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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NIJ 94-129
By Ob, NARA, Date 6-6-95

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Per 1

Monday, July 31, 1967 -- 8:10 a.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith a report on the Clifford-Taylor talks with Prime Minister Holt and his principal Cabinet Ministers.

I agree with the recommendation that we must organize stronger public support, dramatizing not merely the effort in Viet Nam but in all of Southeast Asia and making more clear the fact of Asian support of our effort, from Singapore to Seoul.

We were looking yesterday without success for any written record of your conversation with Holyoake when he was here for the SEATO meeting in his role as Foreign Minister. Clifford and Taylor wished to have it for their trip to Wellington.

I concluded that you spoke privately to Holyoake and there is no written record. Is that correct?

W. W. Rostow

Canberra 448, July 31, 1967

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WWRostow:rln

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PASS WHITE HOUSE

CLARK CLIFFORD, GENERAL TAYLOR AND I MET WITH PRIME
MINISTER HOLT AND HIS PRINCIPAL CABINET MINISTERS
SUNDAY. DISCUSSIONS, WHICH LASTED SEVEN HOURS,
COVERED ENTIRE RANGE OF MILITARY, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC
AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS OF SITUATION IN VIET-NAM.
TALKS WERE FRANK AND PRODUCTIVE. FOLLOWING ARE
PRINCIPAL GA REACTIONS TO PRESENTATION MADE BY

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CLIFFORD AND TAYLOR.

1.3 (a)(3)

HOLT SAID HE THOUGHT TIME WAS ON OUR SIDE.

2. EXCEPT FOR NO MINISTER

1.3 (a)(3)

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PRESENT FAVORED BOMBING OF DIKES OR BOMBING OR MINING
HAIPHONG HARBOR.

1.3 (a)(3)

BOMBING OF DIKES OPPOSED
ON GROUNDS WORLD OPINION WOULD BE STRONGLY CRITICAL
AND EFFECTIVENESS QUESTIONABLE, AND BROADER ATTACKS
ON OR MINING OF HAIPHONG HARBOR TOO RISKY IN TERMS
RUSSIAN AND CHINESE REACTION.

3. SEVERAL MINISTERS EXPRESSED NEED FOR GREATER
EFFORTS IN PROPAGANDA AND PSYCHOLOGICAL AREA.

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MCMAHON STATED AUSTRALIAN PRESS HAD BEEN VERY CRITICAL
OF ALLIED WAR EFFORT IN RECENT WEEKS WHICH, IF CONTINUED,
COULD WEAKEN AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SUPPORT. HOLT SAID
PROPAGANDA INITIATIVE SEEMS TO BE ON OTHER SIDE AND
STRESSED NEED TO INTENSIFY ALLIED EFFORTS. HE THOUGHT
PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT GET MORE ACTIVE AND VOCAL
SUPPORT FROM ACADEMIC, BUSINESS AND OTHER OPINION
FORMING GROUPS. HE ALSO THOUGHT IMPORTANT TRY GET
PRESS TO LOOK AT PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SEA
AS A WHOLE RATHER THAN FOCUSING ATTENTION SOLELY ON
VIETNAM.

COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE SOUVANNA PHOUMA, SEVERAL GOA
MINISTERS SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY INCREASING EFFORTS
INTERDICT TROOP AND SUPPLY MOVEMENTS IN LAOS. THIS
MATTER, HOWEVER, WAS NOT PRESSED.

5.

1.3 (a)(3)

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1.3 (a)(3)

6. HOLT SAID SECOND SUMMIT MEETING DESIRABLE, BUT APPRECIATED ADVISABILITY DEFER UNTIL AFTER FORTHCOMING VIET-NAM ELECTIONS. SENATE ELECTIONS IN AUSTRALIA IN DECEMBER MAY AFFECT GOA VIEWS ON TIMING OF SUMMIT MEETING, BUT THIS NOT PRESSED. HOLT FAVORS VENUE NEXT MEETING IN ASIAN CAPITAL, PREFERABLY BANGKOK OR SEOUL. SEEMED TO LEAN IN FAVOR OF BANGKOK. SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY CANBERRA SITE FOR THIRD MEETING.

7. HASLUCK SAID

HE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT GOA MAINTAIN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH CAMBODIA. CLIFFORD AGREED THAT THIS RELATIONSHIP WAS USEFUL AND HOPED IT COULD BE MAINTAINED.

1.3 (a)(3)

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1.3 (a)(3)

HASLUCK SAID DURABILITY OF PEACE IN SEA, WHEN ACHIEVED, WILL DEPEND TO MAJOR DEGREE ON ATTITUDES OF CHINA AND SOVIET UNION. KEY TO FUTURE IN AREA, HE SAID, COULD BE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN US AND SOVIETS. THIS SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND IN PROSECUTION OF WAR AND PEACE SETTLEMENT.

9. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION OF NEED INTENSIFY ALLIED MILITARY EFFORT IN VIETNAM, HOLT MENTIONED SEVERAL FACTORS WHICH HE SAID MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN REGARD GOA CONTRIBUTION. BRITISH DECISION TO PULL OUT OF MALAYSIA/ SINGAPORE FORCES AUSTRALIA TO RECONSIDER ITS ROLE IN THAT AREA. THIS IS CRUCIAL QUESTION FOR AUSTRALIA AND GOA WOULD WELCOME CONSULTATION WITH USG ON THIS MATTER. HE ASKED, QUOTE WHERE AND HOW CAN AUSTRALIA MAKE ITS GREATEST CONTRIBUTION TO AREA? UNQUOTE. IN ADDITION, HE MENTIONED HIGH LEVEL PRESENT DEFENSE EXPENDITURES (ABOUT 4.6 PERCENT OF GNP), BALANCE OF PAYMENTS IMPACT OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES

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IN ACE OF OVERALL B/P DEFICIT, HIGH AND INCREASING
AID COMMITMENTS (APPROACHING 0.8 PERCENT OF GNP),
AND NEED TO MAINTAIN HIGH LEVEL DOMESTIC
INVESTMENT AS FACTORS WHICH TEND TO LIMIT AUSTRALIA'S
MILITARY CAPABILITY. HOLT SAID HE DID NOT ENUMERATE
THESE CONSIDERATIONS AS ARGUMENTS AGAINST DOING
MORE IN VIET-NAM, BUT AS FACTORS WHICH GOA AND USG
MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN ASSESSING FEASIBILITY AND
DESIRABILITY OF INCREASING AUSTRALIAN COMMITMENT.
10. CLIFFORD SAID WANTED MAKE IT CLEAR THAT MORE
AUSTRALIAN TROOPS FOR VIET-NAM WAS DECISION SOLELY
FOR GOA. BUT HE STRESSED FACT THAT IF NATIONS CLOSER
TO AREA OF CONFLICT THAN US WERE ABLE TO DO MORE NOW,
US WOULD BE ABLE MAKE SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER
CONTRIBUTION. HOLT SAID GOA FULLY RECOGNIZED INTER-
RELATIONSHIP OF GOA CONTRIBUTION TO VIET-NAM TO US
ABILITY JUSTIFY ITS OWN EFFORT. HOLT SAID HE WOULD
LAY ENTIRE MATTER BEFORE FULL CABINET AT EARLIEST
OPPORTUNITY. NO COMMITMENTS WERE MADE, BUT HE WAS
CLEARLY APPRECIATIVE OF VISIT AND FRANK EXCHANGE OF
VIEWS AND INDICATED HIS DESIRE TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE.
HOLT STATED AFTER MEETING THAT HE WAS DEEPLY
GRATEFUL TO PRESIDENT FOR SENDING MISSION
AND THAT HE CONSIDERED THE BRIEFING THE FULLEST AND
MOST SATISFACTORY UNDERSTANDING OF THE VIET-NAM WAR THAT HAD
BEEN GIVEN TO HIM AND GOA. I ALSO AM COMPLETELY PLEASED
WITH VISIT.
EXEMPT. CLARK

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