

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)**

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
56 agenda	NSC Meeting 5/9/66 Secret 1p.	n.d.	A <i>open 6-21-84</i>
57 memo	Bremley Smith to NSC TS 1p.	5/9/66	A <i>open 6-21-84</i>
58 agenda	Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge TS 2p	n.d.	A <i>open 6-21-84</i>
59 report on agenda	Summary of agenda items TS 13 p.	n.d.	A
61 report re: memo re:	agenda item 3a from McNamara 1 p. TS	n.d.	A
63 memo re:	agenda item 3b Secret 2 p. open 6-4-91 NLS 91-26	n.d.	A
64 draft note	to Geneva Co-Chairmen and ICG Members Conf. 3p.	n.d.	A
67 memo re:	agenda item 4 from McNamara TS 1 p.	n.d.	A
69 memo re:	agenda item 5 from McNamara Conf. 1 p.	n.d.	A
73 memo re:	agenda item 7 Secret 2 p. open 6-4-91 NLS 91-26	n.d.	A
75 memo re:	agenda item 8 Secret 1 p. "	5/7/66	A
77 memo re:	agenda item 9 Secret 1 p. "	5/7/66	A
79 memo re:	agenda item 10 Secret 1 p. "	5/7/66	A
81 memo re:	agenda item 11 Secret 1 p. "	5/7/66	A
83 memo re:	agenda item 12 Secret 3 p. "	n.d.	A
85 memo re:	agenda item 13 Secret 2 p. "	n.d.	A
87 memo re:	agenda item 14 Secret 2 p. "	n.d.	A
89 memo re:	agenda item 15 Secret 2 p. "	n.d.	A
91 memo re:	agenda item 16 Secret 1 p. "	n.d.	A
93 memo re:	agenda item 18 Secret 1 p. "	n.d.	A

FILE LOCATION

Meeting Notes File, Box 1 Briefing Papers for NSC Meeting, May 10, 1966

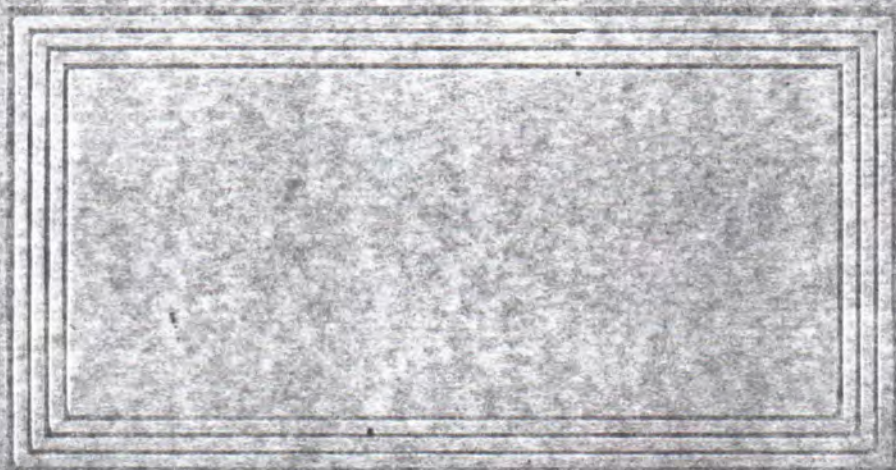
DCH
10/81

RESTRICTION CODES

- (A) Closed by Executive Order 11652 governing access to national security information.
(B) Closed by statute or by the agency which originated the document.
(C) Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in the donor's deed of gift.

V F
General

54
Bill Moyes
Top Secret



SERVICE SET

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~SECRET~~

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

May 9, 1966 - - 5:30 P. M.

AGENDA

VIETNAM: KEY ISSUES

1. The Military Situation and Prospects for the Coming Weeks: General Wheeler
2. The Political and Economic Situation -- Key Issues as Seen from Saigon: Ambassador Lodge
3. Key Political Issues: Secretary Rusk
4. Key Military Issues: Secretary McNamara
5. Key Economic Issues: Mr. Robert Komer
6. Guidance on Further Discussions and Press Handling of Ambassador Lodge's Visit

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4(b)
White House, Feb. 21, 1993
By DCH NALS, Date 6-21-94

SERVICES

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

May 9, 1966

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

The attached papers were prepared for use during Ambassador Lodge's visit to Washington. Some of the issues raised will be discussed at the National Security Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 1966, at 5:30 p.m. These papers serve, therefore, as background material for the NSC meeting as well as for other discussions with Ambassador Lodge.

Bromley Smith
Bromley Smith
Executive Secretary

Distributed to:

The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director, OEP
The Chairman, JCS
The Director, CIA

The Secretary of the Treasury
The Director, USIA
The Director, AID

~~TOP SECRET~~ ATTACHMENTS

DISPATCHED TO
E.O. 12812, Sec. 1.4(b)
White House (12812), Feb. 24, 1983
By *DIA* R223, Lute *6-21-84*

SERVICE

~~TOP SECRET~~AGENDA FOR TALKS WITH AMBASSADOR LODGEMilitary (Secretary McNamara, except item 3 b)

1. Bombing Policy in the North (To be discussed separately)
2. Bombing Policy in Laos (To be discussed separately)
3. Cambodia
 - a. Rules of Engagement
 - b. Diplomacy (Secretary Rusk)
4. Force Levels
5. Military Situation -- I Corps and First Division

Economic (Mr. Komer)

6. Overall Washington Directives
7. Inflation
 - a. Monetary Strategy
 - b. Increased Supply of Essentials
8. Port Congestion
9. Pacification Policy
10. GVN Manpower Policy
11. Land Reform

DECLASSIFIED
 E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4(b)
 White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1993
 By OCA NARS, Date 6-21-84

Political (Secretary Rusk)

12. Policy Towards Elections for Constitutional Assembly
13. Getting Out the Vote and Protecting the Voters
14. Policy Towards Political Party Formation
 - a. Pre-and Post-Election
 - b. Stimulating Discussion: Information Policy

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

TOP SECRET

15. Technical Assistance on Constitution-making
16. Life of the Present Government
17. Contacts with the VC (To be discussed separately)
18. Damping Anti-Americanism
19. What Must They Do If We Stop Bombing in the North?
(To be discussed separately)

TOP SECRET

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY

Agenda Item3a. Subject: Rules of Engagement - Cambodia (Tab A)

Problem: Current rules of engagement prevent "hot pursuit" of ground or naval forces into Cambodia. Communist use of Cambodia is increasing. Should we (a) change rules of engagement to permit pursuit of communist forces into Cambodia or (b) retain present rules and lay public information foundation for later change?

Recommendations: Option b.

3b. Subject: Diplomacy - Cambodia (Tab B)

Problem: We have dealt with Cambodian complaints on border violations by stressing self-defense against communist forces. Cambodia now asserts its own forces were involved. Enlarged ICC border activity would not terminate communist use of Cambodian territory, but it would likely inhibit it.

Recommendations: (a) After appropriate consultation, a note to the ICC Co-Chairmen and members proposing enlarged ICC border operations.
(b) A protest to Cambodia against hostile acts from Cambodian territory against US forces.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ

91-26

By ig, NARA, Date 5-10-91~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

4. Subject: US Force Levels (Tab C)
- Problem: Present plans call for 383,500 US personnel by the end of 1966. The planned magnitude will cause inflationary pressures and risk increased Vietnamese resentment. Should we (a) continue the planned buildup while taking vigorous action to minimize adverse impact or (b) restrict deployments and military construction and run the risk of a growing communist military advantage?
- Recommendation: Option a.
5. Subject: Military Situation - I Corps and 1st Division (Tab D)
- Problem: RVNAF support of the "Struggle Movement" in I Corps has reduced RVNAF effectiveness and combat capability. Progress toward re-establishing central government authority has been slow and the situation remains potentially explosive. Should we (a) continue to encourage the GVN toward a political solution or (b) press the GVN for military action against anti-government elements.
- Recommendation: Option a.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

6. Subject: Overall Directive and Campaign Plan
(Tab E)

Problem: Need for better coordination of military and non-military plans and programs and assignment of priorities. Komer re-drafting Washington directive. Mission in Saigon developing comprehensive pacification plan (due mid-May).

Recommendations: Reach agreement such plans are urgent business for top-level review as soon as submitted.

7. Subject: Action Program to Cope with Inflation
(Tab F)

Problem: Inflation threatens our whole effort in Viet-Nam. GVN reluctant to move decisively; U.S. being blamed. IMF Mission now in Saigon. Tab F discusses: (1) GVN fiscal measures; (2) increasing supply of goods; (3) unilateral U.S. measures; (4) U.S. leverage and inducements.

Recommendation: (a) Agree now that, as soon as IMF proposals are in, we will press GVN for optimum package of stabilization measures; (b) devise parallel package of US measures to reduce as much as possible the inflationary impact of the US buildup.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

9. (cont.)

19,000) by end of 1966. Washington agencies have various reservations. Program to build up police force (to 72,000 by the end of FY 1967) should be pressed with GVN.

Recommendation:

(a) approve RD Cadre expansion, contingent on cost and manpower problems being resolved;
(b) AID and Saigon Mission to conduct urgent study of police requirements through FY 1969.

10.

Subject:

More Rational Use of Vietnamese Manpower (Tab I)

Problem:

Manpower of all kinds is now critically short. Sharp military and civilian competition for those available. Mission and MACV have undertaken manpower survey (not yet available). GVN urgently needs manpower study and establishment at high GVN level of manpower planning and priority unit.

Recommendation:

(a) Charge DOD and Komer in Washington and Mission and MACV in Saigon to get firm handle on GVN manpower requirements, sort out priorities, develop manpower budget, and urge it on GVN;

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

10. (cont.)

(b) pending above, hold in abeyance FY 1967 actions to implement force ceilings agreed on at Honolulu;
(c) review measures to cut demands on Vietnamese manpower (3rd country labor, better use of returnees, etc.);
(d) develop better procedures here and in Saigon for civil/military review of new manpower demands.

11.

Subject:

Land Reform (Tab J)

Problem:

Land reform offers one of few opportunities for dramatic GVN initiative in "social revolution." Main failure over the years has been lack of vigorous execution by GVN. Special task force chaired by Dorothy Jacobson has been established on interagency basis by Secretary Freeman.

Recommendation:

Jacobson group may have firm proposal ready before Ambassador Lodge's departure. If not, Mission and Washington agencies should be asked for firm recommendations no longer than May 30.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

12. Subject: Policy Toward Elections for
 Constitutional Assembly (Tab K)

Problem: Late this summer, South Viet-Nam will
 elect a Constituent Assembly. Electoral
 Council now meeting in Saigon to decide
 election laws and procedures. Un-
 resolved question is role of elected
 assembly beyond its constitution-drafting
 job. Some, including Buddhists, see
 Assembly as having broad powers, in-
 cluding right to determine interim gov-
 ernment until constitution goes into
 effect.

Recommendation: (a) We should do everything possible to
 see that Assembly election is held as
 promised by GVN;
 (b) take no position now on role of
 Assembly beyond its constitution-
 drafting task;
 (c) encourage discussion and political
 activity to start the process of political
 party formation;
 (d) encourage formulation of an election
 law that ensures all non-communist
 groups are adequately represented in
 Assembly--probably through constitu-
 encies based on population with multiple
 representation from each;

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

12. (cont.)

(e) get major non-communist groups to agree before elections on a common body of agreed principles, such as social revolution, progress toward representative government, etc.;
(f) encourage unity of Directorate and promote reconciliation between Generals Ky and Thi;
(g) encourage candidate qualification language that would disqualify "agents of a foreign power" or other terms rather than disqualifying "neutralists" or even "communists" by those designations;
(h) provide election experts to Mission, and quietly to the Vietnamese.

13.

Subject:

Getting Out the Vote and Protecting Voters (Tab L)

Problem:

Maximum voter participation will be required if the forthcoming elections are to be considered a valid expression of Vietnamese popular will and opinion. GVN should consult with Electoral Council on the following:

(a) major psywar campaign to explain election and disseminate information and voting instructions;

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

13. (cont.)

(b) flexible system of voter identification to accommodate those from VC-controlled areas;

(c) widest possible distribution of polling places.

GVN might also consider:

(a) sending youth teams to rural areas to discuss significance of elections and voting procedures;

(b) an election period ceasefire of a week or so to encourage large turnout and inhibit VC;

(c) use of Summer Youth Program personnel as independent poll watchers;

(d) some form of international observation.

Recommendation:

Discuss above with Prime Minister Ky and, subject to his reaction, with appropriate members of Electoral Council. Try to persuade Ky and Council members that elections offer major potential for political and psychological initiatives.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

14.

Subject:

Policy toward formation of Political
Parties (Tab M)

Problem:

Vietnamese body politic is fractionalized. In the face of a unified, disciplined Viet Cong organization, non-communist Vietnamese groups need to coalesce into a minimum number of broad, major political groupings or into one non-communist front. There is evidence Ky is tempted to form a pro-government party around a military nucleus. We can follow two general lines:
(a) exert strong influence to force coalescence of major parties or groupings and encourage Ky in formation of a military-civilian party; or
(b) encourage beginning of party formation but recognize little progress expectable soon. Aim instead at promoting an Assembly that is as accurately reflective of existing groups as possible, recognizing that coalescence of political groups now is likely to be artificial.

Recommendation:

Exert our influence in favor of an electoral law which ensures adequate representation in constituent assembly of all major groups but which discourages further fractionalization. Actively discourage any effort by Ky to form a government party designed purely to perpetuate himself in power and to exclude the militant Buddhists.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

15. Subject: Technical Assistance on
 Constitution Making (Tab N)
- Problem: The nature of the constitution will influence prospects for workable representative government. The experience of other newly independent countries is pertinent, and various electoral systems and constitutional devices are adaptable to Vietnam's requirements. Any foreign guidance must take into account Vietnamese sensitivities.
- Recommendations: (a) We make available reference material on a non-partisan basis.
 (b) Send experts to advise our Mission and as appropriate make quiet contact with the Vietnamese.
 (c) Help constituent assembly members visit other countries with similar problems.
 (d) Establish a public reading room and arrange for films, talks, seminars to facilitate Vietnamese discussion of their political institutional problems.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE 557

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

Agenda Item

16.

Subject:

Life of the Present Government
(Tab O)

Problem:

The Directorate apparently intends to remain in office until a government is elected under the constitution. Buddhist militants envisage a new interim government once the constituent assembly is elected. A serious renewal of their confrontation could result. We could (a) urge that the GVN's future status be resolved now, possibly in the electoral law or (b) urge continuation of the present government in power until a new one is formed under the constitution or (c) adopt a flexible position avoiding resolution of the issue now, while continually reappraising the desirability of the present GVN remaining in power during the interim period as well as our own influence in that direction.

Recommendation:

Option c.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

SUMMARY (Continued)

18. Subject: Dampening Anti-Americanism (Tab P)
- Problem: Present anti-Americanism reflects surface irritations and may be transitory. However, the large-scale US presence, Buddhist political frustrations and war weariness could deepen this sentiment and endanger our objectives. The causes can only be reduced, not repressed.
- Recommendations: (a) Make clear that we favor an orderly political development and are neither partisan nor anti-Buddhist.
 (b) Reduce to the full extent possible all points of friction, including inflationary pressures, troop-community relations, locations of US personnel and facilities.

~~TOP SECRET~~

60

A



SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

1282
61

AGENDA ITEM 3 a. Rules of Engagement -- Cambodia

1. Problem. To determine what if any changes in rules of engagement for US forces in Southeast Asia may be desirable to minimize Cambodian support to the VC:

a. Current rules of engagement prevent immediate pursuit of hostile troops or vessels into Cambodian territory or territorial waters. US land forces are forbidden to enter Cambodia or to fire into Cambodia except with prior Washington approval in each instance, or in emergency situations specifically involving self-defense. Pursuit of hostile aircraft into Cambodia air space is permitted when actually engaged in combat.

b. The communists have been exploiting Cambodian territory in support of the VC. Some Cambodians have been involved in direct assistance to the VC/NVA. The degree of involvement by the Royal Cambodian Government has been unclear. However, the RKG has taken no determined or effective measures to curtail support to the VC from or through Cambodia.

c. Recent actions and statements by Sihanouk indicate an ever-closer alignment of the RKG with the Government of North Vietnam and communist objectives in Southeast Asia.

d. Evidence indicates that communist exploitation of Cambodia is increasing. Infiltration LOCs are being extended and improved through northeast Cambodia. VC and NVN forces have launched military operations against US/friendly forces from Cambodia and have withdrawn into Cambodia.

2. Options.

a. Change the rules of engagement to permit pursuit of communist forces into Cambodia in order to reduce the military disadvantage under which US/friendly forces now operate, but at the risk of inciting Sihanouk to even more effective cooperation with the VC and of generating serious international criticism of our "violation of Cambodian sovereignty."

b. Retain our present rules of engagement, perhaps laying the factual public relations foundation for a possible change later on.

3. Recommendation. I recommend Option b.

ROBERT S. McNAMARA

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NJ 91-27

By WJ, NARA, Date 12-11-91

~~TOP SECRET~~

60

B



SERVICE SET

~~SECRET--EXDIS~~Cambodia: Diplomacy

(Item 3b, Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge)

Problem

To take diplomatic action to reduce Viet Cong use of Cambodian territory, while at the same time dramatizing that the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese are to blame for the situation.

Discussion

1. The Cambodian Government has been filing a series of complaints in the UN concerning US and South Vietnamese violations of its territory. Most recently, as a result of the recent action in which our forces received fire from Cambodian territory and returned it, further complaints may be expected. So far we have been dealing with these by pointing out that all of our actions are in self-defense because of VC/North Vietnamese use of Cambodian territory. We have also been pointing out that we have no quarrel with Cambodia, that we respect its independence and territorial integrity, and that the root of the problem lies in Viet Cong presence in the border areas and use of Cambodian territory.
2. In connection with the recent action, the Cambodians have now asserted that their own forces were involved, and that US forces fired first. Embassy Saigon has recommended a protest to the Cambodian Government. We believe such a protest is warranted and have prepared the attached draft, to be conveyed through the Australians, who represent our interests in Cambodia.
3. We believe that the most effective diplomatic action we could take would be to make a strong approach to the British and Soviets, as Co-Chairmen, and to the ICC members (India, Canada, and Poland) to emphasize our support for the Cambodians' own proposal for enlarged ICC activity both in the border areas and in policing any material that may be coming through the port of Sihanoukville to the VC. The record here is that Sihanouk himself proposed the enlarged ICC role some time ago, and the Canadians have been pushing it, with our urging, and have begun to make some headway with India. We have orally stressed to all the interested nations that we support the proposal, and we recommend that we now act by sending a formal diplomatic note to this effect.
4. The practical impact of enlarged ICC operations would not deal

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ 91-26

By ~~4-8~~ NARA, Date 5-10-91~~SECRET--EXDIS~~

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET--EXDIS~~

-2-

thoroughly with the problem of VC/North Vietnamese use of Cambodian territory, but even small ICC forces might well uncover the kind of specific installations we now believe exist, and would significantly inhibit VC activity. Even in the event that the ICC enlargement did not take place, we would have made a good record of our own willingness to see the problem solved.

Recommendations

1. That, subject to Ambassador Lodge's comments, the President approve the attached draft note to the five countries involved (UK, USSR, India, Canada, and Poland). We would then seek Vietnamese concurrence and would discuss the note concurrently with the British and Canadians, who are sympathetic but might have tactical suggestions. In the light of these comments, we would then formally present the note to the five countries through their Ambassadors here. We would not make the note public at the outset, although it has been drafted so that it could be made public advantageously if this became desirable.
2. That the President approve the attached draft protest to the Cambodians concerning the incidents on April 29 and 30.

~~SECRET--EXDIS~~

SERVICE SET

CH

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Draft Note to Geneva Co-Chairmen
and ICC Members

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to _____ and has the honor to refer to the problems existing in the area of the border between Cambodia and South Vietnam.

As the _____ Government is aware, there have been a number of incidents in this area over a substantial period of time, involving military activity on Cambodian territory by forces of the so-called Viet Cong and more recently by regular forces from North Vietnam. On occasion, forces of the Republic of Vietnam, together with United States forces acting in their support, have violated Cambodian territory in responding to hostile military activities, and the combination of these hostile activities and the responsive action by South Vietnamese and United States forces have created a problem which has increased in dimensions and seriousness as the fighting in South Vietnam has increased and particularly as the numbers of regular troops of the North Vietnamese Army have grown. The Government of the United States is in possession of substantial evidence suggesting that there is increasing use of Cambodian territory by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regular forces in the ways described by Ambassador Stevenson at the United Nations

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NJ 91-26

By ing, NARA, Date 5-10-91

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SERVICE SET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 2 -

in the spring of 1964, i.e., "as a passageway, source of supply, and sanctuary from counterattack."

The Government of the United States has long sought for practical means to meet this problem. It supported in 1964 the proposal made to the UN Security Council for the "establishment of an international police force, or a group of observers with sufficient personnel and resources to keep the frontier area under surveillance . . ." It regrets that this proposal was not adopted. The United States has repeatedly stressed its respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Cambodia, and the action proposed would have contributed to this end.

More recently, the Government of the United States has noted the repeated requests by the Royal Government of Cambodia for an augmentation of the activities of the International Control Commission in relation to this problem. The International Control Commission has in effect been called on to intensify its efforts to see that Cambodia's frontiers are respected and to supervise the application of the Cambodian declaration of July 20, 1954, concerning the introduction into Cambodia of military personnel and war materials.

The Government of the United States notes with concern that

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 3 -

the ICC has as yet not taken effective action on the requests of the Royal Government of Cambodia. In view of the seriousness of the problem created by the abuse of Cambodian territory, it requests that the Government of _____ take such measures as are within its competence as (Co-Chairman, member of ICC), to see that effective action is taken on the proposals of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

The Government of the United States, for its part, although not a party to the 1954 Geneva Agreement, would be prepared to consider sympathetically any requests which the Co-Chairmen or the ICC might make for material assistance in carrying out effective operations pursuant to the Cambodian request.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SERVICE SET

The Department of State wishes to inform the Embassy of Australia that on April 29 and 30 a battalion of the United States 1st Division, engaged in operations against Viet Cong forces in the vicinity of the village of Lồ Gò, Tay Ninh Province, in South Viet-Nam, was subjected to heavy small arms and machine gun fire from the Cambodian side of the Cai Bac River, which forms the Cambodian/South Vietnamese border in that locality. Two United States soldiers were killed by the fire from the Cambodian side of the border. As a measure of self-defense, the United States forces returned fire in order to suppress the hostile fire directed against them from Cambodian territory.

The circumstances of the incident were ascertained to have been as follows. On April 29, United States forces, moving north along the South Vietnamese side of the Cai Bac River, discovered a large Viet Cong cache on the bank of the river, at which time they were subjected to fire from the Cambodian side of the river. The United States forces returned small arms and artillery fire in order to suppress sniper fire being directed against them. On April 30, the United States forces as they approached the village of Lồ Gò were again subjected to heavy

/small

small arms and machine gun fire from the Cambodian side of the river. Artillery fire was thereupon employed, to a depth of about 200 meters, against a large Viet Cong force which was observed on the Cambodian side of the river. Viet Cong forces holding the Lồ Gò position, under fire from the American forces, disengaged and withdrew across the river into Cambodia. Subsequent examination of the area from the Vietnamese side of the river showed that the Viet Cong had prepared positions on Cambodian territory so that United States forces attacking Lồ Gò would at the same time be subjected to flanking fire from the Cambodian side of the river.

It is requested that the Australian Government call these incidents to the attention of the Royal Cambodian Government and express the deep concern of the United States Government at the hostile action directed against United States forces from Cambodian soil, in violation of the declared policy of neutrality of the Cambodian Government. The policy of the United States Government continues to be to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Cambodia, and it has no desire to see the war in Southeast Asia widened. However, the United States Government expects the Royal Cambodian Government to carry out its obligations as a neutral to prevent the use of its territory by North Vietnamese/Viet Cong forces in support of aggression against South Viet-Nam, which remains the root cause of the problem along the Cambodian/South Vietnamese border.

Department of State,
Washington,

SERVICE UNIT

66

C



SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

AGENDA ITEM 4. US Force Levels

1. Problem. To plan US deployments to South Vietnam.

a. Since US combat operations commenced in March 1965, there has been a steady build-up of forces to the current May 1, 1966 in-country total of 251,793. These forces include 50 maneuver battalions and 20 tactical fighter squadrons.

b. It is planned that the US military force building in South Vietnam will continue until, by the end of 1966, there will be a total of 383,500 personnel. Additional deployments will be required in 1967.

c. The additional US deployments are required to offset the increasing Viet Cong main forces and the infiltrating North Vietnamese army units.

d. Deployments of the planned magnitude cause inflationary pressures and risk increased resentment of US presence.

2. Options.

a. Continue deployments and the associated construction programs (1) in order to maximize the chance of destroying VC/PAVN main force units (and thus to contribute to the security of the population), of convincing the enemy that he cannot win, and of leading to acceptable negotiations while (2) taking vigorous actions to minimize the adverse impact on the Vietnamese economy and attitudes toward the United States.

b. Restrict deployments and the accompanying construction program (1) in order to avoid additional pressures on the Vietnamese economy and to minimize the risk of hostility toward the US, while (2) running a serious risk, because of restricted US military operations, that enemy forces will be permitted to grow to the point where the US will be forced first into enclaves and then from the country.

3. Recommendation. I recommend Option a.

ROBERT S. McNAMARA

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ 91-27

By mg, NARA, Date 12-11-91

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

68

D



12/2
67

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AGENDA ITEM 5. Military Situation - I Corps and 1st Division

1. Problem. Are conditions in I Corps such that the area may fall to the VC?

a. The "Struggle Movement," concentrated in Hue and Da Nang, has been supported by RVNAF personnel, particularly by senior commanders of 1st Division who remained loyal to General Thi, deposed I Corps Commander. Other combat units in the Corps area have supported the GVN. This situation has reduced RVNAF force effectiveness and combat capability. There has been no effect on US combat forces. Lt. General Dinh, I Corps Commander, has stated that he can re-establish central government authority. Although he appears confident, it is not possible to predict his success, and progress has been slow.

b. The situation remains fluid and potentially explosive. The spectrum of possibilities varies from a return to relative stability to military action involving RVNAF against RVNAF. If the former should occur, little deterioration of RVNAF effectiveness is expected; in the latter situation, RVNAF combat effectiveness and capability to prosecute this war could be drastically reduced. Elements of the 1st Division have resumed combat operations against the VC/NVA (who have the equivalent of 35-40 battalions plus 15,000 VC militia in the area) at about the same level existing prior to the unrest, and the possibility of a clash between government and anti-government military forces has been reduced.

2. Options. Two options are available to us in our support of the GVN in 1st Corps.

a. Encourage the GVN, as we are currently doing, to press for a political solution in I Corps. Or

b. Press the GVN for military action against the anti-government elements in I Corps.

3. Recommendation. I recommend Option a: We should continue our current policy of supporting GVN attempts for a political solution in I Corps.

ROBERT S. McNAMARA

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 91-27
By [signature], NARA, Date 12-11-91

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SERVICE SET

72

E

SERVICE SET

MAY 7 1966

71

LODGE AGENDA

Item 6 -- Overall Directive and Campaign Plan.

Porter and I are convinced that a realistic overall plan is required on the non-military side (a) to pull together our non-military programs; and (b) order them according to some set of realistic priorities. In short, we need a better idea of where we are going, and then to do first things first.

Such a plan is also essential to provide a better basis for coordination of military and non-military plans and programs, which has become indispensable because of increasingly tight Vietnamese resources. For good and sufficient reasons, the US/GVN military buildup has pre-empted the bulk of these resources (e. g. port facilities and manpower), at the expense of the civil side. Thus we face a situation of growing competitive bidding between the civil and military sides, which must be resolved.

A. Komer is redrafting a Washington directive, for issuance as a Presidential NSAM.

B. Porter and the Mission are preparing, for completion by mid-May, a comprehensive pacification plan as the blueprint for operations in the field.

C. Recommendation. We should reach agreement that such plans are urgent business for review at the top level as soon as submitted.

SERVICE SET

72

F

73

~~SECRET~~

LODGE AGENDA

Item 1 -- A New Action Program to Cope with Inflation.

Unpleasant as it is, we must face up to yet a new threat--accelerating inflation--which if unchecked could undermine our whole effort in Vietnam. A prime cause has been our military buildup, which has created demands on the feeble economy, increasingly outdistancing its ability to respond.

Money supply was up 75% in 1965--probably another 75% in 1966. Prices up 40% in 1965--another 63% likely in 1966--currently rising at faster rate. Manpower is critically short. An enormous hoard of piasters held off the market threatens to break loose. The problem will be massively compounded by cumulative impact of further major US troop deployments and new military construction.

The dangers involved are already apparent. Economic distress contributed to the political unrest in the I Corps area. If confidence in the piaster disappears (and the piaster overhang descends on the market), distress will be compounded, and those elements on whom we depend most--soldiers, government workers--hit hardest. Equally bad, the Americans will be blamed for inflation, thus powerfully contributing to anti-US tendencies in the pre-election period.

We've been addressing the inflation threat for months, but (a) not enough has been done by a feeble GVN, while (b) the inflationary impact of the US buildup has outdistanced our efforts. The Honolulu agreements called for measures to sop up 12 billion piasters in 1966, but only 4 billion is in sight as yet. The import program to operate on the supply side is moving better, but here port congestion remains a key bottleneck--partly because of the military buildup.

Action Needed. We must press an across-the-board attack on inflation. Given the feebleness of the GVN, we cannot realistically expect its fiscal measures to suffice or that these will be carried out with full effect if involved. So we need a whole arsenal of US as well as GVN actions, in hopes that we can achieve sufficient cumulative restraining effect.

A. GVN Fiscal Measures. To meet our aim of holding the 1966 cost of living rise at 50% or less, 10 billion piasters (\$100 million) will have to be taken out of circulation. We are again pressing the GVN on the Honolulu measures, largely to educate it on the need for drastic action. An IMF Mission, aided by US experts, is now in Saigon to add its weight. Our people

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLI 91-26

By sig. NARA, Date 5-10-91

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

in Saigon (despairing that a weak GVN could systematically manage via taxes, bonds, and other measures to sop up enough piasters) strongly urge the radical surgery of sharp devaluation. Washington tends to favor a lesser devaluation plus a package of foreign exchange taxes.

B. Increasing the Supply of Goods. This would be least painful all around. We can buy the goods--the problem is to get them in and distributed efficiently. We need an all-out attack on port congestion (see Item 8). We are also urgently studying a \$25 million security stockpile of essential commodities to be available for quick sale to combat price rises.

C. Unilateral US Measures. We must also make every reasonable effort to limit the inflationary impact of the US military buildup. Many impressive steps have already been taken, but the urgency of containing inflation requires yet more. Komer has sent a list of suggestions to the Secretary of Defense. We must develop better management tools for assessing the inflationary impact of the US presence, and for screening new force increases and construction to limit this impact.

D. US Leverage and Inducements. Getting the GVN to move will not be easy. Recapturing some control over the piaster proceeds is essential to this end. But many say that we can exert little leverage, because the GVN no longer believes that we would hold up otherwise important actions--such as force increases. Yet, if the inflationary threat becomes critical, we may have to do so--and lend credibility to our actions. On the other hand, US and GVN interests demand a substantial wage increase for civil servants and the military. We must insist that this be packaged with simultaneous deflationary measures.

E. Recommendations. (a) Take a firm decision now that, as soon as IMF proposals are available, we will press GVN for the optimum realizable package of stabilization measures; (b) devise a parallel package of US measures to further reduce, to fullest extent consistent with our other aims, the inflationary impact of the US buildup.

74

G

SERVICE SET

7 May 1966

LODGE AGENDA

Item 8 -- Licking Port Congestion, especially in Saigon.

This remains a major bottleneck in effort to fight inflation in Vietnam. The military have largely licked their problem, but partly by pre-empting port space from the civil side. Throughout April ships waiting off Saigon area averaged over 50 daily. Waiting times for commercial ships are running 40 to 70 days. Problem compounded by inefficient stevedoring, slow removal of goods from the port, and military contractors' pre-emption of civilian facilities. Latest AID projections show military tonnage running higher than expected; hence serious commercial cargo deficits are forecast for the rest of 1966. Query--has the impact of likely new US force increases and military construction yet been factored in?

AID has laid on series of measures aimed at keeping Saigon port capacity at least slightly ahead of civil needs. But these do not solve the short-term problem, and may not catch up at all if new military port demands are now levied.

A. Komer has proposed to SecDef series of immediate measures using DOD assets to meet essential civil needs. These include release of additional civilian port facilities by MACV and military contractors; speed up New Port construction; military unloading, maintenance, and in-country transport for priority civilian needs. These under review.

B. The situation is so serious that, if current efforts seem unlikely to suffice, more drastic remedies are essential:

1. Persuade GVN declare Saigon port a military zone, drafting Vietnamese into port battalion, and assisting with AID and MACV advice and equipment.
2. US military take over Saigon port area, primarily using MACV transport-battalion and possibly GVN military transport units.

C. Recommendations.

1. Develop immediate contingency plan for MACV operation of Saigon port;
2. Study establishment of joint civil/military shipping and port priority system to ensure better balance and control of military and civilian cargoes.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 91-26

By 148, NARA, Date 5-10-91

SERVICE SET

H

7 May 1966

LODGE AGENDA

Item 9 -- Stepping Up Pacification Program

Our capability to secure and hold the countryside cleared by regular military operations must be improved. Failing this, we face ever-increasing military commitments, waste of our aid resources, diversion of supplies to the VC, enfeeblement and neutralism in GVN local administration. Roles, missions, and structure of the hodgepodge of local military and security forces need to be rationalized. The two most promising organizations--at present and for the essential subsequent phase--are the RD cadres (PATs) and the police. Buildup of these elements would permit better use of critically scarce manpower and scaling down of US support costs for less effective GVN forces.

Expansion of RD cadres (which also perform local security functions) deserves high priority. The new RD Ministry under General Thang is one of the best in the GVN. Gardner recommends adding medical and public health training to their curriculum. New land reform proposals are based on cadre administration.

A. Porter and Komer have urged a doubling of the output of trained RD Cadres from 19,000 to 39,000 by the end of 1966. It would cost an estimated \$30 million add-on to the \$40 million already planned for FY 1967, unless the GVN will assume the local currency costs. Finding manpower is also a problem. Porter believes it will have to come partly from the Popular Forces. All Washington agencies seem to favor cadre expansion in principle, but have various reservations.

B. Police Expansion. The program to build up the police to 72,000 by the end of FY 1967, especially the 15,000 man Police Field Force (a promising rural constabulary) should also be pressed. We also need an urgent examination of further police expansion through FY 1969 to provide a basis for weighing competing demands for RVNAF and CIDG increases in largely overlapping roles. Komer sees a strong case for gradual expansion of police as on-going local security force in pacified areas.

C. Recommendations.

- a. Approval of RD Cadre expansion, contingent on cost and manpower problems being satisfactorily resolved.
- b. AID and Saigon Mission to lay on urgent study of future police requirements through FY 1969.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NJ 91-26

By sig, NARA, Date 5-10-91

SERVICE SET

78



SERVICE SET

7 May 1966

LODGE AGENDA

Item 10 -- Need for More Rational Use of Vietnamese Manpower.

Manpower across the board is now critically short. Military and civil demands are increasingly competitive. Increases in authorized strength levels through FY 1967 total 126,000 in RVNAF and CIDG. Similarly, military contractor labor force planned to double from 50,000 to 100,000 in FY 67. Latest Saigon reports indicate RD program seriously behind schedule, with almost all provinces citing shortages of cadres and manpower as key reason. Competitive and uncoordinated bidding for manpower left over from draft, fuels inflation and puts premium on speculative construction and profiteering trades. Draft machinery also needs to be overhauled to forestall continued drafting of people with scarce technical skills.

Since the VC or the US/ARVN military have pre-empted the best available manpower, the civil side is at a real disadvantage. Military planning is generally far ahead of civil, with requirements projected through FY 1969. The Mission and MACV reportedly are undertaking a coordinated manpower study, but it is not yet available. We urgently need a US-devised manpower budget designed to resolve competing priority claims, and then to discuss this with the GVN.

Gardner, Bell, and Komer have recommended urgent GVN manpower study and establishment manpower planning and priority unit at senior GVN level. Manpower survey team now being recruited for May departure. Komer suggests additional possibilities for recovery GVN manpower through better use of refugees and defectors--including stepped-up Chieu Hoi program--and measures to cut down RVNAF desertions.

Recommendations.

- a. Charge DOD and Komer here, plus the Mission and MACV in Saigon, to get a firm handle on total GVN manpower requirements, and sort out priorities, before any FY 67 manpower allocations are approved. In effect, a manpower budget should be developed and then pressed on the GVN.
- b. Pending the above, hold in abeyance FY 67 actions to implement Honolulu-agreed force ceilings (AB-141).
- c. Review urgently measures to reduce demands on Vietnamese manpower, such as greater use of third-country labor, greater use of returnees, etc.
- d. Establish better procedures in Saigon and Washington for civil/military review of new manpower bids.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 91-26

By NARA Date 5-10-91

SERVICE SET

80

J

SERVICE SET

7 May 1966

LODGE AGENDA

Item 11 -- Land Reform Measures

If a workable new plan can be devised, land reform offers one of the few dramatic opportunities for a "revolutionary" GVN initiative.

Since 1957 land reform has been a major GVN aim. Long series of decrees but continued failure vigorous execution by successive regimes. Communists exploit absentee and village landlordism as major propaganda appeal. Most authorities agreed land tenure problems are major source rural discontent and loss of confidence in Saigon governments.

Ky recently expressed eagerness to move ahead. Two US experts have drawn up a sweeping program to abolish landlordism throughout Vietnam as dramatic psychological gesture which would give GVN a revolutionary popular appeal. However, both Washington and Saigon find vague Hewes-Cooper proposals weak on inflationary impact, machinery for implementing, and likely cost. Hewes recommends US underwrite scheme, perhaps to tune of \$300 million.

Secretary Freeman called interagency meeting to consider proposals. Special task force chaired by Dorothy Jacobson set up to refine proposals in time for discussions with Lodge.

A. If it seems politically desirable, economically sensible and administratively feasible, we should press GVN to adopt concept of land reform "Emancipation Proclamation". Implementation would have to be phased with pacification and related to manpower shortages and anti-inflationary effort. However, it might be possible to achieve a quick psychological impact, yet stretch out the implementing phase, thus reducing cost to GVN and US.

B. If above is infeasible, and many think it is, we should continue our effort stimulate better GVN performance on existing land reform legislation. Emphasis on gradual transfers related to present GVN capacities.

C. Recommendation. If Jacobson task force report provides sufficiently firm proposal, it should be discussed and recommendation made to President before Lodge leaves. If not, we should call for Mission and Washington agencies to present firm recommendations no later than 30 May.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 91-26

By AK, NARA, Date 5-10-91

SERVICE SET

82



SERVICE SET

Policy Towards Elections for Constitutional Assembly
(Item 12, Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge)

Problem

1. Late this summer South Viet-Nam will elect a Constitutional Assembly to draft a new constitution for South Viet-Nam. In Saigon an Electoral Council has begun to study the preparation of an electoral law and other arrangements for those elections.

Discussion

2. (a) The coming elections, if held, will set a political pattern, probably a new one, which could profoundly influence not only the situation inside SVN but also our future relations with Viet-Nam and our programs in that country. If the elections are not held, this will be taken internally and internationally as a reneging by the GVN on a clear commitment and the political consequences within and outside Viet-Nam will be profound.

(b) Beyond drafting the constitution, the constitutional assembly has been given no task. Nevertheless it is assumed by the Buddhist political leadership and accepted in some other circles that this body, as soon as it sits, will become the Government of South Viet-Nam in effect and will make decisions about whether or not the present GVN cabinet continues, etc.

(c) There is virtually no political party structure in South Viet-Nam today and none is likely to emerge in time to be a significant factor in the coming elections. If the Directorate were to undertake to establish a military-dominated party, perhaps with Catholic participation, this would almost inevitably tend to sharpen a confrontation in the elections between that group and the Buddhists. At the present time our interest lies instead in securing a constituent assembly which adequately represents all non-communist groups and minorities, looking toward a commitment to the newly elected government of the entire non-communist political spectrum, all the way from the Baby Turks to Tri Quang. Our interest also lies in removing from political controversy among the non-communists the issue of pursuing the fight against the Viet Cong with American help.

(d) The military remain the single best organized and most powerful element and it is in our interest to have this continue while at the same time assuring the commitment of the military to the new government.

(e) Understandably the GVN is disposed to exclude "Communists" and "neutralists" from participating as candidates in the elections and the National Political Congress endorsed this position. From an international and domestic US point of view this exclusion, particularly of neutralists, will be seized upon to discredit the elections and one of the potentially important benefits of the elections, i.e. a better image of the GVN around the world, will be lost.

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 91-26

SERVICE SET

By mg, NARA, Date 5-10-91

~~SECRET~~Recommendations

3. Therefore our policy toward elections should be the following:

(a) We should make sure that elections for a constitutional assembly are held in accordance with the GVN's commitment.

(b) We should not take a position at the present time as to whether the constitutional assembly will have powers beyond that of drafting a constitution.

(c) We should encourage discussion and political activity which will get under way the process of political party formation but not expect this process to crystallize until after the new assembly has been elected.

(d) We should encourage by discreet discussion the promulgation of an election law which ensures that all non-communist groups are adequately represented in the constituent assembly. To this end it would appear that constituencies should be based on population and multiple representation elected from each constituency.

(e) We should try to bring about the adoption before the elections, by all significant non-communist groups, perhaps in the electoral council, of a common charter calling for:

social revolution;

continuing progress toward civilian, representative government;

a policy of peace and non-alignment once freedom is restored but meanwhile a determined struggle to defend the country's freedom;

rejection of violence as a means of establishing political power; and

recognition of the role of the army as providing the security behind which the nation can develop.

(f) We should use our influence to preserve the unity of the Directorate and try to encourage General Thi's reincorporation in the group, or at least a reconciliation between Ky and Thi.

(g) We should urge candidate qualification language which avoids the exclusion of neutralists and perhaps even communists by name and calls instead for disqualifying those who seek to attain their political goals by violent means, who are agents of a foreign power, or by some such language.

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

(h) We should make available to our Mission in Saigon, and quietly to the Vietnamese, experts with experience in matters such as alternative voting procedures and other election arrangements.

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

84

L



SERVICE SET

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

Getting Out the Vote and Protecting the Voters
(Item 13, Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge)

Problem

If the forthcoming constituent assembly elections are to be a valid expression of popular will in South Viet-Nam, and if they are to be considered valid by U.S. international opinion, maximum voter participation will have to be sought. This will require a major effort by the GVN to educate the voters, to have adequate administrative machinery for carrying out the elections, to provide maximum security for the voters, and to minimize possible Viet Cong obstruction and harassment of the elections.

Desirable GVN Actions

The GVN should consult with the electoral council to reach agreement on a program of action along the following lines:

1. A major psywar campaign by radio, TV and leaflet, to explain that the constituent assembly election is open to all Vietnamese citizens who meet the eligibility rules, and to disseminate election information and instructions.
2. The adoption of a flexible system of identification for voters designed to accommodate voters from VC-controlled areas who may not have proper ID cards.
3. The widest possible distribution of polling places to maximize the voter turnout.

The following GVN actions might also be desirable:

1. The dispatch of youth teams (e.g., as part of the Summer Youth Program) to educate voters in rural areas of the significance of the elections and election procedures. The use of such youth teams would be preferable to the use of RD teams, including PATs, for such a purpose.
2. The declaration of an election cease-fire of a week or so to permit candidates to move about more freely, to permit more voters to get to the polls, and to make it politically and psychologically more difficult for the VC to obstruct and harass the elections. Any announcement of a cease-fire should make clear that the GVN would continue military patrolling and normal police functions to reduce the possibilities for the VC to exploit the cease-fire covertly.
3. The Summer Youth Program might also be utilized as independent poll-watchers on election day to ensure that correct election procedures are followed.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NJ 91-26

By *ig*, NARA, Date 5-10-91

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

2

4. The GVN might consider inviting international observation of the election proceedings -- e.g., representatives from countries contributing troops to South Viet-Nam, plus India and Japan. While the GVN might balk at the suggestion of international observation of an internal election, they might be convinced of the potential benefits vis-a-vis international opinion that such a move might have.

Recommended position

Some of the above items will require further study as to feasibility. Nevertheless, we should discuss all of them with Ky and, subject to Ky's reactions, with appropriate members of the electoral council. We should attempt to persuade Ky and members of the electoral council that the elections offer major potential for political and psychological initiatives which should not be overlooked.

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

SERVICE SET

SERVICE SET

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ 91-26

By ~~44-8~~, NARA, Date 5-10-91

~~SECRET~~

87

Policy Toward Formation of Political Parties
(Item 14, Agenda for talks with Ambassador Lodge)

Problem

The Vietnamese body politic is badly fractionalized into religious, regional, political and ethnic groupings; there is no tradition in Vietnamese politics of advancing groups or individual fortunes by joining with other groups in a common national cause. In the face of a unified, disciplined Viet Cong political and military organization, non-Communist Vietnamese groups need to coalesce into a minimum number of broad, major groupings or perhaps even into one non-communist front if they are to compete successfully with Communism in a constitutional system of government based on free elections. However, there is little likelihood that, either through the mechanics of an electoral law or by voluntary action, any meaningful degree of coalescence of groupings will be possible prior to the forthcoming elections.

A related problem: There is some evidence that Ky is tempted to try to form a broadly-based government party around a nucleus of military officers. Ky's idea may be to perpetuate himself (or the Directorate) in power by capitalizing on the growing reaction within the military establishments and among Catholic and right-wing political groups against the strength of the militant Buddhist element.

Discussion

We have two general lines we might follow:

1. To exert our strong influence in favor of an election law designed to force the coalescence of major parties or groupings as insurance against Viet Cong exploitation of this election conceivably, but more realistically, of elections which would follow an eventual political settlement. Also to encourage Ky and his military supporters to form a broad military-civilian political party of "national union" as a means of maximizing continuity of government and, hopefully, stability until the constitution is fully in effect.
2. To stimulate the political process to begin, with consultations, meetings and the like. Perhaps it might at a certain point be useful to encourage movement in the direction of the formation of broad groupings, recognizing that while little progress is likely to be made before elections, any progress in this direction would be desirable. This would mean refraining from working for the formation of formal political parties prior to elections. Instead the objective would be to produce a constituent body which is as accurately representative as possible of existing groupings and their relative strengths rather than forcing what is likely to be an artificial coalescence of forces in the short time available.

Since the elections are for a constituent assembly, a coalescence of groupings would seem to be less pressing than it would be for a more permanent legislative body or government. In fact, for a body elected to draft a constitution it would seem to be preferable to ensure that the elections reflect as accurately

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

as possible the relative strengths of the various existing groupings, leaving the emergence of political parties or groupings as a normal outgrowth of the later process of political development. Exploitation of the elections by the Viet Cong, if that is considered a problem in the present case, can be minimized by other means, such as the screening of candidates and by the electoral system used.

Recommendation:

We should exert our influence in favor of an electoral law which ensures adequate representation in the constituent body of all major groups but which at the same time discourages further fractionalization. To this end it would appear that the election law should provide for constituencies based on population and for the election of multiple representation from each constituency.

We should actively discourage any effort by Ky to form a government party designed purely to perpetuate himself in power and to exclude the militant Buddhist element. We should also discourage any effort by Ky to split the moderate Buddhist elements off from the extremist Buddhists in order to isolate and exclude the latter. Such efforts by Ky will only prolong and intensify existing political disequilibrium in the form of a continued confrontation between dissatisfied Buddhist extremists and with anti-Buddhist forces. This could lead to increased Central Viet-Nam dissidence from Saigon. If, on the other hand, Ky can form a political party with civilian and military elements which is prepared to compete freely in a political system with other elements, this could be acceptable.

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

...VICE SET

88

N



SERVICE SET

SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

Technical Assistance on Constitution Making
(Item 1b, Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge)

Problem

1. South Viet-Nam is **about to hold** elections for a constitutional assembly which will draft a new constitution for the country. It is in our interest to help in every constructive way to ensure that the electoral law and other arrangements, the actual conduct of the elections, the drafting of the constitution, and the transfer of authority from the present government to its successor are all carried out in a manner best calculated to help the Vietnamese to preserve their freedom and develop their country politically, socially and economically. While no one expects that the problems of South Viet-Nam will be solved by a constitution, the better the constitution is and the better it is fitted to the character of the country and its people, the more chance that representative, constitutional government will work.

Discussion

2. The process now getting under way in Viet-Nam is one in which most of the leaders of the country have had little or no experience. Those who have had formal training in law and government have received it mostly in France where it obviously related to situations worlds apart from that in South Viet-Nam. On the other hand, a number of newly independent countries have over the last 20 years had to go through the process the Vietnamese are now undertaking and their experience is in varying degrees pertinent. Moreover, there are numerous electoral systems and constitutional devices, some of which might be adopted or adapted to meet Vietnamese requirements if the Vietnamese responsible for the process are aware of them.

On a subject which touches as closely as this on national sensibilities, the decision must be Vietnamese and it must be arrived at in Vietnamese forums. Any foreign participation in the process would have to be very delicately handled and this is doubly true of American involvement when the Vietnamese are already apprehensive about our overwhelming impact on their country.

Recommendations

3. That we make available to the appropriate Vietnamese of all political persuasions all reference material and analyses which will assist in broadening their knowledge on these subjects. At the same time, we should quietly make available in Saigon, preferably through private channels or through third countries, experts who can advise our Mission on electoral and constitutional problems and, where appropriate, make contact with the Vietnamese themselves.

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ 91-26

By kip, NARA, Date 5-10-91

~~SECRET~~

(b) Once a constitutional assembly is elected, we should sound out Vietnamese willingness to have assembly members visit selected countries which have recently faced problems similar to theirs (Korea, Mexico, Brazil and others). We would be prepared to finance this but would want it to be a collective effort of all the countries involved rather than solely American.

(c) We would arrange for the setting up in Saigon and perhaps elsewhere of a reading room for the general public containing pertinent literature and exhibits on election, political party, and constitution subjects. We would also arrange talks, seminars, film showings, etc., all with the purpose of informing people on these new issues in their public life.

~~SECRET~~

90

0



SERVICE SET

~~SECRET~~

Life of the Present Government
(Item 18, Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge)

The Problem

The April 14 ten-point communiques of the National Political Congress and the GVN decree of the same date calling for constituent assembly elections did not specify what the status of the present government would be following elections and the convocation of the constituent assembly. The Directorate appears to assume the present GVN will remain in office until it can turn power over to a government elected under the constitution, and possibly is thinking in terms of being reconfirmed in power under the constitution. Other groups, including the militant Buddhists appear to assume that the Ky Government will come to an end after the elections and be replaced by the constituent assembly itself or a new government named by the constituent assembly. At some point this issue could lead to a full renewal of the GVN-Buddhist confrontation and interrupt the constitution-drafting process.

This presents the following options for U.S. action:

1. The U.S. could urge that the ambiguity of the GVN's status following elections should be resolved now, possibly in the election law. If the issue could be resolved by the electoral council and the GVN now, we would hopefully avoid the development of another serious GVN confrontation with civilian elements, particularly the militant Buddhists, during the period of constitution drafting. Early resolution of this issue could also prevent the GVN, after the elections, from engaging in a struggle to hang onto power in the face of growing popular demands for its resignation.
2. The U.S. could urge the continuation of the present government in power until a new government is formed under the constitution, or its resignation and reappointment as the interim government by the constituent assembly. The acceptability of the Ky Government to the civilian political elements might be enhanced should the Directorate broaden its membership either now or, perhaps politically more rewarding, immediately following elections to include some civilian participation reflecting the election results. This course could provide some assurance of continuity of GVN programs for perhaps several additional months and could be important in helping to achieve an orderly transition to whatever government is provided for in the constitution.
3. The U.S. could take a flexible position on this thorny issue for the time being, avoid pressing for its resolution now and instead take frequent readings on whether it appears more desirable for the present GVN to stay in power during the interim period or to give way to a government set up by the constituent assembly. Such a course would offer the advantage of allowing us to develop our position as events dictate on an issue on which our influence may be restricted considerably by political realities.

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 91-26
By liq, NARA, Date 5-10-91

92

SERVICE SET

SERVICE SET

P
SERV P

Demonstrating Anti-Americanism in Viet-Nam.
(Item 18, Agenda for Talks with Ambassador Lodge)

Problem

At about that period of incident occurrences in South Viet-Nam since the fall of the Diem regime, the recent militant Buddhist campaign for early elections involved anti-American themes. Such themes are largely traceable to the widely-held notion that firm U.S. support for the GVN is the major obstacle to the achievement of the "stragglers" objective, rather than to any deep-seated reaction against continuing the war or to U.S. assistance. Nevertheless, the inevitable irritations created by the massive U.S. military presence could this time have been responsible for the more strident themes and harsher action against individual Americans which occurred in recent weeks. More disturbing still has been the reappearance over the past weekend, particularly in radio and broadcasts, of anti-American themes with noticeable Communist overtones.

Discussion

Although anti-Americanism in South Viet-Nam still appears to be a manifestation of surface irritations and may be transitory in nature, the large-scale American presence, increased friction with a seemingly endless war, and continued unattained political objectives on the part of Buddhist militants could combine to produce more deep-seated anti-U.S. feelings with serious implications for our objectives in Viet-Nam.

Recommended Position

Anti-Americanism cannot be stamped out by repressive actions. The causes for anti-Americanism must be reduced so that a fertile field for exploitation is not given the Viet Cong.

We should favor the orderly development of political institutions, including public and privately that we will accept, a curbing and favor no non-Communist group or individual, and we should give careful consideration to the conduct of U.S. personnel and activities in order to minimize daily irritations caused by the American presence. We should make our view known and the Buddhist militants should be included, not excluded, from the process of political life.

We should take every feasible measure to counter inflammatory pressures, to enhance good-neighborly relations, and we should give careful consideration to the conduct of U.S. personnel and activities in order to minimize daily irritations caused by the American presence.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 91-26

By LSG, NARA, Date 5-10-91

SERVICE SET

SERVICE SET

Recommended Position

Without regard to the political realities, the U.S. preference would clearly be for the continuation of the Directorate and Ky Government in power until replaced by a permanent government chosen under a constitution. In light of political realities, however, the U.S. should avoid committing itself to seek the continuation in office by the Ky Government in the interim period after elections. The resolution of this issue is likely to be a product of the political process itself. We could defeat our objective of continuity by entering into the debate. We should, therefore, continue to monitor the situation closely, and periodically renew the question of our intervention.