

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

~~SECRET/EXDTS~~

August 30, 1967

MEMORANDUM TO: EUR - Mr. Leddy

FROM: H - William B. Macomber, Jr.

This morning Senator John Sherman Cooper called me to say he had been invited to have lunch today with the Charge d'Affaires of the Soviet Embassy. He indicated that the purpose of his call was to notify me of his prospective luncheon, and said that he would make available to the Department a report on what was said.

Immediately following the luncheon, Senator Cooper dictated, and transmitted to me, the attached.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-365

By 60, NARA, Date 12-15-94

cc: Office of Security
Attention: Mr. Muhonen

H:WBMacomber, Jr:jac:rfs

~~SECRET/EXDTS~~

To: August 30, 1967, I talked with *Tcherebin* 852
Charge d'Affaires of the Russian Embassy at the Embassy. On Friday, August 25th, he had called my office and asked me to have lunch with him. I had met him briefly at my house in Washington, where he had come with Mr. Theodore Weintal, but I did not talk to him on that day about any political matters. I was at the Russian Embassy from 1:00 o'clock to 2:15 PM.

He opened the conversation by saying that he had recently returned from Moscow, where he had gone on leave for approximately 30 days. He said it had not been a vacation, because he had worked at the foreign office every day and had spent the evenings, when not at the foreign office, talking to private citizens, officials, and "statesmen", that he had little time for his family, and had come back to Washington quite tired. He went on to say that the dominant theme in his conversations with the above groups had, at their initiative, been the war in Vietnam; that the Russian people do not want war, remembering the scars of World War II; and now, as Russia was showing improvement in economic field, in education, in science, etc., war was even more feared.

gm He said that he was Chargé at the time of the Middle East crisis and that he knew of the care and precision which the U.S.S.R. had communicated and worked to avoid any engagement in the crisis. In response to my question that did not that experience indicate clearly that the United States desired to make no war against the Soviet Union, and that was the President's position, he answered in the affirmative. But he went on to say that there is always a possibility that a mistake or events that could cause misunderstanding could create dangerous situations. *and the President*

gm Vietnam, he noted, was such a dangerous situation. He said if the bombing of North Vietnam were ended that dangers between the Soviet Union and the United States would be avoided and many things would fall in place. I make it clear that he did not say, and I did not ask him, if the Soviet Union would go to war over Vietnam. I asked him that in the case that the United States should cease bombing of North Vietnam, would it lead to negotiations. His answer was that he felt sure that the cessation of bombing would have led to negotiations some months ago, but that North Vietnam had hardened its position and he could not say. I asked him then if the submission of the matter of Vietnam to the United Nations would lead to negotiations, or would it lead to the reconvening of the Geneva Conference. He said that he did not believe so because the war was an internal matter in Vietnam and he did not think an international matter could solve it. *and*

gm I then said to him that what he was proposing was that the United States cease bombing and without any assurance that North Vietnam would negotiate, or that the United Nations or the Security Council would assume jurisdiction and try to settle the war. I said also that we were supplying the South Vietnamese and I assume the Soviet Union would continue to supply the Vietcong. He responded by saying that the Soviet Union had not provided supplies to the Vietcong, except small rifles and machine guns; that its supply of sophisticated weapons had been to North Vietnam, a socialist ally to whom it was committed and a country whose territory was under attack by the United States. He said that in the event the United States ceased bombing of North Vietnam there would be no necessity for the Soviet Union to provide supplies to the North Vietnamese, and that the supplies to the Vietcong were at a minimum. He thought in such a situation fighting would go on in South Vietnam, but it would eventually dry up.

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By *mg*, NARA, Date 12-15-94

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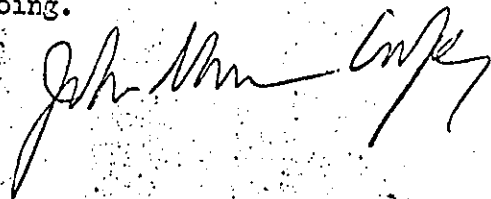
To April Day / Note the minimum 3-105

I asked him if he believed Communist China would intervene in the war. He said that Communist China had large influence in North Vietnam, but he could not say whether or not it would intervene, but again the bombing created danger. He said that while the Soviet Union did not know exactly what was going on in Communist China, its estimate was as follows:

Mao and his associates, while great revolutionaries, could not succeed in the economic development of China; there is a younger group Chinese, many of whom have been educated in Russia, who are able economists, and scientists, and who could lead in the development of China; Mao and his associated were unwilling to yield to this group and that the struggle might go on for years.

I asked him if there was any opinion in Russia that China might attack Russia. He at first said no, but then said there was danger of trouble along Russia's eastern border with China. He said the Chinese would like nothing better than to provoke a war between the United States and Russia, and he did not believe that the United States was sufficiently aware of the possibility of such provocation by China. He noted that a Chinese submarine might sink an American vessel simply to provoke a war. He further stated that he did not believe the United States government was sufficiently aware of the danger of irresponsible use by the Chinese of nuclear weapons it has developed.

In summary, it is my opinion that his chief concern about the war in Vietnam was that it might in some way engage the Soviet Union with the United States, and that it was the bombing that caused this danger. He was very open throughout our talk, but I said nothing to him that I have not noted in this statement. Before going to the Soviet Union Embassy I called Assistant Secretary of State Macomber and told him of my proposed visit and that I would report my conversation, which I am doing.



JSC:mk
August 30, 1967