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Tuesday, July 18, 1967
8:55 a.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith Nick's statement of the case against Intelligence Board "cover" and the case for "full consultation."

I believe that "full consultation" would work if we were to say:

-- A summit conference among troop contributors is envisaged in the autumn, after the Vietnamese elections;

-- In the meanwhile, we wish to share our own thoughts on Viet Nam with our fighting allies; and

-- In particular, we wish to learn directly their thoughts about the current situation and to begin to ascertain from them their views on appropriate items for such a summit conference.

This makes not only good cover but good sense. One reason the Punta del Este meeting went well was that it was overtly planned for some time.

W. W. Rostow

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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July 17, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Clifford/Taylor Trip

I attach a draft outgoing message to the Manila capitals, seeking their concurrence in the Clifford-Taylor trip. Messrs. Clifford and Taylor concur in this message, as does Secretary McNamara.

On reflection, all of us have concluded that it would be impractical and unwise to try to use any Intelligence Board "cover" for this trip. The nature of the required appointments alone is totally out of keeping with such a "cover" purpose, and we believe it would be immediately seen through and derided. We believe that the justification for full consultation is wholly adequate and indeed better in terms of avoiding excessive speculation about immediate decisions for additional forces.

If this message could go tonight we would hope to be able to make an announcement by Wednesday or, at the latest, Thursday. With a Saturday departure, this would avoid the impression of excessive haste.

Messrs. Clifford and Taylor already have preliminary briefing papers, and we should be prepared by Thursday to go over the whole trip with you for your final instructions.

Walter D. K. [Signature]

Under Secretary

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