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FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#24 memo	Jim Jones to the President - summary of views presented at 11/2/67 meeting <i>open 10-6-83</i> Top Secret 3 p. <i>NW 82-51</i>	n.d.	A
#24a memo w/meeting notes	<i>sanitized 10-6-83 NW 82-51</i> Jim Jones for the President, meeting with foreign policy advisors, 11/2/67 <i>Downgraded to SECRET per NSC 8-23-83</i> Top Secret 17 p.	11/2/67	A
#25 memo	Walt Rostow for the President - suggestions for actions offered at meeting of 11/2/67 Secret 4 p. <i>open 8-3-84</i> <i>NW 84-39</i>	11/3/67	A

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TO: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM JONES

~~Attached is the complete notes on the Cabinet Room meeting~~ and the luncheon Thursday, November 2, with your foreign policy advisers.

Following is a summary of the views presented on the five questions you asked:

I. ~~What about our course in South Vietnam?~~

All 10 who responded agreed there is great improvement and progress. The program in the south is in competent hands. The U. S., allied and Vietnamese troops are good and improving. The general feeling is to press forward with this program.

Douglas Dillon and McGeorge Bundy agreed that South Vietnam should and must do more. Walt Rostow said South Vietnam must improve administration, fight corruption and be more aggressive in pacification.

Henry Cabot Lodge made three recommendations: 1.) conduct independent audit of how the ARVN is going; 2.) reduce U.S. casualties by adopting a new military policy of "split up and keep off balance," instead of the "seek out and destroy" policy; 3.) bring about a "true revolution" by utilizing the private sector of Vietnam such as the Tenant Farmers Union.

Robert Murphy and Justice Abe Fortas agrees with Lodge. Fortas believes we should explore the greater use of smaller military units in the South.

General Maxwell Taylor expressed two reservations: 1.) the close defense of the frontier on the DMZ and in the highland area; 2.) no clearcut decision has been made on what we will offer the Viet Cong.

II. ~~What about our course in North Vietnam?~~ Should we continue as is; go further; moderate it; eliminate the bombing?

All but George Ball agreed the bombing should continue. Ball suggested a shifting of the bombing from the dikes and harbors to the DMZ.

Dean Acheson, McGeorge Bundy, Robert Murphy and Henry Cabot Lodge agreed that the bombing should continue, but the emphasis on the bombing is out of proportion to its importance. Acheson suggested the bombing is marginal and should be played down so that we could stop and start it in response to the Communists' cessation of hostilities along the DMZ.

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By us, NARS, Date 10-6-83

General Taylor believes in a bombing pause only if there is quid pro quo. As an alternative, Taylor would accept Acheson's suggestion.

Bundy and Dillon said we should not go further in bombing the dikes and harbors.

General Omar Bradley said to bomb only military targets.

Murphy thinks the bombing should be left in the hands of the Joint Chiefs as much as possible because it is effective. Murphy also suggests the 303 Committee study the elimination of the men responsible in the North.

Fortas and Clark Clifford recommend continued bombing as we are doing.

III. Negotiations -- should we be more aggressive, more passive, or bow out?

Dean Acheson predicted there will not be negotiations because that's not how the Communists operate. Instead there will be a subsiding of hostilities when the Communists finally give up. McGeorge Bundy, Doug Dillon, Arthur Dean, Henry Cabot Lodge, Maxwell Taylor, Justice Fortas and Clark Clifford agreed with Acheson.

Acheson, General Omar Bradley, Justice Fortas and Clark Clifford stated that there should be less talk in the future about negotiations. We have made our willingness quite clear. Further talk of negotiations would be interpreted as a sign of weakness and would make the Communists believe they are winning the battle for public opinion.

Walt Rostow said not to discount negotiations because Hanoi may want to discuss bases in the south and the NLF.

IV. Should we get out of Vietnam?

There was unanimous agreement that we should not.

"Absolutely not," said Acheson.

"As impossible as it is undesirable," said Bundy.

"Definitely not," said Dillon.

"Unthinkable," said Lodge, "we are trying to divert a change in the balance of power."

"No one in the group thinks we should get out," said George Ball, "and no one gives propriety to the Gavin or Galbraith enclave theory."

"The public would be outraged if we got out," said Fortas.

V. How do we unite the people and communicate better?

Dean Acheson -- Get a policy agreement and then all members of the Administration, including the Joint Chiefs, speak out uniformly on that policy. Also organize groups in every city (similar to the Citizens Committee on the Marshall Plan) to speak to clubs and organizations.

McGeorge Bundy -- Don't let the communications people in New York set the tone of the debate. Emphasize the 'light at the end of the tunnel' instead of the battles, deaths and danger.

Douglas Dillon -- Emphasis should be shifted from how we got there to what are we doing. Dillon agrees with Bundy that more progress must be shown instead of portraying a long and hopeless situation. Bunker should come back and report. President should have briefing for top educators (college presidents and deans) and opinion makers.

Arthur Dean -- Someone should pull together why we are in Vietnam, what are we doing, value of the bombing, etc. to clarify popular confusion.

Henry Cabot Lodge -- Bunker should be well publicized when he returns.

Robert Murphy -- We need a hate complex directed at Ho Chi Minh similar to Hitler.

General Omar Bradley -- Our troubles can be blamed on the communications media. We need patriotic slogans -- perhaps "Patience."

General Maxwell Taylor -- Organize a nationwide campaign that will be continuous. Use television - perhaps a weekly program.

George Ball -- Quit arguing about how we got there, but instead what do we do about it now that we are there.

Justice Abe Fortas -- Let George Carver brief Members of Congress, the press and other opinion moulders. Bring Bunker back to brief.

Clark Clifford -- Expand the list of spokesmen in this country to include heads of State from Southeast Asia, Ambassadors, Asian government officials, heroes such as Robin'Olds. Use television. But in final analysis realize the war will not be popular - but it is right.

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~~TOP SECRET~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM JONES

SUBJECT: Meeting with Foreign Policy Advisors, Thursday, November 2, 1967

Meeting convened - 10:42 a.m.

Meeting adjourned following luncheon at 2:15 p.m.

Attending were: Clark Clifford, George Ball, McGeorge Bundy, Maxwell Taylor, General Omar Bradley, Robert Murphy, Henry Cabot Lodge, Secretary Dean Rusk, Secretary Nick Katzenbach, Governor Averill Harriman, Assistant Secretary William Bundy, Secretary Robert McNamara, CIA Director Richard Helms, Dean Acheson, Justice Abe Fortas, Arthur Dean, Douglas Dillon, Walt Rostow, George Christian and Jim Jones.

The President greeted the group around the Cabinet table and pointed out that he did not know the details of what had been accomplished in their discussions to this point. He said he did want to raise some questions that concerned him. "I have a peculiar confidence in you as patriots and that is why I have picked you," the President said. He said he wanted to know if our course in Vietnam was right. If not, how should it be modified? He said he is deeply concerned about the deterioration of public support and the lack of editorial support for our policies. He pointed out that if a bomb accidentally kills two civilians in North Vietnam, it makes banner headlines. However, they can log mortar shells into the Palace grounds in Saigon and there are no editorial complaints against it.

The President said he watched General Norstad on television Thursday morning. He found it interesting. "I agreed with almost all he said up to the point of bombing." The President said that Norstad did not say yes or no on the bombing issue. He (Norstad) did point out that the Administration has not unified the nation because we have never told the country that we are really willing to negotiate. The President said Norstad commented that he did not believe the credibility argument, but merely ended up saying the government has failed to communicate with the nation about our willingness to negotiate.

The President said he thought that "when we sent men to nearly every capitol that this would dramatize our willingness, but apparently the people have forgotten this. So the question is how do we unite the country?"

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The President said, "I would like to consider the following five questions and get your advice: 1.) What could we do that we are not doing in South Vietnam? 2.) Concerning the North, should we continue what we are doing, or should we mine the ports and take out the dikes, or should we eliminate the bombing of the North? 3.) On negotiations - should we adopt a passive policy of willingness to negotiate, or should we be more aggressive, or should we bow out? 4.) Should we get out of Vietnam?" (At this point the President noted a poll from a Congressional district in Iowa which had 11,000 responses. The poll showed that 34% favored our pulling out; 20% approved the present policies and 40% thought we should do more. The President also said some other polls have been taken in some of the larger states. These show that about 30% favor either a pull in or pull out of Vietnam. Those who want to do more comprise about 35-40% and those who approve of what we are doing now are about 30%. "So it's about 70-30," the President said, "but that 30 has grown from 15%.") 5.) What positive steps should the Administration take ~~to unite the people~~ and ~~to communicate~~ with the nation better?"

The President then called on Secretary Rusk.

Secretary Rusk reported that the group started their meetings yesterday with briefings by George Carver of the CIA and General Wheeler. ~~Rusk~~ then read from a letter marked personal and confidential from U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker which reflected on his first six months in Saigon. In general, the letter noted that there has been improvement in the past six months. The military has established a base which has allowed us to go on the offensive. The training of the Vietnamese units has improved considerably. The civil side of the war is proceeding well with the constitutional process and the pacification success equalling in importance the military improvements. The village and the hamlet programs are going well and the Chu Hoi program is expanding. Bunker's letter points out that last year the revolutionary development program really got underway. The newly-elected government, especially Thieu and Ky, know that they must show progress in order to gain support of the people. Steady progress is being made. Much still needs to be done, however, such as a vigorous processing of the war, elimination of corruption, improvement of the standard of living, especially in the rural areas. Bunker wrote that in the past we have been overly optimistic and have become prisoners of this optimism. However, he is enthusiastic about the progress being made.

Rusk then reported that the group talked about the bombing program, although no consensus was reached, nor was a consensus requested. Rusk said the views ranged widely. Rusk said it was a good evening. Rusk declined to speak for the group because there was no consensus.

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The President said "I have met with the Leadership of the Republican Party in Congress and all the Democratic Members of Congress. I have met with the Democratic Senators twice. I point this out to say that we have received no alternatives from Congress on the course we are taking. One of the things that divides us is that a great number of the hawks want us to do more, but the other side is more vociferous." The President then called on Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson.

Acheson addressed himself to each of the five questions posed by the President. "In the South, I was very impressed by George Carver's restatement of what we are doing there. This is the heart of the matter. I agree that this should be pressed just as fast as possible, and as fast as South Vietnam will permit. I am encouraged by the ground fighting in the South and that we are taking the initiative. I got the impression this is a matter we can and will win. ~~So on the first question, I think this is going well,~~" Acheson said.

On the second question concerning the North, Acheson said his view is different from some of the others. ~~He agrees with the view of the Secretary of Defense and would not stop the bombing.~~ Acheson regards this ~~however, as purely,~~ a marginal operation as far as the fighting in the South is concerned. He said the bombing in the North is not the essential point.

On negotiations, Acheson said ~~"we must understand that we are not going to have negotiations."~~ The bombing has no effect on negotiations. When these fellows decide they can't defeat the South, then they will give up. This is the way it was in Korea. This is the way the Communists operate," Acheson said.

~~"The importance of the bombing in the North is not that it is important militarily,"~~ Acheson said. ~~"It could be used as a signal, however, not that it is a solution to the stopping of the fighting across the demilitarized zone."~~

Acheson said it is possible that they will not reduce the fighting until the 1968 election is resolved. "Until that is resolved they may say let's see it out," Acheson added. ~~"I would not talk about negotiations any more."~~ You have made it clear where you stand. This isn't the Communist method. If they can't win they just quit after a while. "Acheson suggested that we put the bombing in a position where it could be stopped and/or started. ~~In other words play it down.~~ The targets must become less dramatic."

The President replied that we don't play it either up or down. However, it is front page news. The President pointed out that the dramatic impact of the bombing traces to Secretary McNamara's testimony before Senator Stuart Symington's Committee. That generated both the hawks and the doves talking about bombing.

The President said "I am like the steering wheel of a car without any control. The Senate won't let us play down the bombing issue."

~~Acheson replied "The cross you have to bear is a lousy Senate Foreign Relations Committee. You have a dilettante fool at the head of the Committee."~~

About reaching the people, Acheson said, "if you agree to the policy I have outlined, then get everyone in the government to agree on it and talk along these policy lines."

~~Acheson added "we certainly should not get out of Vietnam."~~ He noted that General Bradley remembers after General McArthur took his licking at the Yaloo in the Korean War there was a great outcry to get out. On December 4, however, Acheson had Dean Rusk and George Kennan into his office and told them to see Secretary George Marshall. "We want less Goddamn analysis and more fighting spirit." Acheson said that the President had a good commander who takes orders in General Westmoreland. Acheson said that he spoke to about 21 Supreme Court law clerks and they were all amazed that I thought we should not get out of Vietnam. ~~Acheson suggested a program be adopted similar to the Citizens Committee on the Marshall Plan and he said, perhaps the Paul Douglas group would be the proper vehicle.~~ He noted that the Citizens Committee on the Marshall Plan organized a group in every city over 150,000 population; got the money mostly from private groups and got up several readable pamphlets that were used as speech material. Acheson said that the President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense have taken the whole burden of the Vietnam issue. The people know what these three stand for. What is needed now is several thousand new speakers to support our policy in every city in the nation. Acheson pointed out the main thing is that the President should not worry about this. He said he was pleased to read in Scotty Reston's column that the President gave up whiskey and took up golf.

The President interjected that "he was wrong on both counts." When Mac Bundy walked out of Washington, so did Scotty Reston and he doesn't know what is going on."

In summary on the bombing, Acheson believes we should play down its importance. When the communists ease the pressure off the DMZ, we can reduce the bombing in the North. However, we should not give advance notice of these bombing pauses.

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McGeorge Bundy said he agreed with nearly everything that Acheson said. He said the bombing in the North is out of proportion to its importance. Bundy said to go after the dikes or Haiphong would not be a net gain and would unnecessarily worry the moderate to dovish population.

Bundy said that the South is the focus. He thinks that it is right that the President continues to have the Medal of Honor winners presented in the Rose Garden. He thinks a great deal has been done in the provinces and these people should be honored and publicized. Bundy said "we have done a remarkable job in the last two years in getting the work in the provinces organized. We have a wonderful first team in there. ~~Vietnam will have to do more.~~ Anything that shows that Vietnam is doing more will be helpful over here."

~~Bundy said he shares Acheson's opinion that there will not be negotiations. "I suppose we cannot say that publicly because the judges of public opinion in the nation won't believe it. But I think it is logical to say that we in the Administration do not expect negotiations in the next year," Bundy said.~~

~~Bundy said "getting out of Vietnam is as impossible and it is undesirable." He pointed out that there is an enormous difference in Asia as it is now and what it might have been because of what the President did in 1965. He said this point should be emphasized.~~

As to how to pull the nation together - Bundy said the communication people who are centered in New York cannot be won over, but they should not be allowed to set the tone of the debate. "Your (the President) sense of where you are going is very important here."

"One must also ask," Bundy added, "that what is eroding public support are the battles and deaths and dangers to the sons of mothers and fathers with no picture of a result in sight. ~~If we can permeate to the public that we are seeing the results and the end of the road, this will be helpful.~~"

~~Former Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon said he "agrees with a great deal of what has been said. There is nothing additional in the South that we can do that is not being done now." He pointed out however that the South Vietnamese must be expected to do more.~~

~~"In the North, it is just about right and we should continue as we are doing. I would not think of going further and bombing the dikes and harbors. This is different than the way I thought two years ago," Dillon said.~~

~~On negotiations Dillon agreed entirely with Acheson.~~ The trade suggested by Acheson is excellent.

~~Dillon said we must not get out of Vietnam.~~

On how to better communicate - Dillon said "our major emphasis should be shifted to the position that we are in rather than why or how we got there. We should clarify what we are doing. There is a lot of misunderstanding about what we are doing. The subject that McGeorge Bundy discussed is most important. That is the feeling on both sides, including both the doves and hawks, that the situation over there is hopeless. ~~We must show some progress.~~ To talk of 15 years seems like forever. I was surprised that last night, things were better than I had expected," Dillon said.

~~"The revolutionary development program should be emphasized."~~ Perhaps Bunker could come back and make a report to the nation. But we must give some hope that there is a possibility in the next two or three years of seeing light at the end of the tunnel. If the people thought that this could end at some time, we would gain a lot more support," Dillon said.

~~Dillon suggested one group to talk to are the top educators, and the heads of colleges and the deans.~~ He noted that much of the trouble is coming largely from the younger professors and students. Those college presidents whom Dillon knows, sympathize with the students' dovish views. Dillon believes that a good briefing to these top educators who are responsible people would be very helpful.

~~Arthur Dean said the country as a whole is confused.~~ "Very few people have read the Geneva Accords of 1954. It calls for a single election in the North and the South. Then we have said that we will not let the people of South Vietnam down and not let them be incorporated into the North. This is inconsistent with our profession of belief in the Geneva Accords of '54."

Dean said there is also a feeling that Ambassador Arthur Goldberg is willing to negotiate on less than honourous terms than Washington. If South Vietnam is as important, then why are we willing to say that we will abide by the majority vote. This means all our sacrifice will have been in vain.

Dean said there is a strong feeling among the hawks, especially that the President and Secretary McNamara are vetoing the recommendations of the Joint Chiefs. Dean suggested that someone pull together everything there is on why we are in Vietnam. If the majority of the people are satisfied based on the national interest, they would support us. Dean said the people are puzzled. They are puzzled about the value of the bombing. He said he agrees generally with Secretary Acheson. ~~Dean worried that if we get them~~

~~to the conference table; they will do the same thing they did in the Korean War by demanding that we get out before any other points of negotiation are taken up.~~

Henry Cabot Lodge said he had three suggestions for the South: "1.) There should be an independent audit of how the revamping of the ARVN is going; of those training the ARVN; and how the local police technique is improving. Do the trainees understand the significance of the ARVN thing itself? 2.) Public opinion is more concerned with U.S. casualties than with our bombing program. If the casualties go down, nothing else matters so much. An exclusive military victory is not conceivable to me."

Lodge suggested a "split up and keep off balance" military policy rather than a "seek out and destroy" policy. "I would take a look at this policy because it utilizes the smaller units and means less casualties. This also diminishes the number of refugees." 3.) Lodge pointed out that when he went to Saigon in 1965 he talked about a true revolution to win over the people. "In Vietnam this means non-government activity. However, the government must give the green light, and the U.S. must help, but it must be way in the background." Lodge recommended the use of the Tenant Farmers Union etc., to develop farm credit, rice milling, and marketing programs. He pointed out that six months ago, fertilizers were piped in through the Tenant Farmers Union, and now the Union has tripled. "But you must stimulate and agitate them. This will be visual proof of a true revolution to win over the people. This may take the French and Chinese to the wall, but it will point out a true revolution to the Vietnamese. As this program succeeds, you can cut down on U. S. involvement, and thereby cut down on U. S. casualties." Lodge said it is better to work through the unions, and organizations such as this as opposed to the local governments because you do not have competent local governments as such in Vietnam yet.


Lodge agreed with Acheson about the bombing, and about negotiations. Lodge also added it would be unthinkable about getting out of Vietnam. "In this war we are trying to divert a change in the balance of power."

Lodge said he is working with the Citizens Committee. "They are planning a series of brochures to discuss why we are in Vietnam, what we have accomplished, what needs to be done, a history of the people and the trouble there."

Lodge suggested that Bunker should be given lots of publicity when he gets back to report.

At this point, the President invited all of the group to lunch. Everyone accepted except Douglas Dillon who had a previous commitment and would have to leave.

Robert Murphy said it is best to focus on what might be done. ~~We don't know~~ whether there will be negotiations or not. Murphy pointed out that he works with Norstad and Norstad has had strange illusions on negotiations. Murphy suggested that the bombing be left in the hands of the Joint Chiefs as much as possible. He said it is effective. ~~Murphy noted that there is no hate complex like there was against Hitler.~~ He said that Ho Chi Minh is not regarded as evil in many places in the United States and in Europe he is regarded as a kindly hero. There should also be a better fixation on the small group of men who are responsible in the North.



Governor Averill Harriman said he wished Dean Acheson would say publicly what he said about the character of the Foreign Relations Committee Chairman. Harriman added that he "had tremendous respect for Senator Gale McGee and they threw him off the committee." Harriman said the difference between Senator Vandenberg and his Committee and the present committee is as great as black and white.

The President pointed out that even then, Vandenberg and the Foreign Relations Committee made it miserable for the Secretary of State.

General Omar Bradley said in general he agrees with the comments that have been made. "The military services, both ours and the Vietnamese are improving, and we are making progress. It is difficult for the American people to understand why we cannot draw a line and push this line up and back. There is confusion among the people because they cannot view Vietnam in the same way they did in World War II. The enemy may be 10 or 15 feet away from you and you cannot see him. The improvement in the local forces are beginning to be played up in the last few days. Some of the units are very good. They are training them well, Bradley said.

~~"On the bombing, we should stick to military targets.~~ They do affect the North Vietnamese ability to fight in the South, We must keep up the bombing." Bradley said military targets are sometimes questionable. "Whether the dikes will become military targets, I do not know."

"On negotiations there should not be so much talk. The more we talk about negotiations, this is a sign of weakness to them. If we stop the bombing, we don't need to tell them in advance," Bradley said.

The President noted that when we had told them in advance about our bombing pauses, it has not worked in the past.

~~Concerning the troubles at home, Bradley said our means of communications~~ are largely responsible. "For example, the Washington Post used three pages to describe the 35,000 or so peace marchers who converged on the Pentagon recently. However, there were 180,000 in New York and New Jersey who demonstrated in support of our men in Vietnam, and this was played on page 17 of the Post."

~~Bradley said "we've got to arouse patriotism somehow. We've never had a~~ war without patriotic slogans. Perhaps the slogan in this would be "Patience," 100 years means nothing to a Chinaman, but we do not have their same patience. The Korean troops in Vietnam have more patience. They'll sit in front of a tunnel until the North Vietnamese come out." Bradley said he believes if it wasn't for all the protestors, the North Vietnamese would give up. He said that captured prisoners have told him they (North Vietnam) would win the war, not in Vietnam but back in the States, as they did with the French. We are winning, but we must have patience," Bradley concluded.

The President asked General Bradley to tell the group about the competence of the South Vietnamese, the Korean, and the United States men in Vietnam.

~~Bradley said "I have never seen better morale or better fed troops."~~ They get ice cream about three times a week. Only two out of the thousand that I and my wife visited disliked being there or did not understand why they were there. These were two colored soldiers from Detroit who were more interested in the riots in Detroit than in Vietnam. As for the Vietnamese, all are enthusiastic, they still have some leaders that should not be there, but they are trying to get them out. I was impressed with the popular forces in the villages. We must do something to get the hearts of the Vietnamese people. They want to be let alone and grow their rice more than anything else. They probably feel a little more secure with the government of South Vietnam than the Viet Cong. Two captured Viet Cong were about 12 or 13 years old and they said they had to go fight for the Viet Cong or their families would be killed," Bradley said.

~~General Maxwell Taylor said that in the South, things are going well. He made two points. 1.) He questions the close defense of the frontier on the DMZ and in the highland area, and 2.) He believes that we have never decided on what we are going to offer the Viet Cong and this is a problem.~~

~~Taylor said the bombing is an essential part of our strategy, and to give it up without clearly getting something in return would be wrong.~~

The President asked him if he was talking about quid pro quo or the Acheson program.

Taylor said he prefers the first but would go along with the latter.

~~On negotiations, Taylor agrees that a subsiding solution is more likely than negotiations.~~ He pointed out that if he were Ho Chi Minh, he would stay with what the North Vietnamese are doing, at least through the elections in 1968.

On the homefront, Taylor said that he has made more speeches than anyone, having completed his 126th last night. "The people still are asking why they are not being told all the facts on Vietnam. We should organize a nationwide campaign that will be continuous. Television is our best weapon as it is with the opposition. Every week we should have a program either sponsored by public or private in which the people can ask their government questions. We can also bring personalities - returning veterans, diplomats, etc., to discuss Vietnam."

~~George Ball said that no one in the group thinks we should get out of Vietnam, and no one gives propriety to the Gavin or Galbraith enclave theory.~~

"In the South, the report we received was very reassuring. The war of attrition and civil action is in competent hands and we are doing very well there. We should focus on the conditions that will lead the other side to stopping the fighting. ~~We must look and see how the war looks to them. There are two wars in the eyes of Hanoi. First the war in the South. This one they can afford to lose or to withdraw from. Second is the war in the North which is viewed as a war by the greatest imperialist force against a sister socialist state.~~ Can they afford to lose that one, we must ask," Ball said.

"In light of that then, is the bombing useful in the North. ~~Bombing in the North won't limit the flow of supplies into the South significantly. On the other hand, it will make it almost impossible for them to stop the war.~~" Ball recommended a change of tactics, that is, shifting of the bombing away from the harbor and dikes to the bombing of the DMZ as an interdiction of men and supplies. "This would clearly show the other side that we are creating the conditions to let them stop the fighting," Ball said.

As far as persuading the U. S. to support our efforts there, Ball pointed out that a double standard is implicit in our presence in Vietnam. He said there is a great disparity in size and strength between the United States and the Viet Cong and North Vietnam. He also pointed out that many students can't understand why we are using our air power against a primitive people that has no air power.

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Ball said very few Americans really see a political solution as another Munich. We don't talk about getting out. He said he has had a bad reaction to Goldberg's statement that six months after the war, we'll get out. People don't really believe this, because they look at Korea and see we've been there for 17 years. Furthermore, if they do believe we are telling the truth, they think we should have our heads examined because we would be throwing away everything we fought for. Ball said we should consider all these in terms of the American national interest. We are in a position now instead of arguing how we got there as to what we do about it now that we're there.

Following Ball's statement the group adjourned to wash up before lunch.

Lunch convened at 1:03 p. m.

The President called on Justice Fortas.

Fortas said there was a remarkable presentation by George Carver of the CIA last night. Fortas said the country should hear the presentation made by Carver. He said the nation is totally unaware of this side of the Vietnam conflict. He said Carver told the story with complete conviction and great sophistication. Fortas suggested that the press might be told that Carver briefed the Cabinet and he would be available to brief the press in a low-key way. Following this, Fortas recommended a repeat performance by Carver for Members of Congress and later for other opinion makers. He said these briefings would be contrary to the opinion of the country that there are no improvements. Fortas then suggested that later on Ambassador Bunker return and report.

Fortas expressed his gratitude to the Paul Douglas Committee participants. He said at last some of the leaders and people of the country are beginning to speak out. "I believe there is a good deal of over-reaction to what appears to be the public attitude of the United States. This opposition exists in only a small group of the community, primarily the intellectuals or so-called intellectuals and the press. The opposition is not as widespread as we think. Public opinion is a fickle thing and a changable thing. The American people are committed to a few propositions that are contrary to the rash of opposition. The public would be outraged if we withdrew. We are not now prepared for a "Fortress America," nor are we for the foreseeable future. It is very important to separate the superficialities of expression from the fundamentals of American belief."

~~Negotiations are symbolic rather than a real thing, Fortas said. This could be an ingenious trap to trap us into negotiations on terms or at a time when they can be corrosive to us. "We've been fortunate so far that North Vietnam has rejected our offer. When the time comes what will happen will be a cessation of hostilities, not negotiations. The American people are not interested in negotiations. That is merely a symbol. That is why the people~~

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don't understand you when you say you're willing to negotiate, because the American people really don't believe in negotiations. ~~It would serve no~~ purpose to continue to emphasize our willingness to negotiate. You have already stated your position. Don't repudiate what you have done but tone down on it in the future. To continue to talk about negotiations only signals to the Communists that they are succeeding in winning over American public opinion," Fortas said.

~~On the bombing, Fortas said in reference to George Ball's comments, that he~~ admires the ingenuity in the proposal but rejects the logic for stopping the bombing in the North. "I don't believe North Vietnam thinks we are out to overthrow their government, and I don't believe it would have any effect if we shifted our bombing. The bombing of the North is not the way to end the war but a way to make cessation of the hostilities on a basis acceptable to us a possibility."

The President asked Dick Helms what the minimum and maximum figures of people who are being tied up in the North to repair the damage done by U.S. bombing.

Helms replied about 500,000.

~~Fortas continued saying he was interested in Lodge's proposal. "I wonder if~~ all questions have been asked about the nature of our military action in the South. I think we should explore a greater use of the small military units in the South."

The President said he has asked the Secretary how we could speed up winning the war. "The Joint Chiefs came up with 10 proposals, all of which involve the North. I sent it back to them to focus on the South and they reported that we can't do anything more than we are doing in the South now," the President said.

Dean Acheson commented on Fortas' idea of having Carver brief the press, saying "neither George (Christian) nor the CIA should brief the press."

Fortas said he was very impressed both by what he (Carver) said and how he said it. He realizes, of course, that anything anyone in Government says will be denounced by the Fulbrights.

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The President asked the group to give any suggestion on Vietnam or any danger signals they see in any other part of the world. He said he did not want this group to confine itself totally to Vietnam. He asked them to want to and to feel obligated to tell him personally for his eyes only about any of these subjects, even his own competence or that of the Secretary of State or Defense in handling matters of world affairs. He then introduced Clark Clifford as one of his most valued advisors who is most generous with his time. BJ LIBRARY

Clifford said that the President was aware of his stand on the questions posed, and thus he would confine his comments to one subject - the attitude of American people. ~~"An effort must be made to explain and to educate the American people."~~ There is another area which we have not discussed today - - namely that the American people will react to hearing from those individuals who live in Southeast Asia who can give a better color of the conditions there. For example, President Thieu should visit the United States if the protocol can be worked out. He could address a Joint Session of the Congress, he could be invited to the Press Club and I am certain he could get prime time on television some evening where he could explain the nature of the problem there. He is an intelligent and a reasonable fellow, and more balanced than Ky. He could go through the background of the conflict, the importance of the conflict, and I think this would be very helpful. Colonel Robin Olds, who is our only air ace, could be assigned to speak to large audiences. Selected officials from other Southeast Asian nations and Ambassadors from Southeast Asian nations could visit the United States to make appearances," Clifford suggested.

~~"The thing to keep in mind however is that no matter what this accomplishes, this will not be a popular war. No wars have been popular. In the Revolutionary War there was an enormous body who felt this was a tragic mistake. The same was true in the Civil War where President Lincoln was beleaguered day after day with people who thought he should get out. The First World War was enormously unpopular with many of the American people. In the Korean War, it was popular in 1950, and in 1951 more than 60% thought we were wrong,"~~ Clifford said.

The President interjected at this time to point out that the Korean War at the time of our entering was favored 83-7% and 6 months later the balance had shifted to 66-24 against.

Clifford continued saying that he remembers well Senator Taft calling the Korean Conflict "Truman's War". One possible exception is World War II. "But wars will be unpopular and we won't be able to sell it to everyone. But we must go on because what we are doing is right. But recognizing this fact, I hope we won't get frustrated."

"Last night was an enormously interesting experience. Secretary McNamara said that perhaps he and Rusk's efforts since 1961 have been a failure. But this is not true. Their efforts have constituted an enormous success. One of the measures of the success that history will look very favorably upon is that both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson didn't wait for public opinion to catch up with them. They went ahead with what was right, and because of that the war is a success today. You can look around and find that the other nations say

we have provided them with a shield. They cannot depend upon the British or the French. This has been an enormous success but we won't be able to convince the American people of that as long as it is going on. So we should go right on doing what we're going to do. It is important that we do so," Clifford continued.

"Any cessation in the South or the North will be interpreted as a sign of weakness of the American people. If we keep up the pressure on them, gradually the will of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese will wear down," Clifford concluded.

At 1:45 p.m. Lynda Bird brought Patrick Lyndon Nugent in to the President. Lyn stayed in the President's arms for most of the remainder of the luncheon.

The President then briefly summarized the consensus of opinions given today. Generally everyone agrees with our present course in the South. The Lodge proposal is generally agreed upon. In the North, there is the general agreement that we should not extend the bombing any further. There is some sentiment for moderating the bombing. We have moved far along on the bombing. We've hit all but 24 out of the 9,000 targets or the 5,000 military targets. The President then called on McGeorge Bundy to summarize the feelings of the group and asked Bundy to put on paper his summary.

Bundy suggested two things. First, he said no one has said anything about China because no one really believes that the President will do anything that will start trouble with China. Most people understand that. Although there are many in Bundy's circle of moderate to dovish people who do not understand that and he will go about to make this clear. Also, there is a sense of clarity and calmness among the group with a heavy majority agreed about what we should or should not do. Bundy pointed out that this unity of agreement is not reported in the Press and is a popular misconception. He said an endless many hours have been spent pointing out how we got to where we are now. Instead, the emphasis should be what do we do now. He said there is agreement that the bombing is important but is overemphasized. He pointed out that the group has not given detailed attention to a pause or refusal of a pause, but there is some agreement that it is not a critical point.

The President asked that all of the group try to give their views to the public, and he asked that when they make speeches that they provide him a copy of what they said so he will know.

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Walt Rostow addressed himself to Hanoi's mind which must concern itself with the rate of erosion of their manpower base against the erosion of the American political base. He pointed out that at least half of the job must be done by the South Vietnamese government. They must show improved administration. They must make a bold, bloody attack on corruption and the ARVN must be more aggressive in pacification.

Rostow agrees that this will not be a popular war but he points out that the progress taking place will help win support. He said that there are ways of guiding the press to show light at the end of the tunnel.

On negotiations, Rostow said the normal way for the Communists is to pack up and cease aggression rather than negotiate. He pointed out however that Vietnam may be different in that Hanoi will not want the NLF destroyed as it was in Indonesia and they may want to negotiate on this point. Secondly, Hanoi may want to negotiate about bases in South Vietnam. So negotiations are not out of the realm of possibility.

The President called on Under Secretary Nicholas Katzenbach who chided that if President Thieu and Ambassador Bunker are brought back to the United States, "that leaves Vietnam under Locke and Ky!"

Secretary McNamara expressed his personal appreciation to the group.

The President said that no nation has been more enlightenly served than under Secretaries Rusk and McNamara. He pointed out that these two are the highest type of manhood that this nation can produce. Their working relationship is good and they have had no petty jealousies or quarrels. "Their only test is what is good for their country," the President said.

Secretary Rusk said that the deliberations in the past two days have been thoughtful, imaginative and responsible. He expressed his personal appreciation. He agreed that this was not a popular war but one of the problems in polling of public opinion on the popularity of the war is the way the questions are phrased. He said that he is sure that if the President were asked by a pollster, 'are you happy about Vietnam,' the President would reply 'hell no.'

On negotiations, Rusk said we don't expect Hanoi to come to the negotiating table very soon.

On bombing, he pointed out what it does for the morale of our men. So when we consider a shifting or a stopping of the bombing on a geography basis, we must consider the morale of the men.

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The President said that we are studying what essential targets remain. There will have to be some restrikes and we are studying when and where. The President then called on Secretary McNamara to discuss the so-called barrier.

McNamara said first of all it is not a barrier. For five or six years we have been studying how to interdict men and materials. We've considered many things from the use of divisions to an actual Maginot Line, but none merited being put into play. About a year and a half ago, we got our scientists and engineers to analyze the situation, and they improved the effectiveness of our air campaign.

4+5

We start the operation against vehicles on December 1 and against men on January 1. We don't know how effective it's going to be, but we are hopeful. There are also obstacle defenses in which we have a cleared area with mines and other obstacles and fixed fire positions in the north of South Vietnam.

McNamara revealed that captured documents showed about 20% of those who leave the North, do not reach the South. About 2% of these are because of air casualties. Our scientists and engineers hope this new system will increase the air casualties by 15 fold, in other words, up to 30%. They think the destruction of the trucks by air casualties will increase 200-300%. McNamara points out that we haven't discussed this program because it is so complex that with some ingenuity by the enemy it can be detected and destroyed. Therefore, I have put a flat barrier that there will be no discussions. McNamara said he does not want to overstate its effectiveness, but if it improves the casualty ratio by even a few percent it will have been worth the effort.

Secretary Rusk addressed himself briefly to the Goldberg-Mansfield Resolution on bringing the Vietnam issue to the United Nations. He pointed out that several efforts in the past to do this have not worked. It is both an illusion and a sophistication. In the Security Council we do not have the nine votes necessary. The Soviet Union does not want it brought up. They do not want to heat up any issue between them and the United States at this time. Other nations oppose it for different reasons.

See 1.3(a)
(5)

Hanoi and Peking say that it does not belong in the United Nations. If we don't get the nine votes or if we get an adverse vote, it's going to be interpreted as a repudiation of our policy. In the General Assembly the situation is much the same way. The difference between the public view and the private statements

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of these world leaders is enormous. For example, there is no more of a hawk than Ne Win of Burma, yet if it were brought before the UN, he would probably vote against it. We have tried to make clear to these Senators that they are not on a realistic path. We have a resolution pending now which no one wants to vote on.

The President pointed out that the United States presence in Southeast Asia has had its effect. It has hampered China's policy and caused reversals against China in Indonesia and other parts of the world. Practically all the leaders in Asia are in deep sympathy with us. Prime Minister Lee of Singapore said he came to the United States to find out if the American people would hold out. He knew that the President, Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara would, but he didn't know about the resoluteness of the American people. The President pointed out that General Taylor and Clark Clifford did a marvelous job on their trip to Southeast Asia. As a result, the Thais have brought up their troop strength to 10,000. The Koreans, Australians, New Zealanders are all going to send more troops. The South Vietnamese are increasing their troop strength by 60 or 65,000.

The President adjourned the group at 2:15 p. m.

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~~SECRET~~ MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

30
25
Friday, November 3, 1967

SECRET

MR. PRESIDENT:

Read 1:40p

I did not take full notes in yesterday's advisory meeting; but I did try to list suggestions for action.

Here is my list.

Dean Acheson:

- organize citizen's committees in all cities over 100,000;
- get fresh faces to defend our Viet Nam policy.

McGeorge Bundy:

- cool attention to bombing: make it routine;
- reward in White House ceremonies those who have done great work in the provinces, military and civilians;
- assure that military men on advisory duty in pacification are promoted on same basis as those in combat;
- develop publicity that Vietnamese are doing more, and make sure they do;
- shift our stance on negotiations to one of not expecting negotiations until after November 1968;
- dramatize that we have already won a great strategic victory in Asia: lift people's eyes from Viet Nam to the whole scene;
- brief the key editors and communicators just as the group was briefed (Dick Helms has no objection to using Carver when it's off-the-record and no public attribution);
- let good news speak for itself: don't strain publicly to convince people progress is being made.

Douglas Dillon:

- spend time not on how we got into Viet Nam, but on position we're in and real choices we face;
- clarify what we are doing on the ground and in bombing;

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Douglas Dillon (cont'd)

- develop sense of progress: sense of stalemate is what ^{unites} ~~invites~~ extreme doves and hawks; let events speak for themselves, but there are ways of getting good news out;
- have Bunker -- a fresh and trusted voice -- report to the nation;
- the President should brief top college presidents and deans as Advisory Group was briefed.

Arthur Dean:

- clarify our "get out of Viet Nam" position: if we're really going to get out, why spend all this blood and treasure?
- explain critical importance of Viet Nam to our Asia and Pacific positions: people don't understand implications for U.S. national interest of loss of Viet Nam;
- avoid another Panmunjom.

Cabot Lodge:

- an independent audit of the pace and success of the revamping and re-orientation of the ARVN;
- limit U.S. casualties by diminishing "search and destroy" operations, substituting a doctrine of "split up and keep off balance";
- encourage a "true revolution" in South Viet Nam by throwing our weight behind private cooperative institutions such as farmers' unions, marketing organizations, which would stimulate, agitate, and engage the people themselves and begin to push the French and Chinese middlemen to the wall. (WWR comment: the French and Chinese businessmen ought to be moving into light industry at this stage of Vietnamese development.)
- agreed with Acheson on a no-bombing versus DMZ deal;
- urged that Bunker and his views be given maximum exposure.

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Nov. 3, 1967

Robert Murphy:

- sharpen focus and action against small group of Hanoi villains: we have no target for hate in this, as opposed to other wars.

General Omar Bradley:

- talk less about negotiations: Hanoi takes it as a sign of weakness;
- use "Patience" as a slogan;

General Maxwell Taylor:

- questions close-in defense of DMZ;
- decide what we are prepared to offer the VC; that is a major gap in our policy and ought to be filled;
- bombing should not be traded against DMZ pressure but against level of VC incidents in the South: bombing is our equivalent of guerrilla warfare;
- organize nationwide, continuous campaign of speeches in support of policy;
- organize an hour TV program regularly: government replies to its citizens on Viet Nam, answering questions.

George Ball:

- stop bombing, except across the DMZ, to create climate for negotiation.

Abe Fortas:

- get George Carver to briefing on television. (Dean Acheson, Dick Helms, and others objected to using Carver in public.)

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Nov. 3, 1967

Clark Clifford:

- bring Thieu to the United States (Nick Katzenbach implied we should make sure his political base in Saigon would be safe during such a tour).

W. R.

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