

Pres. file

~~SECRET~~

Monday, July 17, 1967
6:40 p.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith for your urgent consideration
a draft cable launching Clark Clifford and
General Taylor on their journey.

It closely conforms to the mission as
you designed it the other day, with one major
exception; namely, it is universally agreed
that they should abandon cover as members of
your Intelligence Advisory Board and proceed,
simply, as distinguished and trusted advisers.

The change made at the bottom of page 3
is my suggestion, since there is no clear
statement of the mission in the text.

W. W. Rostow

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DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 94-162
By CL, NARA, Date 6-9-95

WWRostow:rlh

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

INDICATE: ☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

~~SECRET~~

Classification

FOR OC/T USE ONLY

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Origin	ACTION:	Amembassy	BANGKOK	IMMEDIATE
Info:			CANBERRA	"
			MANILA	"
			SAIGON	"
			SEOUL	"
			WELLINGTON	"

STATE

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EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 94-162
By CL, NARA, Date 6-9-95

1. For your background, President wishes to send Mr. Clark Clifford and General Maxwell Taylor, with very small party, to Saigon and then to consult in rotation with Manila nations for full exchange of views on current situation. While private objective of trip would be to obtain maximum progress on additional force contributions, we plan to depict trip to maximum possible extent as another step in normal consultation among Manila nations, for exchange of views on all aspects. We would expect that it would be pointed out that such consultation natural at this stage, with formal summit meeting out of the question at least until after Vietnamese elections. We would plan to downplay question of additional force contributions, noting that any

Drafted by:

EA: W. P. Bundy:bmm 7/17/67

Clearances:

DoD-Secretary McNamara
White House - Mr. Rostow

Tel. Ext.

4235

Telegraphic transmission and

classification approved by:

The Secretary

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S/S-

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requests for additional forces should come from GVN in any event, and that each of Manila nations is sovereign government fully devoted to the cause and able to determine for itself what the need is and what it should do. Instruction below is first step in obtaining Manila government concurrences. Tentative proposed schedule, assuming such concurrences, would be departure about Saturday, July 22, with visits to Saigon (July 24-27), Bangkok (July 27-28), Canberra (July 29-31, to include day of rest), Wellington (July 31-August 1), Manila (August 2-3), Seoul (August 3-5), and then return to Washington.

2. In order to obtain host government concurrences in this plan, you should deliver following personal message from President to Thanom, Holt, Marcos, Thieu, Park, and Holyoake respectively:

QUOTE Dear (Salutation):

I have now had the opportunity to review fully Secretary McNamara's findings from his recent visit to Vietnam, and I have sent you a summary of the highlights.

In the meantime, it seems evident that Hanoi has been reviewing its position. While we think it unlikely that they have reached any serious decision in the direction of peace--and may indeed be headed in just the opposite direction--it seems entirely possible that we shall be confronted in the near future with some new tactical move. In

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any event, there is much to ~~xi~~ discuss concerning Hanoi's attitude, including the question of the possible effect in Hanoi of the apparent steady deterioration and increasing extremism in Communist China.

In the light of these developments, I have been giving thought to the need for full consultation among all the Seven Nations with forces in Vietnam. The April meeting of our foreign ministers was most helpful, but I believe we need something that would cover all the major strategic and diplomatic issues. At the same time, while all of us have been giving thought to the possibility of another summit conference, such a conference is plainly out of the question until after the Vietnamese elections and the establishment of a new and Constitutionally-based government in Saigon.

Accordingly, I am prepared to make two of my most trusted advisors, Mr. Clark Clifford and General Maxwell Taylor, available in the immediate future, to travel to Saigon for a further short review of the situation and then to make a round of the capitals of the other nations with forces in Vietnam. Mr. Clifford and General Taylor have participated fully in our review here of the McNamara findings, and have been intimately associated over a long period with the whole ~~question of the situation~~ situation.

I repose the fullest trust and confidence in them.

The fundamental purpose of the trip would be, ~~as I have described~~

Then, interim consultation on all aspects of the Vietnamese problem

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it above. At the same time, I must say frankly to you that the McNamara findings lead us to conclude that there is a need for substantially raising our sights on force needs in Vietnam.

With the momentum we have achieved, it is more than ever vital to convince Hanoi that we mean to keep up the pressures. We must meet and defeat whatever Hanoi may do in the South, while continuing to deal effectively with thrusts across the border by North Vietnamese forces and with the infiltration routes and sources of supply in North Vietnam.

The Vietnamese themselves fully recognize that they must do more, but there remains a substantial additional need for external help. Accordingly, Messrs. Clifford and Taylor will be in a position to go over this question with you privately as fully as possible, and to indicate the actions that we ourselves have in mind.

In addition to these basic factors, I am sure you will recognize that the prospect of additional force contributions from other Manila nations can make a great difference to our political situation here. As the American Congress and people are asked to assume greater burdens, they will inevitably be asking whether these burdens are being fairly shared among those nations who have the most direct stakes in the outcome.

(Ambassador or Charge) is in a position to give you more detailed information on our tentative plans. Could you let me know as soon as

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possible your reaction to this suggestion and whether the idea of the trip, together with possible dates, would be acceptable to you?

With warm personal regards,

(Signed) LBJ END QUOTE

3. In presenting letter, you may draw on background in para 1, including dates. You should tactfully make it clear that we would appreciate immediate response, to permit announcement here Wednesday or Thursday, with advance notice to other capitals so that they could confirm as desired. As indicated in tentative schedule, we hope for departure Saturday here.

4. For your own planning purposes, or if question should arise in presenting letter, schedule in each country should be as businesslike as possible, and party would wish to avoid formal entertainment if this can possibly be done. We would welcome your suggestions on schedule in each country, and will provide further guidance, including ways to keep press speculation at minimum.

5. Following are individual country variations in proposed letter:

a. Saigon should omit paras beginning "The Vietnamese themselves", and "In addition to these basic factors."

b. Bangkok should add after the words "force needs in Vietnam"

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the following: "which I raised during my conversations with His Majesty and which you and Ambassador Martin have discussed subsequently."

GP-3

END