

INFORMATION

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Friday, November 10, 1967
9:45 a.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith Andy's report of the
recent briefing by Gen. Eisenhower
by Sec. McNamara and Gen. Wheeler.

W. W. Rostow

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)

White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983

By kg, NARA, Date 11-21-91

WWRostow:rla




DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

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9 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I attach a memorandum reporting on the meeting of Secretary McNamara, General Wheeler and myself with General Eisenhower today. General Eisenhower's principal comments are contained in the last paragraph. As indicated, I will be furnishing him additional information prior to his TV appearance late this month. (He plans to tape it on 24 November; it will be broadcast on 28 November.)

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as


A. J. GOODPASTER
Lieutenant General, USA



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE **DECLASSIFIED**
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

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9 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Eisenhower, 9 November 1967

Secretary McNamara, General Wheeler and I met with General Eisenhower for an hour and a half in his Gettysburg office this morning. The meeting began at 0830.

I first gave to General Eisenhower a brief memorandum, furnished me by Mr. Bromley Smith, on a question General Eisenhower had phoned me about a few days ago. This related to the reported Soviet offer to accept any necessary inspection if the United States would accept a proposal for disarmament. This was initially made by Mr. Khrushchev in 1960. We and the Russians concluded in mid 1961 that agreement could not be reached, because of disagreement on verification; the Russians wanted to inspect only the disarmament steps taken, whereas we insisted on inspecting the armaments that were left. I also reported further to General Eisenhower on a question he had raised as to whether the Soviets really wanted to see an end to the war in Vietnam. I told him I had discussed the matter further with Mr. Rostow, and also recalled to him that the President had asked me to pass to him just after the Glassboro meeting Mr. Kosygin's statement that he strongly desired an end to the war in Vietnam. I told General Eisenhower that although there are mixed considerations and opinions, the general feeling seems to be that the Soviets would like to see the war end, but feel limited in what they are able to do, because they are sensitive to Chinese attacks upon them within the Communist circle. There is some reason to think that they are genuinely afraid of the possibility of an open confrontation with the United States involving Soviet ships. General Eisenhower said he had thought that there might be some among them who are just as happy to see the United States incurring these losses and heavy costs. Mr. McNamara commented that there may be divided opinion within the Soviet ruling group on this matter, with Mr. Kosygin wishing to see an end to it.

I then gave a brief updating of the Vietnamese war, covering the 3-pronged effort involving the air campaign in the north to cause the NVN to stop or limit their support, control and direction of the

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insurgency in South Vietnam, together with our anti-infiltration operations; the ground-air campaign in South Vietnam to defeat the VC/NVA forces there; and the pacification campaign to assist the South Vietnamese to extend their dominion and control in South Vietnam, and to suppress the guerillas.

On the air campaign in NVN, I reported that the level of effort remains high -- running from 300 to 600 sorties a day, more than half against the fixed target system and somewhat less than half against lines of communication, utilizing armed reconnaissance attacks. We are imposing a high cost as evidenced by some 500,000 laborers in their maintenance and repair force. However, the NVN are using less than 10% of their route capacity in Laos, for reasons we do not know with certainty. It is possible that this is all they wish to do in the face of the losses they would suffer if they tried to increase this figure. During the last TET in February they jumped up to an average of 545 trucks (rather than 25) cited by us each day. In any case, we are imposing heavy costs on them, and would impose higher costs if they increased the flow of men and material. I mentioned as another new point that the bulk of the North Vietnam aircraft are now in China, and that recently they have been having some of their aircraft recover in China after engagements over North Vietnam. General Eisenhower asked whether we are exercising the doctrine of hot pursuit. I told him we were not, and General Wheeler confirmed this. I mentioned a recent Indonesian report which indicates that there are extensive damage and disruption in North Vietnam, that a loss of confidence is now seen among their people, and that there has been great damage along their transportation lines. Also, the number of foreign ships and identified imports last month is well below the average in each of the last three years, and the volume of their exports is the lowest since early 1965. Finally, I showed him a picture of the WALLEYE bomb, which is TV guided. At this point General Wheeler described to General Eisenhower the new targets just added to the bombing campaigns through the President's decision yesterday.

I next told him that our anti-infiltration operations continue with a continuation of armed reconnaissance against routes in Laos and surveillance to block sea traffic. I then described, and there was general discussion in detail concerning, the "barrier" system which is due to begin to become operational next month. I covered the anti-vehicle section in Laos, the anti-personnel section in NVN, Laos and SVN, and the coastal, cleared strip barrier section just south of the DMZ. It was made clear that all of this is regarded as an aid and supplement to our current operations, and in no sense a

substitute or mechanical panacea. General Eisenhower indicated he found the project interesting and militarily sensible.


I next took up the air-ground battle in SVN indicating that the basic casualty trends and ratios continue in our favor. I also pointed out that the main battles seem to be shifting away from the populated coastal plain towards the frontiers, the war zones, the jungle country and the DMZ. I cited the recent battle at Loc Ninh as well as the press report by Mr. Orr Kelly in The Washington Star reporting particularly the views of Generals Brownfield and Palmer. There is some evidence of lessened morale on the Communist side. Captured documents and prisoners indicate they expected to be welcomed as visitors, instead they are losing the people and suffering sickness, lack of food, losses en route and heavy losses in battle. General Bradley states that "We are gaining in the military struggle and in healing the social ills on which the Communists feed."

I next reviewed pacification briefly, indicating that progress is still being made, although slowly, and that the population under GVN control continues to increase. It now comes to 69%, whereas the population under Viet Cong control is down to 16%. I reported in detail on the progress in II Corps. On the other side, more officials and other civilians are now being killed than last year (although less than in 1964 and 1965). I mentioned several political advantages -- inauguration of the government under the new constitution, the lower house elections, the recent strengthened draft decree, the recent trial and conviction for corruption of a province chief, and the check on inflation.

General Wheeler then gave the assessment of the Chiefs -- that we are in fact winning in South Vietnam. Mr. McNamara mentioned a "nibble" we had thought we had received from NVN looking toward negotiations. It has now been broken off by them, however.

General Eisenhower asked a number of questions on which information will be sent to him. He wanted to know how many South Vietnam units are rated as really good outfits, whether economic life is improving in South Vietnam, whether General Westmoreland has the troops that he needs to react quickly and maintain the initiative. He said he is troubled by the sanctuary for NVA artillery north of the DMZ. (We pointed out that the artillery fire has slackened off.) He said he is optimistic that we can win this war. We should give it No. 1 priority. He said he agreed with Mr.

McNamara that we can win this war and solve our social problems at the same time if we manage both efficiently. He plans to plead for a "common sense" approach on the war. He thinks that many of the current charges against it are being made out of confusion and ignorance.


A. J. GOODPASTER
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army