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#2a report	NSC Meeting of 2/8/67 <i>open 9/4/02 per FRUS, vol. XIV #9</i> Secret <i>sanitized</i> 8-1-85 NLS 84-252 2 p <i>sanitized</i> 8-22-75 NLS 73-320 same sanitization	02/00/67	A
#2b report	re: North Vietnam top secret <i>open</i> 8-27-84 NLS-CBS 5-3 p	undated	A

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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SUMMARY NOTES OF 568th NSC MEETING
February 8, 1967; 11:05 A.M.

Bombing of North Vietnam -- North Africa

In opening the meeting, Walt Rostow summarized the history of U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, citing:

1. The Kennedy statement at Fort Bragg referring to the U.S. Government's position at the time of the Geneva Conference.
2. The Taylor Report, 1961 -- that part which discussed what might be necessary if current moves did not work in Vietnam.
3. The Geneva Accords of 1962.
4. The February, 1965, decisions.
5. The Johns Hopkins speech.

General Wheeler briefed on the military objectives of our bombing of North Vietnam. His statement, verbatim, is attached. It is an accurate and complete record of what he told Council members. He concluded by saying that bombing of North Vietnam is an integral part of the U.S. war effort. A North Vietnamese promise to talk is not enough to lead us to halt the bombing.

Secretary McNamara: Bombing of North Vietnam could be stopped if we got in return a symmetrical de-escalation.

Secretary Rusk: Responded to the President's request to review our peace probes:

We have undertaken dozens of probes. We have been in touch with the Pope, with Secretary General U Thant, and the United Nations. Our position is entirely clear and it is summarized in the fourteen-point paper which we have now made public. The other side is not interested. We have had no comeback from them. We have used third parties without success. There is a readiness of the North Vietnamese to receive our position, but there is no indication of their changing their public position.

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Secretary Rusk (Cont'd.):

The Poles have put out fragmentary and false accounts of a probe which is called "Marigold". All our efforts have encountered silence. We have had no serious response, private or public.

We have come to feel that the North Vietnamese may think we are panicking. This risk we took. There is no evidence that Hanoi is ready to stop the fighting. The North Vietnamese want sanctuary in the north without giving anything, at the same time continuing the war in South Vietnam.

The President: We have our people all over the world who are ready to listen. We have pursued every hint that the North Vietnamese were willing to give up something if we give up something. Hanoi is trying to force us to give up the bombing of North Vietnam. We will keep on until we get something from the North Vietnamese.

The Council then turned to the second item on the agenda, i.e., North Africa. Notes of this discussion follow on the next page.

Brouley Smith

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February 8, 1967

NSC MEETING - February 8, 1967
Discussion of North Africa

At the President's request, Secretary Rusk sketched the policy framework within which we operate in North Africa as follows:

We have an interest in the success and stability of all four North African countries. We have been concerned over polarization in the Arab world which has seen some countries (e.g. Egypt, Algeria, Syria) drawn to Arab socialism. These nations have put pressure on the more conservative regimes. The Soviet Union has sent substantial quantities of arms to two of these more radical regimes--Egypt and Syria. Neither we nor the French know why they have poured so much materiel into Algeria, but it has stirred up instability in Morocco and Tunisia. We have been in touch with the Soviet Union in the Middle East about possible limitation on arms. The Soviets are willing to see the area denuclearized but have no interest in the control of conventional arms.

Our immediate problem is to give King Hassan a sense of stability. Therefore, we have recommended a \$14 million arms sale and a new food agreement.

In this process, however, we do not believe we should abandon Algeria. There are other cases around the world--the passing of Ben Bella, Nkrumah, Sukarno--where our maintaining a presence through a difficult period has paid off. Algeria faces a food problem like the other North African nations. It has bought 405,000 tons of wheat in the United States in FY 1967. We would like to keep a presence there to give us some influence while our private sector moves ahead.

At this point the President asked what the Algerians might be willing to buy in the future. For instance, we furnish India 8-10 million tons of grain and India buys commercially elsewhere. Although Algeria has bought grain here, would it buy more?

Assistant Secretary Palmer felt Algeria, if it needed more wheat, would probably buy elsewhere. When asked, he could not argue that this was because prices were better elsewhere. Whether or not we could make our Algerian sale conditional on further purchases is another matter, he felt.

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Secretary Rusk concluded, in essence, that Algeria has all but met its requirements for this year, but in FY 68 probably could buy more grain in the US.

The President concluded by asking him to pursue that point.

Notes of Harold Saunders

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AIR CAMPAIGN AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM

1. Objectives of our air campaign against North Vietnam are to reduce the North Vietnamese capability to support the war in South Vietnam by:

- a. Destroying war supporting facilities and supplies, and
- b. Interdicting LOC's in North Vietnam and Laos in order to restrict North Vietnamese ability to move men and supplies within North Vietnam and from North Vietnam to South Vietnam.

Collateral objectives were to raise the morale of the South Vietnamese and to make North Vietnam pay a price for their aggression against South Vietnam.

2. During calendar year 1966:

- a. We flew 81,000 attack sorties and 48,000 combat support sorties against North Vietnam; 48,000 attack sorties and 10,000 combat support sorties against the loatian panhandle; 130,000 attack sorties and 31,000 combat support sorties in South Vietnam; and over 5,000 B-52 sorties, most of them in South Vietnam.

- b. During the two calendar years of 1965 and 1966 we attacked and destroyed in North Vietnam important segments of fixed POL storage capacity, ammunition storage capacity, and supply and maintenance facilities of all types. In addition

- c. In addition, our armed reconnaissance campaign destroyed over 4,600 trucks and damaged over 4,600 trucks; destroyed over 4,700 logistic water craft and damaged an additional 8,700 water craft; destroyed over 800 items of railroad rolling stock and damaged nearly 1,700; and destroyed 16 locomotives and damaged an additional 15.

- d. The rate of infiltration of men from the north apparently leveled off in the third quarter of 1966. By this I mean that there was a high level of personnel infiltration in the first quarter of 1966, a lesser infiltration in the 2d quarter of 1966 and an even lower infiltration figure in the 3d quarter of 1966.

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e. We estimate that some 200,000 to 300,000 personnel are constantly engaged in the repair and upkeep of LOC's. Some of these people are women, some are non-military and some military. Nevertheless, all have been drawn from other pursuits for this activity.

f. The air defense capability in North Vietnam has increased substantially. They have deployed over 6,900 AAA weapons, ranging in caliber from heavy machine guns to ¹⁰⁰MM cannon. They have deployed from 25 to 30 battalions of SAM's. They have established a sophisticated and effective air warning ^{and} ground control intercept capability. They now have in-country between 115 and 120 MIG aircraft, some 15 of which are MIG 21's, the rest MIG 15's and MIG 17's. We estimate that somewhere between 100,000 and 120,000 men -- soldiers -- are devoted full-time to the air defense of North Vietnam.

g. The North Vietnamese have established sizable coastal defenses, both active and passive. They have deployed a large number of artillery pieces which apparently can operate in a dual mode either as AAA or as surface weapons to defend against our Navy.

h. Ground combat actions in South Vietnam in recent months are fewer, smaller, of shorter duration and less frequent than in the early months of the year. I attribute this fall-off in large and moderate scale combat actions by VC/NVA units to the attrition of supplies by our air campaign against North Vietnam and by the aggressive ground combat operations conducted by our forces in South Vietnam. In this connection, General Westmoreland points out that the air campaign against North Vietnam has reduced the flow of supplies to South Vietnam. He adds that men can continue to move over the many trails through the rugged terrain in North Vietnam, Laos and northern South Vietnam despite our air activity against these groups of infiltrators. I agree with this assessment. I call your attention to the substantial movement of supplies by the North Vietnamese at Christmas time along the coast of North Vietnam to the DMZ. There is mounting evidence that they are capitalizing on the present TET suspension of air and naval activity to repeat their resupply activity as they did during Christmas. CINCPAC has reported substantial numbers of coastal craft, to include 8 armed trawlers, moving in the coastal waters south of 19° north latitude. He also reports that 50 trucks were engaged in unloading supplies on the beach some 8 nautical

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miles north of DONG HOI.

i. The North Vietnamese have organized a propaganda campaign, domestic and foreign, designed to force us to stop bombing operations against North Vietnam without conditions.

3. The foregoing facts, statistics and judgments support the thesis that our air campaign against North Vietnam is damaging their capability to move men and supplies into South Vietnam and ~~is~~ making them pay a substantial price for their aggression against South Vietnam. Obviously, a cessation of our air attacks against North Vietnam would permit them to employ the people now engaged in the repair and upkeep of LOC's, air defense activities, and in defending their coasts to direct and indirect support of the war in South Vietnam. They would be able to move supplies and men with impunity in a sanctuary. The net result would be that U.S., ~~F~~Free-world and ARVN forces would be forced to face larger bodies of better supplied and supported enemy forces with accompanying greater casualties to us.

4. In conclusion, I believe that the air campaign against North Vietnam is one of two blue chips available to President Johnson to be used in negotiations, the other being the present~~te~~ and aggressive use of U.S. ground troops in South Vietnam. It is my judgment that our air campaign is an integral and ^{indispensable}~~indisputable~~ component of our over-all operations in Southeast Asia. Upon my return from South Vietnam in mid-January, I reported to the President that:

a. The VC/NVA can no longer hope to win militarily in South Vietnam, and

b. Our air campaign against North Vietnam plus our vigorous and aggressive ground actions in South Vietnam have created this favorable military situation.

5. It is my belief that our bombing operations in North Vietnam should not be stopped unless a substantial reciprocal action is undertaken by North Vietnam. In my view, a promise to talk does not meet the criterion for a substantial reciprocal action.

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LIST OF ATTENDEES, NSC MEETING, FEBRUARY 8, 1967

Wednesday, 10:30 A.M.

Vice President Humphrey (came in at 10:45)

Secretary of Defense McNamara

Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance

Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton

Secretary of State Rusk

Under Secretary of State Katzenbach

Assistant Secretary of State Palmer

Ambassador Goldberg

CIA Director Helms

JCS Chairman Wheeler

OEP Chairman Bryant

Secretary of the Treasury Fowler

USIA Director Marks

NASA Administrator Webb

Walt Rostow

George Christian

Robert Kintner

Bromley Smith

Robert Komer

Harold Saunders

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