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#2 report	same sanitization 8-6-85 NLS 83-44 summary notes of 556th NSC Meeting open 3-4-96 NLS 93-475 top secret SANITIZED 3 p Downgrade to Secret NLS/CBS 17-10-14-84	01/29/66	A
#2b memo	to the President secret open 8-1-83 NLS 83-86 1 p	01/29/66	A
#2c map	Vietnam secret open 6-17-94 NLS 93-463 1 p	undated	A
#2d map	Vietnam secret same 6-17-94 NLS 93-463 1 p SAME SANI. NLS 016-002-1-1 9/6/02	undated	A
#2e map	Vietnam top secret sanitized 3-11-94 NLS 93-488 1 p open 10/23/09	undated	A

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~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~
~~FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY~~

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W. J. P. NARA Date 2-12-96

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SUMMARY NOTES OF 556th NSC MEETING
January 29, 1966; Noon

Vietnam

CIA Director Raborn, reading from notes, briefed on the military situation in Vietnam. Six hundred trucks are reported in the south -- twice the level of a year ago. They are carrying men and equipment.

The North Vietnamese are taking actions in anticipation of a resumption of the bombing. They have improved their air defense. Equipment is being airlifted to Dien Bien Phu. The Chinese are moving forces up to their border with North Vietnam. The infiltration of North Vietnamese troops is heavy. Total North Vietnamese forces number 22 battalions. They are obviously girding themselves for battles yet to come. A cyclical lull usually follows a period of heavy activity.

Secretary Rusk reported on the peace offensive, lightly referring to one comment alleging that "McNamara tries to keep us in and Rusk tries to get us out."

The enormous effort made in the last 34 days has produced nothing -- no runs, no hits, no errors.

The Ho letter (copy attached) was the hardest yet. It did not even include a confusion ploy. Hanoi has done nothing. In all conversations -- and we have a telephone on every line -- the other party has merely hung up.

We now need to make a report to the UN Security Council and consider whether the Vietnam problem should be taken to the UN.

Ambassador Goldberg: The tone of the Pope's letter is favorable to us. The peace offensive has had a good effect on world opinion. However, we have received no encouragement from any source. We have talked to everyone at the UN -- 113 representatives.

The President: We should have one last report from our allies to be certain that they have heard nothing.

General Johnson briefed on Operation Masher. (A summary of this operation is attached.) We are apparently at the beginning of a major engagement. We now have 197,000 men in Vietnam.

The President: What do you want most to win?

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General Johnson: A surge of additional troops into Vietnam. We need to double the number now and then triple the number later. We should call up the reserves and go to mobilization to get the needed U.S. manpower. This involves declaring a national emergency here and in Vietnam. The bombing should be resumed at once to hold down infiltration. By resuming the bombing, we divert North Vietnamese manpower to repair their LOCs, put pressure on their infiltration and their government, and destroy their equipment, especially trucks.

General McConnell: There is nothing unusual in the air effort recommended. It involves 330 sorties weekly, B-52 sorties at the rate of 300 a month, and 1200 weekly sorties into Laos. When we resume the bombing, our losses will rise because North Vietnam now has a greater anti-aircraft capability.

Secretary McNamara: Our plane loss is now running 5 per 1,000 sorties.

General McConnell: We can get better results from bombing North Vietnam than bombing either in Laos or in South Vietnam.

General Greene briefed on the current Marine Corps operations, including Double Eagle, which involves the landing of two Marine Corps battalions north of Operation Masher (maps attached).

Air strikes should be resumed by a sharp blow as soon as possible. POL storage areas should be struck at once. Armed reconnaissance is not enough.

CIA Director Raborn: Our bombing cuts by 50 percent the amount of supplies being trucked from the north.

The President: We need evidence for Senator McCarthy.

Secretary McNamara: We have destroyed 400 trucks and damaged 250 since the bombing began in February. The bombing will not hurt the infiltration of men, but it will reduce the number.

Admiral McDonald: There has been no major infiltration via water of men or materials. We must resume bombing as soon as possible in order to do what we can to slow down infiltration by land.

The President said he wanted the hardest proof.

General Taylor implied that we cannot get firm proof. He recommended the resumption of bombing as soon as possible -- heavy bombing to slow down infiltration as much as we can. He favored striking POL supplies, the port of Haiphong, plus railroad lines.

The President said we need to know what we think about how much North Vietnamese traffic increased during the lull. Planners should go to work now on deciding what we can do if we resume the bombing.

Secretary McNamara: Four weeks from now we can answer these questions.

The Vice President: General Taylor, commenting on his experience in Korea, pointed out that bombing did slow down the North Koreans. We should tell the Senators this because some Senators think our bombing in Korea was poor. We cannot win over Senators by merely citing numbers, but we can win them over by discussing our overall strategy.

General Wheeler: We should resume the bombing as soon as practicable on infiltration-associated targets which we have advised on the basis of evidence from the North Vietnamese.

General McConnell: Our bombing is ineffective because of the restrictions placed upon the Air Force. We should lift these restrictions and we would then get results.

Bromley Smith

Text of Ho Chi Minh's Letter on Peace Conditions

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 28—Following is the text of the letter of President Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam to some heads of state and others "interested in the Vietnam situation." The text was broadcast in English by the Hanoi radio today and monitored here.

I have the honor to call your attention to the war of aggression waged by the U.S. imperialists in our country, Vietnam. As is known to you, over the past 11 years and more, the U.S. imperialists have been seriously sabotaging the 1954 Geneva agreements and preventing the peaceful reunification of Vietnam in an attempt to turn South Vietnam into a U.S. new-type colony and military base, while waging a war of aggression and barbarously repressing the patriotic struggle of our fellow countrymen in the South.

'Fooling Public Opinion'

At the same time, they try to draw experiences from this war to repress the national liberation movement in other countries.

In an endeavor to get out of the quagmire in South Vietnam, the U.S. imperialists have massively increased the strength of the U.S. expeditionary corps and sent in troops from a number of their satellites to wage direct aggression in South Vietnam. They have also launched air attacks on the D.R.V., Democratic Republic of Vietnam, an independent and sovereign country, and a member of the Socialist camp.

While intensifying and expanding the war of aggression in Vietnam, the U.S. im-

perialists are clamoring about their desire for peace and their readiness to engage in unconditional discussion in the hope of fooling world public opinion and the American people.

Recently the Johnson Administration has initiated a so-called search for peace and put forward a 14-point proposal as an excuse for its war of aggression in South Vietnam. It claims that it is keeping its commitment to the Saigon puppet administration. It slanders the patriotic struggle of the people of South Vietnam, calling it an aggression by North Vietnam.

This deceitful contention can in no way [two words indistinct] the solemn declaration made by the United States in Geneva in 1954 that it will refrain from the threat of the use of force to respect them—that is, the Geneva Agreements. [Still less] can President Johnson's hypocritical allegation conceal the U.S. crime in Vietnam.

Troop Pullout Demanded

The United States talks about respecting the Geneva agreements, but one of the main provisions of the said agreements bans the introduction of foreign troops into Vietnam. If the United States really respects the agreements, it must withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Vietnam.

It is crystal clear that the United States is the aggressor who is trampling under foot the Vietnamese soil. The people of South Vietnam are the victims of aggression and are fighting in self-defense. If the United States really wants peace, it must recog-

nize the N.F.L.S.V. [National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam] as the sole genuine representative of the people of South Vietnam, and engage in negotiations with it.

In accordance with the aspiration of the people of South Vietnam and the spirit of the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam, the N.F.L.S.V. is fighting to achieve independence, democracy, peace, and neutrality in South Vietnam and to advance toward the peaceful reunification of the fatherland.

If the United States really respects the right to self-determination of the people of South Vietnam, it cannot but approve this correct program of the National Front for Liberation.

The 14 points of the United States boil down in essence to this: The United States is trying hard to cling to South Vietnam and maintain there the puppet administration rigged up by it, and to perpetuate the partition of Vietnam.

In his 12 January 1966 message read before the U. S. Congress, President Johnson [explained] that it was the policy of the United States not to pull out of South Vietnam, and he hoped the Vietnamese people would choose between peace and the [ravages] of the conflict. That is an impudent [plot], an attempt to impose on the Vietnamese people the conditions of the so-called U. S. unconditional discussions.

The Vietnamese people will never submit to the U. S. imperialists' plot. At the very moment when the U. S. Government [puts] forward the so-called new peace effort, it is frantically increasing U. S. strength in South Vietnam.

It is stepping up the terrorist raids, resorting to the scorched-earth policy, burning all, destroying all, killing all, using napalm bombs, poison gases, and toxic chemicals to burn down villages and massacre the civilian population in vast areas of South Vietnam.

I sternly protest against such extremely barbarous methods of warfare. I earnestly call on all peace-loving governments and peoples the world over to resolutely stay the hands of the U. S. war criminals.

The United States keeps sending its planes on espionage flights in preparation for new air attacks on the D.R.V. On the other hand, it is launching air attacks on many areas in the Kingdom of Laos and multiplying armed prov-

ocations against the Kingdom of Laos and multiplying armed provocations against the Kingdom of Cambodia, thus causing an even more serious menace to peace in Indochina.

Obviously the U. S. search for peace is only designed to conceal its scheme for intensifying the war of aggression. The Johnson Administration's stand remains aggression and expansion of the war. To settle the Vietnam question, the D.R.V. Government has put forward the four-point stand which is an expression of the essential provisions of the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam.

This is a stand of peace.

Having gone through over 20 years of war, the Vietnamese people desire peace more eagerly than anyone else, to build their life, but real peace can by no means be dissociated from genuine independence.

Raids Must End 'for Good'

So long as the U.S. army of aggression still remains on our soil, our people will resolutely fight against it. If the U.S. Government really wants a peaceful settlement, it must accept the four-point stand of the D.R.V. Government and prove this by actual deeds.

It must end unconditionally, and for good all bombing raids and other war acts against the D.R.V. Only in this way can a political solution to the Vietnam problem be envisaged.

Dear Comrade Chairman, so far, in the spirit of international solidarity, the people and government of the fraternal [name of country inserted in each letter] have been giving wholehearted support and assistance to the Vietnamese people in the struggle against the U.S. imperialist aggressors for the defense of their independence and freedom.

On behalf of the Vietnamese people and the D.R.V. Government, I wish to express our deep gratitude to the people and Government of the fraternal [name of country].

In the face of the extremely serious situation brought about by the United States in Vietnam, I firmly believe that the people and government of the fraternal [name of country] will extend increased support and assistance to our people's just struggle. [resolutely] condemn the U.S. Government's sham peace trick and check in time all the perfidious maneuvers of the United States in Vietnam and Indochina.

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Saturday, January 29, 1966
12:00 Noon

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Special Report on Operation MASHER

The combined allied forces participating in Operation MASHER in the coastal plains northwest of Qui Nhon consist of 5 battalions from the 1st Cavalry Division (air mobile), 12 South Vietnamese battalions and one battalion from the Korean Capitol Division plus command and supporting forces.

In the first three days of the operation, U.S. and South Vietnamese forces conducted a feint to the south, while Korean forces provided route security. Thursday, the forces turned north and are sweeping and clearing Route 1 to the north.

The allied force made contact with an estimated Viet Cong force of 500. Two suspected PAVN companies have been reported in the area of operations.

Contact yesterday was reported from moderate to heavy. At 10:00 EST today, a battalion of the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division (air mobile) was reported still engaged and receiving machine gun, small arms and heavy mortar fire from a Viet Cong force estimated as 2 hard corps companies in dug-in fortified positions. Other allied forces are in defensive positions for the night and report light and sporadic contact.

Viet Cong losses to date in the operation are 256 killed (combined body count), 81 captured and 300 Viet Cong suspects detained.

U.S. losses are 37 killed, 53 wounded, and 5 missing in action. South Vietnamese losses are 17 killed and 86 wounded. Korean losses are 3 killed and 7 wounded.

DECLASSIFIED
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DATE: 8-1-83

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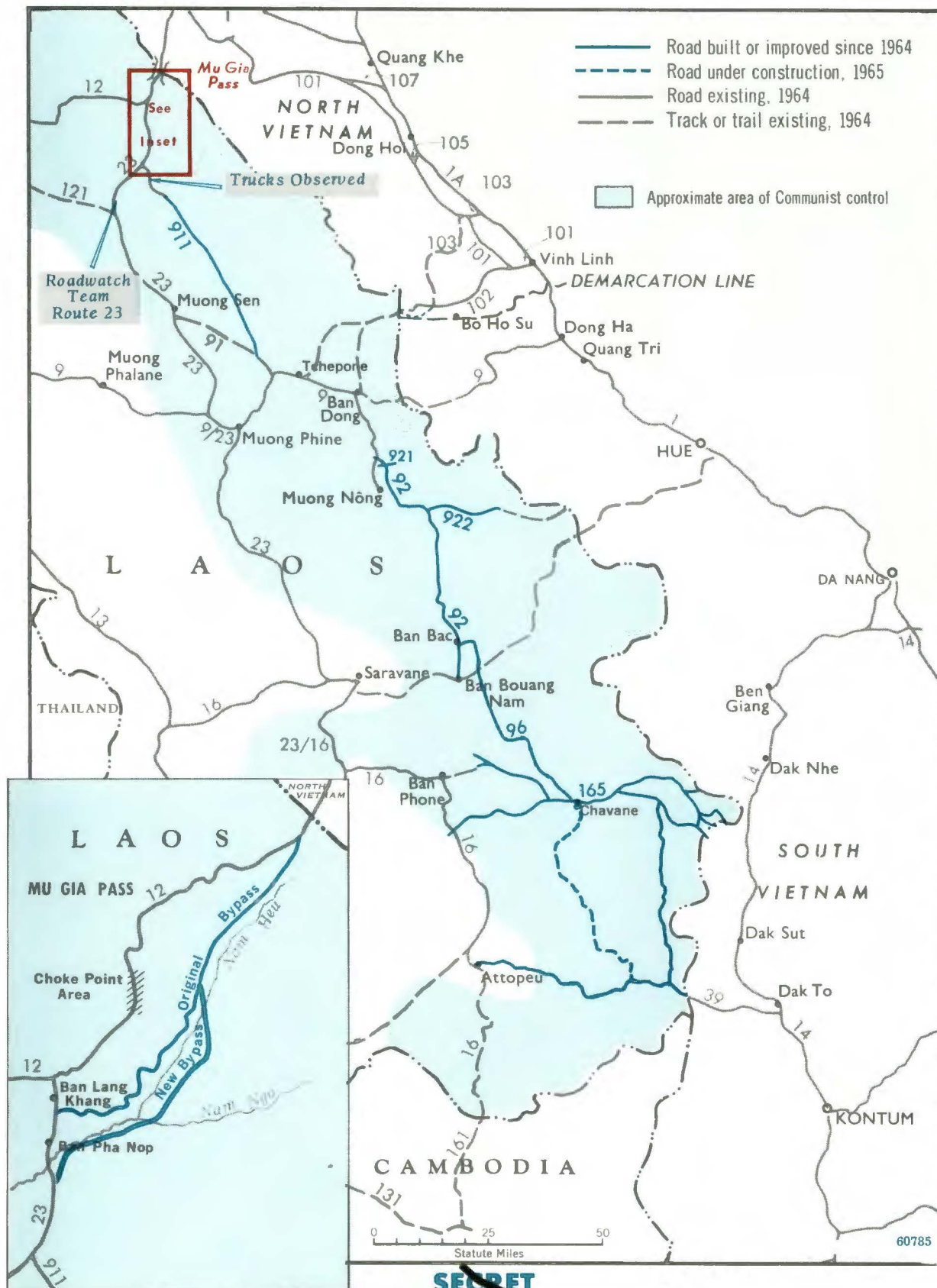
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SOUTHEASTERN LAOS



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~~TOP SECRET TRINE~~

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Authority NLS 141 020-007/1
By je, NARA, Date 10/23/09

~~TOP SECRET TRINE~~

LIST OF ATTENDEES, NSC MEETING
January 29, 1966; 12:00 noon

Vice President Humphrey

Secretary of State Rusk
Ambassador Goldberg
Assistant Secretary Bundy

Secretary of Defense McNamara
Deputy Secretary Vance

CIA Director Raborn
Deputy Director Helms

JCS Chairman Wheeler
General Johnson, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army
Admiral McDonald, Chief of Naval Operations
General McConnell, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force
General Greene, Commandant of the Marine Corps

Secretary of the Treasury Fowler

USIA Director Marks

General Maxwell D. Taylor
Jack Valenti
Joe Califano
Bill Moyers
McGeorge Bundy
Bromley Smith

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