

TOP SECRET--PENNSYLVANIA

Friday, October 20, 1967
10:50 a.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith Kissinger does his initial job; but he's got a problem with the optimism of the two amateurs M and A.

Pres. file

W. W. Rostow

Paris 5472

TOP SECRET--PENNSYLVANIA

WWRostow:rln

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By kg, NARA, Date 11-4-91

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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NODIS/PENNSYLVANIA

FROM KISSINGER

CN-4438

Oct 20, 1967, 7:20 a.m.
1967

M. MET ME AT THE AIRPORT IN A STATE OF ADVANCED EUPHORIA. ACCORDING TO HIM, THE LAST MESSAGE FROM BO MADE ALL THE FRUSTRATIONS WORTHWHILE. WHEN I ASKED HIM FOR THE CAUSE OF HIS OPTIMISM, HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ESCALATION AND BOMBING AND THE CHANGE OF TENSE IN THE LAST SENTENCE. I QUICKLY DISILLUSIONED HIM. I SAID THAT THE ISSUE WAS REALLY QUITE SIMPLE. IF HANOI WANTED TO NEGOTIATE IT SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND SOME WAY OF EXPRESSING THIS FACT BY MEANS OTHER THAN SUBTLE CHANGES IN TENSE AND ELLIPTICAL REFERENCES FULL OF DOUBLE MEANINGS. WE HAD MADE A CLEAR CUT OFFER, IT HAD HAD NO RESPONSE. WE HAD ACCEPTED UNILATERAL RESTRICTIONS. HANOI HAD INCREASED ITS MILITARY ACTIVITIES INCLUDING AN OFFENSIVE ALONG THE DMZ WHICH COULD IN NO WAY BE JUSTIFIED BY MILITARY NECESSITY. WASHINGTON'S PATIENCE WAS NEARING AN END. M SAID OUR RESTRICTIONS WERE A DIMINUTION OF AN ESCALATION. I REPLIED THAT IF THEY WERE LIFTED, HE WOULD SEE QUICKLY ENOUGH HOW REAL THEY WERE. I REMINDED HIM OF HIS OWN POSITIVE REACTION TO THE MESSAGE OF AUGUST 25. THIS HAD MEANWHILE BEEN CLARIFIED AND FURTHER STRENGTHENED. IT WAS NOW UP TO HANOI TO BE EXPLICIT ENOUGH TO PERMIT A CONVERSATION. M. SAID THAT HANOI BY ITS SILENCE HAD RATIFIED A'S NOTES OF THE CONVERSATION WITH PHAM VAN DONG. I REPLIED THAT NO SERIOUS PERSON COULD EXPECT THE PRESIDENT TO ACT ON THE BASIS OF SUCH CONJECTURES WHILE HUNDREDS OF SHELLS WERE BEING FIRED DAILY BY THE OTHER SIDE ALONG THE DMZ.

M. CLEARLY SHAKEN SAID THAT A WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE HIS PLANS AND RETURN TO PARIS ON THE FIRST AVAILABLE PLANE RATHER THAN FRIDAY AFTERNOON AS HE HAD PLANNED. WE CALLED A. IN ROME. I SPOKE FIRST. A. ALSO IN A EUPHORIC MOOD REPLIED TO MY REQUEST FOR AN EARLY RETURN: "YOU MUST HAVE VERY GOOD NEWS." I TOLD HIM THE OPPOSITE WAS MORE NEARLY THE CASE. I AM LEAVING NOW TO MEET A AT THE AIRPORT WHERE HE, M. AND I PLAN TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION. I SHALL STRESS THE POINTS OF YOUR 56516. I AM CERTAIN THEY WILL WISH TO SEE BO THIS AFTERNOON.

GP-1. BOHLEN

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-449

By lbg, NARA, Date 12-23-54