

~~TOP SECRET/NODIS/PENNSYLVANIA~~

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Pres file

Wednesday, October 18, 1967 -- 4:00 p.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith some Vietnam negotiating items.

1. Henry Kissinger, whose views I summarized yesterday, sets them out on his own.

2. A report (marked on page 2) that Maurer had found the men in Hanoi somewhat more flexible, plus some comments on the Chinese.

3. A Norwegian report that the Yugoslav Foreign Minister believes that Hanoi had decided to await U.S. elections in hope situation would shift favorably for North Vietnam."

Sec. Rusk, Sec. McNamara and I will be meeting with Kissinger tonight. We ought to budget for a meeting with you some time tomorrow morning on:

-- Whether Kissinger should go to Paris this week end.

-- What he should say to M and A, if he goes.

W. W. Rostow

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NEJ 94-452

By 149, NARA, Date 7-17-95

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NEJ 94-452

By ~~48~~, NARA, Date 7-17-95

Memorandum by Mr. Kissinger

The decisions with respect to next moves in the A-M/K channel involve complex considerations in which the balance of judgment is inevitably close. This memo sets out three assumptions for discussion and two policy options. The assumptions are:

(1) The policy of Hanoi reflects the internal stresses of a group of men, largely cut off from world affairs, to whom the decision to enter discussions with the US has overriding importance for the future of their country. We have some evidence of differing views on their part this key issue. Hanoi's situation is complicated by an extremely complex external situation. As a result what appears to the outsider as deliberate delay may in reality reflect uneasy navigating between Peking and Moscow, coupled with uncertainty about internal cohesion under the stress of negotiations (especially as Peking disapproves) and deep distrust of the United States. The prospect of talks thus confronts Hanoi with a dilemma which can be resolved only by a set of compromises between individuals jockeying for political survival.

(2) Whatever the ultimate decision, Hanoi's course is likely to be tortuous and complicated rather than clear cut; groping rather than definite with efforts made to keep open as many escape hatches as possible.

(3) - Whatever our reading of Hanoi's intention, the minimum US interest with respect to the present channel should be to demonstrate that we have gone to the limit in testing Hanoi's willingness to negotiate -- especially if this can be done without paying an appreciable price.

It is the purpose of this memo to argue (1) that the last communication from Hanoi contains among the usual intransigent formulations sufficient positive elements to raise doubts about breaking the channel now by refusal to answer the communication and an immediate resumption of full scale activities; (2) that even should we decide to end the channel, it would be wiser to give Hanoi a reasonable time to react to notification of this fact before we terminate current restrictions.

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The following positive aspects can be found in the October 17 note on the assumption that it was carefully drafted: The first paragraph spoke of what Hanoi would not do under conditions of escalation, i.e., talk to me or comment on our proposals. For the first time in a written message from the DRV, the implication seems clear that it is US escalation, not the bombing itself, that rules out such talks and comments.

The last paragraph states the usual pre-condition of stopping bombing for talks but adds for the first time that if the United States ends its bombing talks can (not could; peuvent, not pourraient) take place.

If this interpretation is deliberate, and Bo has appeared to convey messages only when he has instructions, the intransigent phrases in this latest message may reflect Hanoi's fear caused by weakness of seeming to ask for a bombing pause.

Two options present themselves, both involving a formal reply:

Option 1

A message which contains the following element:

- (a) we interpret the communication from Hanoi in the above affirmative sense;
- (b) we notify Hanoi of a further unilateral de-escalation designed to establish a climate for secret preliminary talks which would fix the timing and mode for substantive negotiations;
- (c) we state that during the first preliminary exchange we would advise the DRV of a definite date for a complete cessation; and
- (d) the rest of the message would restate the other essential elements of our proposals.

Option 2

A message containing the following elements:

(a) We sum up in concise and non-argumentative fashion the offers made in this channel: - to end the bombing; to accept unilateral restrictions without time limit; and to set a date for the cessation of the bombing.

(b) We state that the last DRV message appears to us as a flat rejection and an indication of unwillingness to make a commitment to enter discussions, even if the bombing had stopped.

(c) Since we do not want to reach this conclusion lightly the purpose of this communication is to ask Hanoi to confirm our interpretation or to tell us where it is mistaken.

(d) We would affirm that the US offers remain open. We should wait ten days (the average turn-around time) before resuming activities. To avoid the charge of an ultimatum this time limit would not be part of the record but it would be communicated in approximate terms orally to M and A as my impression of Washington's mood.

Option 1 involves risks of domestic debate and of leading to another set of delays. The latter danger could be minimized by a personal word to A and M of growing US impatience. It has the following advantages: (a) it would offer Hanoi cessation and discussions under the most tempting and face-saving circumstances; (b) if a pause is apt to be tried in the next 3 or 4 months, it would be desirable to approach it with an existing, operating channel to Hanoi and an established diplomatic framework. If rejected and publicized, such a move might tend to quiet for a while the clamor for a pause, at least among more responsible elements.

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Option 2 seems to me the minimum notification needed to avoid charges of duplicity, whatever our reading of Hanoi's intention. To close the channel abruptly after receipt of a DRV message that contains some movement and follow it immediately with a removal of restrictions would in all likelihood trigger A and M into a public declaration against us; it will give color to the option that Hanoi was not given a sufficient opportunity to consider our final position or that we failed to respond to a conciliatory change in phraseology on their part. Option 2 would be accomplished by a grave warning by me to A and M of Washington's growing impatience. The marginal cause of a delay of ten days does not seem to me to outweigh its benefits.

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NEJ 94-449

By 48, NARA, Date 12-23-94

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1617
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 300
USMISSION USUN 063
AMEMBASSY PARIS 277
AMEMBASSY LONDON 239
AMCONSUL HONG KONG 074
AMEMBASSY SAIGON 062

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LIMDIS

SUBJECT: MAURER'S TRIP TO HANOI

1. AT CLOSE RECEPTION FOR INDIRA CHANDI OCTOBER 16, FRENCH
AMBASSADOR PONS HAD THREE MINUTE CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER
MAURER ON SUBJECT LATTER'S RECENT RIP TO FAR EAST WHICH PONS

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RELATED TO ME THIS MORNING.

2. MAURER SAW KOSYGIN ENROUTE TO PEKING-HANOI FOR APPROXIMATELY
TWO HOURS CONVERSATION AND ALSO STOPPED OVER BRIEFLY UPON HIS
RETURN THOUGH HE DID NOT MENTION WHOM HE SAW ON THIS OCCASION.
HE REVEALED NOTHING OF HIS MOSCOW TALKS.

3. MAURER SAW CHOU EN-LAI BOTH ENROUTE AND ON RETURN JOURNEY
SAYING THAT A TECHNICAL STOP-OVER OF TWO HOURS ON

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OCTOBER 1 BROUGHT CHOU TO AIRFIELD WHERE THEY LUNCED TOGETHER AND HAD GOOD TALK. PONS COMMENTED MAURER OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH THIS GESTURE ON CHINESE NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND HAD ASKED PONS WHAT COULD HE EXPECT IF HE ARRIVED AT PARIS ON JULY 14 -- "POMPIDOU?"

4. PONS, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM FRENCH MISSION IN HANOI REPORTING VIETNAMESE HAD TAKEN VERY TOUGH LINE WITH MAURER ON THEIR DETERMINATION TO PERSEVERE IN THE WAR, THEN ASKED MAURER, IF HE HAD FOUND VIETNAMESE AS "HARD" THIS TIME AS ON OCCASION HIS LAST VISIT APPROXIMATELY YEAR

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AGO. MAURER'S IMMEDIATE REPLY WAS: "NOT AT ALL" AND REMARKED WITHOUT AMPLIFICATION THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT IF AMERICANS STOPPED THE BOMBING "SOMETHING COULD BE ARRANGED." PONS COMMENTED TO ME MAURER HAD NOT USED WORD NEGOTIATIONS AND THERE WAS NOT OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF WHAT MAURER MEANT BY PHRASE HE USED.

5. PONS ALSO ASKED MAURER WHETHER HE THOUGHT CHINESE WERE OPPOSED TO SETTLEMENT VIETNAM WAR TO WHICH MAURER REPLIED THEY WERE IN SUCH AN INTERNAL MESS WITH CULTURAL REVOLUTION THAT HE HAD IMPRESSION THEY WOULD NOT BE OPPOSED TO NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

6. PONS RELATED MAURER IN CONCLUSION HAD SAID HE WAS TELLING HIM THESE THINGS, WHICH HE HAD NOT EVEN TOLD AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, IN CONFIDENCE AS HE KNEW PONS WAS DISCREET DIPLOMAT.

7. ON ANOTHER SUBJECT PONS REFERRED TO POSITION OF SHELEPIN IN KREMLIN HIERARCHY. MAURER AGREED WITH PONS' OBSERVATION THAT SHELEPIN STILL HAD PROMISING FUTURE COMMENTING, "HE

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IS NOT AS STUPID AS THE OTHERS." PONS DEDUCES FROM THIS THAT MAURER'S TALKS WITH KOSYGIN AND OTHERS IN MOSCOW MAY NOT

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HAVE GONE WELL.

8. ONLY OTHER INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED COMES FROM BRITISH AMBASSADOR WHO SAW MAURER AT AIRPORT EVENING OCTOBER 14 WHILE BOTH AWAITING ARRIVAL OF SHAH OF IRAN'S BROTHER. WHEN CHADWICK ASKED MAURER IF HE HAD FOUND SITUATION IN FAR EAST MORE TRANQUIL THAN IN JULY, MAURER COMMENTED HE WAS OPTIMISTIC ON SOLUTION FOR VIETNAM WAR.

9. COMMENT: PONS' OPPORTUNITY TO CONVERSE WITH MAURER WAS SO LIMITED THAT INFORMATION REVEALED OBVIOUSLY MEAGER. I HAVE DELIBERATELY REFRAINED FROM REQUESTING APPOINTMENT WITH MAURER TO AVOID POSSIBILITY OF EMBARRASSMENT EITHER SIDE THOUGH I HAD SOUGHT OPPORTUNITY (WHICH NEVER AROSE) LAST EVENING TO SEEK OUT ACTING FOMIN MACOVESCU TO SAY (MAKING CLEAR I WAS SPEAKING WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS AND PURELY ON PERSONAL BASIS) THAT IF MAURER WISHED TO TELL ME ANYTHING OF HIS RECENT RIP, I WAS CERTAIN MY GOVERNMENT WOULD APPRECIATE

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INFORMATION. I STILL INTEND MAKE SUCH INFORMAL APPROACH
MACOVESCU WHENEVER THERE MAY BE SUITABLE OCCASION.
GP-3 DAVIS

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By 100, NARA, Date 12-23-94

REF: OSLO 1567 AND 1597

1. FONMIN POL DIRECTOR ANSTEENSEN HANDED ME OCT 18 TRANSLATION OF MESSAGE SENT FROM PEKING OCT 16 BY AMB ALGARD. ALGARD IS HERE PRESENTING GLOSS ON CONVERSATION BETWEEN NORWEGIAN CHARGE AND LOAN DESCRIBED FIRST REFTEL AND CLARIFYING VERBAL PROBLEM ALREADY SIGNALLED. DEPT WILL ALSO NOTE THAT QUOTE ALL PARTIES UNQUOTE HAS NOW BECOME QUOTE BOTH PARTIES UNQUOTE, PRESUMABLY MEANING NORWEGIANS AND NVN REP.

2. BEGIN MSG: AMB NGO USED THE EXPRESSION QUOTE INSECURE TO BOTH PARTIES UNQUOTE REGARDING A CONTINUATION OF EXCHANGE OF VIEWS IN PEKING. THE REFERENCE TO THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WAS CLEARLY INTENDED TO GIVE A HINT TO ALTERNATIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR CONTACT.

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THE GENERAL TENOR OF AMB NGO'S STATEMENT GAVE THE IMPRESSION, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT HANOI FOR THE TIME BEING IS NOT RPT NOT VERY INTERESTED IN MAKING CONTACT. END MSG.

3. LONGER REPORT RE LOAN-CHARGE CONVERSATION NOT RPT NOT YET RECEIVED OWING COURIER DELAY BUT FONOFF ANTICIPATES IT SHOULD LEAVE PEKING OCT 20.

4. ANSTEENSEN SAID FONMIN LYNG HAD ALSO ASKED HIM TO GIVE ME SUBSTANCE HIS CONVERSATION YUGO FONMIN NIKEZIC AT NEW YORK OCT 6. NIKEZIC SAID YUGOSLAWS HAD HAD SOME CONTACTS WITH HANOI BUT WITHOUT SPECIFYING WHEN. HE TOLD LYNG TANJUG JOURNALIST HAD RECENTLY FAILED RECEIVE PERMISSION VISIT HANOI ON GROUNDS NVN COULD NOT RPT NOT BE RESPONSIBLE HIS SAFETY. NIKEZIC ALSO

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-2- OSLO 1739, OCTOBER 18

SAID HANOI HAD ESTABLISHED PATTERN OF ESTABLISHING INFORMAL
CONTACTS WITH VARIOUS COUNTRIES, MAINTAINING THEM FOR
SOME TIME, AND THEN FADING OUT. YUGO FONMIN'S HYPOTHESIS
WAS THAT DRVN BELIEVES IF IT ACCEPTED NEGOTIATIONS NOW, IT
WOULD BE ASKED TO OFFER CONCESSIONS SO LARGE THAT NET RESULT OF
TALKS WOULD BE POOR. SUFFERINGS NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD EXPOSED
THEMSELVES TO WOULD THEN BE PROVEN VAIN. NIKEZIC BELIEVED HANOI
HAD DECIDED TO AWAIT US ELECTIONS IN HOPE SITUATION WOULD SHIFT
FAVORABLY FOR NVN.

GP-1. BOVEY

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