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Rusk's Report on Vietnam, Bundy's Rept. on Laos

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Authority NSC Dir. 10/24/80
By Chen NTS. DFM 12/9/80

Summary Record of National Security Council Meeting No. 528

April 22, 1964, 4:45 PM -- Cutback in Nuclear Production

Secretary Rusk's Report on Vietnam

Asst. Secretary Bundy's Report on Laos

Secretary Rusk chaired the meeting in the absence of the President and reported on his recent trip.

c. South Vietnam -- Most of the recommendations he has made on South Vietnam are being worked on.

(1) Khanh is a very impressive person who realizes fully that his problem is not just military.

(2) We need to get more flags flying in South Vietnam. We need to help persuade other countries to provide assistance to Vietnam, not only for the value of assistance, but also because of its importance to Vietnamese morale.

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(3) The Vietnamese need to fill diplomatic posts in several major capitals so that their point of view can be put across to other countries.

(4) The relationship between Khanh and Big Minh is not entirely satisfactory. Ambassador Lodge is trying to bring these two men closer together. If some of Minh's followers are taken care of and put in jobs abroad or in Vietnam, it is possible that Minh will actively support Khanh.

(5) Khanh needs to seek a broader civilian base for his government. A non-governmental organization has been formed to try to produce greater unity among the civilians.

(6) Psychological warfare in Vietnam is very spotty. Mr. Rowan studied this problem and has made some recommendations as to what should be done.

(Mr. Rowan, in response to the Secretary's request, commented that the critical information need is to train South Vietnamese. The Vietnamese information service is very weak in the provinces. Limited physical facilities exist but maintenance is very poor. A great improvement can be made with the expenditure of a very small amount of money. The USIA in Vietnam is now working on a joint basis with the Vietnamese and it is hoped that progress will result from the joint effort.)

(7) Limitation of funds -- we may not be doing some things that we ought to be doing in Vietnam because we still think that we must limit expenditures. As compared to the cost of a war or our withdrawal, the amount of money we are spending in Vietnam is small. Ambassador Lodge says he has enough U.S. funds but this may not be so. We should look again at our programs and examine all ideas without thinking whether or not they can be done without increasing our expenditures.

(8) The Defense Department is studying several new military recommendations made by the group.

(9) We are anxious to get a new Canadian member on the International Control Commission.

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Secretary Rusk asked Assistant Secretary William Bundy to comment. Mr. Bundy said that we are now getting good reporting in both the political and military fields. Newspaper reporters have been misleading us. Unrest within the South Vietnam government has been exaggerated. The security situation is much better than as reported in the press. In the most recent large engagement, the Vietnamese stood and fought very well.

General Wheeler said he agreed. He called attention to a page one story in the New York Times which was quite misleading in that it left the impression that the Viet Cong had achieved a major victory over the Vietnamese. Viet Cong losses in this battle were sizeable. Although the week has been bloody, it has been pretty successful for the Vietnamese. Among the military advisers there is a growing sense of accomplishment even though the war is hotting up. The Viet Cong forces are tending now to stand and fight harder but the Vietnamese are also fighting much better. We should be encouraged by the progress which was being made.

Secretary McNamara said he was impressed by two things, one, our restriction on funds, and two, our restriction on people. As to funds, he thought we were unduly conservative. We are keeping the Vietnamese under too much financial pressure by insisting that they pay for certain projects. They are not doing things they should be doing because they do not have sufficient funds. This is especially true in the difficult areas where we should be building the infrastructure, such as schools and roads, because the Vietnamese cannot do so. As to the restrictions on people, we do not have enough U.S. civilian advisers to show the Vietnamese how to do some of the things they should be doing.

Secretary Rusk said that because of the critical security problems in many areas, we have been concentrating on military activity. The result is that we tend to take for granted the provinces which have been pacified. We should be building up the pacified provinces and exploiting our opportunity to carry on activities helpful to the people, such as providing doctors and schools, etc.

Secretary McNamara said that to accomplish its task AID had one-fourth of the people that the military had to accomplish its objective. We may be wasting some people and some money in Vietnam, but this is unimportant because of the critical nature of the task. The country team is

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too restrictive. AID is doing a great job and the AID people are true heroes, but there are too few AID people.

Director Bell acknowledged that neither money nor people should stand in the way of our achieving our objectives in Vietnam. However, AID officials in the provinces are not asking for more U.S. citizens, but they want people from third countries, especially Filipinos. AID is trying to get in third country people and is currently engaged in recruiting many of them. However, Ambassador Lodge has limited the number of people that AID could send.

Secretary McNamara acknowledged that Lodge had done this and it was an attitude of mind of his. Despite this, we need many more people in Vietnam.

Assistant Secretary Bundy interjected to say that Lodge had recently changed his mind on this point.

Director Bell said that he had instructed American officials to ask for what they need. He added, however, that the Vietnamese must do the job. What we need is more Vietnamese who exercise leadership rather than more Americans. We must keep the heat on the Vietnamese to do the job themselves.

Secretary McNamara said we can't find enough Vietnamese. He said we need a great deal more training by USIA. We need an increased program for the civil administration school. Director Bell said that in addition to numbers we need Vietnamese leaders and administrators. Secretary McNamara said there appeared to be a new mood in Saigon which would result in Vietnamese being used more extensively.

Secretary McNamara said we were right on the margin in Vietnam and that he could not guarantee that we would still be there six months or twelve months from now. Therefore, we should pour in resources now even if some of them were wasted because of the terrific cost that would be involved if we had to use U.S. forces. He said the Defense Department, with its \$50 million budget, must somehow be used effectively in Vietnam.

Mr. Rowan commented that there was a joint U.S. - Vietnamese plan which called for a field service center. Nothing had been done because

more people were required to organize this center. USIA is now sending people to help the Vietnamese organize radio programs aimed at North Vietnam.

Mr. Rowan said he had had long discussions with U.S. correspondents in Saigon. He asked why they did not write affirmative stories and why their leads could not be on Viet Cong losses rather than on Vietnamese losses. He said the correspondents complained that they were not being helped; for example, that military information officers are not even in their offices on weekend. Mr. Rowan added that the USIA chief there could not be very helpful because he had been told by Ambassador Lodge that he should have no contacts with the press since the Ambassador would handle all such contacts, as he had always done in his long government experience.

Secretary McNamara said that we were just now getting organized to aim black broadcasts into North Vietnam. White broadcasts were not yet being made. He expressed irritation at the length of time that it took to get these broadcasts organized primarily because of a lack of radio programmers and Vietnamese technicians.

Director Bell said that up until recently he had been unable to use former Peace Corps Volunteers in Vietnam. He had just succeeded in reaching agreement that former Peace Corps Volunteers could be recruited by AID and used throughout the world, including Vietnam.

Secretary McNamara said we need up to 200 more civilians in Vietnam now. He was prepared to take out one military person for each civilian added. He has made military personnel available to AID, allowing them to work in civilian clothes. In his view, only one-fourth of the civilians needed by AID in the provinces are now there.

Secretary Rusk called attention to the importance of providing basic health services for the Vietnamese. He cited simplified methods being used successfully by AID and suggested that military health officers and doctors be allowed to work with the Vietnamese.

Mr. Sullivan commented that we are asking our allies, especially the Filipinos, to make available civilians for service in Vietnam.

Secretary McNamara said he wished to cite another illustration, namely, the Vietnamese coastal railroad. If we spend enough money we can get

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this railroad running even though the Viet Cong continues to sabotage it. We are pouring money into Korea which is not now critical and we are not spending enough in Vietnam.

Secretary Rusk agreed that we need a rapid expansion of our programs and should not consider a money limitation.

Mr. McGeorge Bundy suggested that a telegram containing the new proposals be sent to Ambassador Lodge. So far, we have asked for his approval on all matters and have been successful in persuading him to go along with Washington proposals. We should continue our method of persuasion.

Secretary Rusk noted that if we go in with new expanded programs we might prompt the French, as well as Sihanouk, to change their attitude of pessimism.

General Wheeler said he wished to comment that in his view more military personnel would be required in Vietnam shortly. More air forces will probably be required as well. We will have to train more people and this is difficult to do.

The President joined the meeting. Secretary Rusk suggested that Assistant Secretary Bundy report on his trip to Laos.

Mr. Bundy said Ambassador Unger and the country team are doing an excellent job. The Ambassador is cool and has good judgment. As of this morning, the chances looked pretty good that the former coalition will continue in power. The King may be successful in holding together the coalition government within the general Geneva framework. Souvanna Phouma, who last week was very discouraged and prepared to resign, is now ready to continue as Prime Minister. Possibly the effect of his having been under arrest for two days has changed his view about continuing as Prime Minister. The danger in Laos is that right-wing hotheads who promoted the military revolution and who now have military control of Vientiane may refuse to accept the compromise and break out despite the opposition of Phoumi and other senior officers. and very bad news.

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He promised to try to get back to the situation where they were before the right-wing officers overthrew the coalition. A rightist push may, however, come later. Our short-term problem is to keep the hotheads from preventing the restored coalition government regaining power. We are considering a cable to our Ambassador authorizing him to tell the right-wing hotheads that the U.S. will not support their forces and will continue U.S. assistance to the other military forces. We must always remember that it was the Pathet Lao who were responsible for breaking up the conference at the Plaine des Jarre and preventing the coalition from working. The Pathet Lao created the situation which led to the right-wing revolt.

Secretary Rusk said he had warned Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin of the importance we place on keeping the Pathet Lao from taking advantage of the current chaotic situation in Laos.

Cutbacks in Nuclear Production -- In response to the President's question, AEC Chairman Seaborg said there was some Congressional opposition to the nuclear production cutback. Some Congressmen said the cutback was announced so quickly that they were not informed. Most Congressmen to whom Seaborg talked were satisfied by his explanation that we had acted unilaterally and that there was no agreement with the Soviets. Congressman Hosmer and Senator Hickenlooper had doubts as to whether we had acted only because the Soviets had promised to do certain things without inspection or verification.

Secretary McNamara reported on his meeting with ten Senators, most of whom were satisfied with his explanation of our cutback.

Mr. Rowan said the cutback had brought us worldwide acclaim and read parts of the attached memorandum.

Bromley Smith

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OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY
WASHINGTON

April 22, 1964

Bundy

MEMORANDUM FOR: The President

SUBJECT: Daily Reaction Report

Voluminous world acclaim for the nuclear announcements includes these points:

- These parallel decisions prove both sides fear nuclear war and want peace.
- No inspection or verification is involved -- these thorny problems remain to be solved.
- This unsigned, informal arrangement, however, avoids the previous inspection roadblocks and may lead to further progress toward real disarmament.
- Under your administration, White House contacts with the Kremlin are continuing and fruitful.

The development touches off considerable and often sophisticated speculation about what it all means, what brought it about and what remains to be done.

Many editorials stress that no reduction in military power has taken place yet. Asahi of Tokyo says "both sides still possess enough nuclear weapons to wipe the other side off the face of the earth many times over."

Some speculate on the effect this might have on Sino-Soviet relations. Stockholms-Tidningen observes that "the decision was not free from risks even for Khrushchev" since the Chinese Communists "will naturally take the Russian-American agreement as new evidence that their theses are correct."

The U.S. timing of the announcement is considered significant by Tagesspiegel of West Berlin in that it confirms U.S. willingness to support Khrushchev's course in the Sino-Soviet conflict. The door is opened for further Soviet agreements with the U.S., the paper declares.

The French press regards the decisions as unsatisfactory, and the Gaullist papers dismiss them as mere economy moves signifying nothing.

Major Indian papers consider the announcement of great significance in slowing down the arms race. The U.S. is given credit for this initiative. The Hindustan Times of New Delhi and the Hindu of Madras believe inspection and verification has been the major obstacle to preventing a constant buildup of overkill capacity.

The Latin American press is highly laudatory. Las Ultimas Noticias of Chile says two dates mark the search for world peace. "The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed on August 5, 1963, and the second is April 20, 1964... Now man can dream of the year 2000."

Far East comment was generally enthusiastic and prompt. The Manila Times says this means the "American people have accepted the challenge of peaceful competition." The Daily Mirror of Manila sees "a weakening of the extreme right wing in U.S. politics as well as in the extreme left in the Kremlin leadership."

Some comment expresses concern over the continued danger of proliferating nuclear capabilities.

COMMUNIST TREATMENT

Soviet media focus on the USSR's peaceful intent and gratification that the "right line is being followed" toward eventual disarmament. Radio Moscow in a broadcast to North America, credits your initiative directly: "The idea of reducing the output of fissionable materials came from President Johnson, so that in agreeing to it the Soviet Union met the United States halfway." It adds: "We hope that the U.S. Government will meet us halfway too."

Peking buries the news in a New China News Agency report on U.S. underground testing. It implies the Soviet Union has been taken in.

Carl T. Rowan
Director

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

RECORD OF ACTIONS

NSC
Action

2482. VISIT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO
THE FAR EAST

Noted Secretary Rusk's report on the SEATO meeting in Manila, his discussion with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, and his visit to South Vietnam.

2483. U. S. POLICY TOWARD LAOS

Noted Assistant Secretary of Defense Bundy's report of the recent military revolt in Laos.

2484. CUTBACKS IN U. S. NUCLEAR PRODUCTION

Discussed the domestic and foreign reaction to the President's announcement of the U. S. cutback in the production of nuclear materials.

April 22, 1964
528th NSC Meeting
NSC Actions 2482, 2483,
and 2484

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By NARA. Date 1-3-91

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ATTENDANCE FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MEETING, CABINET ROOM, THE WHITE HOUSE, 4:45 P. M.
FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 1964 #528

The President of the United States, Presiding

ACDA

William C. Foster, Director

AEC

Glenn T. Seaborg, Chairman

AID

David E. Bell, Administrator

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Robert F. Kennedy

CIA

Lieut. General Marshall Carter, Deputy Director
Chester Cooper, Asst. Deputy Director

DEFENSE

Robert S. McNamara, Secretary
Cyrus Vance, Deputy Secretary
John McNaughton, Assistant Secretary

JCS

General Earle G. Wheeler, USA, Chief of Staff, U. S. Army

OEP

Edward A. McDermott, Director

STATE

Dean Rusk, Secretary
George W. Ball, Under Secretary
William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs
William Sullivan, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary
for Political Affairs

USIA

Carl T. Rowan, Director

WHITE HOUSE

George Reedy, Press Secretary to the President
McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President
Major General Chester V. Clifton, Military Aide to the President
Walter Jenkins, Special Assistant to the President
Dr. Donald Hornig, Director, Office of Science & Technology
Michael Forrestal, Senior Staff Member, National Security Council
Bromley Smith, Executive Secretary, National Security Council

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Agenda for the April 22, 1964 Meeting
Cabinet Room

1. Report by the Secretary of State on Vietnam
2. Cutback in Nuclear Production

Secretary Rusk

Secretary McNamara

Chairman Seaborg, AEC