WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#2a memo exempt 9.15.03 NW/RAC 03-62	Helms to Rostow re Vietnam S 2 pp.	1/11/69	A
#2b memo exempt 9.15.03 NW/RAC 03-62	Intelligence memorandum re Vietnam S 3 pp.	1/11/69	A
#11b cable	Intelligence report re Vietnam TS 1 p. —	1/14/69	A
~~#33 memo~~	~~Rostow to the Pres., 12:05 p.m. re Vietnam~~ ~~S 1 p.~~ open 2-27-04 NW 03-96 [partial dup. #2 this file]	~~1/11/69~~	~~A~~
#33a memo	Helms to Rostow re Vietnam S 2 p. [dup. #2a this file]	1/11/69	A
#33b memo	Intelligence memorandum re Vietnam S 3 pp. [dup. #2a this file]	1/11/69	A
~~34a memo~~	~~Adrian Fisher to Rostow re arms control~~ ~~TS 1 p.~~ Open 5/02 - NLJ 019-044-2-3	~~1/11/69~~	~~A~~
#34b cable	Rusk to Cleveland, suggested cable to NATO TS 4 pp.	1/11/69	A
#34c cable	Rusk to Cleveland re SALT and NATO TS 5 pp.	1/11/69	A
#34d cable	Rusk to Cleveland re SALT and NATO TS 3 pp.	1/11/69	A
~~#52b letter~~	~~Kaunda to LBJ re Zambia~~ open 1-6-10 ~~PCI 2 pp.~~	~~10/30/68~~	~~A~~
#71a memcon	President, Allon, et al. 9/9/68 mtg re Israel S 3 pp.	9/10/68	A
#71b memcon	President, Allon, et al. mtg re Israel S 2 pp. Sanitized [Sanitized NLJ 84-181]	9/9/68	A

FILE LOCATION

NSF, Memos to the President, "Walt Rostow, Vol. 113, 1/1 - 15/69," Box 44

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FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#76 memo	Rostow to the President re Vietnam S 1 p. Sanitized [Sanitized NLJ 95-34]	1/3/69	A
#76a cable	FBI Director to Bromley Smith re Vietnam S 1 p. Sanitized [Sanitized NLJ 95-33]	1/3/69	A
~~#86 cable~~	~~CAP 9024, Rostow to the President re Soviets~~ ~~S 2 pp.~~ open 1-20-11 NLJ/RAC ID-215 [dup #9, NSF, CF, France, Vol. 14 "Box 174"]	~~1/2/69~~	~~A~~
~~#88 cable~~	~~CAP 9021, Rostow to the President re Pope Paul~~ ~~C 2 pp.~~ open 4-20-11 NLJ/RAC ID-132 (#5) [dup #5, HOS "Vatican, Pope Paul VI" Box 11]	1/2/69	A

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Pres file

1/

~~Top Secret~~ Sensitive
Literally Eyes Only
for the President

THE PRESIDENT

Vol. 113

THE WHITE HOUSE
Situation Room

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By ____, NARA, Date 3-5-91

Sec. McNamara's draft recommendations of Nov. 1, 1967
and the views of others on the issues raised

Sec. McNamara recommendation Tab A	Sec. Rusk Tab B	Amb. Bunker Tab C	Gen. Westmoreland Tab D	Under Sec. Katzenbach (independent paper) Tab E
Announce 525,000 as ceiling on U.S. forces.	Stabilize but do not announce.	Agrees if we make clear this assumes other side will not escalate.	Stabilize -- unless situation changes -- but don't announce.	--
No U.S. forces across borders: North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia	Agreed.	Make no announcement. Keep options open and keep enemy guessing.	Wants capability to operate across borders.	Agreed.
Stop bombing of North Vietnam and seek negotiations.	No. Use as bargaining card. Remove drama. Perhaps reduce Hanoi-Haiphong attacks.	No. We should not trade bombing merely for "talk."	No.	Agreed: "a qualified but indefinite halt in bombing" or, if unacceptable, stay away from Hanoi-Haiphong.
No mining of Haiphong.	Agreed.	Agreed.	Agreed.	--
No bombing of dikes.	Agreed.	Agreed.	Agreed.	--
Conduct South Vietnamese operations with lesser U.S. and South Vietnamese casualties.	--	Worried about U.S. Delta operations.	That is his "constant endeavor."	Agreed -- strongly.
Transfer functions to South Vietnamese	--	Agreed; but do it slow and steady.	That is his "central purpose."	Agreed -- strongly.
Other.	Believes progress will become increasingly clear in 1968.	--	--	--

DECLASSIFIED
Authority per declassification of all NSMOS on chart
By mp/dcb NARA, Date 1-26-98

Mr. Clark Clifford Tab F	Mr. Justice Fortas Tab G	Gen. Maxwell Taylor Tab H	Mr. McGeorge Bundy (independent paper) Tab I	Mr. W. W. Rostow Tab J
No.	No.	No.	Stabilize (no announcement)	Do not announce.
--	--	--	--	Keep option open.
No.	No.	No.	No. But reduce drama and avoid Hanoi.	No. But reduce drama.
--	--	--	--	Keep option open.
--	--	--	--	Keep option open.
--	--	--	--	--
--	--	--	Agreed.	Agreed.
Disagrees with underlying assumptions about U. S. public opinion and effect on Hanoi.	--	--	--	Disagrees with underlying assumptions.

Pres file
1b

~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE

Thursday, January 9, 1969
12:30 p. m.

LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President:

At the top of the attached file (tab 1) is a copy of Mac Bundy's letter of resignation. Your memory was quite correct: Mac was very sturdy in December 1965. As the next document shows (tab 2), he was also sturdy as late as November 4, 1967, when I compared his position (tab I) with that of Bob McNamara.

As the index of tabs indicates, the rest of the file contains comments on McNamara's paper by others. His memorandum to you of November 1, 1967, is at Tab A.

In the file is also a paper in somewhat the same mood by Nick Katzenbach (tab E).

W. W. Rostow

Attachment: ~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE file

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By mp, NARA, Date 1-22-98

TAB 1 - Copy of McGeorge Bundy's letter of resignation

TAB 2 - Comparison of Bundy and McNamara positions

TAB A - McNamara recommendation

TAB B - Views of Secy Rusk

TAB C - " " Amb. Bunker

TAB D - " " Gen. Westmoreland

TAB E - Sect. Katzenbach (Independent paper)

TAB F - Views of Secy Clifford

TAB G - " " Mr. Fortas

TAB H - " " Gen. Taylor

TAB I - McGeorge Bundy (independent paper)

TAB J - Views of W. W. Rostow

De. 7, 1965 1e

Dear Mr. President:

I submit herewith my resignation as Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, to take effect on February 28, 1966. I leave this work with great regret, but the Trustees of the Ford Foundation have offered me another opportunity which it is not in my heart to reject, and I believe that after five years here it is right for me to move on. I am deeply grateful to you for your generous understanding of my decision.

I shall always be proud to have been a member of the White House Staff under two such leaders as President Kennedy and yourself. The achievements of the last five years are great by any standard. They are greater still in the light of the clear prospect that in the years ahead your continued leadership will enlarge and strengthen both our own society and our service to the peace and progress of mankind.

There are dangers ahead, as there are dangers that we have put behind us. In Vietnam a hard and testing struggle continues. But you have set a course there that is both right and brave, and I know our country will continue in its understanding support of both your resolution and your steady search for peace. While the effort in Vietnam goes on -- both in battle and in the works of peace -- I know that our country will also go ahead in other fields. It will respond to your standard of energetic cooperation for progress with all who will cooperate with us.

I now look forward to joining the great mass of private citizens who work for peace as they can, and upon whom you can always call. I have asked the Trustees of the Ford Foundation if I may accept their invitation on the understanding that I shall always be free to accept any special assignments from you, and they have generously agreed to this condition.

Mary and I will always cherish the friendship which you and Mrs. Johnson have offered us so warmly. We will never forget your kindness to us both, and you can count on our deep and lasting affection.

With great respect,

/s/
McGeorge Bundy

The Honorable Lyndon B. Johnson
The President of the United States
Washington, D. C.

2

~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE

Saturday, November 4, 1967
10:15 a.m.

LITERALLY EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLS86-167
By mcl/sp NARA, Date 1-26-98

Mr. President:

Here are the McNamara and Mac Bundy positions you asked me to compare.

McNAMARA	MAC BUNDY
General:	
An announced new policy of stabilization.	No major change in public posture established in San Antonio speech.
Bombing:	
Unilateral stand-down to await Hanoi reaction.	Against: -- any unconditional pause; -- any extended pause for sake of appearance; -- any major headline-making intensification of the bombing.
U.S. Troops:	
No increase beyond current approved level.	No large-scale reinforcements beyond totals already agreed.

Mac Bundy did not address himself explicitly to the following list of points made by Secretary McNamara. Presumably he would agree with the following list, within the general framework of existing policy rather than a new announced policy of "stabilization."

-- There will be no call up of reserves.

-- No expansion of ground action will be undertaken in North Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia.

-- No attempt will be made to deny sea imports into North Vietnam.

-- No effort will be made to break the will of the North by an air campaign on the dikes, locks or populated targets -- efforts will be made to hold down civilian casualties in the North.

-- We will engage in continued efforts to restrict the war.

-- We will endeavor to maintain our current rates of progress but with lesser US casualties and lesser destruction in South Vietnam.

-- We will be willing to accept slow but steady progress for whatever period is required to move the North Vietnamese to abandon their attempt to gain political control in South Vietnam by military means.

-- In light of the political progress of the GVN, we will gradually transfer the major burden of the fighting to the South Vietnamese forces.

W. W. R.

1h

A

OFFICE F THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1 November 1967

MEMO FOR The President

Yesterday at lunch I stated my belief that continuation of our present course of action in Southeast Asia would be dangerous, costly in lives, and unsatisfactory to the American people. The attached memorandum outlines an alternative program.

The memo represents my personal views. Because these may be incompatible with your own, I have not shown the paper to Dean Rusk, Walt Rostow or Bus Wheeler. After you have read it, if you wish me to discuss my proposals with them and report back to you our joint recommendations, I will do so.

Robert S. McNamara

~~TOP SECRET~~ SENSITIVE

1 November 1967
DRAFT

1j

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 84-331
By kpl NARA, Date 1-26-98

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: A Fifteen Month Program for Military Operations in Southeast Asia

This memorandum explores the likely consequences if we go ahead with our presently planned course of action in Vietnam and considers whether more promising alternatives exist. The purpose is to begin to focus for your decision the actions we should take over the next 15 months in order to achieve the maximum progress towards our objectives in the South while retaining the maximum domestic and international support for our efforts.

In Section I, "Outlook If Present Course of Action is Continued," I state my opinion that continuing on our present course will not bring us by the end of 1968 enough closer to success, in the eyes of the American public, to prevent the continued erosion of popular support for our involvement in Vietnam.

In Section II, "Possible Alternative Courses of Action," I examine both a halt in the bombing and an expansion of our military operations as alternative means of achieving our political objectives in Vietnam.

In Section III, "Recommendations," I state my belief that we should announce a policy of stabilization of our military effort indicating that we plan no further increase in our forces in South Vietnam, and no expansion of our operations against North Vietnam. This posture would help to convince Hanoi that we are prepared to stay in Vietnam as long as necessary, and that we are resigned to a long struggle. It would also increase support for the war at home by removing anxiety about possible increases in our activity. To further increase support for the war effort and to probe the possibilities of a negotiated settlement, I recommend we plan on a halt in the bombing of the North. And finally, I suggest we examine our military operations in the South with a view to taking steps which will reduce our casualties and increase the role of the Vietnamese.

I. Outlook If Present Course of Action is Continued

1. Expansion of Forces

Under present plans, we will continue during the next 15 months gradually to expand the US and free world forces in South Vietnam. The number of American troops will, during this period, increase from the present level of 465,000 to 525,000 while the aggregate increase in other free world forces from outside South Vietnam will bring their total in the area from 59,000 to 75,000.

The additional numbers of combat troops will not produce any significant change in the nature of our military operations. The increase in numbers is likely to lead to a proportionate increase in encounters with the enemy, and some increase in the number of casualties inflicted on both sides. But neither the additional troops now scheduled nor augmentation of our forces by a much

greater amount holds great promise of bringing the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces visibly closer to collapse during the next 15 months. Nonetheless, we will be faced with requests for additional ground forces requiring an increased draft and/or a call-up of reserves.

2. US Ground Operations in South

The military effort in the South would continue along the general lines now being pursued. US forces would be used along the DMZ and opposite the North Vietnamese staging areas in Cambodia and Laos. These forces would also be used in "search and destroy" operations against large enemy units and main base areas of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army.

The South Vietnamese armed forces would continue to be used primarily for "secure and hold" operations and in support of pacification. There are no present plans to turn a larger share of the campaign against main enemy forces over to the South Vietnamese.

Accordingly, the present US casualty rate will probably increase if the present program is pursued. This would mean between 700 and 1,000 US killed in action every month, for a total during the fifteen months of 10,900 to 15,000 additional American dead and 30,000 to 45,000 additional wounded requiring hospitalization. This would bring our total killed in action in the Vietnam campaign to somewhere between 24 and 30,000, close to the Korean total of 33,000, and 75,000 to 90,000 wounded requiring hospitalization.

Continuation of the North Vietnamese attack across the DMZ and use of Laotian and Cambodian territory will produce repeated requests for ground operations against the "sanctuary" areas.

3. Bombing Operations in the North

During the next 15 months, we would expect to run about 115,000 attack sorties against North Vietnamese targets, including approximately 12,000 attack sorties in the restricted areas of Hanoi and Haiphong.

Although no change in the nature of the bombing campaign against North Vietnam is contemplated, the continuing destruction of previously authorized targets will lead inexorably to requests for authority to attack more and more sensitive targets in the centers of Hanoi and Haiphong. There will, as the bombing attack proceeds, be increasing pressures to take direct action to prevent movement of materiel by sea into North Vietnam and to attack the irrigation dikes.

4. Pacification

Pacification efforts similarly would continue along the lines now being pursued. Better utilization of the South Vietnamese regular forces, regional forces and popular forces in the provision of security for the Revolutionary Development Teams would be attempted. Principal reliance for this improved performance would be placed on an increase in the number of US Advisors and some integration of US and Vietnamese forces. The chances of dramatic impact by any measurement of security are slim. The Pacification Program is moving forward but progress is slow and likely to remain slow.

5. Political Evolution

Although the development of the form of representative government has certainly been encouraging, it is not at all clear that the image or performance of this government over the next 15 months will make it appear to the US public to be a government worthy of continued US support in blood and treasure. A new government operating without parties or party discipline amid numerous competing cliques, is bound to have difficult going. It will be faced with hard political and economic decisions in meeting strong inflationary pressures in a disrupted country.

6. Probable Results of Present Course of Action

In South Vietnam, I believe that following the present course of action will bring continued but slow progress. However, I do not anticipate that this progress will be readily visible to the general public either in the United States or abroad.

In North Vietnam, the bombing attacks have been unable to interrupt the flow of supplies and men needed to maintain the present level of enemy military action in the South. Whatever is done in the way of approving additional targets, improving our tactics or munitions, or reorienting the focus of our sorties, unless the "obstacle system" is spectacularly successful, there is little prospect that we will be able to cut off the men and ammunition needed to continue to inflict the present casualty rate on our forces.

Nor is there any reason to believe that the steady progress we are likely to make, the continued infliction of grievous casualties, or the heavy punishment of air bombardment will suffice to break the will of the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong to continue to fight. Nothing can be expected to break this will other than the conviction that they cannot succeed. This conviction will not be created unless and until they come to the conclusion that the US is prepared to remain in Vietnam for whatever period of time is necessary to assure the independent choice of the South Vietnamese people. The enemy cannot be expected to arrive at that conclusion in advance of the American public. And the American public, frustrated by the slow rate of progress, fearing continued escalation, and doubting that all approaches to peace have been sincerely probed, does not give the appearance of having the will to persist. As the months go by, there will be both increasing pressure for widening the war and continued loss of support for American participation in the struggle. There will be increasing calls for American withdrawal.

There is, in my opinion, a very real question whether under these circumstances it will be possible to maintain our efforts in South Vietnam for the time necessary to accomplish our objectives there.

II. Possible Alternative Courses of Action

In appraising alternatives, it is significant to review the list of military actions presented by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 17 in response to your request of September 12 for their recommendations of additional actions to bring the conflict to a speedy conclusion. The striking fact is that none of them relate to our conduct of military operations in the South. Six would involve increased operations against North Vietnam -- mining the ports

and waterways, making greater use of our naval forces to attack North Vietnamese shipping and aircraft and expanding bombing and covert programs. The other four involve extension of our activities in Laos and Cambodia. I do not think adoption of any or all of these proposals would bring us significantly closer to victory in the next 15 months.

There are obviously other possibilities for expansion of our military operations, both against North Vietnam and in South Vietnam. We might extend our efforts to eliminate aggression from the North by expanding the geographic scope of the ground conflict. We might intensify the bombing attack to try to break the will of the North to continue. But no further expansion seems likely to achieve sufficient visible progress in the next 15 months to assure the required public support. (See the Appendix for a discussion of ground action in North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and air action against the ports and dikes.) And most programs of expanded military action carry major risks of widening the war.

The alternative possibilities lie in the stabilization of our military operations in the South (possibly with fewer US casualties) and of our air operations in the North, along with a demonstration that our air attacks on the North are not blocking negotiations leading to a peaceful settlement. The remainder of this memorandum deals with the use of a bombing halt for this purpose and the decisions that are associated with the stabilization of our military program.

(a) Complete Cessation of Bombing in the North

A decision to stop the bombing is a logical alternative to our present course in Vietnam. The bombing halt would have dual objectives. We would hope for a response from Hanoi, by some parallel reduction in its offensive activity, by a movement toward talks, or both. At a minimum, the lack of any response from Hanoi would demonstrate that it is North Vietnam and not the United States that is blocking a peaceful settlement.

If a halt is to be called in the bombing, we should be prepared to continue it indefinitely. During this time, however, we would plan to continue to bomb the infiltration trails in Laos.

After the bombing stops, we could expect Hanoi to repair roads and bridges, improve its anti-aircraft defenses and take other steps to be able to move supplies and men at reduced cost if the bombing resumes. During this period, Hanoi would of course be able to move supplies more openly and more economically toward the South. However, these actions would not necessarily increase the amount of support now provided to the enemy forces operating in the South, since our present air campaign does not limit this support to its present level.

Moreover, if artillery fire or other overt pressure from across the DMZ were to continue, we could establish a policy of returning fire, including air bombardment of their artillery positions. Hanoi, however, might well respond to our halt in the bombardment of the North by the cessation of artillery fire and large scale infiltration from across the DMZ. If this is its only product, the bombing halt would have achieved a major benefit in reduced US casualties.

If there were to be a substantial expansion of North Vietnam's operations in the South, either in general or only immediately south of the DMZ, we could resume our air attacks at such level as we saw fit.

We would have to anticipate strong resistance to any resumption. Many here and abroad will always argue that if we wait just a little longer negotiations leading to peaceful settlement will ensue. Politically, resumption will be extremely difficult if Hanoi has responded to the halt by substantial reduction of its offensive, whether or not accompanied by any movement toward talks. But if the halt has bought us an appreciable easing of North Vietnam's military pressure, resumption would be unnecessary and imprudent. In short, the difficulty of resuming will vary inversely with the amount of overt military action continued by North Vietnam. Restraint on its part will create the greatest pressure to continue the bombing halt but the least disadvantage in doing so.

If we halt the bombing without advance sign of reciprocal action and without setting a time limit, the North Vietnamese initially may conclude that the US resolve is weakening. They will be encouraged to believe that the course they have been following is correct. They will also recognize the risk that failure to respond to a bombing halt, either by reduction of the level of operations in the South or by entering into talks, might lead the US to resume bombing at intensified levels. The North Vietnamese leaders will expect considerable pressure to agree to talks, both from free world countries and from the Soviet Union, which will be aware that resumption and intensification of the bombing would face it with a difficult choice.

Suspension of the bombing, particularly for a prolonged period, must be expected to have some adverse effect on the morale both of non-Communist Vietnamese and of US troops fighting in the South.

In sum, a halt would have the following consequences:

How do we get this Conclusion?

1. It is probable that Hanoi would move to "talks," perhaps within a few weeks after the bombing stopped.

Skeptical Source — Why believe this?

2. There is a strong possibility that, whether or not talks ensued, a halt would be accompanied by a cessation of enemy military activities across the DMZ.

3. Hanoi, at least initially, would be likely to use the talks for propaganda purposes rather than as a forum for serious negotiation. Agree

4. As the talks, continue, however, the internal dynamics of the situation would create pressures and opportunities for both parties that might well result in productive discussions moving toward a settlement short of the total elimination of North Vietnam's intervention in the South but consistent with our objective of permitting the South Vietnamese to shape their own future.

5. If large scale shelling and infiltration across the DMZ does not stop, or if Hanoi prolongs fruitless discussions while taking military advantage, resumption of the bombing could be made acceptable to the majority of the American people.

6. At a minumum, we would have made clear that our bombing is not preventing peaceful political settlement.

(b) Stabilization of Our Military Effort

With or without a bombing halt, we could state clearly for both internal and public guidance our decision to stabilize our level of military effort in the absence of any major change in the enemy threat. The following elements would be involved in a decision to stabilize military operations:

1. No increase is to be made in US forces above the current approved level.

2. There will be no call up of reserves.

3. No expansion of ground action will be undertaken in North Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia.

4. No attempt will be made to deny sea imports into North Vietnam.

5. No effort will be made to break the will of the North by an air campaign on the dikes, locks or populated targets -- efforts will be made to hold down civilian casualties in the North.

6. We will engage in continued efforts to restrict the war.

7. We will endeavor to maintain our current rates of progress but with lesser US casualties and lesser destruction in South Vietnam.

8. We will be willing to accept slow but steady progress for whatever period is required to move the North Vietnamese to abandon their attempt to gain political control in South Vietnam by military means.

9. In light of the political progress of the GVN, we will gradually transfer the major burden of the fighting to the South Vietnamese forces.

In announcing this stabilization policy, we would have two objectives. First, we would hope to attract greater support by allaying apprehensions that the conflict would be expanded by our actions beyond Vietnam. Second, we would hope to increase pressure on Hanoi to enter into negotiations and/or to reduce their military efforts in the South.

III. Recommendations

I recommend that we:

1. Decide on, and announce, the policy of stabilization outlined above, that we assert that we are making slow but steady progress and

expect to move ahead without expanding our operations against the North, and without increasing the size of our forces in the South beyond those already planned.

2. Plan a halt in the bombing for some time before the end of the year. This halt seems advisable, if not mandatory, entirely apart from its actual effect in bringing about negotiations and a settlement of the Vietnamese conflict. The argument of many who oppose the American effort in Vietnam comes down to the proposition that American air attacks on North Vietnam are what keep the war going and prevents political settlement. A cessation would thus clear the atmosphere and should minimize further loss of domestic and international support for our efforts. Moreover, I believe there is a strong possibility that a bombing halt would lead to suspension of overt enemy operations across the DMZ. And a bombing halt is likely to lead to talks with Hanoi. It is possible that such talks would lead to productive negotiations on at least some issues. No other course affords any hope of these results in the next 15 months.

3. Review intensively the conduct of military operations in the South and consider programs which involve (a) reduced US casualties, (b) procedures for the progressive turn-over to the GVN of greater responsibility for security in the South, and (c) lesser destruction of the people and wealth of South Vietnam.

Robert S. McNamara

APPENDIX

EXPANDED GROUND AND AIR OPERATIONS AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM, LAOS, AND CAMBODIA

This Appendix examines briefly considerations affecting a major expansion of our operations against the North Vietnamese, either by ground invasion or an intensification of the bombing, and an acceleration of our activities against Laos and Cambodia.

1. Geographical Expansion of the Conflict

Despite our bombing campaign, infiltration of men and supplies continues both through the DMZ and across the borders of Laos and Cambodia. In addition, our forces south of the DMZ have been subjected to heavy fire from the North Vietnamese side with consequent heavy casualties.

Under these circumstances, it is logical to consider whether invasion north of the DMZ would reduce or eliminate this infiltration or, at a minimum, ease the pressure on our forces in the northern part of South Vietnam. If American forces were to be landed north of the DMZ, they might succeed, by working their way south, in cleaning out the existing rocket and mortar sites and the staging areas for the North Vietnamese army's infiltration. The relief gained, however, would only be temporary unless the territory invaded were to be secured and held by our troops.

Such an invasion of the North would certainly be regarded as a substantial escalation of the war. It would alarm our allies and our own people and would lead to violent denunciation by the Soviet Bloc and the Communist Chinese. This alarm and these denunciations would be greater if our forces were to seek to hold North Vietnamese territory. There is some prospect that this action would lead to the introduction of Chinese volunteers, to the provision by the Soviets of more, and more sophisticated weapons, or to Soviet military pressure against the West.

On the other hand, the advantages of such invasion would be dubious at best. As pointed out, above, the easing of pressure would be only temporary in the absence of continued occupation of the territory north of the DMZ. And if American forces were to remain in positions north of the DMZ, this would result only in their attack by North Vietnamese forces and armament from the area immediately north of that occupied. Our repeated response to this renewal of pressure would lead to our inching the area of conflict further into North Vietnam. The net result would be a broader battlefield, part of which would be contested by opponents fighting for their own homeland and an ever higher American casualty list. If Chinese troops enter the fray, or more sophisticated Russian weapons are introduced, our losses would continue to climb.

A greater effort to suppress infiltration might lead instead, or in addition, to an acceleration of our activities in Laos and Cambodia. The difficulty the North Vietnamese might experience in admitting the presence

of North Vietnamese troops in those other countries would make our expansion in this direction less provocative than invasion of the North. In other respects, however, expansion of the area of conflict westward would have the same disabilities and could have serious diplomatic consequences. In the end, we would have to decide either to attack and withdraw, or to secure and hold. In either case, infiltration into South Vietnam would probably continue and the present level of military activity in South Vietnam would not be appreciably reduced. Again, no reduction in American casualties could be anticipated in compensation for the risk of expanding the conflict.

2. Intensification of the Bombing Campaign

No intensification of the bombing attack against North Vietnam will prevent them from maintaining their present level of military effort in the South. Elimination of the present restrictions and an effort to close the ports by mining would unquestionably compound their problems. But, because North Vietnam is a conduit for munitions and military support materials, rather than the source, these supplies would continue to move on alternate routes even if the deep water ports could be permanently and completely closed.

Under these circumstances, the true impact of unrestricted attacks on North Vietnam's ports would be the further disruption of its economy and the everyday life of its people. This would be achieved at the risk of direct confrontation with the Soviet Union because of interference with, and possible destruction of, its shipping. This risk has to be measured against the incremental disadvantage to North Vietnam, and the very low probability of its having an effect on the resupply of the South, or Hanoi's determination to continue the war.

The bombing attack might also be expanded to include the dikes and locks. Again, this would add to the unpleasantness of life for the North Vietnamese, but their activities in the South could and would continue at somewhat greater sacrifice to their civilian population. The effectiveness of attacks on the dikes has not been proved. In any event, this would stimulate severe criticism as a direct attack on a civilian population. The flooding of homes and the destruction of crops would be denounced as attempted genocide and contravention of the Nuremberg principles. These denunciations would not come solely from Communist countries. Domestically, this kind of air campaign would result in further loss of support. Obviously any direct attack on the population, by bombing the cities, would produce the most unfortunate public reaction in the US and world-wide. At the same time, it would not destroy Hanoi's determination or ability to fight.

Even short of a change in the character of the targets, the elimination of all restrictions on military targets and the higher civilian casualties which would result would cause much the same adverse reaction, both in the United States and abroad. In view of the fact that our air campaign has already destroyed such industrial base as existed, its expansion could not produce results which would offset the further loss of support for our efforts.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

1 b

November 20, 1967

~~TOP SECRET~~ - SENSITIVE

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 85-317
By mp/isp NARA, Date 1-26-98

Mr. President:

Here is a digest of my personal reactions to Secretary McNamara's memorandum to you of November 1 on Vietnam. I have not discussed his memorandum with anyone in the Department of State and have not attempted, in this digest, a full argumentation. The organization of my comments follows the topical headings of Secretary McNamara's memorandum.

I. Outlook if Present Course of Action is Continued

1. Expansion of Forces

I accept, as realistic, the prospect that U. S. forces will reach 525, 000, other free world forces will reach 59-75, 000, and that South Vietnamese forces can be increased by 60, 000.

I do not agree that these increased forces cannot bring "the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces visibly closer to collapse during the next 15 months." The indicators point in the other direction. Ambassador Bunker is convinced that progress "will accelerate."

2. U. S. Ground Operations in South

I have no real disagreement on this point. For reasons expressed later, I strongly oppose U. S. ground operations against North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. I would favor increased operations against infiltration routes through Laos, but not with U. S. combat units of significant size.

3. Bombing Operations in the North

I believe we must resist pressures to take direct action

against

The President,
The White House.

~~TOP SECRET~~ - SENSITIVE

against foreign shipping entering Haiphong or to bomb irrigation dikes.

I strongly support intensive bombardment of infiltration routes in North Vietnam and Laos and sectors of the battlefield such as the DMZ and areas north of the DMZ.

As for bombing in the Hanoi-Haiphong area, I believe that we should be guided by the following:

(a) we should bomb sufficiently to hold in place the AA defenses of the area;

(b) we should bomb sufficiently to require substantial diversions of manpower to repairs and to maintaining communications;

(c) we should not permit a complete sanctuary in the northern part of North Vietnam and thereby eliminate this incentive for peace.

But, I believe that we should hit only major targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong area and not sustain losses in men and planes for targets of marginal utility from a military point of view.

I would reject the political judgment that a continuous escalation of the bombing will break the will of Hanoi.

In sum, I would be more selective about the targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong area--limiting them to targets which have a significant military value and which are worth the losses incurred.

4. Pacification

I generally concur.

5. Political

5. Political Evolution

Ambassador Bunker and I are somewhat more optimistic about political developments. There seems to be little threat of a coup; groups like the extreme Buddhists are not catching on. High priority tasks for the next six months are agreed and promising. Hanoi is being deprived of the possibility of a political collapse in the South.

6. Probable Results of Present Course of Action

I am more optimistic than Secretary McNamara about whether progress will be "visible to the general public in the months ahead." General Westmoreland's estimate that only 60% of enemy battalions are combat effective is significant. Success is cumulative--and so is failure. The enemy has problems which are growing. Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland should be closely questioned on this point.

II. Possible Alternative Courses of Action

I agree strongly with Secretary McNamara that we should not extend ground operations into North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and should not go after foreign shipping, irrigation dikes or civilian centers.

There are large forces in North Vietnam which have not been committed to South Vietnam. If we cannot deal satisfactorily with forces now in South Vietnam, I do not see how we could improve the position by taking on more than 300,000 additional forces in North Vietnam.

No one knows just where the "flash point" is which would change the present rules insofar as Peking and Moscow are concerned. There is a very high risk that ground action against North Vietnam would cross the "flash point."

(a) Complete

(a) Complete Cessation of Bombing in the North

Purely from a political point of view in relation to Hanoi, we have two major cards to play: (i) growing success in the South and (ii) the bombing of the North. It seems to me that a cessation of the bombing of the North should be related to what will happen next. The Kissinger exercise did not even produce a discussion as to what your San Antonio formula means. They have never said that cessation will lead to talks. They resolutely resist any discussion of reciprocal military action or what we mean by "taking no military advantage." I do not believe that we should cease the bombing before further probing on what the result would be. If Hanoi has any serious interest in peace, private contacts could move much further and much faster than has occurred to date.

I am sceptical of an extended pause in the bombing because I don't know who would be persuaded. Hanoi would call any pause (i. e., not permanent) an ultimatum. We know of their "fight and negotiate" strategy discussions. For those in the outside world pressing for a halt in the bombing, no pause would be long enough. No one has said to me that his view would be changed if we had a prolonged pause in the bombing and there were no response from Hanoi.

I do think we should take the drama out of our bombing of the North by cutting back on our operations in the Hanoi-Haiphong area. Politically, we should avoid the impression of continuous escalation; militarily we should weigh military advantage against military losses.

(b) Stabilization of Our Military Effort

I generally agree with the concept of stabilization--but I would not announce it. To do so would give the enemy a firm base upon which to plan and redispose his manpower and other assets. Over time, stabilization would become apparent to our own people, without giving guarantees to the other side.

III. Recommendations

III. Recommendations

1. I would stabilize, but not announce it. This is on the assumption that actual results in the South will continue to accelerate.

2. I would use the bombing of the North as a central card to play in connection with some interest on the part of Hanoi in a peaceful settlement. I would take some of the drama, and the losses, out of our present bombing effort in the Hanoi-Haiphong area. I would be prepared to build upon cease fires at Christmas, New Year's and Tet if the enemy shows any interest.

3. I agree with Secretary McNamara's recommendation.

Dean Rusk

Dean Rusk

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INFORMATION 1m

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLS 85-316
By NARA, Date 1-26-98

~~SECRET~~

Tuesday, November 21, 1967
3:50 p.m.

Mr. President:

Late on Monday, November 20, 1967, I had an hour's session alone with Amb. Bunker. I took him through exactly the same questions I took Westy, derived from Bob McNamara's memorandum. The results were as follows.

1. A bombing stand down in North Viet Nam except in the tactical area across the DMZ if they continue to press at the DMZ. Ellsworth talked speculatively about the problem around these three points:

-- He sees no reason to believe that a bombing stand down now would lead to serious negotiations, and he does not think we should trade bombing simply for talk;

-- He is, however, interested in the barrier and in SOUTHPAW (harassment on the ground in Laos) because he would like to put us in a position where we might put Hanoi to a test in the future with a bombing pause. Therefore, he feels it important that we get as good a grasp as we can on infiltration of Laos so that the costs of a pause designed to test Hanoi would be minimized.

2. Announce that our present U.S. troop ceilings are the limit of our commitment. Bunker is rather drawn to this proposition if we make it clear that an announced troop ceiling would assume that no one else would expand the war. He says that we are fighting a limited war for limited objectives and believes that we will not need more than 525,000 U.S. forces. He was not dogmatic on this point but, I would say, mildly favorable.

3. Forego ground operations in North Vietnam; Laos; and Cambodia. Bunker would make no statement committing us against such ground operations. His advice: keep them guessing. As for Laos, as indicated above, he actively supports SOUTHPAW.

4. No mining of Haiphong. Bunker is against mining the harbors. We are doing almost as well by hitting transport around Haiphong. The international complications are worth avoiding.

5. No attack on dikes. Bunker is against the attack on dikes because of the international political repercussions.

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6. Maintain progress with lesser U. S. casualties and destruction inside South Vietnam. Under this heading Bunker is worried about future operations in the Delta. He is afraid that an additional massive flow of refugees could turn the people of South Vietnam against us. He is skeptical of Komer's view that the refugees are churned up by enemy operations. He believes they are mainly trying to get away from our bombing. It is true that of 2 million refugees generated by the war, 633,000 have already gone back to their villages and another 600,000 have been resettled elsewhere. But he would like to see the total refugee number decline in 1968 and not increase. (I told Bunker that I had raised this question with the President and with Westy, so you would get a feel for it. I urged him to sot down with Westy and make sure that the actual tactical plan Westy proposes to follow in the Delta would not generate excessive refugees, pointing out that Westy himself seemed sensitive on this point as well as on the need not to induce a decline in Delta rice production by his military operations.

7. Transfer functions to the ARVN. Bunker, is, of course, all for this; but he says we must go slow and steady. We should not shove at them more than they can absorb at any one time. Like Westy, he regards the build up of the political and military capacity of the South Vietnamese as a central taks.

Coming back to Bob McNamara's two basic propositions -- about a new announced policy of stabilization and a bombing halt -- Bunker said in general we should refuse to put the war in a time frame. He has carefully separated his own language in this matter from Westy's. In any policy announcement it would be good to indicate that we expect the GVN to take over increasing military and nation building responsibility, but we must avoid giving them the feeling that we are pulling out and leaving them alone, or that we are relaxing in our effort to bring the war to a conclusion as rapidly as possible. In general, we must keep flexible and try to conduct the war with maximum imagination within accepted limits. Bunker's position on bombing is set out in paragraph 1, above.

W. W. Rostow

WWRostow:rln

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INFORMATION

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ85-316
By mpf NARA, Date 1-26-98

~~SECRET~~

Monday, November 20, 1967

Mr. President:

I could not get Westmoreland and Bunker together because of Bunker's schedule today, but I had a good lunch in my office with Westy and put to him the key propositions in Bob McNamara's memorandum.

1. A bombing stand down in North Viet Nam except in the tactical area across the DMZ if they continue to press at the DMZ. He was against such a policy. Effective bombing operations against the logistical system requires pressure throughout that system, from the Chinese Communist border all the way south. He wants to keep the northeast railway lines cut or harassed; he wants to continue complicated shipments out of Haiphong to Hanoi and south. He wants to keep destroying the temporary bridges which they put in.

When I pressed him on the question of Hanoi-Haiphong area, he said: bombing south of the 20th parallel is "absolutely essential." He would prefer to see bombing continued all the way to the Chinese Communist border.

2. Announce that our present U.S. troop ceilings are the limit of our commitment. He said that in one sense the issue is academic because they will not all be there for a year; although he is satisfied that the present troop shipment schedule is as tight as it can be. On television he said he would pass judgment on the adequacy of the troop level at the time when the 525,000 are in place. He believes it would be "foolish" to announce now that 525,000 is our limit, although obviously we hope that it will prove to be the maximum requirement.

3. Forego ground operations in North Vietnam; Laos; and Cambodia. With respect to North Vietnam, he would like for us to have the capability to raid North Vietnam in force above the DMZ in May-June of next year -- the earliest time that might be technically possible. He is not now recommending such an operation; but he thinks it important that we have such an option if our DMZ position requires it at that time.

With respect to Laos, he has been discussing with Bob McNamara some very limited operations by South Vietnamese forces, which would get at certain critical base areas now being used in Laos to support operations against us in the highlands. In addition, there is an area in southeast Laos which is used as a rocket storage base which he would like to get at come next March, again with South Vietnamese troops. These would be raid operations designed to make the enemy uncertain of his sanctuary. Therefore, although a formal recommendation

has not yet come to us from him, he would not like us flatly to rule out the possibility of some limited raiding operations in Laos.

With respect to Cambodia, he is sensitive, of course, to the political problem. He believes there are "dozens even hundreds" of VC bases of the kind just discovered by the press inside Cambodia. Again, he is not now recommending any Cambodian operations but he does not wish to see them flatly ruled out.

4. No mining of Haiphong. He thinks we ought to make a maximum effort to throttle the flow of supplies from Haiphong into the country, but believes our present efforts to harass and isolate Haiphong are quite effective; and he understands well that they involve less risk than mining or attacking Soviet ships. Therefore, he is not recommending an attack on Haiphong harbor.

5. No attack on dikes. He is not at all sure the Air Force has a realistic capability for destroying the dikes; and the effort to destroy them would raise tremendous political problems. He does not recommend, therefore, an attack on the dikes.

6. Maintain progress with lesser U.S. casualties and destruction inside South Vietnam. Westy's reply to this point was, simply, that is his "constant endeavor." Every operation is undertaken with a view to minimizing our own and South Vietnamese civil casualties. On the other hand, he cannot permit his tactical operations to be controlled by these criteria. In this context, he noted that certain technical devices now coming into use would tend to make our bombing attacks in South Vietnam more accurate and otherwise help to limit casualties.

7. Transfer functions to the ARVN. Over the next two years this is Westy's central purpose. Elements in a program have been studied; but a mature operational program to transfer functions does not yet exist. One reason for his statements in the U.S. about the ARVN and the U.S. phase down within two years is to give him leverage, when he goes back, to both elevate the South Vietnamese -- by recalling the confidence he showed in them in the U.S. -- and to pressure them in the direction of better performance and more responsibility. He is extremely conscious that one of our tasks is not merely to achieve our immediate purpose in Vietnam but to leave behind a military establishment capable of looking after itself increasingly.

With respect to Bob McNamara's two central propositions, then:

-- Westy is against a new announced program of stabilization, although he does not now envisage more U.S. troops and actively wishes to

see the ARVN take over more functions;

-- He is flatly against a bombing stand down for reasons set out in paragraph 1, above.

W. W. Rostow

WWRostow:rln

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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

November 16, 1967

Dear Mr. President:

The enclosed memorandum on Viet-Nam represents my personal views which may not be shared by you or by my colleagues in the Administration. For this reason I am sending it directly to you for your consideration.

Only Secretary Rusk, with whom I have not discussed this memorandum, has a copy.

Respectfully,

Nicholas deB. Katzenbach

Enclosure.

The President
The White House.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

18-1

November 16, 1967

~~TOP SECRET~~
SENSITIVE

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLS85-317
By mpl NARA, Date 1-26-98

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Viet-Nam

Since you are now in the process of reviewing the situation in Viet-Nam, I want to take this opportunity to express my personal views.

I.

Until we can build the GVN as a government and as a fighting force to the point where it can, with moderate levels of outside assistance, both sustain itself and deal adequately with DRV-supported insurrection and terror, we must base our strategy on six fundamental premises:

1. The war is being actively fought on two fronts: One, in Viet-Nam with our military and civilian efforts; the other, in the United States with our efforts to maintain whatever level of popular and Congressional support is necessary to continue our efforts.

2. Hanoi's strategy is based on winning the war in the United States, not in Viet-Nam where our military might obviously forecloses that possibility.

The DRV strategy should not be analyzed in terms of phase 1, phase 2 warfare. Hanoi uses time the way the Russians used terrain before Napoleon's advance on Moscow, always retreating, losing every battle, but eventually creating conditions in which the enemy can no longer function. For Napoleon it was his long supply lines and the

cold Russian winter; Hanoi hopes that for us it will be the mounting dissension, impatience, and frustration caused by a protracted war without fronts or other visible signs of success; a growing need to choose between guns and butter; and an increasing American repugnance at finding, for the first time, their own country cast as "the heavy" with massive fire power brought to bear against a "small Asian nation".

3. The war can be lost in the United States. There is considerable justification for Hanoi's belief that public and Congressional opinion will not permit the United States to keep meeting immense costs in men, money, and--above all--severe internal divisions for many more months without an end visibly in sight.

4. The military requirements of Hanoi's strategy are minimal and well within the DRV's capabilities. Even if it never wins a battle, the DRV can create the conditions of growing dissension in the United States merely by denying us crucial victories, inflicting (as well as taking) sizeable casualties and requiring us to maintain a large and expensive force in Viet-Nam. Unless we undertake a full-scale and unlimited war on the North--and almost certainly, even then--this will continue to be well within the DRV's capacities for years to come.

5. Hanoi will continue to fight, so long as it continues to believe it will win the South; and it will continue to believe it will win the South so long as dissension flourishes and grows in the United States. The additional costs we can still impose on North Viet-Nam without invading the DRV weigh far less in Hanoi's scales than the value of continuing a fight which they believe we will be prepared to abandon relatively soon. Unless and until they are persuaded that we are not going to abandon Viet-Nam, they thus have little incentive for negotiation.

6. While the position of the DRV/VC in the field may be weakened by increasing our commitment of men and money to the war and/or reducing our self-imposed restrictions as to how and where we fight, this result is by no means certain. What is certain is that these actions at the same time increase the level of dissent at home and thus bolster the sole basis for Hanoi's hopes.

These actions directly aggravate the four major grounds of domestic oppositions to the war in Viet-Nam.

Our critics think that:

a. We have set ourselves an objective which, despite immense costs, we have not achieved after several years of effort and which we cannot prove we are in the process of achieving. Many see no "light at the end of the tunnel". To some this means principally that our resources are being deflected from urgent domestic purposes. To others there is added the frustration of realizing that the immense power of the United States is unable to cope quickly and cleanly with an undesirable situation in a small, underdeveloped country.

b. There is a widely-held feeling that the GVN is not bearing its share of the responsibility and burden of the war. To this is added a feeling that the government does not deserve our support because of corruption or other reasons.

c. This idealistic country is, for perhaps the first time, cast in the role of "the heavy" in Viet-Nam. In part, this is traceable to the disparity in the size of the opponents and traditional sympathy for the underdog; in part, to what is viewed as an indiscriminate use of fire power in both South and North Viet-Nam and a popular view that we are indifferent to the welfare of the people of South Viet-Nam; and in part, to measuring success in body counts.

d. Finally, there is the fear, often unjustified, of expansion of the war in such a way as to invite Chinese or Soviet intervention.

II.

You have two broad strategic options before you.

1. You can increase the commitment of men and money and reduce the restrictions on how and where we fight in an effort to score a quick "knock-out" of enemy forces in Viet-Nam before dissent at home--which will be greatly increased by these actions--becomes overwhelming.

or

2. You can concentrate on adjusting the United States to a longer pull by gradually attacking the sources of at least much of the growing opposition to the war.

I do not underrate the difficulty of the latter strategy; nevertheless, I think it is the obvious choice for a single reason. The first strategy may let off steam, but it won't accomplish results. It will reinforce dissent--and thus Hanoi's hopes and determination--without destroying Hanoi's ability to continue the war.

By increasing the size of this war, in any one of a number of ways, we can pursue a strategy based on the assumption that Hanoi's forces in the South can be destroyed, and that Hanoi's will to continue the struggle will also end in a reasonable period of time. We should only follow this strategy if we believe that we can destroy the enemy's military forces, eliminate its infrastructure and destroy its will to persist well before American public opinion decides to wash its hands of the whole Viet-Nam problem.

If we believe this, if we believe that we do have this capability, then it would be logical to grant General Westmoreland a virtual carte blanche, authorizing an extension of the war into North Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia, remove all target restrictions in the North, make an all-out effort to increase other free world commitments in Viet-Nam, send US troops into the Mekong Delta in a major campaign, etc. (The only limitations would be those forced by international considerations, the danger of directly involving China or Russia.)

In effect, most of this General Westmoreland wants to do. He has been given an extremely difficult mission, and naturally seeks every possible military means with which to carry it out. If I were in his shoes I would do the same thing.

But General Westmoreland is careful not to predict how long the war will last at its present levels. After four years in Viet-Nam he is well aware of the tremendous resiliance of the enemy, of their ability to absorb defeat after punishing defeat and still regroup and come back for more. My recollection is that at one of our Non-Group meetings Bus Wheeler, after outlining the dimension of the defeats the North Vietnamese are now suffering in the highlands, said that he thought the North Vietnamese would continue to commit their home army slowly over the next year in order to maintain a continuing military main force presence in South Viet-Nam--a view sharply at variance with the Alsop "end-of-the-main-force" war theory and hardly encouraging in its implications to any hopes for an early end to the war.

In short, the rub is that we can't in this way destroy the continuing capacity of the DRV/VC to inflict heavy casualties and to tie down large numbers of American troops so long as there is a sanctuary in North Viet-Nam, a reserve

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of 400,000 ~~troops,~~ and a willingness of Communist allies ~~to provide material~~ support. And, if we cannot destroy the DRV's capacity to continue fighting, it will be our democratic will to fight on--not Hanoi's dictatorial will--that will suffer the harder blow. We will pay the costs of combining frustrated expectations of quick victory with heavy US losses both in men and in political support at home and abroad. Hanoi will at least enjoy the rewards of increased US dissent. Only from Hanoi's point of view is there much to recommend a strategy that promises greatly to increase dissension, impatience, and frustration within the United States without greatly reducing the capacity of the DRV to continue fighting.

III.

The alternative is to pursue a strategy whose principal purpose is to restore the center position here in the United States. If we cannot destroy North Viet-Nam's capacity to fight on without assuming unacceptable burdens and risks and if North Viet-Nam's will to fight on will continue as long as domestic dissent grow--then surely the focus of our attention should be on the front at home. Only in this way can we eliminate the basis for Hanoi's hope that we will abandon Viet-Nam before the GVN is able to withstand Communist pressures on its own.

The time is right for such a "shifting of gears". We have made progress in South Viet-Nam. We could easily maintain it now that we have arrived at a new stage of the war--just as we arrived at a new stage of the war in the spring of 1965. We can now take advantage of what we have accomplished to exercise policy options not previously available to us. How we choose--and what we say about it--will mean a difference both in Viet-Nam and in the United States.

Five steps are required to carry out this strategy for strengthening the center at home. Not one of them represents a radical innovation.

1. We must restate our objective in Viet-Nam with greater precision. Our objective should be:

a. to provide the military cover and non-military assistance needed to enable the GVN to grow in capacity and popular support to the point where it can survive and, over a period of years, deal with what will be a continuing and very serious Communist problem. (After it has reached this point we might, of course, continue to render military and non-military assistance at a sharply reduced level. Ideally, our troop strength over the long haul should bear a close relationship to the number of NVA in South Viet-Nam.)

This is a far more limited, far more attainable objective than an alternative formulation we sometimes suggest:

b. to eliminate all significant bases of Communist, anti-government power in South Viet-Nam and to convince North Viet-Nam to allow the South to follow an independent course without outside interference.

The differences are extremely significant. The first objective can be reached, whatever the perseverance of the DRV/VC. The second can be frustrated indefinitely by the enemy unless we alter radically the limits we have so far imposed on our actions (and, perhaps, even then). Progress toward the first is measured by growth of the GVN's capacity; progress toward the second, by body counts. The former recognizes the basic and continuing responsibility of the GVN; the latter does not. Only the former recognizes that there are areas of SVN that the VC have controlled for many years and may control for many more after we have left.

Most important, attaining the first is possible without occupying or destroying sanctuary areas in Southeast Asia; if the second could be accomplished at all, it might well require this dangerous step.

An analysis of the present strategy being followed in Indochina, including consideration of the incremental measures that General Westmoreland, Ambassador Bunker and the JCS are urging, leads me to the conclusion that--consciously or unconsciously--all these people are actively pursuing the second ("b") objective. The two objectives are significantly different. If, as I believe, our real objective is "a", then this must be made clear to all of us as well as the American people.

2. With this clarified objective in mind, we must progressively shift more of the weight of the war to the GVN. This would make it clear to all that our objective is a self-sustaining GVN. A progressive and visible shifting of responsibility is the only effective road to regaining public confidence in what we are doing. Even if the result is that the aggressiveness of our pursuit of the enemy is somewhat reduced, that price is worth the benefits.

Many of the dissenters accept the commitment of the United States to help the GVN fight Communist aggression. But they see this as an obligation to assist, not to do the job for the Vietnamese. When they see US casualties consistently higher than the ARVN, when they see the ARVN either unwilling or unable to fight, when they see dissension and corruption in the GVN, they ask whether what we are doing does not get well beyond any reasonable interpretation of our commitment. Many of them would also say that while it may be proper for the United States to use its own forces to hold external aggression, the job of fighting internal subversion should be exclusively that of the ARVN. They do not understand why we need 500,000 US troops to defend South Viet-Nam from 50,000-plus regular PAVN.

At the same time we must continue to press upon the GVN the importance of its responsibility for creating a broadly-based progressive government. The GVN should know that many Americans seriously question whether the present Thieu-Ky Government is worth supporting. They point to its many failures and say that the United States cannot bolster this Government to the point where it will gain sufficient support from its own people. They would argue that our military strategy, aimed at killing the opposition, supports this view. They argue that if the GVN is so much stronger than the NLF, why is it afraid to negotiate with them? In short, these people believe that given massive US support for a decade, the government that has not succeeded isn't likely to succeed, and that we are now throwing good money after bad and wasting American lives on a sure loser.

3. Closely related to the above, we should give renewed attention to the effects of our military actions on the civilian population of South Viet-Nam. For example, it is questionable whether the military gains of US operations in populated areas (such as the planned offensive in the Mekong Delta) or of tactics which generate large numbers of refugees outweigh the political losses even in Viet-Nam (except in those special cases like Ben Suc where the tactical gain is clear). But when the cost in domestic support is thrown in, the balance plainly tips.

Rightly or wrongly, too many people are appalled by the brutality of the war. They feel that to fight a war of insurgency with vastly superior fire power is immoral and counter-productive. We use artillery and air power against villages and hamlets which are refuges for the Viet Cong, destroying homes, killing civilians, and devastating whole areas. Some of this feeling may be a traditional sympathy for the underdog, but much of it is simply horror that

the United States would level a hamlet or village simply because a few Viet Cong are present. Some feeling (more abroad than in the United States) is based on a feeling that the United States is calloused where non-whites are concerned.

I don't think it is an adequate answer to point to Viet Cong terrorism for two reasons: First, Americans put, and should put, higher standards on their own conduct than they do on that of other people; and secondly, terrorism is more acceptable as a technique of revolution than of government. In modern history, the axe of the Israelis against the British, the French Maquis against the Nazis, the Algerians against the French, the Hungarian revolutionaries against the Soviets, won considerable support. What was morally reprehensible was the overpowering reaction of the legitimate government in each case. Hungarian students who threw home-made bombs at Soviet tanks were heroes, not villains.

Although we are obviously not equatable with the repressive regimes listed above, we do share with them a stigma: for the first time in our history, the United States is cast in the heavy role and this makes many Americans feel uncomfortable. There is much in our own tradition which would oppose inflicting suffering and death on innocent people in order to kill a few guilty ones.

4. We must make clear to the American people that our objective is defined in a way that can be attained without massive destruction of North Viet-Nam, without significant ground operations in any of the present sanctuary areas, and without any further increase in troop strength. Indeed, if I am right about the causes and strength of American dissent and the relevance of this dissent to Hanoi's willingness to continue fighting, we cannot attain our objective unless we restrict the nature and size of our operations as we have in the past.

We have too often failed to make this clear. We have talked about honoring our commitments without defining or qualifying them. We have talked about giving the military "what they need to do the job" without defining the job they are doing. We have emphasized that we have a vital national security interest in Viet-Nam without qualifying the nature of that interest. Almost every time there has been a public statement which suggested limitations, those limitations have been overtaken by events. Our statements from the outset on the presence and level of US troops, our many statements on bombing policy, our statements on strategy and its justification, our different statements of objectives--all these have raised questions as to where the limits are and whether limits really exist.

How sure are the American people that: (a) We do not want to invade North Viet-Nam? (b) We will not seek to destroy North Viet-Nam by indiscriminate bombing? (c) We will not invade Laos or Cambodia? (d) We will not mine Haiphong Harbor or bomb Soviet shipping? (e) We will not bomb Chinese airfields in which DRV MIGs are seeking sanctuary?

5. Finally, we should re-examine our bombing policy. We pay a huge price for our bombing policy at home and abroad with very little to show for it in South Viet-Nam. Its supporters maintain that the present costs in terms of domestic and foreign support for the United States is a small price when compared to the future payoff. Unfortunately, that payoff remains in the future and my guess is that it always will. Indeed, the very fact that those who have access to all relevant intelligence continually disagree about its value should be proof at least that its value is dubious.

I do not say that our bombing of the North was a mistake when you authorized it. I would have supported it then, but it is time now that we put it into a new

perspective. Nobody really believes that the war can be won with bombs in the North. We may lose it with bombs--here in the United States. (And we lose other objectives abroad as well).

It is very difficult to rationally justify our present bombing policy. I doubt it can convincingly be squared with our stated objectives. This will become increasingly true as pressure mounts for more and more targets in more and more sensitive areas. More people will be killed; more pilots will be lost; more headlines will be made; more defections from our policy will take place. The war will continue to escalate when exactly the opposite should be our objective.

It is true that bombs make the DRV pay a price for its aggression. But, is there any evidence that this is the price they are unable or unwilling to pay?

My own preference would be for a qualified, but indefinite, halt in the bombing. It would be qualified in that I would have no hesitation in bombing visible efforts to expand resupply of the South as well as troop concentration in and north of the DMZ. Such bombing is never criticized and is clearly related to the big war.

There are clear political advantages to this course of action. It would not only remove the stigma of our present policy, but it should put most of the onus for continued war on the DRV. I think the military disadvantages are grossly overstated. It simply isn't possible to maintain that the military value of destroying the Doumier bridge for a few days outweighs the political cost of the headlines it makes. Nor is our policy viewed in terms of our stated objectives credible. We say we do not seek to destroy North Viet-Nam, but our aerial photographs

show many residential areas destroyed. Continuous re-strikes of Hanoi and Haiphong come perilously close to straight population bombing. Nor is this avoidable when the targets, the SAMs and the anti-aircraft are located where they are.

I do not think a halt would lead to negotiations, but in time it might. But even if one thinks that the "peace pressures" would have little influence on Hanoi, these pressures would at least be off our back. (I think it would be difficult to resume full-scale bombing if the decision to do so were made, but I think we could manage this by doing it gradually in response to direct infiltration.)

Furthermore, we gain one blue chip. The DRV never knows when we might renew our extended bombing, and that threat may be worth as much as the fact.

If this policy is unacceptable, then I think we should at a minimum stay away from Hanoi, Haiphong, and other glamor targets such as thermal power plants. These get the publicity, cause the losses and accomplish little. If we put these off bounds bombing causes little attention and therefore little defection. But I think this half-a-loaf approach causes more criticism at home from the Hawks and gains less on the other side.

In short, I think the danger of loss of political support for the war by curbing the military is much less than the confidence which would be restored to the middle. And, in my judgment, those who press for a military solution are never going to be satisfied anyway.

IV

Time is the crucial element at this stage of our involvement in Viet-Nam. Can the tortoise of progress in Viet-Nam stay ahead of the hare of dissent at home? All our present evidence points to the fact that progress in Viet-Nam will be steady but undramatic over next year. Yet slow and steady progress may not be enough if, as I suspect, the rate of US disenchantment with the war is growing rapidly. We must, it seems, find a way to change the pace at which events move on the two fronts--Viet-Nam and the United States.

The hope that this change can be accomplished by a rapid acceleration of our progress in Viet-Nam is a slim one. Even if we progressively remove the limits we have imposed on how and where we fight, there is little reason to believe that the end of the road would be significantly nearer. But it is certain that taking such action would greatly increase the volume of dissent at home and thus further encourage North Vietnamese hopes for an early US withdrawal.

Winston Churchill, speaking of traditional frontal conflicts, once said that in war "nothing succeeds like excess." Hanoi is relying on our following that strategy in the very different context of Viet-Nam--a war which has as a principal battleground the minds of the American and Vietnamese people and in which the enemy has the power to deny us the opportunity to show to the public an end to the struggle. In this situation, excessive expenditures of men and money--which will not measurably shorten the war--are the surest route to failure, not to success.

If we can't speed up the tortoise of demonstrable success in the field we must concentrate on slowing down the hare of dissent at home. At pages 7 - 11 above I have set forth in some detail the five general ways in which we could move in this direction. By way of conclusion I want only to suggest five specific measures.

1. We should clarify our objective in South Viet-Nam by updating NSAM 288 of March, 1964. This NSAM, which is

still used by our military commanders, states our objective in the following general terms: "We seek an independent non-Communist South Viet-Nam." From this general statement, the JCS and CINCPAC have derived the following specific mission and tasks for MACV:

a. "To make it as difficult and costly as possible for NVN to continue effective support of the Viet Cong and to cause NVN to cease direction of the Viet Cong insurgency."

b. "To defeat decisively the Viet Cong and NVN in South Viet-Nam and force the withdrawal of NVN forces."

c. "To extend GVN dominion, direction and control over South Viet-Nam." (underlining added)

If I were given this mission I would follow the same strategy as General Westmoreland. But this mission overshoots our real objectives in SEA: to provide the military cover and non-military assistance needed to enable the GVN to grow in capacity and popular support to the point where it can survive and, over a period of years, deal with what will remain a continuing and serious Communist problem.

Unless we help General Westmoreland off the hook by writing a statement of objectives from which a more realistic and attainable mission can be derived, we will continually be faced by "thin edge of the wedge" requests from the military for expansion of the war.

2. Instruct our field commanders, including Ambassador Bunker, to adjust their strategy and tactics to the revised objective.

No one in Washington can second-guess the field on the details of strategy, at least not successfully. Therefore, in the first instance, I think we should ask Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland for their proposals, which we could then review in Washington to make sure they meet our requirements.

In rough outline, I would anticipate that such a change in objective and mission should mean that MACV would deploy its forces so as to minimize their involvement with the population, and to reduce substantially American involvement in those measures which should be the GVN's responsibility. It would probably mean:

-- a rigorous review of free bombing zones,

-- a policy on refugees which would sharply reduce our vulnerabilities at home and around the world on this festering sore point,

-- dramatic new efforts to reduce civilian casualties,

-- and an end to the continual military requests for incremental expansions of the war into Laos, Cambodia and North Viet-Nam.

These steps, while controversial with the military, are not radical departures, and would not prevent General Westmoreland from achieving the mission and objective which we have set forth.

3. Demand more of the GVN--not only in the traditional ways, but also in seeking contact and accommodation with the NLF.

I am, of course, wholeheartedly in favor of the current drive to get the ARVN to assume a larger part of the war, the anti-corruption drive, and our other efforts to improve the GVN across the board. I would go further than we have yet gone and tell Thieu and Ky frankly that there are time limits on our commitment at its present level and that they had better face up to that fact and plan accordingly.

At the same time, I would like to see Ellsworth intensify his efforts to get the GVN into contact with the NLF. The risks are obvious, and only Ellsworth can determine the exact pace at which to move. But I feel

strongly that we should look toward an accommodation and that Ellsworth can prod the GVN harder in this direction. Both these actions with regard to the GVN are implicit in the restatement of our objective which is discussed above.

4. Stop bombing targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong area. While, in the main body of this paper, I have advocated a qualified but indefinite halt in the bombing, I recognize that this is a special problem and not necessarily derivable from a restatement of objectives. I do feel, however, that we must at a minimum bring our target system into line with our objectives. Therefore, we should avoid targets which raise doubts as to our often stated position that we are not seeking to destroy the DRV.

5. To tie all these themes together, develop over a period of weeks a public posture which rebuilds the confidence of the American center in our objectives and methods in Viet-Nam.

Such a public policy would entail

-- major but not dramatic statements by you and your principal deputies, including General Westmoreland, taking advantage of reports on recent progress;

-- public statements by Thieu and Ky re-emphasizing their hope to see peace and the eventual control of South Viet-Nam by Southvietnamese without large numbers of Americans.

-- and acts visible to the world showing that our rhetoric is matched by our deeds. The visible acts would be derived from points 2, 3 and 4 above.

Nicholas deB. Katzenbach

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MEMORANDUM

I disagree with the recommendations presented in the memorandum of November 1, 1967. I believe that the course of action suggested therein will retard the possibility of concluding the conflict rather than accelerating it.

The question is often asked: Why does North Vietnam continue to prosecute the war when it appears that they have no chance of winning it?

The answer is clear. Hanoi is depending upon a weakening of the will of the United States to carry on the war. Their previous experience with the French has convinced them that the same result will occur again insofar as the United States is concerned.

It is my opinion that Hanoi will never seek a cessation of the conflict if they think our determination is lessening. On the other hand, if our pressure is unremitting and their losses continue to grow, and hope fades for any sign of weakening on our part, then some day they will conclude that the game is not worth the candle.

If one accepts this premise, then the course of action recommended in the memorandum must be subjected to the test of Hanoi's reaction.

It is suggested in the memo that there be "complete cessation of

bombing in the North." The argument is made that "it is probable that Hanoi would move to 'talks' perhaps within a few weeks after the bombing stopped."

I am at a loss to understand this logic. Would the unconditional suspension of the bombing, without any effort to extract a quid pro quo persuade Hanoi that we were firm and unyielding in our conviction to force them to desist from their aggressive designs?

The answer is a loud and resounding "no."

It would be interpreted by Hanoi as (a) evidence of our discouragement and frustration, and (b) an admission of the wrongness and immorality of our bombing of the North, and (c) the first step in our ultimate total disengagement from the conflict.

It would give an enormous lift to the spirits and morale of the North, and an equally grave setback to the will and determination of the South Vietnamese and our other allies fighting with us.

It would dramatically confirm the conviction of the North that Premier Pham Van Dong was correct when he said, "Americans do not like long, inconclusive wars; thus we are sure to win in the end."

The cessation of the bombing would be used to great advantage to repair roads and bridges, improve anti-aircraft defenses, and build up the war-making potential of the North. The Chinese and Russians would

react enthusiastically to such cessation and would redouble their efforts to drive us out of Asia.

I think it is reckless to talk about resuming the bombing after such a suspension. It would create a storm of protest, which would be compounded by our greater losses of men and planes due to their improved air defenses.

I feel strongly that it is grossly fallacious to contend that we are fighting two wars: the war in the South and a separate war in the North. They are part and parcel of our single effort to convince Hanoi that it must abandon its effort to conquer South Vietnam.

The second recommendation in the memo is that we "stabilize" our military effort in the South.

This would be achieved by stating "publicly" that we would not increase our forces; we would not call up reserves; we would not expand ground action in North Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia; we would not attack North Vietnam seaports; we would not hit the dikes or locks; and we would engage in continued efforts to restrict the war.

Can there by any doubt as to the North Vietnamese reaction to such an announcement? The chortles of unholy glee issuing from Hanoi would be audible in every capital of the world.

Is this evidence of our zeal and courage to stay the course? Of

course not! It would be interpreted to be exactly what it is. A resigned and discouraged effort to find a way out of a conflict for which we had lost our will and dedication.

And what of our bargaining position? It would have been utterly destroyed. Hanoi would be secure in the comforting thought that we had informed the world that we would refrain from practically all activities that would be damaging to North Vietnam.

It would be tantamount to turning over our hole card and showing Hanoi that it was a deuce.

Can one recall that we ever successfully terminated a war by such a program? In World War I, World War II and the Korean War, the pressure was constantly increased until the enemy found it intolerable and capitulated.

The President and every man around him wants to end the war. But the future of our children and grandchildren require that it be ended by accomplishing our purpose, i.e., the thwarting of the aggression by North Vietnam, aided by China and Russia.

Free peoples everywhere, and Communists everywhere, in fact the entire world, is watching to see if the United States meant what it said when it announced its intention to help defend South Vietnam.

It will affect the plans and intentions and aspirations of many people.

Because of the unique position we occupy in the world of today,

we cannot expect other countries and other peoples to love us, but with courage and determination, and the help of God, we can make them respect us.

It is clear to me that the course of action offered in the memorandum does not accomplish this purpose.

1-8

EYES ONLY -- ~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLS 83-55
By mcf/ip NARA, Date 1-26-98

Tuesday, November 7, 1967
11:40 a.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith Clark Clifford responds to the draft memorandum of November 1.

W. W. Rostow

EYES ONLY -- ~~TOP SECRET~~

WWRostow:rln

G

~~TOP SECRET~~

IV

Sunday, November 5, 1967

Comments.

1. The analysis and recommendations are based, almost entirely, upon an assessment of U. S. public opinion and an unspoken assumption as to the effect that should be given to it. I am in total disagreement.

2. We should not assume that the American public are unwilling to sustain an indefinitely prolonged war. If we should so assume, we should not agree that it is either honorable or sensisble for the administration to acquiesce in this and to base military decisions upon that assumption unless and until the people through Congress or the polls make it impossible for this administration to do what it considers to be right in the national interest.

3. Our duty is to do what we consider right -- not what we consider (on a highly dubious basis with which I do not agree) the "American people" want. (I repeat that I believe they do not want us to achieve less than our objectives -- namely, to prevent North Vietnamese domination of South Vietnam by military force or subversion; and to continue to exert such influence as we reasonably can in Asia to prevent an ultimate Communist take-over.)

4. Our strategy should be to exert increasing and continuing pressure on the North Vietnamese; and to increase our destruction of the Viet Cong by increased and more diversified military effectiveness and civil conversion in the South. Our target should be a cessation of organized military operations against us and the South Vietnamese, coupled as soon as possible with a South Vietnamese program designed, perhaps, to eliminate the NLF as an operating force either by viable coalition or by destroying its structure. "Negotiation" is not an objective or a target. It is a propaganda symbol that we should keep alive. It is a possible (but not probable) stage toward achieving our objective; and it is a probable (but not certain) tactic that the enemy will adopt.

5. I can think of nothing worse than the suggested program -- stating that we are going to "stabilize" our level of military effort and halting the bombing. This is an invitation to slaughter. It will, indeed, produce demands in this country to withdraw -- and, in fact, it must be appraised for what it is: a step in the process of withdrawal. And, in my opinion, it means not domestic appeasement, but domestic repudiation (which it would deserve); a powerful tonic to Chinese Communist effectiveness in the world; and a profound retreat to the Asian dominoes.

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Authority NLJ 83-108
By mp/ng NARA, Date 1-26-98

~~TOP SECRET~~

6. Again, I can only repeat that the proposal to halt the bombing makes no sense. Its domestic good-effects would be illusory. It's not what the "doves" really want: the leaders want us to quit seeking our objective in Vietnam and Asia; the ordinary doves -- the ~~moves~~ masses on that side -- want us to achieve our objectives, to halt Communism, to defend Asia, but to do it without inflicting or receiving the wounds of battle. If we halt bombing, our armed forces are exposed; our pressure on North Vietnam is at an end; we will have given the Communists victory which they will exploit and escalate.

On the other hand, if Hanoi wishes to talk or to de-escalate, it is preposterous, I submit, to suppose that they are waiting for a signal -- and that the only signal acceptable is a halt in bombing!

7. I must frankly state again that I am not convinced that our military program in South Vietnam is as flexible or ingenious as it could be. I know that new proposals have been sought from our military. But perhaps a new and fresh look, including new people -- civilian as well as military -- might be warranted.

Abe Fortas

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SECRET Friday, Nov. 3, 1967

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith General Taylor's arguments in response to those I gave him from the unidentified paper.

He will be filing a paper of his own in a few days.

W. W. R.

SECRET attachment

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Authority NLJ 83-55
By mp/isp NARA, Date 1-26-98

14

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET

November 3, 1967

Mr. President:

Walt Rostow has asked my comments on the following possible course of action:

Proposal

The U.S. will stabilize its military strength in Vietnam at presently approved levels and, with its allies, will continue to conduct the war in South Vietnam essentially as at present, making every effort to hold down U.S. casualties and battle damage and to pass the burden of the fighting to the South Vietnamese.

There will be no extension of the air target system in North Vietnam beyond the present one and no blockade or mining of the ports. At some point, we will stop the bombing of North Vietnam except for the use of air strikes in the Demilitarized Zone to suppress shelling or to interdict enemy troop movements.

The purpose of the foregoing course of action would be to allay apprehensions at home and abroad of a further expansion of the conflict and to increase the pressure on Hanoi to reduce its military activities or to enter upon negotiations. It is my understanding that all or most of our intentions under this alternative would be announced publicly.

Comment

Of the alternatives* open to the U.S., this is one form of the Pull-back Alternative. While this course of action might tend to allay the fears of those who are concerned over an expansion of the conflict, it would provide fresh ammunition for the numerically larger number of critics who say that we are embarked on an endless and hopeless struggle or that we are really not trying to win. The decrease in our efforts implicit in this proposal would tend to nullify by a form of self-stagnation the progress which we properly contend that we are now making and would give renewed stimulus to our impatient fellow citizens who are even now crying for a quick solution or get out. Like other variations of the Pull-back Alternative, it would probably degenerate into an eventual pull-out.

* There are four in all: Pull-out, Pull-back, All-out, Stick-it-out

SECRET

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Authority NLJ 83-55
By NLJ/130 NARA, Date 1-26-98

The curtailment of the bombing under this proposal has all the liabilities which we have noted in previous discussions of this issue. The South Vietnamese would be deeply discouraged by this lifting of the penalty which the bombing imposes on the North. I would suspect that our other allies contributing troops would object strongly to this course of action - they are convinced of the essentiality of the bombing. Our own forces would regard this action as a deliberate decrease in the protection which, they feel, is afforded them by the bombing. The large majority of our citizens who believe in the bombing but who thus far have been silent could be expected to raise violent objections on the home front, probably surpassing in volume the present criticisms of the anti-bombers.

Probably the most serious objection of all to this Pull-back Alternative would be the effect upon the enemy. Any such retreat will be interpreted as weakness and will add to the difficulty of getting any kind of eventual solution compatible with our overall objective of an independent South Vietnam free from the threat of subversive aggression.

I would recommend strongly against adopting any such course of action.

M. D. T.

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Walt,

Take that and compare it with
Bob McNamara's.

LBJ/mjdr
Nov 3, 1967

166

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 85-316
By ap/cp NARA, Date 2-27-98

~~SECRET~~

October 17, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Vietnam -- October 1967

I have talked today with my brother Bill, Bob McNamara, a knowledgeable Junior interdepartmental staff team, Dick Helms, and Bromley Smith. I am going to see the Vice President, Clark Clifford and Walt Rostow before the day ends, and when we talk I can make amendments orally to the following tentative conclusions.

Basically, I think your policy is as right as ever and that the weight of the evidence from the field is encouraging. I also believe that we are in a long, slow business in which we cannot expect decisive results soon. And while I think there are several things which we can usefully do to strengthen our position, my most important preliminary conclusions are negative. Because these negative conclusions define my affirmative recommendations, I begin with them:

1. At present I would be strongly against

(1) any unconditional pause;

(2) any extended pause for the sake of appearances;

(3) any major headline-making intensification of the bombing -- such as a renewed bombing of Hanoi;

(4) any large-scale reinforcement of General Westmoreland beyond the totals already agreed;

(5) any major immediate change in the public posture established by your Texas speech and recent supporting efforts by Cabinet Officers;

(6) any elaborate effort to show by new facts and figures that we are "winning."

~~SECRET~~

2. The argument which follows attempts first to spell out these conclusions in detail, and second to outline some things I would do now.

(1) No unconditional pause. The basic objection to an unconditional pause is simply that the odds are very heavy that you would have to resume, and that if the pause is truly unconditional, the circumstances of any such resumption would be very damaging to us both at home and abroad. Dean Rusk is absolutely right when he says that none of the advocates of such a pause have told us they would support a resumption, on any grounds (although Walter Lippmann acknowledged the impossibility of a permanent and unproductive pause a year ago). If we pause unconditionally, we impale ourselves on a terrible dilemma:

a. to accept continuing and visible reinforcement from the North without reply;

b. to resume on our own say-so, thus "destroying the hope of peace" by unilateral action.

(2) No extended pause for the sake of appearances. The argument against this kind of pause is somewhat different: it is that nothing which pretends to be a pause and has conditions attached to it is likely to have any useful effect whatever upon people like the New York Times. They will simply say once more that we have done it wrong, that we were insincere, and that we have proved again that we cannot be trusted by Hanoi. Since in fact Hanoi will not accept any such conditional or limited pause, we can only get the worst of both worlds by offering it. This means that any short standdown at Christmas or New Year's should be very carefully handled to prevent a false impression that we are quietly reopening a serious pause as we did -- in all good faith -- in 1965-66. We should not repeat the pattern of 1966-67.

There is one and only one condition on which I would order an extended pause -- it is that there should be a recorded and acknowledged diplomatic position like the one which we have been stating to Hanoi through the Harvard professor. A quick review of this exchange persuades me that it has been extremely well handled and that it is to our advantage to keep it going. If it leads to a nibble, and we should get grounds for a bombing suspension, we would have a clear predicate on which to base any necessary resumption if the truce were not productive

or if there were heavy reinforcement from the North. If, on the other hand, we get no response, we have certainly established a record which will show plainly that we were ready to stop the bombing on a still more forthcoming basis than any we have yet stated -- even in the Texas speech. To me this exchange is a valuable and cost-free exercise, because even without it, as the next paragraph shows, I would be in favor of leaving Hanoi alone. While the exchange continues, we must stay away from Hanoi, but in my judgment we should stay away from there in any case. My reasons follow:

(3) No headline-making intensification of the bombing -- and especially no more bombing in Hanoi. As you know, I think that the bombing of the North is quite intense enough as it stands. While I strongly support bombing of communications lines and supply depots -- tactical bombing -- I see no evidence whatever that North Vietnam is a good object for a major strategic campaign. Dick Helms told me solemnly today that every single member of his intelligence staff agrees with the view that bombing in the Hanoi-Haiphong area has no significant effect whatever on the level of supplies that reaches the Southern battlefields. Nor does any intelligence officer of standing believe that strategic bombing will break the will of Hanoi in the foreseeable future. This strategic air war engages our pilots and the pride of our air commanders; it also has a military life of its own, with its own claimed imperatives. But it does not affect the real contest, which is in the South. Its political costs are rising every week. We have everything to gain politically and almost nothing to lose militarily if we will firmly hold our bombing to demonstrably useful target areas.

The one great objection to this otherwise desirable restraint is that the top brass and their political friends disagree. I know you have thought in the past that we could not afford to break with them on this issue, but I believe that the balance of opinion is shifting rapidly against them and that it is more and more to our advantage to put a distance between ourselves and people like Symington, Rivers, Harvey -- and even Russell. They are overwhelmingly wrong, on all the evidence, and the belief that you are gradually giving in to them is the most serious single fear of reasonable men in all parts of the country.

(4) No large-scale reinforcement beyond totals already agreed. I would hope that 525,000 would hold Westy through 1968. I would certainly try to meet this total early if that is now what he wants, because if there is to be hard fighting in the next fifteen months the sooner it comes the better. Indeed, my impression is that whatever we do, our casualties are likely to go up at the turn of the year because of operations now planned, and this seems to me one more powerful argument against an extended holiday pause.

(5) No immediate change in our public posture. The Texas speech is one of the most powerful you have given, and I think it is right in moving the emphasis a bit toward the whole of Southeast Asia and away from the details of Vietnam. I think we ought to do more of this later on, because as you know I think the strategic victory has already been won and is worth claiming. But I do not think the next month or two will be a good time for very extended additional argument. Neither Rusk nor McNamara states the matter quite the way you do, and you yourself need to save your breath until later.

(6) No elaborate effort to use new facts and figures to prove our case. There is a credibility gap and it really makes no difference that the press has done more to make it than we have. We do not gain with the mass of the people by what we report of progress in Vietnam. What we desperately need is that the newspaper men should begin to find progress for themselves. Joe Alsop, with all his weaknesses, is worth ten of our spokesmen. We should strive for a situation in which Reagan's charge begins to look plausible -- that we really are hiding our successes -- for whatever reason. It might cost us a few headlines and a few unbalanced television news reports to observe such a policy of reticence -- but it would help to set a new stage for the necessary efforts we shall have to make next year.

* * * * * *

I turn now to the things I would favor. As you will see, they grow out of what I am against.

1. I would favor a careful and considered exposition of the argument against an unconditional pause sometime in the next month or two. I think the right man to do this would be Nick Katzenbach, and I

think the arguments should be fully developed and firm. Once we have made an absolutely fixed decision on this point, we will end some of the chatter and we will lay a base for looking at other less categorical alternatives.

2. I think we should have a careful staff study of the possibilities for continuous bombing in the North which avoids startling targets and has the public effect of deescalation without seriously lightening the burden on the North Vietnamese. My conversations today persuaded me that there is a very promising possibility here that we can have both the essence of the present real military advantages of bombing and much of the advantage of seeming to exercise a new Presidential restraint. I would hope that this alternative could have as careful and complete a review as any other in the immediate future.

3. I would continue the effort to expand the visibility of Vietnamese participation in all forms. I understand that Bunker and Westy are tired of Washington prodding on the subject of ARVN performance, but I also understand that there is some real enthusiasm both in the Pentagon and in Saigon for brigading a few Vietnamese battalions with U. S. forces in offensive action. I would give prompt and strong encouragement to this idea because nothing would do us more good than a few battlefront reports of truly shared combat.

4. All the evidence is that our present team in Saigon is much the best we have had. But they are not getting the very best people to help them even yet. I think you might make progress with the assignment of both Army and CIA officers if you were to press the Army people directly (not through Bob) and Dick Helms too to tell you whether they are using every possible incentive to get their very best professionals into the work of pacification, intelligence collection, province leadership, and other such traditional unglamorous activities. My agents tell me that the Pentagon rewards the battalion commanders but that it is not really giving top priority to getting top men into other countryside jobs.

5. Finally, I would not listen too closely to anyone who comes from a distance and spends only one day looking at the evidence. What

I think I might do instead is to find a way of widening the circle of those who talk regularly about overall policy choices in this area. I do get a feeling that while a number of different people are working on a number of different angles, only a few are trying to keep the whole picture together, and those few are not your least-burdened men. My impression is that here, as in the Middle East, the best organizer of continued study is Katzenbach (whom I have not seen today) and you may wish to look for a way of sitting with him and his people every now and then.

McG. B.

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~~TOP SECRET~~
LITERALLY EYES ONLY

Thursday, November 2, 1967
4:40 p. m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith my comments on Secretary McNamara's draft paper of November 1, 1967.

1. I would summarize Secretary McNamara's argument as follows: In the next 15 months we shall make progress in South Vietnam but not enough progress either to: lead to peace or convince our people that major progress has been made and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Under these circumstances, he believes two conflicting tendencies will grow in U. S. public opinion: on the one hand, to escalate the war in the North and expand it on the ground in the South; on the other hand, to pull out.

To avoid this believed polarization of U. S. public opinion around the extremes, he believes we should take a series of measures that would stabilize the war and push the North Vietnamese into a negotiation, even on a "fight and talk" basis. At the maximum, he believes this process could lead to a successful negotiation; at the minimum, it would avoid the pressures to expand the war in the air and on the ground, which he greatly fears.

2. My observations on the political, military and diplomatic aspects of this argument follow.

a. Political. If his proposed strategy did not lead to a successful negotiation, you would be pushed off the middle ground you now hold at home. To test Bob's strategy would require a long bombing cessation, plus a Panmunjom phase, until we found out whether they were serious about negotiations. If we then had to resume full-scale bombing, the Republicans could accuse us of vacillation and adopt a hard line which might then appeal to our people. If we got caught in a Panmunjom phase, the case for their advocating a stronger policy would be even more clear. In a recent Gallup poll, some 67% of the American people want us to continue bombing the North (as I remember it). Acknowledging my limitations as a judge of domestic politics, I am extremely skeptical of any change in strategy that would take you away from your present middle position; that is, using rationally all the power available, but avoiding actions likely to engage the Soviet Union and Communist China. If we shift unilaterally towards de-escalation, the Republicans will move in and crystallize a majority around a stronger policy.

If I felt Bob's strategy would measurably increase the chances of a true settlement, I believe the risk might be worth taking. But both a unilateral

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Authority NLJ 94-475
By mpf/isp NARA, Date 1-26-98

bombing cessation and an announced policy of "stabilization" would, in my view, be judged in Hanoi a mark of weakness rather than evidence of increased U. S. capacity to sweat out the war.

b. Military. Although I certainly will not predict for you an early end fo the war, I believe that, with a little luck and reasonable performance by the South Vietnamese under the new government, the evidence of solid progress will become increasingly clear to one and all. It is no accident that Republican politicians are beginning to smell this. If progress in fact continues, we will get more and more of the kind of testimony that Alsop, Walter Judd, General Bradley, etc., are now generating. Moreover, as an old intelligence officer, I know that one should take very seriously events that one did not predict. I have been looking for a long time, as you know, for a negotiation within South Vietnam. But I did not expect so soon after the failure in Paris as substantive a message as we got by the Buttercup channel. That channel may develop only slowly. It may not yield anything. But the simple fact is this: it emerged while we were bombing the North full scale. Before changing our strategy in the direction suggested by Bob McNamara, I would certainly play this string out to the full. Incidentally, if it works well, I am sure we will come back to the bombing question -- if and when the National Liberation Front suggests that we talk to Hanoi about the issues directly at stake between the U. S. and the DRV. (That is foreshadowed in their description of the three negotiations required for peace.) Until proved otherwise, then, I would stay with Buttercup and see where it leads us, while holding steady on our present program.

c. Diplomacy. As indicated above, I would play out the Buttercup string before probing or initiating in any other direction. I detect in the full flow of intelligence a shift of the following kind:

-- an increase in Soviet influence in Hanoi, partially caused by our bombing and a consequent requirement for very large increases in Soviet aid;

-- a shift in Hanoi to the view that they cannot directly take over the South now and, therefore, they have to accept the 17th parallel for a considerable time period;

-- within this framework, a probing for what the status of the Communists would be within South Vietnam in a time of peace.

If this is right, we are already in a kind of Panmunjom stage; that is, their military operations are designed not to produce victory but to improve their position in a negotiation which is, in a sense, already under way. It is quite clear from Buttercup that they are trying to bargain the highest possible status for the National Liberation Front in the South against our clear desire to get the war off our necks. If and when we come into contact and begin to exchange views, it may well turn out that their minimum price for National Liberation Front status is higher than we and the government of South Vietnam are prepared to pay. In that case, we shall have to prove that their bargaining power diminishes with the passage of time -- not increases. That, in turn, means high costs in the North; maximum pressure in the South on their manpower base. I believe Bob's strategy would ease their problem and permit them rationally to protract the negotiation -- unless Bob is correct on domestic politics and I am wrong. That is, if the country settled down for the long pull comfortably with Bob's program, he could be right. If his policy opened up a debate between united Republicans claiming we had gone soft and a Democratic Administration, with the JCS in disagreement if not open revolt, then my view is correct.

3. Some Specifics. Having taken this negative stance in general, I would agree at the moment with his points 1 - 5, and 9 (page 6); but I would not announce them as a new policy -- in part, because I don't think we need a new announced policy; in part, because changing circumstances might make it wise to reopen some of the issues in those paragraphs.

W. W. R.

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

(720) 2

~~SECRET--SENSITIVE~~

Sunday, January 12, 1969
12:05 p.m.

Mr. President:

This account of how Ky came to persuade Thieu on the round table may interest you.

W. W. Rostow

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By [illegible], NARA, Date 3-5-98

~~SECRET--SENSITIVE~~

3 Rostow

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Wednesday, Jan. 15, 1969
4:45 p. m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

SUBJECT: Bromley Smith

As you may know, Mr. Nixon decided, contrary to Henry Kissinger's wish, that the NSC staff be thoroughly turned over on the view that there ought to be "new faces." Only a few of our men are retained.

Arrangements for the others are in good shape, except for Brom Smith.

Henry has asked Brom to stay and help organize the new structure for some weeks as an adviser. Brom has agreed -- out of a simple sense of duty.

Henry has assured me that he will take personal responsibility for getting Brom the post in the government he wants.

Nevertheless, it may be helpful if you have a word with Mr. Nixon about Brom, if there is an opportunity.

He is a great public servant, a wise and good man. He has much to contribute to government and is prepared to do it.

He deserves exceedingly well of Mr. Nixon -- and of us all.

W. W. Rostow

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
NOT NAT'L SECURITY
INFORMATION, E. O. 12356,
SEC. 1.1(a).
BY LJ ON 3-5-98

ACTION 4

~~TOP SECRET~~

Wednesday, January 15, 1969 - 4:30 p. m.

Mr. President:

You suggested yesterday you might wish to forward Abrams' latest cable to the President-elect with a note.

I have had the message retyped for that purpose. Pres. file

If you wish to do it personally, a draft note might be:

I thought you would wish to see the text of Abrams's report on his latest meeting with his commanders. They are evidently alert to what the enemy may do in the days ahead. The flow of intelligence suggests that they may feel impelled to take some sort of offensive action as the new Administration comes in and, perhaps, the Paris talks move into a new stage.

We have every right to feel confident that our men in the field can handle it; but, should an offensive develop, you will wish to give thought to putting it in what you judge to be proper perspective.

W. W. Rostow

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By LJ, NARA, Date 3-098

WWRostow:rln

~~TOP SECRET~~

4a

~~TOP SECRET~~

MAC 509 EYES ONLY, January 13, 1969

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.3
NARA, Date 3-5-96

Yesterday (Saturday) we had one of the finest commanders' conferences to date. It lasted the greater part of the day. In addition to our own commanders, we had in attendance Admiral Bringle, Commander, Seventh Fleet, with members of his staff, and for the morning sessions, Ambassador Bunker.

The purpose of the conference was to review the current situation and to consider friendly actions against the enemy options outlined in a previous message. Each commander presented his concept of operations against the full gamut of enemy options; first with his currently assigned forces and then, with incountry reinforcements that might be made available should enemy options develop as postulated. I must say that all presentations were of the highest professional caliber. As a result of these presentations and the discussions which followed, I have reached several conclusions and tentative decisions as follows:

A. The enemy is putting forth a sustained effort in logistics buildup just north of the DMZ. The same is true of his supply operations in the Laotian panhandle; also through Sihanoukville to border sanctuaries in Cambodia, from the Delta to Northern II Corps. At the moment, the enemy is restraining himself from crossing the DMZ in force. In the Laotian panhandle, we are having only limited success in reducing his through put since 15 December; for the second week in succession over 50% of the Arc Light strikes have been used in Laos. In the Cambodian sanctuaries, it's another story. The enemy's supplies into and through that country are unimpeded by friendly forces. The greatest threat comes from the enemy forces astride the Cambodian-South Vietnam border.

B. The formal thrust of our operations and the azimuth on which we are traveling are correct. The most important objective, the one with the highest payoff, is the accelerated pacification program. The momentum of pacification has got to be maintained along with any other actions that take place.

C. The resources currently available to MACV are sufficient to meet any or all of these threats simultaneously, provided our cards are played at the right time and place. Such execution is essential in order to assure no reduction in pacification momentum. We are working for the degree of intelligence accuracy that will permit this.

D. For the time being, forces will remain as currently disposed. A slight adjustment will be made in the vicinity of the Parrot's Beak where Kerwin is being authorized to operate with the Air Cavalry in Kien Tuong Province using the Vam Co Tay as an axis. The Cavalry's operations will be

in conjunction with Naval interdiction operations (Giant Sling Shot) up the Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay rivers. The combination of waterways, land, and air patrols is increasing the effectiveness of interdiction of enemy lines of communication and infiltration.

E. As long as the primary threats are on almost opposite flanks, it looks as if the reinforcements for either will come from the center, i.e., II Corps. Accordingly, Ray Peers has been given a mission to furnish up to 2 brigades for reinforcement. As the situation looks now, the employment, if required, would be in I Corps. We should be able to handle the current threat in the III Corps with the troops now there.

It appears to me that the enemy must generate some type of strong reaction against the successes of the pacification program. I don't see how he could do otherwise. This could take the form of a main force ground attack, a pacification fight at the village and hamlet level, or a combination of the two, just as we are doing. In any event, I expect him to make a major effort. This is what we are looking for and planning against. Smashing such a reaction promptly and completely in all its forms could be the watershed event that would lead all parties to recognize and accept a realistic assessment of the U.S. position.

6

ACTION

Wednesday, January 15, 1969

Profile

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Officers to review Presidential Papers in Austin

We now have two officers who could go to Austin in February to launch the review of those Presidential papers which you would consider for transfer to the Presidential Library.

a. Richard W. Time, a Class 1 Foreign Service Officer with extensive experience as a university instructor, political analyst in OSS and political officer in several Eastern European posts. Mr. Time has been working for the last six months on the State Department's history of your administration. He is thus very familiar with the developments of the past five years as well as the State Department records.

b. Richard L. Burnham, a young Foreign Service Officer with his LLB from Harvard and foreign service experience in France and Saigon. He has just completed a graduate course at the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Virginia.

If you approve, we will ask GSA to make arrangements for these officers to be detailed temporarily to launch, organize and initiate the review of your papers in the national security area. I would work closely with them in Austin giving them guidance and direction. Together we would plan a program for your approval including the detail of additional officers as the work progresses.

W. W. Rostow

_____ Tell GSA to go ahead

_____ Call me

BKS:amc

TIMS, RICHARD WONSER

born: Iowa on March 4, 1912
married
Cornell, AB 1934, Columbia U PhD, 1941
US Army 1943-1945, 1st Lt.
Priv. Exper - 1937-1942, instructor at Columbia - 1937-1941
at Trinity College -1941-1942
Government: Political Analyst, Office of Strategic Services - 1942-1945
State Dept P-5 Research Analyst 10/45
Warsaw R-4 Research Off. 10/47
Dept P-6 for Aff Spec 6/49
Chief East European Br. Div of Research for USSR and East Europe 4/52, GS-14 11/52, O-3 7/55.
Prague Pol Off 5/57, O-2 3/60.
Dept officer-in-Charge Pol, Baltic and Czech Aff 10/60.
Budapest Couns Pol. Aff. 8/64, Deputy Chief of Mission 9/67.
Languages: Czech, German.

6b

OFFICER PROFILE

Richard I. Burnham (FSO-4)

DOB: February 20, 1936; New York

Education:

Amherst	AB '58
Harvard U.	LLB '61

Foreign Service Experience:

1961	EOD in FS as FSO-8
1962-63	Paris, FSO/General
1963-64	Bordeaux, Consular officer
1964	AID, Executive Assistant
1965-68	Saigon, Assistant provincial rep; Political officer
1968-	Armed Forces Staff College

Promotions: O-8, 1961; O-7, 1963; O-6, 1965; O-5, 1967 O-4, 1969

Languages: French

Comments:

Mr. Burnham is presently at the Armed Forces Staff College on a six-month politico-military training assignment which ends in late January 1969. Mr. Burnham's performance in Vietnam was outstanding and is reflected in his recent promotion to the FSO-4 ranks. Previously, Mr. Burnham did excellent work in Paris and in Bordeaux in a variety of Foreign Service functions. In addition to superior intellectual capabilities, in Vietnam he has demonstrated exceptional competence in discharging responsibilities at a considerably higher level than his rank. He writes clearly and effectively and is very articulate in oral communication.

INFORMATION

7

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ Wednesday, Jan. 15, 1969

MR. PRESIDENT:

You should know there is some last-minute trouble in Paris, the seriousness of which Vance cannot assess. Mai Van Bo has put to Manac'h a different formula for order of speaking than that suggested by Oberemko and agreed by Lau. Without going into details, Bô's formula is less two-sided. Manac'h raised the question as to whether Lau "may have exceeded his instructions."

Cy is now seeing Oberemko to check his understanding that the Oberemko formula was straight AA-BB or BB-AA, depending on who won the draw. He will then try to engage Oberemko and straighten the matter out. If necessary, he will see Lau again.

In short, we cannot be sure that the deal is on yet.

W. W. Rostow

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines
By LG, NARA, Date 3-5-99

Fenske
8

~~SECRET~~ Wed., Jan. 15, 1969
3:45 p. m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith the GVN Foreign Minister formally raises the question of U. S. troop withdrawals in 1969.

Bunker and Abrams (paras. 9 and 10) are against any early announcement and are for no announcement until serious joint staff work is done.

W. W. Rostow

~~SECRET~~ attachment

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines
By lg NARA, Date 3-5-98

WH

Department of State TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~

#71

PP RUFNCR
DE RUEHCR 845 0151440
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P R 151410Z JAN 69
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7483
INFO RUFNCR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3522
STATE GRNC
BT
~~S E C R E T~~ SAIGON 845

3 7 1/0 Q
1969 JAN 15 AM 10:33

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 91-132
By mp/dp, NARA, Date 2-27-98

NODIS

PARIS FOR VIET NAM MISSION

REF: A. SAIGON 45710
B. SAIGON 45840
C. SAIGON 754

1. FOREIGN MINISTER THANH ASKED POLITICAL COUNSELOR TO CALL ON HIM THIS AFTERNOON. HE SAID PRESIDENT THIEU WISHED TO ASK ME TO CONVEY TO WASHINGTON A REQUEST THAT THE GVN AND USG INITIATE EARLY DISCUSSIONS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF VIETNAMESE FORCES "RELIEVING" A CERTAIN NUMBER OF US FORCES IN THE COURSE OF THE CURRENT YEAR.

2. THANH REFERRED TO PRESIDENT THIEU'S SPEECH OF DECEMBER 31 (REF A) WHICH HAD BROACHED THE SUBJECT AND HAD ANNOUNCED THE GVN'S "READINESS TO REPLACE PART OF THE ALLIED FORCES TO LIGHTEN THE BURDEN FOR THE PEOPLES, THE GOVERNMENTS AND THE ARMED FORCES OF OUR ALLIES" AND IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAD SAID "WE ARE READY TO FULFILL OUR DUTY AND ARE MORE CAPABLE OF DOING IT IN 1969 THANKS TO THE GROWTH AND EFFICIENCY OF OUR ARMED FORCES." THE PRESIDENT HAD HAD IN MIND, THANH SAID, A LIMITED REPLACEMENT OF AMERICAN TROOPS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE MOBILIZATION OF ADDITIONAL FORCES BY SOUTH VIET-NAM AND THEIR IMPROVED EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING AS WELL AS BY THE GROWING WEAKNESS OF THE ENEMY. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT, OF COURSE, HAVE IN MIND AN INCIPIENT OUTRIGHT "WITHDRAWAL" OF ALLIED FORCES WHICH DEPENDS ON A SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT AND PRESUMABLY WOULD TAKE PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE MANILA COMMUNIQUE.

3. SPECIFICALLY, THANH SAID, THE PRESIDENT WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE VIEWS OF THE USG WHETHER IN THE COURSE OF THE YEAR 1969 A GRADUAL REPLACEMENT OF TWO US COMBAT DIVISIONS MIGHT BE CONTEMPLATED. THANH EMPHASIZED THAT WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAD IN MIND WAS "A GRADUAL REPLACEMENT" ACCORDING TO A PHASED PLAN TO BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN MACV AND THE JGS, INVOLVING ALTOGETHER PERHAPS BETWEEN 40 AND 50,000 MEN. THANH STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF SECRECY AND SAID THAT THE GVN WOULD ENVISAGE THE TALKS TO BE HANDLED BETWEEN GENERAL ABRAMS AND GENERAL VIEN.

~~SECRET~~

4. THANH ADDED THAT PRESIDENT THIEU WAS DISQUIETED BY PRESS REPORTS WHICH SEEMED TO EXAGGERATE THE EXTENT OF POSSIBLE WITHDRAWALS OF US FORCES DURING THE COMING YEAR AND WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED BY SPECULATIONS MENTIONING AS MANY AS 200,000 TROOPS. A WITHDRAWAL ON SUCH A SCALE IN THE PRESENT CONDITIONS WOULD BE INTERPRETED NOT AS AN ORDERLY REPLACEMENT BY THE RVNAF BUT AS AN "ABANDONMENT".

5. THANH SAID PRESIDENT THIEU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT THE MATTER OF "REPLACEMENT" IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND WOULD THEREFORE ESPECIALLY APPRECIATE OUR COMMENTS ON THE UTILITY OF HIS MENTIONING THE POSSIBILITY OF WITHDRAWING TWO US COMBAT DIVISIONS IN 1969. HE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER THE USG BELIEVES SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD HAVE A GOOD EFFECT IN THE US AT THE PRESENT TIME.

6. HERZ REPLIED THAT THIS MATTER HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP BY PRESIDENT THIEU IN HIS MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR JUST BEFORE NEW YEAR'S (REF B) AND THAT IT HAD BEEN AGREED AT THAT TIME THAT IT NEEDED TO BE DISCUSSED ON A VERY SECRET AND SECURE BASIS. WE HAD THEREFORE BEEN SURPRISED AT THE PUBLIC STATEMENT OF DECEMBER 31 AND EVEN MORE SURPRISED AT THE LEAKS ABOUT THIS MATTER WHICH SEEM TO BE COMING FROM VIETNAMESE SOURCES. OBVIOUSLY THE WAY IN WHICH ANY SUCH ANNOUNCEMENT IS HANDLED IS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE IF THE FAVORABLE EFFECT IS NOT TO BE DISSIPATED, AND INDEED IF THERE IS NOT TO BE A SERIOUSLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON VIETNAMESE PUBLIC OPINION.

7. FURTHERMORE, HERZ SAID, THE MATTER HAD ALSO COME UP WHEN GENERAL ABRAMS BRIEFED THE DEPARTING VIETNAMESE GOOD-WILL DELEGATIONS ON JANUARY 11 (REF C) WHEN IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION FROM NGUYEN XUAN OANH HE HAD SAID THAT IT IS PREMATURE TO TALK ABOUT NUMBERS AND THAT IT MIGHT TAKE AS LONG AS JUNE BEFORE WE HAVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ON WHICH TO BASE A JUDGMENT. GENERAL ABRAMS HAD OBSERVED THAT WHEN AND IF A REDUCTION IS JUDGED ADVISABLE, HE HOPED IT WOULD BE A BALANCED REDUCTION PLANNED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE COMBAT ELEMENTS ARE NOT WITHDRAWN IN DISPROPORTIONATELY LARGE NUMBERS TO SUPPORT ELEMENTS OR VICE VERSA. IN ADDITION UPI HAD REPORTED A STATEMENT BY GENERAL ABRAMS JAN 13 DOWN-PLAYING THE IDEA OF AN EARLY SCHEDULE FOR WITHDRAWALS AND STATING THAT IT IS TOO SOON TO TELL WHEN A CUTBACK CAN BEGIN. HERZ EXPRESSED DOUBT THEREFORE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE AT PRESENT TO SPEAK OF 40 TO 50,000 AND OF "TWO COMBAT DIVISIONS" SINCE THIS MIGHT BE PREMATURE AND THERE COULD BE A CONFLICT BETWEEN THOSE TWO CONCEPTS.

8. COMMENT: I THINK IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT WHAT WAS INTENDED AS A CONSTRUCTIVE MOVE IS NOW BECOMING A CONFUSED AND UNDISCIPLINED OPERATION ON THE VIETNAMESE SIDE THAT COULD FRITTER AWAY THE GOOD EFFECT IN THE US AND BECOME VERY DAMAGING HERE DUE TO EXAGGERATED SPECULATIONS ON THE EXTENT OF POSSIBLE REDUCTION OF OUR TROOP COMMITMENT. I HAVE DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH GENERAL ABRAMS AND RECOMMEND THAT HE BE AUTHORIZED TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS WITH GENERAL VIEN. GENERAL ABRAMS DOES NOT SEE

HOW WE OR THIEU CAN MAKE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT AT THIS TIME OF THE NUMBER OF US TROOPS THAT COULD BE "REPLACED" DURING THE CURRENT YEAR.

9. I INTEND TO DISCUSS THIS ENTIRE MATTER FURTHER WITH THIEU HIMSELF, AND HAD IN FACT PUT IN FOR AN APPOINTMENT FOR HIM TO SEE GENERAL ABRAMS AND ME, BUT THIS HAS BEEN DELAYED DUE TO THE DEATH OF THIEU'S FATHER. AT THAT MEETING WE WILL ALSO URGE THAT HE WITHHOLD ANY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT UNTIL WE HAVE ARRIVED AT SOME GENERAL AGREEMENT ON HOW TO WORK OUT THIS MATTER BETWEEN GENERAL ABRAMS' COMMAND AND HIS VIETNAMESE COUNTERPARTS.

10. GENERAL ABRAMS FEELS, AND I AGREE, THAT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO COME UP WITH A TARGET FIGURE IN THE NEAR FUTURE BECAUSE THERE ARE TOO MANY VARIABLES IN THE SITUATION INCLUDING RVNAF CAPABILITIES, PROGRESS OF PACIFICATION, DEVELOPMENTS IN ENEMY STRATEGY, AND DEVELOPMENTS IN PARIS. WHILE IT MAY BE NECESSARY FOR THIEU TO KNOCK DOWN THE 200,000 FIGURE IT SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR HIM TO REFER TO DISCUSSIONS WHICH ARE BEGINNING BETWEEN VIETNAMESE AND US MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO WORK UP AN ORDERLY PLAN FOR REPLACEMENT OF SOME US TROOPS BY VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN VIEW OF THE IMPROVED MILITARY SITUATION AND IN THE LIGHT OF INCREASED VIETNAMESE CAPABILITIES TO TAKE OVER A GREATER SHARE OF THE FIGHTING. HE COULD TALK ABOUT THE GROWING STRENGTH AND EFFECTIVENESS OF HIS MILITARY AND PARA-MILITARY FORCES, AND GENERAL ABRAMS WOULD BE GLAD TO BACK UP SUCH STATEMENTS PUBLICLY.

BUNKER
BT

9

INFORMATION

~~SECRET/HARVAN PLUS~~

Wednesday, January 15, 1969
2:05 p.m.

Mr. President:

As you can see, the GVN problem is a minor one; but Vance now envisages an announcement at noon Thursday, Paris time -- 6:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, our time.

W. W. Rostow

~~SECRET/HARVAN PLUS~~

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 91-54
By wg, NARA, Date 5-31-91

WWRostow:rln

9a

~~SECRET/NODIS~~/HARVAN/PLUS

January 15, 1969

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 91-132
By cp/lp NARA, Date 2-27-98

Vance Phoned at 11:45 a.m.

1. Vance had not yet heard from the DRV about NLF concurrence. Our delegation had heard that the "other side" had asked to see Manach at 5:30 p.m. (Paris time), but does not know if the Front or the DRV or both are involved.

2. Lam just called Miller to say that he had phoned Thieu with the information which Vance had given him on earlier developments. Lam wanted Miller to come over right away to the GVN delegation headquarters and asked Miller to tell Vance to "stop everything he is doing."

3. Secretary Rusk got on the phone and advised Vance to inform Lam that it was too late to stop action and to tell him that Vance was proceeding with Lau and Manach in accordance with the instructions approved by President Thieu.

Vance Called at Noon

1. Vance said the DRV delegation had just phoned to advise us that the NLF delegation concurred in the Vance/Lau arrangement as agreed upon earlier in the day.

Vance Called at 12:25 p.m.

1. Vance and Lau are scheduled to meet with Manach at 7:30 p.m. (Paris time). Harriman and Vance have sent an officer to see Lam to find out what the GVN problem is but have not heard back from him.

Vance Called at 1:00 p.m.

1. The GVN problem is a minor one - Thieu does not want the drawing or flip of the coin to be done at the Quai. He prefers that it be done at the Hotel Majestic, but Lam raised no other problems.

2. Accordingly Vance plans to see Manach and Lau at 7:30 Paris time and propose the change in site of the drawing and suggest a new time schedule so that the drawing would occur at 10:00 a.m. Thursday (Paris time) and the announcement

to follow at noon Thursday (Paris time). He thinks Lau will agree to these changes, but if the delay is a serious problem for the DRV he will agree to set it up for this evening at a later hour.

BHR

Benjamin H. Read

10

ACTION

Pres. file

Wednesday, January 15, 1969 - 12:45 pm

Mr. President:

Herewith Sec. Rusk forwards a request that you receive Sargent Shriver, if possible, tomorrow, Thursday, January 16. Shriver is prepared to remain over until Friday if you cannot see him tomorrow.

W. W. Rostow

Have Jim Jones arrange time _____

No_____

Call me_____

rln

4063

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

10 a

January 15, 1969

S/S-17185

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Ambassador Shriver's Request for Appointment

Sargent Shriver has returned to the United States this week to attend the annual board meeting of the Kennedy Foundation in New York. He is coming to Washington on consultation and I am seeing him at 11:00 a. m. on Thursday, January 16.

He would like to call on you any time on Thursday. He plans to leave Washington on Friday the 17th but would stay over to see you on that day if you cannot receive him on Thursday. He is presently planning to be back in Paris on Saturday, January 18.

In view of your very heavy commitments, I am reluctant to press for an appointment for Ambassador Shriver but I did want you to know that he will be in town in the event you would wish to give him ten or fifteen minutes.

Dean Rusk

Dean Rusk

11

INFORMATION

~~SECRET/HARVAN PLUS~~

Wednesday, January 15, 1969
12:30 p. m.

Mr. President:

Herewith the account of Vance's telephone call at 9:45 am, today.

Lam had just called Vance and stated he must be in touch with the delegation urgently and to make no further move.

Since the agreement is wholly within the instruction approved by Thieu, Sec. Rusk sees no basis for holding up and has so informed Vance.

Sec. Rusk does not feel, on the basis of what he knows, there is any basis for going back to the President for new instructions. But we will shortly get word as to what Lam has in mind; I shall inform you.

As rather ominous background, you may wish to look at Lam's cable to Saigon, which reached us yesterday (to be supplied later).

W. W. Rostow

~~SECRET/HARVAN PLUS~~

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 91-54
By cg, NARA, Date 5-31-91

WWRostow:rln

W It 11a

~~SECRET~~/NODIS/HARVAN/PLUS

January 15, 1969

Ambassador Vance called on the Secure Phone at 9:45 a.m.

1. Vance reported that he had just reached agreement with Lau on procedures. Seating would be arranged as set forth in the Soviet proposal. There would be no name plates or flags. On the order of speaking Vance and Lau agreed that each would send a subordinate officer to see Manach at the French Foreign Office at 6:00 p.m. (Paris time) today. In the presence of the US and DRV officers Manach would be asked to determine by chance, either by lots or flip of a coin, which side would speak first.

2. Lau told Vance that he would have to get the agreement of the NLF delegation to this arrangement before it could be considered final and he would call Vance as soon as this had been done.

3. At that time Lau and Vance will go together to see Manach to spell out the above arrangements.

4. After the winner is determined on the question of order of speaking by Manach, it was agreed that the US and DRV officers would telephone Vance and Lau from the Quai and that two hours later the US and DRV delegations would make separate public statements about the procedural agreement.

5. Part of the understanding reached is that the first US/GVN-DRV/NLF meeting - which would be devoted to procedural questions - would be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 18.

6. Vance had talked to Lam when GVN concurrence to these arrangements was cabled from Saigon and Lam had not raised any problems. Vance intended to see Lam again, after hearing from Lau, to report developments.

Comment:

Vance urged greatest precaution in handling this information until NLF concurrence is obtained and the arrangements are carried out as outlined above.

BHR

Benjamin H. Read

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
State Dept. Guidelines
By AE NARA, Date 3-5-98

Wed., June 15, 1969
11:55 a.m.

Read
12

Mr. President:

Herewith a farewell letter from Harlan Cleveland.

W. W. Rostow

Attachment

120

UNITED STATES PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
ON THE
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

Brussels, Belgium

January 8, 1969

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

You will know that the President-elect has asked me to stay on the job for a little while, so my formal letter of resignation has not been sent to you. But before you leave the White House, I want to say what I would like to be able to tell you in person: It has been a great privilege, for which I am enormously grateful, to serve in your Administration, first as Assistant Secretary of State and then as Ambassador to NATO.

The past three years have been a time of danger and difficulty for the North Atlantic Alliance. Your policies and leadership have enabled us to maintain NATO as a workable system of deterrence, to create an acceptable way for allies to share in nuclear planning, and to draw our European allies into more intimate political consultation in the North Atlantic Council. Adjusting to the French military withdrawal in 1966, taking the initiative to improve East-West relations in 1967, and reacting healthily to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, NATO has shown more resilience and flexibility than either its critics or its friends had supposed.

Our part in NATO's accomplishments has naturally been a major one. The United States Government in Washington and overseas has been, on the whole, alert and imaginative in promoting the US national interest in a strong Atlantic Alliance; and your own personal support of its undiminished strength has been the key ingredient.

The workers in this particular vineyard appreciate in particular the large rations of time and energy you and Secretaries Rusk, McNamara and Clifford, and their staffs, have devoted to European and NATO matters in the midst of other urgent preoccupations. In three years of daily cabling and eighteen commuting trips to Washington, I have never failed to find major Alliance issues getting the attention they required from the senior officials of a very busy government.

While talking in the Cabinet Room with a group of European Ministers a couple of years ago, you called NATO history's "greatest peacekeeping force". We have helped adapt it for a future that combines continuing military risks with a good chance for peaceful change in Europe. NATO is ready for a third decade of service to its members, and indeed to the wider world: for the lessons we have learned in the North Atlantic Council about cooperative political endeavor may well prove useful in peacekeeping and peacemaking elsewhere.

With great respect and warm regards,

Sincerely,

Harlan Cleveland

13

January 15, 1969

Mr. President:

Herewith Bill Jorden's letter covering the understanding which I transmitted to him after talking with you and Arthur Krim. Bill needs formal confirmation, if this is an acceptable formula.

W. W. Rostow

cc: Mr. Arthur Krim

WWRostow:rln

13a

Harriman/Vance Delegation
American Embassy Paris
APO New York 09777
January 7, 1968

Dear Walt:

This letter is a follow-up to our recent phone conversation regarding the future. At the outset, let me say how delighted I am that there is a prospect of my going to Austin to help the President work on the record of his years in the White House. And I am looking forward keenly to working also on a book of my own.

Let me set forth hereunder my understanding of the arrangement as we discussed it:

1) I would assist the President by doing research, organizing papers and preparing materials for his use on a book (or books) on the major foreign policy decisions and actions of his Administration.

2) I would also do research and write my own book on the search for peace in Viet-Nam, or perhaps a broader subject.

3) My working time would be divided approximately equally between (1) and (2).

4) In preparing my book, I would have full access to the President's papers and files containing all relavent data.

5) I would not publish my book without the President's agreement as to timing.

6) My salary would be $30,000 a year.

While nothing can be assured at this time, I understand I can regard a teaching assignment as a distinct possibility. This should be left for future discussion and decision.

As a footnote, I would hope that the cost of moving from Washington to Texas could be borne by the Foundation.

I trust this conforms to the President's ideas regarding my position. Again let me say how thoroughly happy I am at the prospect of continuing to work for him. I am assuming the Paris assignment will terminate about the end of February, or the end of March at the latest. Please advise when it is desired that I commence the new position and I will make the necessary adjustments.

Sincerely yours,
Bill
William J. Jorden

Mr. Walt W. Rostow
Special Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Pres file

14

SECRET/HARVAN PLUS Wed., Jan. 15, 1969

MR. PRESIDENT:

With a minor variation, the GVN buys the Oberemko formula in the attached; and the Foreign Minister expresses hope for a meeting on Friday.

Fingers crossed.

W. W. Rostow

SECRET/HARVAN PLUS attachment (Saigon 814)

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 1/30/95, State Dept. Guidelines
By ly, NARA, Date 3 5 98

ACTION COPY (1) 14c

Department of State TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~

3580Q
1:36AM
1-15-69

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 91-132
By mpl/sp NARA, Date 2-27-98

Z 150600Z JAN 69 ZFF6
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 7451
INFO RUFNCR/AMEMBASSY PARIS FLASH 3517
STATE GRNC
BT
~~S E C R E T~~ SAIGON 814

NODIS/HARVAN/PLUS

PARIS FOR VIET NAM MISSION

REF: A. PARIS 521
B. STATE 5973
C. SAIGON 530
D. SAIGON 769

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAW FOREIGN MINISTER THIS MORNING AND PERSUADED HIM TO SEE THIEU DURING MOURNING CEREMONIES AND OBTAIN HIS AUTHORIZATION. WE HAVE THUS OBTAINED THIEU'S CONCURRENCE TO PROCEED WITH PRESENTATION NEW PACKAGE ALONG LINES REF A WITH ONE MINOR MODIFICATION: SUB-PARAGRAPH (3) OF PARA 2 REF B TO BE AMENDED TO READ: "THE SIDE WHICH SPEAKS FIRST IS TO BE DETERMINED BY LOT (OR CHANCE) EITHER BY THE US AND NORTH VIET-NAM OR BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT IN THE PRESENCE OF US AND NORTH VIETNAMESE REPRESENTATIVES." REST OF SUB-PARAGRAPH (3) UNCHANGED.

2. THANH EXPLAINED THAT THIEU WOULD PREFERE NOT TO HAVE THE FRENCH INVOLVED BUT WAS WILLING TO LET THEM DETERMINE WHO SPEAKS FIRST IF THIS CANNOT BE SETLED BY LOT BETWEEN US AND DRV. THIEU WAS ALSO SUSPICIOUS OF THE SENTENCE "THE FRENCH WILL INFORM US AS TO WHICH SIDE WILL SPEAK FIRST" SINCE THIS SEEMED TO LEAVE OPEN HOW AND IN WHOLE PRESENCE FRENCH WOULD MAKE THE DETERMINATION "BY CHANCE". SUBSTITUTION OF "HOST GOVERNMENT" FOR "FRENCH" IS PURELY FOR COSMETIC REASONS, TO DOWNPLAY FRENCH ROLE.

~~SECRET~~

(1)

~~SECRET~~

3. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS WE ALSO PRESSED FOR AUTHORITY TO USE FALL-BACK POSITION AS PER REF C AND THANH DISCUSSED THIS WITH THE PRESIDENT. HE SAID THIEU CONSIDERED HE COULD NOT GIVE THE GREEN LIGHT UNTIL HE HAD CONFERRED WITH THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL. THIS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTON TODAY, BUT COULD BE DONE TOMORROW IF NECESSARY. HERZ URGED THANH TO URGE THE PRESIDENT TO CONVOKE THE NSC IN ANY CASE FOR TOMMORROW MORNING JANUARY 16, JUST AFTER THE FURNERAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S FATHER, SINCE THIEU WOULD EITHER HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO REPORT ABOUT TODAY'S MEETING IN PARIS OR WOULD NEED AUTHORITY TO USE FALL-BACK POSITION PROMPTLY. THANH PROMISED TO TALK TO THIEU IN THIS SENSE IN THE AFTERNOON.

4. THANH IS NOTIFYING LAM BUT ASKED THAT VANCE FILL IN LAM BEFORE SEEING LAU SINCE GVN COMMUNICATIONS ARE SO MUCH SLOWER THAN OURS. THANH ALSO REMINDED US THAT IN CASE AGREEMENT IS REACHED TODAY, GVN WOULD EXPECT OUR AGREEMENT ON PUBLIC POSITIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED AS PER PARA 5 REF C, I.E. BOTH US AND GVN WOULD MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENTS REAFFIRMING OUR POSITIONS ON THE TWO-SIDED NATURE OF THE TALKS AND NON-RECOGNITION OF THE NLF AS SEPARATE ENTITY, ALONG THE LINES OF NOVEMBER 26 STATEMENT.

5. AGAIN, AS NOTED REF, D, DESPITE THE CONFUSION AND PREOCCUPATION WITH THE MOURNING CEREMONIES WHICH HAVE ALMOST COMPLETELY REMOVES THIEU FROM CONDUCT OF BUSINESS, WE SENSE A GENUINE WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE THE PROCEDURAL MATTERS BEFORE THE END OF THE WEEK. THANH REMARKED THAT HE HOPED FIRST FULL MEETING ON PROCEDURE SHOULD BE POSSIBLE ON FRIDAY.

BUNKER

BT

~~SECRET~~

Pres. File

15

Tuesday, Jan. 14, 1969
5:30 p. m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

Attached herewith at Tab A is copy of a letter from His Holiness the Pope in response to your letter to him of December 23.

At Tab B is the printed text of the Pope's December 8 Peace message, forwarded by the Apostolic Delegate.

At Tab C is the draft of a final communication to the Pope, if you wish to send it.

W. W. Rostow

A

To

Lyndon B. Johnson

President of the United States of America

By your courteous letter of December 23, 1968, you, Mr President, had the great kindness to inform Us once again directly about the developments of the situation in Vietnam, and about the prospects for peace in the entire Southeast Asia region.

We cannot but be touched by this thoughtful gesture on your part, and We wish to express Our deep appreciation of it and Our gratitude.

If the world's expectations - which have been Ours also - of a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Vietnam have in this past year come nearer to realization, it is due, Mr President, not least to your constancy and dedication in leaving no opening unexplored in the

attempt to begin the complex and difficult process of peacemaking.

The road before us is perhaps still a long one, and, as you remarked, there will be no lack of diversions and delays. However, We have confidence that your noble nation will continue the search for the realization of Our hopes: peace in freedom, in order, and in respect for the sacred rights of the human person and for the legitimate aspirations of those peoples.

We are happy to note your resolve to continue your valued work for the growth of the spirit of brotherhood between all nations, and for the advancement of the social and economic progress of all mankind by placing under rational control the mighty forces of nuclear energy.

As you, Mr President, prepare to take leave of your high office, We recall with pleasure Our meetings with you, and your many acts of courtesy towards Our person and towards Our efforts in the cause of peace, and, while expressing Our heartfelt thankfulness, We willingly invoke upon you and your

family the choicest blessings of heaven, with sincere wishes for your personal welfare and prosperity.

Meanwhile We renew to you, Mr President, Our sentiments of the highest consideration and esteem.

From the Vatican, January 5, 1969.

Paulus P.P. VI

15c

B

15d

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
PAUL VI

FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE "DAY OF PEACE"

JANUARY 1st, 1969

15e

To all men of good will, to all those responsible for the development of history today and tomorrow;

hence, to those who guide politics, public opinion, social directions, culture, education,

to youth, rising up in its yearning for world-wide renewal,

with a humble and free voice, which comes forth from the desert where no worldly interest is,

We again proclaim that imploring and solemn word: Peace.

Peace is today intrinsically linked with the ideal recognition and effective realization of the Rights of Man. To these fundamental rights there corresponds a fundamental duty, which is Peace.

Peace is a duty.

All the comments of the modern world concerning the development of international relations, the interdependence of the interests of peoples, the accession of new States to freedom and independence, the efforts made by civilization to attain a single world-wide juridical organization, the dangers of the incalculable catastrophes should new armed conflicts occur, the psychology of modern man with his desire for undisturbed prosperity and universal human relationships, the progress of ecumenism and mutual respect for personal and social freedoms, all this persuades us that Peace is one of the supreme benefits of man's life on earth, an interest of the first order, a common aspiration, an ideal worthy of mankind, master of itself and of the world, a necessity in order to maintain the conquests achieved and to achieve others, a fundamental law for the free circulation of thought, culture, economy, art, and a demand which can no longer be suppressed in view of human destiny. This is so because Peace is security, Peace is order. A just and

dynamic order, We add, which must continually be built up. Without Peace there is no trust, without trust there is no progress. And that trust, We declare, must be rooted in justice and fairness. Only in a climate of Peace can right be recognized, can justice advance, can freedom breathe. If, then, such is the meaning of Peace, if such is the value of Peace, then Peace is a duty.

It is the duty of present history. Whoever reflects upon the lessons which past history teaches us will proceed at once to declare that a return to war, to struggle, to massacre, to the ruins caused by the psychology of conflicting arms and forces, even to the death of men who are citizens of the earth, the common fatherland of our life in time, that such a return is absurd. He who knows the significance of man cannot avoid being a follower of Peace. He who reflects on the causes of the conflicts between men must recognize that they betray a lack in man's mind, and not true virtues of his moral greatness. The necessity of war could be justified only in exceptional and deplorable conditions of fact and law, which should never be verified in modern world society. Reason, and not might, must decide the destinies of peoples. Understanding, negotiations, arbitration, and not outrage, blood and slavery, must intervene in the difficult relationships between men. No precarious truce, unstable equilibrium, fear of reprisals and revenge, successful conquest or fortunate arrogance, can guarantee a Peace worthy of that name. Peace must be willed. Peace must be loved. Peace must be produced. It must be a moral consequence; it must spring up from free and generous spirits. A dream

it may well seem; but a dream which becomes a reality by virtue of a new and superior human concept.

Yes, a dream, since the experience of these recent years and the rise of recent murky floods of evil ideas, such as radical anarchic contestation, violence considered lawful and always necessary, the policy of power and domination, the armaments race, trust in methods of cunning and deception, the inescapable tests of strength, and others, seem to suffocate hope for the peaceful ordering of the world. Yet that hope remains, for it must remain. It is the light of progress and of civilization. The world cannot give up its dream of universal Peace. It is precisely because Peace is always coming to be, always incomplete, always fragile, always under attack, always difficult, that We proclaim it. We proclaim it as a duty, an inescapable duty. The duty of those responsible for the destiny of peoples. The duty of every citizen of the world; because all must love Peace, and all must work together to produce that public mentality and common conscience which make it possible and probable. Peace must first be in men's minds, so that it can then exist in human events.

Indeed, Peace is a universal and perennial duty. In order to recall this axiom of modern civilization, We invite the world to celebrate once again, for the year 1969 which is about to begin, World Peace Day on the first of January. This is a wish, a hope and an engagement; the first sun of the new year must shed upon the earth the light of Peace.

We dare to hope that, above all, it will be Youth who will grasp this invitation as a demand which can interpret

everything new, lively and great, yearned for by their exasperated spirits, because Peace demands the correction of abuses and coincides with the cause of justice.

This year a special circumstance recommends Our proposal to all: there has just been celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights. This event interests all men, individuals, families, groups, associations and nations. No one must forget or neglect it, for it calls all to the fundamental recognition of the full dignified citizenship of every man on earth. From such recognition springs the original title of Peace; in fact, the theme of World Peace Day is precisely this: "The promotion of Human Rights, the way to Peace". In order that man may be guaranteed the right to life, to liberty, to equality, to culture, to the enjoyment of the benefits of civilization, to personal and social dignity, Peace is necessary: when Peace loses its equilibrium and efficiency, Human Rights become precarious and are compromised; when there is no Peace, right loses its human stature. Moreover, where Human Rights are not respected, defended and promoted, where violence or fraud is done to man's inalienable freedoms, where his personality is ignored or degraded, where discrimination, slavery or intolerance prevail, there true Peace cannot be. Peace and Rights are reciprocally cause and effect, the one of the other: Peace favours Rights, and Rights in their turn favour Peace.

We presume to hope that these arguments will prove valid for every person, every group of persons, every Nation; that the transcendental importance of the cause of Peace will encourage meditation upon it and application

of it. Peace and Human Rights—such is the thought with which, We hope, men will commence the coming year. Our invitation is sincere, having no other purpose than the good of mankind. Our voice is feeble but clear; it is the voice of a friend, who desires that it be heard not so much because of who says it, but of what he says. It is addressed to the world; that world which thinks, which is capable, which grows, which works, which suffers, which waits. Oh! May this voice not be ignored! Peace is a duty!

This message of Ours cannot lack the strength which comes to is from that Gospel of which We are minister, the Gospel of Christ.

It, too, like the Gospel, is addressed to everyone in the world.

More directly, however, to you, Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate, and to you, beloved sons and faithful members of the Catholic Church, do We repeat Our invitation to celebrate the Day of Peace; and this invitation becomes a precept, not of Ours but of the Lord, Who desires that we be convinced and active workers for Peace if we are to be numbered among the blessed marked with the name of sons of God (*Mt.* v. 9). Our voice addresses itself to you; it becomes a cry, because for us believers Peace takes on an even deeper and more mysterious meaning, for us it acquires the value of spiritual fulness and personal as well as collective and social salvation; earthly and temporal Peace, to us, is the reflection and prelude of heavenly and eternal Peace.

For us Christians, Peace is not only an external equilibrium, a juridical order, a complex of disciplined public relationships; for us, Peace is above all the result of the implementation of that design of wisdom and love, through which God willed to enter into supernatural relations with mankind. Peace is the first effect of that new divine economy which we call grace—"Grace and peace", as the Apostle says—

it is a gift of God which becomes the style of Christian life; it is a Messianic phase which reflects its light and hope upon the temporal city also, strengthening with its superior motives those reasons upon which that city bases its own Peace. To the dignity of citizens of the world, the Peace of Christ adds the dignity of sons of the heavenly Father; to the natural equality of men, it adds that of Christian brotherhood; to human competition which ever compromise and violate Peace, Christ's Peace weakens pretexts and opposes motives, thus showing forth the advantages of an ideal and superior moral order, and revealing the marvellous religious and civil virtue of generous pardon; to the incapability of human art to produce a solid and stable Peace, Christ's Peace lends the aid of its inexhaustable optimism; to the fallacy of policies of proud prestige and material interests, Christ's Peace suggests a policy of charity; to justice, too often weak and impatient, upholding its needs by the fury of arms, Christ's Peace infuses the unconquerable energy of those rights derived from the deepest reasons of human nature and from man's transcendental destiny. The Peace of Christ, which derives its spirit from the redeeming sacrifice, is not fear of might and resistance; the Peace of Christ, which understands pain and human needs, which finds love and gifts for the little, the poor, the weak the desinherited, the suffering, the humiliated, the conquered, is not cowardice tolerant of the misadventures and deficiencies of man with no fortune or defence. In a word, the Peace of Christ is, more than any other humanitarian formula, solicitous of Human Rights.

This, Brothers and sons, is what We would have you remember and proclaim on World Peace Day, under the auspices of which the new year commences, in the name of Christ, the King of Peace, defender of all authentic human rights. So be it, with Our Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, December 8, 1968.

Paulus P. P. VI

C

15h

January 14, 1969

Your Holiness:

I received today your letter of January 5, 1969, as well as the text of your address of December 8, 1968, for the celebration of the "World Day of Peace."

In this, my final communication to you as President, I wish to tell you how moved I have been by the depth of your understanding of what Peace requires among human beings and nations.

All I could do from this office I have done on behalf of Peace, security, and order. Whenever it was possible, I sought to turn men's minds from violence to reason, from conflict to understanding and negotiation.

You know, I believe, the comfort and strength your correspondence has brought me over these years.

I shall always treasure our meeting in December 1967.

Sincerely,

His Holiness
Pope Paul VI
Vatican City

LBJ:WWR:ms

16

ACTION

Tuesday, January 14, 1969 -- 4:45 p.m.

Mr. President:

Attached are State Department recommendations on farewell messages. As you see, two Apollo 8 photographs will be enclosed with each message.

At Tab A is the text of the proposed farewell message to Chiefs of State and heads of government. At Tab B is a list of countries with which we do not have diplomatic relations.

Sec. Rusk and Nick Katzenbach reviewed a suggestion of mine that we might consider sending the astronaut pictures, without a message from the President, but with, perhaps, the President's personal card, to all Chiefs of Government -- Mao, Castro, and all. The idea is, of course, that the astronauts saw our planet as one world. Their recommendation was positive, rather to my surprise. The question is, therefore, :

-- Do you wish to send the pictures to countries with which we do not have diplomatic relations:

All of them_____

Excluding_____

You may wish to talk directly with Sec. Rusk about this interesting farewell gesture.

W. W. Rostow

WWRostow:rln

16a

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

S/S-17186

January 14, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. WALT W. ROSTOW
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Farewell Messages

Enclosed is a proposed draft of a farewell message for the President to send to Chiefs of State and/or Heads of Government. Two photographs taken on the recent Apollo VIII flight would be enclosed with the message. The second paragraph in parentheses would be included in messages to those officials whom he has met personally. In those few occasions where he would be sending messages to both a Chief of State and Head of Government of a country, neither or both of whom he has met, we would plan to make minor changes in the texts so that the two men did not receive identical letters.

In addition to these standard messages we are preparing personalized draft letters for the President to send to the following:

Australia	Prime Minister Gorton
China	President Chiang
Ethiopia	Emperor Haile Selassie
France	President de Gaulle
Germany	President Luebke
	Chancellor Kiesinger
United Kingdom	Queen Elizabeth
	Prime Minister Wilson
India	President Husain
	Prime Minister Indira Ghandi
Iran	Reza Shah Pahlavi
Israel	President Shazar
	Prime Minister Eshkol
Italy	President Saragat
Japan	Emperor Hirohito
	Prime Minister Sato
Jordan	King Hussein
Korea	President Park

Mexico	President Diaz Ordaz
Morocco	King Hassan II
New Zealand	Prime Minister Holyoake
Pakistan	President Ayub
Philippines	President Marcos
Tunisia	President Bourguiba
Vatican	Pope Paul
Viet-Nam	President Thieu

Also enclosed is a list of the most important political figures of countries with which we do not have diplomatic relations.

John P. Walsh

Benjamin H. Read
Executive Secretary

Enclosures:

1. Proposed draft.

2. List of Countries.

RECEIVED
ROSTOW'S OFFICE

1969 JAN 14 PM 2 23

FAREWELL MESSAGE TO CHIEFS OF STATE AND
HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

As I prepare to leave office, I want not only to say good-bye but also to thank you for helping to make possible cooperation for peace and progress between our two countries during my years as President. I know that the spirit of friendship and mutual respect on which this cooperation has been based will continue and that both our peoples will be the better for it.

(I also want to thank you for our personal association, which has been a source of special gratification. Through it, both of us were able to gain a better understanding of our nations' problems and aspirations.)

As the enclosed photographs of our recent lunar flight suggest, this shrinking globe is rapidly becoming a single neighborhood. Even the most distant nations now live closer to each other than villages in a single nation did only a few centuries ago. Countries are learning that they must work together for common ends if any are to survive and prosper in the new world of interdependence which science and technology are helping to create.

We have made some progress to this end in recent years. New forms of international cooperation are evident in many areas. I believe that this progress will continue, and that one day an international community will come into being which is as solidly grounded in common interest and common institutions as national communities are today.

I know that both our countries will play a part in this great venture. Despite my retirement from the Presidency, my interest in (country's) role and my friendship for its people will remain strong and undiminished, as will my dedication to the goals which both our countries share.

COUNTRIES WI WHICH WE DO NOT HAVE DIPL ATIC RELATIONS 16c

AFRICA

Algeria - His Excellency
Colonel Houari Boumediene,
President of the National Council of the Revolution
and President of the Council of Ministers of the
Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria,
Algiers.

Congo (Brazzaville) - His Excellency
Major Marien Ngouabi,
President of the Republic of the Congo,
Brazzaville.

Mauritania - His Excellency
Moktar Ould Daddah,
President of the Islamic Republic
of Mauritania,
Nouakchott.

Southern Rhodesia - The Honorable
Ian Douglas Smith,
Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia,
Salisbury.

Sudan - His Excellency
Sayyed Ismail el Azhari,
President of the Supreme Council of the
Republic of Sudan,
Khartoum.

LATIN AMERICA

Cuba - His Excellency
Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba,
Habana.

EUROPE

Albania - His Excellency
Enver Hoxha,
First Secretary of the Albanian Workers' Party
of the Peoples Republic of Albania,
Tirana.

East Germany - His Excellency
Walter Ulbricht,
Chairman of the Council of State
of the German Democratic Republic,
Berlin.

EAST ASIA

Cambodia - His Royal Highness
Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk Upayuvareach,
Chief of State of Cambodia,
Phnom Penh.

Communist China - His Excellency
Mao Tse-tung,
Chairman of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party of China,
China, Peking.

Mongolia - His Excellency
Yumjagiyn Tsendenbal,
Prime Minister of the Mongolian People's Republic,
Ulan Bator,

North Korea - His Excellency
Kim Il Sung,
Premier of the Democratic
People's Republic of Korea,
Pyongyang.

North Vietnam - His Excellency
Ho Chi Minh,
President of the Democratic
Republic of Vietnam,
Vietnam.

NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Iraq - His Excellency
Major General Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr,
President of the Republic of Iraq,
Baghdad.

Syria - His Excellency
Dr. Nour al-Din al-Atassi,
Chief of State of the
Syrian Arab Republic,
Damascus.

UAR - His Excellency
Gamal Abdel Nasser,
President of the United Arab Republic,
Cairo.

Yemen - His Excellency
Abd al-Rahman Iryani,
Chairman of the Republican Council
of the Yemen Arab Republic,
Taiz.

17

ACTION

Tuesday, January 14, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Pres file

SUBJECT: Suggested reply to Congressman Pucinski's letters

Roman Pucinski has written you twice recently regarding the follow-through on the Pueblo problem now that the crew has been released. He is urging economic sanctions against North Korea.

Attached is a suggested reply provided by Nick Katzenbach. I recommend you sign the letter.

W. W. Rostow

Att

17a

Dear Mr. Pucinski:

May I thank you for your very warm and thoughtful letters on the subject of the PUEBLO and its crew. As you say, it was extremely gratifying to me that the crew was released in time for them to have the Christmas reunion in San Diego with their families. I also agree with your suggestion that there are questions about the PUEBLO matter which should be thoroughly investigated and resolved. We will, of course, wish to pursue with the North Koreans a number of items of unfinished business -- notably their grievous mistreatment of the crew and their continued failure to return the ship to us.

Since there is so little time left in this Administration, your suggestion that the handling of these matters should be coordinated with my successor is completely appropriate and I have requested Secretary Rusk to discuss the matter with Secretary-designate Rogers. I do not, however, think it would be appropriate to decide now what the character and terms of reference of any further inquiry should be. This decision must await the results of the Court of Inquiry which the Navy Department is convening in San Diego. When the results of that Court of Inquiry are available, I am sure that the new Administration will consult with the Congress on appropriate further actions.

May I thank you for the warm words with which you closed your letter to me. The cooperation which I have had from you and from other members of Congress has been of the greatest assistance to me in facing the tremendous problems which must be faced by the man who holds this office.

Sincerely,

Honorable Roman C. Pucinski
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

LBJ:State:MWright:mm:1/14/69

18

Tuesday, January 14, 1969

MR. PRESIDENT:

An initial report from the ENTERPRISE indicates that casualties from the fire are now 13 killed, 78 wounded, and 1 missing.

All fires are reported to have been extinguished.

The ship is scheduled to arrive in Pearl Harbor at 6:30, Washington time, tonight.

W. W. Rostow