

Wednesday, September 6, 1967

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: WALT ROSTOW

*sent to Rusk
via wire*

Free file

We have a report from Vientiane in which David Schoenbrun reports on his talk a few days ago with North Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong.

Schoenbrun is totally unsympathetic to our policy in Viet-Nam, thinks we should stop bombing and get out. It is impossible to know how much his own attitude colors his reporting.

In any case, he reports no give whatsoever in Pham Van Dong's expressed views. Regarding peace talks, he said that if we stopped bombing unconditionally and refrained from other acts of war, talks would come about rapidly. Such talks must be with the Liberation Front. The only thing to negotiate was U.S. withdrawal from the South. There would be quote no reciprocity, no bargaining, no blackmail, no ransom paid to pirates. unquote

We would have to accept the Front's Four Points and its new program calling for new elections in the South and a new government that would quote negotiate the terms of reunification with the north unquote.

Dong was opposed to any secret talks but this element was deleted from the version approved for publication. Schoenbrun pictured Dong as distrustful of the U.S. and of secret negotiations. Dong was more rigid and tougher than Ho but latter remained in control.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-364

By 48, NARA, Date 6-23-95

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