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Thursday, August 10, 1967
4:15 p. m.

Pres. file

Mr. President:

Herewith Andy's account of his
conversation with Gen. Eisenhower
on your three points.

W. W. Rostow

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WWRostow:rlm

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By *Ag*, NARA, Date 7-23-91

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

10 August 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Attached is my memo for record of a meeting I had with General Eisenhower at Walter Reed Hospital yesterday. I covered the three points about which Mr. Rostow had spoken to me -- the possible trade of bombing cessation in the North for cessation of Soviet military supplies to North Vietnam; the Middle East desalinization proposal; and the state and progress of the Vietnamese war, which does not constitute "stalemate".


A. J. GOODPASTER
Lieutenant General, USA

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Authority per declassification 2 attached
By 12/1/81, NARA, Date 8-26-91

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 94-190
By CG, NARA, Date 4-3-95

10 August 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Eisenhower, 9 August 1967

I met with General Eisenhower for about three-quarters of an hour at Walter Reed Hospital in the late morning of 9 August. The purpose was to cover with him three topics which Mr. Rostow had asked me to bring to his attention. I had briefly met with General Eisenhower on the afternoon of 6 August, and had given him a brief report on the situation in Vietnam.

On 9 August I began the discussion by reporting the activity within the government relating to his recommendation to examine the possibility of "trading" a cessation of bombing of North Vietnam (or the northern part thereof) for a cessation by the USSR of in-shipments of military material to the North Vietnamese. I drew upon the CIA assessment of a postulated agreement between the US and USSR on this matter, noting in particular the conclusion that the Soviets would be unlikely to agree without the prior agreement of the North Vietnamese and that the North Vietnamese would be likely to refuse to agree. I told him that the matter has been receiving consideration by an interdepartmental group at undersecretary level, and that Secretary Rusk is pondering the matter as stated to me by Mr. Rostow. I also reported that the US has put to the Soviets the following question: You say that if the US stops its bombing of the North, there would be talks; you also say that you can't get Hanoi to make a compensatory escalation; we would like to know what you, the Russians, would be willing to do as a compensatory action. I told him Mr. Rostow had informed me that the US is still waiting to see what the Russians give as an answer, and that we have jogged them once or twice for an answer.

I added that the current governmental thinking is that the proposition advanced by General Eisenhower would only work if the North Vietnamese want to end the war. In such case, it would have some face-saving value for them. At the same time it would meet the requirements stated by the President for some de-escalation from the other side. I further reported Mr. Rostow's feeling that

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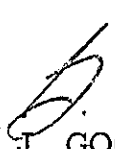
this proposition may well prove to be worth a trial. We do, however, have to think out where the US would find itself if the Soviets were to accept, and then cheat on the agreement. Specifically, how could the President go about justifying resumption of bombing in such a case? Finally, as suggested by Mr. Rostow, I told General Eisenhower that there had been no decision in the matter, that the government is working hard on it, that it fits very well into other actions (such as the question posed to the Russians) and that there is great interest in it. I told General Eisenhower that if he had any further thoughts, now or later, the government would be interested in hearing them. He indicated he had nothing further to suggest at this time. He found particularly interesting the information in the CIA report that only a very small part of the material being utilized by the communists in South Vietnam is of Russian origin, and that the bulk (small arms, mortars and ammunition, as well as radios) comes from China. This would suggest that even if Russian supplies were halted (and bombing of the North stopped) the combat in the South could continue, including the battle with US forces. Some reduction of flow could, of course, be accomplished by continuing the air attack against the North Vietnamese panhandle.

I next took up the status of the Middle East desalinization proposal. Here too the government is pushing ahead. They now have the memo by Admiral Strauss and are studying it. In addition, they are working with the World Bank. Ambassador Woodward of State is heading up activity in the government on "water for peace". The World Bank is actively studying the matter, and George Woods is looking into three possibilities -- the Jordan Valley; the Tigris-Euphrates; and Libya. I told General Eisenhower that the government sees this as a 10 to 12-year project. He commented that it would of course proceed by phases, with early installations operating well before that time, and I told him that this is the way government officials see the matter too. I added that no one can now foresee a use for all the power that would be generated, and he said this observation agreed with his own understanding. I told him Mr. Rostow had referred to the possibility of using power to produce chemical fertilizers and aluminum, and General Eisenhower said this was his understanding of the possibilities together with light manufactures as well. Finally I told him Mr. Rostow had said that diplomacy is moving slowly since great care and patience must be exercised with the Arabs, but that in the meantime a lot of quiet staff work is going on. General Eisenhower said it was his understanding that there is a good possibility that this whole proposition could be financially self-supporting within a relatively short time.

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I then took up the third point raised by Mr. Rostow -- the "stalemate" theme that is beginning to appear in connection with the war in Vietnam. I told him that I felt that this is not a valid or useful concept and that, as Mr. Rostow had stated to me, although progress is painfully slow, the situation is moving favorably. I used the main points of General Momyer's briefing of 8 July together with a series of charts given me by Mr. Rostow. I went through the Momyer briefing in some detail, covering the new flak suppression weapon, the introduction of a countermeasure Pod, the new tactics it has been possible to utilize, and the resulting reduction in attrition rates. I also noted the destruction, for practical purposes, of the North Vietnam Air Force at this time, and the readiness to destroy it again. General Eisenhower was keenly interested. He was especially interested in the mutually reinforcing effects of reduction of anti-air effectiveness, greater weight of effort against military and transportation targets reducing availability of ammunition, resulting further reduction of anti-air defenses, and further increase in destructive impact on lines of communication. He recalled from his own experience the appearance of such mutually reinforcing effects in Europe when the tempo and systems coverage of the bombing campaign were brought to the proper level. He indicated that this thought underlies much of his concern about a policy of "gradualism". On Mr. Rostow's charts he was interested in the level-off of VC/NVA strength since mid-'66, the generally rising ratio of VC/NVA KIA to friendly forces KIA, the generally rising trend of Chieu Hoi defectors and the sharply rising trend since 1965 of VC/NVA weapons lost to ARVN weapons lost. I also told him there is evidence -- for example in the defection and testimony of a VC colonel -- that the VC are encountering great manpower difficulties in trying to keep up the strength of their units. General Eisenhower said he agreed that the term "stalemate" is not a valid one to cover the present trend and situation of the war.


A. J. GOODPASTER
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army

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