnam was raised.

With the Czech crisis, the environment for a Summit with the Soviets diminished. The President raised with the Soviets the question of Vietnam.

The language to Kosygin read:

"Setting all political arguments aside, the simple fact is that the President could not maintain a cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam unless it were very promptly evident to him, to the American people, and to our allies, that such an action was, indeed, a step toward peace. A cessation of bombing which would be followed by abuses of the DMZ, Viet Cong, and North Vietnamese attacks on cities or such populated areas as provincial capitals, or a refusal of the authorities in Hanoi to enter promptly into serious political discussions which included the elected government of the Republic of Vietnam, could simply not be sustained. "

Points included as conditions for a bombing halt:

- (1) Inclusion of the GVN at Paris talks
- (2) No attacks on the cities
- (3) Respect for the DMZ

The Soviets would not march in with all three points. Secretary Rusk stressed that the Soviets should push on one essential point -- inclusion of South Vietnam at the Paris talks.

Last Friday, a private meeting was held in Paris.

The critical passages from this discussion:

"Thuy opened meeting by asking Vance to repeat again what he had said at Wednesday's tea break on GVN representation. We did so using the same language as at tea break.

Tho then said he wanted to raise two questions. First, whether we would stop the bombing when we had a clear answer to the question of GVN participation as a party in the negotiations that would follow a cessation. Second, whether after a clear answer to this question has been given we will consider the answer to be a condition or reciprocity for stopping of bombing.

We answered the second question first, saying it was not a demand for reciprocity or a condition but, as we had said many times, was our definition of serious talks. We said that as we had stated, we do not believe there could be serious negotiations without inclusion of representatives of GVN on our side.

Turning to the first question, we said that we could not answer the question and that it would have to be answered in Washington. We then made the following statement: "In responding to your question, it is very important that there be no misunderstanding between us. It is important to understand that we are not talking about reciprocity or conditions but the simple fact that after a cessation of all bombardment the President's ability to maintain that situation would be affected by certain elemental considerations.

" We do not look on them as a condition for stopping the bombing but as a description of the situation which would permit serious negotiations and thus the cessation to continue. You will understand, therefore, that the circumstances we have discussed in our various private meetings about military activity in and around the DMZ are essential to the maintenance of that situation. And, of course, you know from our various discussions that indiscriminate attacks launched against major cities would create a situation which would not permit serious talks and thus the maintenance of a cessation." We said that we had said this before, and that it was specifically confirmed when Vance was in Washington.

Tho said he would like to repeat once again that regarding a peaceful settlement, North Vietnam had a serious intent and that he hoped we also had a serious intent. He said North Vietnam knows how to look at the problem realistically and so should we. And only in this way could the matter be settled peacefully. He said, suppose we formally answer what you are now requiring and you don't stop the bombing -- then you would have no goodwill and would not have looked realistically at the matter. Tho said he was convinced that if we both had serious intent and goodwill, a peaceful settlement can be reached. We said that nothing would be worse than to have the talks start and then break down and that that was the reason why we have been completely frank with them.

Tho said when you give us an answer we will express our view. He said "We should be positive and you should be positive. If we are positive and you are not, or vice-versa, then no progress will be made."

The U. S. delegation said that South Vietnam must be included at the talks prior to the cessation of all bombardment.

- 3 -

Tho said if both had serious intent then progress should be made.

The President sent a message on cessation of the bombing and rules of engagement. We want your (General Abrams and Ambassador Bunker) response.

The message was received from Abrams and Bunker that they could live with the cessation if the three points are included.

Ambassador Bunker said he thought they were moving the conflict from the battle-field to the conference table.

The number two man in the Soviet Embassy in Paris called Ambassador Vance in on Saturday. He said there could not be a bombing halt without participation of the GVN. Also, Vance stressed DMZ and the attacks on the cities.

He dictated the following passage:

"I have good reason to believe that if the U. S. stops unconditionally and completely the bombardments and other acts of war against the DRV, the delegation of North Vietnam will agree to the participation of the representative of the Saigon government in the talks on the problem of political settlement in Vietnam. Thus these talks would be held by the representatives of the DRV, of the United States of America, of the NLF, and the Saigon Government."

THE PRESIDENT: Was this about the same language as that used by Kosygin?

WALT ROSTOW: It was similar.

The Soviet representative said there are differing views in Hanoi. He said if bombing were halted serious talks could begin.

Thieu concurred in instructions given Harriman and Vance.

There is a later cable. He is ready to go along to try to see if they are serious about stopping the war.

A message was sent to Bunker to examine loop-holes and contingencies -- including the possibility of the enemy needing rest to get ready to hit us again.

Asked four questions of Bunker/Abrams:

- (1) How long should we wait?
- (2) Can morale be maintained?
- (3) Rules of engagement?
- (4) Is a ceasefire proposal to our advantage - one we can arrange?

They responded:

- (1) Impossible to tell what the enemy can do.
- (2) Hanoi given up militarily; trying to get best negotiations possible.
- (3) Hanoi doesn't believe next administration will pull out.

Hanoi failed in this year's major offensives.

They will seek:

- (1) Cease-fire
- (2) Removal of foreign forces
- (3) Coalition government.

They think we should know something within a month.

Bunker says they are against

- (a) coalition government and
- (b) a cease-fire in place.

They said 1968 has been a devastating year for Hanoi.

He sent rules of engagement.

- (1) Continued strong pressure in South.
- (2) Message to troops
- (3) Morale can be sustained.

Rules:

- (A) All commanders can conduct self-defense actions.
- (B) Response to attacks across DMZ.
- (C) Artillery fire will be responded to by destruction of unit firing.
- (D) If came across DMZ or struck cities, resumption of bombing would be recommended.

A draft message was sent to Paris this morning. (Attachment A)

It includes:

- (1.) Serious talks must take place.
- (2.) If GVN included day after cessation, bombing will be halted.
- (3.) After halt, conditions must permit President to continue it.
- (4.) Respect for the DMZ.
- (5.) Armed attacks against major cities not permitted.
- (6.) Reconnaissance will continue, unarmed.

- 5 -

This would include cessation of Naval, air and artillery attacks.

Reconnaissance must include both high and low level flights as well as drones.

We asked for their views on draft instructions. GVN are aboard.

Maintenance for total security is required.

THE PRESIDENT: (1) On September 17 Harriman came here.

I told him what we were confronted with. We were interested in

- (a) GVN at talks.
- (b) No attacks on cities.
- (c) Respect for DMZ.

(2) On October 3, Vance came home. I talked with him October 6 and October 7. I told him the same thing.

at 2:22, Senator Russell entered the meeting.

THE PRESIDENT: I asked them what would happen if bombing stopped.

I told them we could not stop it if:

- GVN were not included.
- They abused the DMZ.
- They attacked the cities.

Soviets were told this. Rusk got impression they would do all they could on GVN -- and that we could work on the other two points.

THE PRESIDENT: I met with Secretary Clifford and General Wheeler this morning. (To Senator Russell:) "Here are three statements."

- San Antonio formula
- August - Detroit
- New Orleans - won't increase U.S. casualties.

(1) The weather has changed.

(2) Troops are moving out.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: For five months Hanoi has said if bombing is halted they will begin "serious" talks. They refused any conditions. They said they never would sit down with the GVN.

Now the situation has changed.

- 6 -

- (1) We say GVN must be at the table.
- (2) Hanoi now prepared to accept GVN at table.
- (3) Enemy military situation has deteriorated.
- (4) We are recommending that there be a shift of emphasis.

If GVN are at table, we can talk but only if DMZ is respected and cities are not attacked.

We are at a point where their good faith must be tested. We are recommending that we stop the bombing to test their good faith. If they violate it, we will know they are not in good faith and resume without any limitations.

The President has an opportunity to take them at their word. I would recommend starting bombing again if they did not show good faith.

We would continue bombing in Laos.

At the moment, Laos is where we want to bomb because of monsoon season in North Vietnam.

They have said we must cease all acts of war. I do not consider reconnaissance an act of war. We cannot deal in the dark.

I always have feared a build-up north of the DMZ. If they did, we would have to destroy the build-up. The time has come now. They have changed their attitude toward GVN.

They recognize the existence of the government in South Vietnam; the partition of South Vietnam and North Vietnam; the effect on the Viet Cong would be damaging. To know North Vietnam has recognized the government of South Vietnam would be quite a psychological blow to the Viet Cong.

I do consider the risk to us as minor. It does not injure us to stop the bombing for awhile. We can go back with bombing if we need to. The timing is important.

There must be another exchange with Kosygin to say we are taking them up on their offer and getting them to use whatever leverage that is possible.

We must move on anything that might bring peace.

GENERAL WHEELER: After six months of stonewalling, North Vietnam has made a movement which I consider important.

Abrams' assessment is highly favorable. If we haven't already won the war militarily we are well on the way to it.

Thieu readily agreed to the formula. All believe we must continue reconnaissance in and around North Vietnam.

If the enemy violates this, we will resume our operations without limitations.

I recommend you make this approach to North Vietnam. If they accept the presence of GVN at conference table, we should proceed.

SECRETARY RUSK: North Vietnam is not clearly on board in this. The acceptance of North Vietnam of South Vietnam at the conference table is a recognition that the Viet Cong are not sole government in the South.

We must press for flat commitments by them after bombing is halted and talks are started on a new basis.

If there is violation of two points we go back to bombing. The Soviets will no longer be in a position where a sister Socialist state is being attacked.

The negotiations will be troublesome.

Bombing will restart if
cities are attacked.
DMZ is not respected.
GVN not permitted at table.

Bunker and Abrams met with Thieu. He is entirely in favor of this step.

WALT ROSTOW: Bunker-Abrams said:

- (1) Hanoi shifting from battlefield to conference table.
- (2) Lost 150,000 killed in action and B52 killed in action and captures and injured and desertions.
- (3) Strengthening of ARVN.
- (4) Inability to mount offensives in recent months.

Beginning with KheSanh, B-52 attacks became devastating. Record withdrawal signaled end of third offensive.

Abrams believes it will take 2-3 months for NVN-VC to rebuild. Hanoi realizes U.S. will not disengage in Vietnam regardless of who is elected.

Victory has eluded Hanoi. Hanoi may feel its position never will be better than it is today.

NVN-VC forces have not collapsed.

EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

- 8 -

Up to now, Hanoi's emphasis has been on military and not negotiations.

Abrams and Bunker concur in instructions on cessation of bombing.

Thieu made a decision on the spot to accept this on October 13.

Thieu said he is ready to go along. The problem is not to stop the bombing, but to stop the war.

At 3:15, General Westmoreland joined the meeting.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the San Antonio formula.

I said we would stop bombing when it would lead to
productive discussions
provided they would not take advantage of the cessation.

Their acceptance of the Government of Vietnam is some modification of their position. It does not represent a breakaway on our part from what we have stated.

SECRETARY RUSK: Acceptance of GVN is absolute. Other two points are self-policing.

THE PRESIDENT: What is the difference between their not signing a contract on two and three?

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: If they are in good faith, they won't shell cities or not respect the DMZ.

Our risk is limited.

WALT ROSTOW: Message sent to Harriman-Vance: (Attachment A)

Includes for a bombing halt:

- (1) Serious talks take place
- (2) GVN participation and
- (3) Cities not attacked
- (4) DMZ respected.

THE PRESIDENT: I want your judgments and your views. I do not know when I will make a decision.

EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

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EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

- 9 -

GENERAL McCONNELL: If you agree to unconditional cessation of the bombing, this would pre-empt your resumption of the bombing.

THE PRESIDENT: If cities were attacked,
If DMZ abused,
we would resume.

SECRETARY RUSK: We have actually -- (interrupted.)

GENERAL McCONNELL: If you are to stop bombing NOW is the time to do it. The weather will be bad in the panhandle.

I do not think they can attack the cities.

We would concentrate air operations in Laos this season anyhow.

I am concerned that they could mass troops and supplies without our knowing. Only two days a month would be good for reconnaissance.

We must continue reconnaissance.

I recommend going ahead.

ADMIRAL MOORER: I subscribe to General McConnell's views. We must keep up the reconnaissance.

In 3 Corps area, Viet Cong might feel as though they are being deserted and initiate an action to break the deal.

GENERAL McCONNELL: I do not think the enemy can attack the cities.

ADMIRAL MOORER: I recommend we proceed along the course as outlined.

GENERAL CHAPMAN: The DRV are hurting. Bombing is a strong card. They will want to rebuild their strength. We must go all out in South Vietnam to build South Vietnam army and root out guerrillas.

We must carefully inform the troops and the U.S. public of this.

I support the proposal.

ADMIRAL MOORER: Do we state that bombing will be resumed?

SECRETARY RUSK: Not at the beginning. It would be provocative.

MEETING NOTES
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EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

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- 10 -

GENERAL McCONNELL: If we resume, we want to be unrestricted.

ADMIRAL MOORER: I agree to that.

GENERAL PALMER: Time has been running against the enemy. Hanoi doesn't have the same support from the Soviets that he used to have.

I would worry about a form of cease-fire.

Once the bombing is suspended, it will be difficult to resume it.

THE PRESIDENT: If they do not meet these three conditions, we will respond.

GENERAL PALMER: Based on what I know, I would go along with it.

SECRETARY RUSK: A cease-fire in place won't do. We would have to have free access to province capitals controlled by the GVN.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND: It would be chaos not to have GVN at the conference table.

The enemy can't seriously attack the cities. They can shell them some.

We must observe the safety of the troops and the morale of the GVN.

We can do this.

The weather is favorable. Northeast monsoon starts out with fury. The weather will improve in Laos for bombing.

Bombing in Laos is not under jeopardy.

THE PRESIDENT: It will be increased.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND: Any massing north of the DMZ will be known. A few hours of each day will be O.K. for reconnaissance.

Communications intelligence will detect it as well.

During January, February and March there is a low fog which hangs over the area. Even helicopters can't fly. In the DMZ, North and South, this will be covered.

The enemy can be seriously affected in a major way.

- 11 -

This gives the GVN a great opportunity to wage a campaign to bring about defections.

I agree with this proposal with the restrictions placed on it.

With the proper psychological campaign we can get defections.

SENATOR RUSSELL: I can't deal with this with limited amount of knowledge. The Viet Cong may terrorize the cities.

You all mention "good faith." In our relations with the Soviets, we should indicate how long we will stand by and do nothing.

SECRETARY RUSK: We should know within four to six weeks.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: We should set no limits so long as they do not take advantage of our restraint.

I think we would make a mistake to set a time limit.

SENATOR RUSSELL: It will be hard to restart the bombing. Soviets need some time in mind as a deadline.

THE PRESIDENT: Did we tell the Soviets thirty days?

WALT ROSTOW: No.

SENATOR RUSSELL: Do the Soviets and North Vietnam know we expect to continue bombing if this doesn't work?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

SENATOR RUSSELL: I hope the suggestion is as our military leaders think it is. It will be hard to resume.

GENERAL McCONNELL: The President assured us we could restart it if we needed to. That's the only reason I went along.

SENATOR RUSSELL: If that is so, I would hope the program would work.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: We are willing to give up bombing for three acts on their part -- (1) including the GVN (2) DMZ and (3) no attacks on the cities.

- 12 -

If they stick to all three, we are not being damaged.

SENATOR RUSSELL: I would perhaps agree with you if I knew something about the enemy morale problems, supply problems, and know we can police this.

THE PRESIDENT: I want us to be agreed on this before I go.

SENATOR RUSSELL: This is a most agonizing war. The most agonizing any President or any Secretary of State or any Secretary of Defense ever faced.

SENATOR RUSSELL: This is O.K., but the U.S. people won't agree to keep the troops over there when the war is not going on.

THE PRESIDENT: On a 37-day bombing pause, the Soviets told us 12 days probably would be sufficient but no more than 20.

General Wheeler said he would not recommend it, but would support it.

I am not brave just because it's at the end of my term. I will not proceed unless both Secretaries and all JCS support it.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: This is different from the 37-day pause. The GVN come into the talks. We have the DMZ and cities as a test of their good will.

This make it easier to start.

SECRETARY RUSK: Most precious asset has been the morale of our forces. Can this be sustained?

GENERAL WESTMORELAND: The Communists have violated prior ceasefires. They may erode this agreement. If that happens, we will have problems with morale. How far do we go before we resume the bombing? We will have trouble if erosion occurs.

Abrams' approach is very practical. I see no problem.

THE PRESIDENT: I want us to know what we are getting into now.

What is the reaction of the country going to be and reaction of the Senate?

SENATOR RUSSELL: We are in the midst of the political campaign. Reactions will vary. The press will hail this. You will be charged with politics.

What everybody wants is an end of the war. It's been a miserable war -- worse than Korea.

- 13 -

SECRETARY RUSK: No decision has been made in relationship to domestic politics.

SENATOR RUSSELL: I know that.

ADMIRAL MOORER: I think we should make it clear

SENATOR RUSSELL: Senate wants to get out of the war - some by exterminating North Vietnam - others by bringing all troops home on the next convoy.

My committee will give it a chance. There will be some skepticism. Everybody wants to get this to a conclusion.

You've given North Vietnam every chance to show good faith. They haven't.

GEORGE CHRISTIAN: The reaction will be good from the press and media. Political charges of helping Vice President Humphrey will be made.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: The public can be educated to two factors:

- (1) North Vietnam has not been doing well in the war.
- (2) North Vietnam may have chosen to deal with this administration rather than the next.

THE PRESIDENT: I will be charged with doing this to influence the election.

Nixon will be disappointed.

The doves will criticize us for not doing it before now.

If this is not a way of stopping it, I don't think I'll have another opportunity.

I do not have much confidence in the Soviets or North Vietnam.

I don't think they will accept this.

If they accept it, I do not think they will honor it.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND: Militarily, the enemy is BANKRUPT.

We must assume he will accept GVN
honor DMZ
doesn't attack the cities

- 14 -

Then can you justify resuming the bombing for their foot-dragging on a political act?

THE PRESIDENT: We are testing him.

SENATOR RUSSELL: The U.S. people will take a "wait-and-see" attitude.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: The decision to move at this time is not based on our initiative. It is based on Hanoi's initiative. They said they will bring the GVN into the talks.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: By stopping the bombing now, we do not give up much.

GENERAL McCONNELL: We do not give up much, no.

THE PRESIDENT: What effect does a "no" decision by me have?

Mac Bundy picked the worst time possible to make his speech.

SENATOR RUSSELL: There is little else that can be done.

THE PRESIDENT: We said to the Soviets on September 17 that they could take the heat off Czechoslovakia by talks on Mideast.

SENATOR RUSSELL: It's worth a try.

#

1:40

Pres

Clifford - ~~Rusk~~

Wheeler

Adm. MooreGenl. ChapmanGenl McConnellGenl PalmerBromley SmithRostowChristian

Senator Richard Russell

joins.

General Westmoreland

joins

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NLS 02-273; 02-271By JM NARA Date 3-26-18

[1]

Clifford: There have been instructions issued on authority to release nuclear weapons in event President has been killed or cannot be found. This is to prevent a breakdown in chain of command

Project is "Futhervance" code-name

We recommend 3 major changes:

- 1) Full nuclear response against both. Soviet and Chinese targets was planned. Under change, response would go to either — not both. There could be a small-scale or accidental attack. We do not recommend [2] full attack at all times. This would

permit limited

(2) Instructions on conventional attack would be conventional, not nuclear as is now in plan.

(3) Only 1 document of instructions before hand. Now there would be 2 documents.

We All recommend this.

Rostow: We think it is An essential change. This was dangerous. We recommend going forward

Wheeler: All JCS And commanders have been consulted. We recommend approval

Genl McConnell: 1 concur, Sir.

Chapman: 1 concur.

Moover: 1 concur.

II.

Rostow: In course of discussions with Soviets on missile talks, question of middle East And Vietnam was raised.

With Czech crisis, the environment for a summit with Soviets diminished

President raised with Soviets the question of Vietnam.

Language to Kosygin read:

(insert language)

55

Points included as conditions for bombing halt

- 1) inclusion of GUN at Paris talks
- 2) no Attacks on cities
- 3) respect for DMZ

Soviets would not MARCH in with all 3 points. Rusk stressed that Soviets should push on one essential point - inclusion of SUN at Paris talks.

Last Friday, a private meeting was held in Paris.

Critical passages from this discussion:

①

(insert language)

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delivered
4 pages

[6]

The U.S. delegation said SUN must be included At talks prior to cessation of All bombardment.

Tho said if both had serious intent then progress should be made.

President sent A message on cessation of bombing and rules of engagement. We want your (General Abrams and Amb Bunker) response.

Message was received from Abrams AND Bunker that they could live with the cessation if 3 points are included.

Bunker said he thought they were moving the conflict from the battlefield to the conference table.

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He said: there could not be bombing halt without participation of GVN. Also, Vance stressed DMZ and Attacks on cities.

He dictated following passage:
("I have good reason to believe) —
(Insert)

Pres: Was this ^{the} ABOUT SAME language
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- 1) Impossible to tell what enemy can do
- 2) Hanoi given up militarily;
Trying to get best negotiations possible.
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Hanoi failed in this year's major offensives.

They will seek

- 1) cease-fire
- 2) removal of foreign forces
- 3) Coalition govt.

They think we should know something within a month.

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010

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1. Continued strong pressure in South
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Rules

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B Response to attacks across DMZ.

C Artillery fire will be responded to by destruction of unit firing

D. If came across DMZ or struck cities, resumption of bombing would be recommended

Draft Message sent to Paris
this morning: ✓

(Insert)

(Includes) 1. Serious talks must take place.

2. If GUN included day after
cessation, bombing will be
halted

(3.) After halt, conditions must
permit president to
continue it.

(4) Respect for DMZ.

(5) Armed attacks against
major cities not permitted.

(6) Reconnaissance will continue,
unarmed.

[13]

| This would include cessation of
| NAVAL, AIR, And Artillery Attacks.

| Reconnaissance must include both
| high and low level flights as
| well as drones.

| We Asked for their views on draft
| instructions. GUN ARE ABOARD.

| Maintenance for total security is
| required.

President:

1) SEPT 17- Harriman here

I TOLD him WHAT we were
CONFRONTED with. We were
interested in

- A) GUN AT TALKS.
- B) NO ATTACKS on cities.
- C) Respect for DMZ.

2) Oct 3 Vance came home

Oct 6

Oct 7

(Told him same thing)

2:22 Senator Russell entered.

President: I asked them what would happen if bombing stopped.

I told them we could not stop it if:

- GUN were not included.
- they abused the DMZ.
- they attacked the cities.

Soviets were told this. Rusk got impression they would do All they Could on GUN — and that we could work on the other 2 points.

OK

President :

Met with Clifford and Wheeler
this morning.

(To Senator Russell, "here are
3 statements."

- San Antonio formula
- August - Detroit
- New Orleans - won't increase U.S.
casualties.

1) weather has changed.

2) Troops are moving out.

DRD

Clifford

For 5 months Hanoi has said if bombing is halted they will begin "serious" talks. They refused any conditions. They said they never would sit down with GVN.

Now situation has changed.

- 1) We say GVN must be at table.
- 2) Hanoi now prepared to accept GVN AT TABLE.
- 3) ^{Enemy} Military situation has deteriorated.
- 4) We are recommending that there be shift of emphasis.

If GVN are at table,
we can talk but only if
DMZ is respected and
cities are not attacked.

We are at point where their good faith must be tested. We are recommending THAT we stop the bombing to test their good faith. IF they violate it, we will know they are not in good faith and resume without any limitation

President has opportunity to take them at their word. I would recommend starting bombing again IF THEY DID NOT show good faith.

We would continue bombing in LAOS.

At moment, LAOS is where we want to bomb because of monsoon season in NVN.

They have said we must cease all acts of war. I do not consider reconnaissance an act of war. We cannot deal in the dark.

I always have feared a buildup north of DMZ. If they did, we would have to destroy the buildup.

The time has come now. They have changed attitude toward SVN.

They recognize existence of govt in SVN; the partition of SVN + NVN; effect on VC would be damaging. To know NVN has recognized government of SVN would be damaging. [20]

I do consider risk to us AS
minor.

It does not injure us to stop
bombing for a while.

We can go back with
bombing if need to.

Timing is important.

There must be another
exchange with Kosygin
to say we are taking them
up on their offer and
getting them to use whatever
leverage that is possible.

We must move on anything
that might bring peace.

Wheeler: After 6 months of
stonewalling, NVN have made a
movement which I consider important.

Abrams' assessment is highly favorable.
If we haven't already won the war
militarily we are well on the
way to it.

Thien readily agreed to formula.

all believe we must continue
reconnaissance in and around
NVN.

If enemy violates this, we will
resume our operations without
limitations.

I recommend you make this
approach to NVN. If they
accept presence of QUN at
conference table, we should
proceed.

Rusk: NVN is not clearly on
board in this.

The acceptance of NVN of SVN
at the conference table is
a recognition that ~~the~~
VC are not sole government
in South.

We must press for flat commitments
by them after bombing is halted
and talks are started on new
basis.

If there is violation of 2
points we go back to
bombing.

~~THEY~~ The Soviets will no
longer be in a position
where a sister Socialist
state is being attacked.

Negotiations will be troublesome.

Bombing will restart if
cities are attacked.

DMZ is NOT respected.

GUN not permitted at table.

Bunker and Abrams met with
Thieu. He is entirely in favor
of this step.

Rostow: Bunker - Abrams said:

- 1) HANOI SHIFTING FROM BATTLEFIELD
to CONFERENCE TABLE.
- 2) LOST 150,000 KIA + 352 KIA.
+ captures + injured + desertions
- 3) Strengthening of ARVN.
- 4) Inability to mount offensives.
in recent months.

Beginning with Khe Sanh, B52 attacks became devastating. Record withdrawal signaled end of 3rd offensive.

Abrams believes it will take take 2-3 months for NVN-VC to rebuild.

Hanoi realizes U.S. will not disengage in Vietnam regardless of who is elected.

Victory has eluded Hanoi. Hanoi may feel its position never will be better than it is today.

NVN-VC forces have not collapsed.

Up to now, Hanoi's emphasis has been on military and not negotiations. [27]

Smith Rostow McConnell Wheeler
Moore Chapman
Palmer

| Westmoreland

Christian Johnson Clifford
Pres Rusk Russell

3:15 General Westmoreland joins

President: read San Antonio Formula.

I said we would stop bombing
when it would lead to
productive discussions
provided they would not
take advantage of the
cessation.

Their acceptance of QUN is
some modification of their position.

It does not represent a breakaway
on our part from what we
have stated.

Rusk: Acceptance of QUN is Absolute
Other 2 points are self-policing.

Pres: What is difference between
their not signing a contract on
(2) and (3)

CC: If they are in good faith,
they won't shell cities
or not respect DMZ.

Our risk is limited.

Postow: Message sent to Harriman-Vance.

Bombing halt: (insert)

attachment A-

Includes: 1) Serious talks take place

2) gun participation +

3) Cities not attacked

4) DMZ respected.

Pres: I want your judgments and your views. I do not know when I will make a decision.

McConnell:

1. IF you agree to unconditional cessation of bombing, this would preempt your resumption of bombing

Pres: IF cities were attacked,
IF DMZ Abused,
we would resume.

Rusk: we have actually 6-2/4

McConnell:

2. IF you are to stop bombing
now is time to do it. Weather
will be bad in Panhandle

3. I do not think they can
Attack the cities

4. we would concentrate AIR

[3]

operations in Laos this season
anyhow.

I am concerned that they
could mass troops &
supplies without our knowing.
Only 2 days a month would
be good for reconnaissance.

We must continue reconnaissance.

I recommend going ahead

Moore: I subscribe to
General McConnell's views.

We must keep up reconnaissance.

In 3 Corps Area, V.C. might feel as though they are being deserted and initiate an action to break the deal.

McConnell: I do not think the enemy can attack cities.

Moore: I recommend we proceed along course outlined

Chapman: DRV are hunting. Bombing is strong card. They will want to rebuild their strength. We must go all out in SVN to build SVN army & root out guerrillas.

We must carefully inform troops & U.S. public of this [33]

I support the proposal.

Moorer: Do we state that bombing will be resumed

Rusk: Not at beginning
It would be provocative.

McConnell: If we resume, we want to be unrestricted

Moorer: I agree to that

Palmer: Time has been running against enemy. Hanoi doesn't have same support from Soviets he used to have.

I would worry about form
of cease-fire.

Once bombing is suspended, it
will be difficult to resume
it.

Pres: If they do not meet
these 3 conditions, we will
respond

Palmer: Based on what I
know, I would go along
with it.

Rusk: A cease-fire in place won't
do. We would have to have
free access to province
capitals controlled by GVN.

Westmoreland:

It would be chaos not to have 90N
at conference table

Enemy can't seriously attack
cities. Can shell it some.

Must observe safety of Hoops
and morale of 90N

We can do this

Weather is favorable. NE monsoon
starts out with fury.

Weather will improve in
haos for bombing.

Bombing in haos not under jeopardy

Pres: It will be increased.

[36]

Westmoreland:

Any massing north of DMZ will be known. A few hours of each day will be OK for reconnaissance.

Communications intelligence will detect it as well.

During JAN-FEB-MARCH there is low fog which hangs over Area. Even helicopters can't fly. In DMZ, N+S, this will ^{be} covered.

| Enemy can be seriously affected in major way.

This gives QUN A great opportunity to wage campaign to bring about defections.

I agree with this proposal with the restrictions placed on it..

| With proper psychological Campaign we can get defections.

Russell: I can't deal with this with limited Amount of knowledge. VC may terrorize cities.

You All mention "good faith". In Our relations with Soviets, we should indicate how long we will stand by and do nothing.

Rusk: We should know within 4 to 6 weeks.

CC: We should set no limits so long As they do not take Advantage of our restraint.

I think we would make a mistake to set time

Russell: It will be hard to restart bombing. Soviets need some time in mind as a deadline

Pres: Did we tell Soviets 30 days?

Rostow: No

[39]

Russell: Do Soviets and NUN
know we expect to continue
bombing? *7/15/45*

Pres: Yes.

Russell: I hope suggestion is
as our military leaders
think it is. It will be
hard to resume.

McConnell: Pres. Assured us
we could restart if needed to.
That's only reason I went along.

Russell: If that is so, I would
hope program would work.

Clifford: We are willing to give
up bombing for 3 aets on their
part - (1) including 9011

[45]

(2) DMZ (3) No Attacks on cities.

IF they stick to All 3, we are not being damaged.

Russell: I ^{would perhaps} agree with you if I knew something about enemy morale problems, supply problems, and know we can police this.

Pres: I want us to be agreed on this before I go

Russell: This is a most agonizing war. The most agonizing any President or any Secretary of State or any Secretary of Defense ever faced.

1412

Russell: This is OK,

But U.S. people won't agree to keep troops over there when war is not going on.

Pres: On 37-day bombing pause, Soviets told us 12 days probably would be sufficient but no more than 20.

Wheeler said he would not recommend it, but will support it.

I Am not brave just because it's at end of my term.

I will not proceed unless both Secretaries And All JCS support it.

[42]

CC: This is different from 37-pause.
GUN come into talks.
We have DMZ + cities as a
test of their good will.

This makes it easier to start.

Rusk: Most precious asset has been
the morale of our forces
Can this be sustained?

Westmoreland:

Communists have violated prior
ceasefires. They may erode
this agreement. If that
happens, we will have
problems with morale.
How far do we go before
we resume the bombing

[43]

We will have trouble if erosion occurs.

Westmoreland: Abrams Approach is very practical. I see no problem

Pres: I want us to know what we are getting into now.

P: What is reaction of country going to be And reaction of Senate.

Russell: We are in midst of political campaign. Reactions will vary. Press will hail this. You will be charged with politics.

What every body wants is end of war. It's been a miserable war - worst than Korea.

[44]

Rusk: No decision has been made
in relationship to domestic politics.

Russell: I know that.

Moore: I think we should make it
clear

Russell: Senate wants to get out of
war - some by exterminating
North Vietnam - others
by bringing all troops home on next convey.

My committee will give it a
chance. There will be some
skepticism. Everybody wants
to get this to a conclusion.

You've given NVN every chance to show good faith. They haven't.

Christian:

Reaction will be good from press and media. Political changes of helping HHH will be made.

Clifford: Public can be educated to 2 factors:

- 1) NVN have not been doing well in war.
- 2) NVN may have chosen to deal with this administration rather than the next.

Pres:

I will be charged with
doing this to influence
election —

Nixon will be disappointed.

Doves will criticize us for not
doing it before now.

—
If this is not a way of stopping
it, I don't think I'll have
another opportunity.

I do not have much confidence
in the Soviets or NUN.

I don't think they will accept this

If they accept it, I do not think
they will honor it.

[43]

Westmoreland:

Militarily, enemy is BANKRUPT.

Assume he will Accept gun

honor DMZ

doesn't Attack cities

Can you justify resuming the
bombing for their
foot-dragging on a political
Act.

President: We are testing him.

Russell: U.S. people will take a
"wait-and-see" Attitude.

Clifford: The decision to move at this
time is not based on our initiative.
It is based on Hanoi's initiative.
They said they will bring gun
into the talks

[46]

CC: By stopping bombing now,
we do not give up much.

McConnell: We do not give up much
no.

Pres: What effect does a "no"
decision by me have.

PART II

Oct 14, 1968

CABINET ROOM

Joint Chiefs - Rusk - Clifford - Russell, et al

Pres: Mac Bundy picked worst
time possible to make his
speech.

Russell: ^{with} There is ~~much~~ else that can
be done.

Pres: We said to Soviets on Sept 17
that they could take heat off
Czech by talks on Mideast
AND

Russell: It's worth a try

Abrams And Bunker concur
in instructions on cessation
of bombing.

Thieu made decision on spot
to accept this on Oct. 13.

Thieu said he is ready to along.
Problem is not to stop the
bombing but to stop the war.

- McConnell:** Therefore, I recommend that you go ahead and do this.
- Rusk:** I recommend that we proceed. I recommend that we proceed along the course as outlined.
- Chapman:** I think we should go ahead with it.
- Palmer:** Considering everything that has been brought up here, I would go along with making this proposition.
- Russell:** It's worth a try.
- Westmoreland:** But if the rules of engagement as suggested here are adopted, I see no problem.
- Abrams:** I certainly subscribe to that a hundred per cent.

28

McConnell: Therefore, I recommend that you go ahead and do this.

Rusk: I recommend that we proceed. I recommend that we proceed along the course as outlined.

Chapman: I think we should go ahead with it.

Palmer: Considering everything that has been brought up here, I would go along with making this proposition.

Russell: It's worth a try.

Westmoreland: But if the rules of engagement as suggested here are adopted, I see no problem.

Abrams: I certainly subscribe to that a hundred per cent.