

21

Thursday, Sept. 21, 1967
5:30 p. m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

Here is the latest from Paris. No movement,
but the line is still open.

W. W. R.

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ attachment (Paris 3803)

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

21a

#3

~~TOP SECRET~~

Action

52810
SEPTEMBER 21, 1967
2:53 P.M.

Z 211740Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 5712
STATE GRNC
BT

In.c

~~TOP SECRET~~ PARIS 3803

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-363

By ig, NARA, Date 1-13-95

NO DIS/PENNSYLVANIA

FROM KISSINGER

A & M SAW BO FOR NOE AND A HLF HOURS AT NOON TODAY. AFTER A FEW MINUTES OF PERSONAL CONVERSATION, M READ TO BO THE TEXT OF MY MESSAGE REPORTED IN PARIS 3765. BO ASKED FOR M'S NOTES AND M. HANDED THEM TO HIM. BO PROMISED TO RETURN THEM TOMORROW. BO THEN ASKED WHETHER THE WORDS WERE MINE OR M'S INTERPRETATION OF MY REMARKS. M REPLIED THAT THEY HAD BEEN AGREED WITH ME. BO THEN REPLIED (THE NOTES WERE A'S): "THIS CHANNEL IS VERY CONVENIENT FOR US. IF I HAVE A REPLY BEFORE SATURDAY EVENING, I SHALL CALL YOU (M). I SHALL ALSO BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU AFTERWARDS AS SOON AS I HEAR SOMETHING. BUT YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE MOOD HANOI AS EXPRESSED IN OUR FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 19." BO THEN MENTIONED BOMBARDMENT OF HAIPHONG AND VINH BUT WITHOUT REAL CONVICTION AND ONLY VERY BRIEFLY.

M. THEN URGED BO TO SEE ME OR AT LEAST TO SEND BACK A "MILD" REPLY. A & M COULD VOUCH FOR ME. TO AMERICANS PERSONAL CONTACT WAS IMPORTANT. THOSE INTERESTED IN PEACE ON THE AMERICAN SIDE MUST BE GIVEN SOME SIG OF A RECIPROCAL ATTITUDE FROM HANOI. BO REPLIED THAT HE COULD SEE PRIVATE AMERICANS AT HIS DISCRETION. FOR EXAMPLE HE HAD RECEIVED DAVID SCHOENBRUN AND WAS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIM THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE CATHOLICS WERE ENTIRELY RECONCILED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DRV. BUT HE COULD NOT SEE ANY AMERICAN WHO SPOKE FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OR REPORTED DIRECTLY TO THEM WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION AND HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED IT. (NOTE: FOR WHATEVER IT IS WORTH, A. HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT BO REQUESTED THIS AUTHORIZATION.) M. ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE ASKED WHETHER BO WOULD FIND IT EASIER TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE LIKE DOTY (FROM THE U.S. PUGWASH GROUP) WHO COULD THEN REPORT TO ME OR TO WASHINGTON. BO REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD NOT CURE THE BASIC DIFFICULTY THAT HANOI IS RELUCTANT TO TALK UNDER DURESS WITH ANY OFFICIALLY CONNECTED AMERICAN. "THE AMERICANS ARE PLAYING A DOUBLE GAME. ON THE ONE HAND THEY ARE OFFERING US PEACE; ON THE OTHER THEY INCREASE THEIR BOMBING." AT THE SAME TIME HE REPEATED HIS DESIRE TO KEEP THE CHANNEL OPEN. "I WILL ACCEPT A COMMUNICATION AT ANY TIME. I WILL BE IN TOUCH AS SOON AS I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY."

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-2- PARIS 3803, SEPTEMBER 21

M. ASKED WHETHER THE CHANNEL WAS STILL USEFUL. BO REPLIED: "DO NOT WORRY (NE VOUS EN FAITES PAS). IF WE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT WE DO NOT WISH TO COMMUNICATE VIA KISSINGER WE SHALL TELL YOU. (SI JAMAIS NOUS PENSONS QUE NOUS NE VOULONS PAS COMMUNIQUER PAR KISSINGER NOUS VOUS LE DIRONS.) IF WE EVER THINK THAT YOU SHOULD NO LONGER CONTINUE, WE SHALL TELL YOU WITHOUT HESITATION. (SI JAMAIS NOUS PENSONS QUE VOUS MEMES NE DEVEZ PAS CONTINUER, NOUS VOUS DIRONS SANS HESITER.) BUT WE WANT YOU AND KISSINGER TO CONTINUE."

M. NEXT RAISED THE ISSUE OF REPORTING TO THE ELYSEE. HE SHOWED BO HIS DRAFT REPORT (SENT BY SEPTTEL) AND INVITED COMMENTS. HE TOLD HIM OF MY DESIRE TO DELETE THE TEXT OF THE MESSAGES. BO AGREED. BO'S ONLY SUGGESTION WAS TO GIVE THE TITLES OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE JUNE 16-18 PUGWASH MEETING WHERE THE IDEA OF THE HANOI TRIP ORIGINATED. HE SAID THAT IF THE REPORT IS GIVEN TO THE ELYSEE, IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR THAT IT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT HIS INSTIGATION OR REQUEST.

CONCLUSIONS: (1) HANOI HAS HAD OUR ORIGINAL PROPOSAL FOR AT LEAST TWENTY FIVE DAYS AND MESSAGE OF SEPTEMBER 13 FOR SIX DAYS. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE NEXT MOVE IS CLEARLY UP TO THEM. IF THE CHANNEL IS IMPORTANT TO THEM, IT IS UP TO THEM TO PUT SOMETHING INTO IT. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT I TELL M WHEN I NEXT SEE HIM AT 14:30 TOMORROW THAT HE SHOULD TELL BO THAT WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR AN ANSWER FROM HANOI. UNTIL IT COME WE HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO SAY.

(2) A BELIEVES THAT FOR HANOI THE DECISION TO INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS MARKS A POINT OF NO RETURN AND THAT THEY MAY NOT BE FREE TO DO AS THEY WISH. EVEN IF THIS CORRECT, MY INSTINCT WOULD BE THAT THESE ARE DIFFICULTIES FOR HANOI TO OVERCOME.

(3) WITH RESPECT TO EXISTING RESTRAINTS, I WOULD RECOMMEND MAINTAINING THEM FOR SOME TIME LONGER TO GIVE HANOI A CHANCE TO REPLY OR AT LEAST TO PREVENT THEM FROM BLAMING THEIR REFUSAL ON U.S. ESCALATION.

GP-1. BOHLEN
BT

~~TOP SECRET~~

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