

84

INFORMATION

EYES ONLY

~~SECRET~~/BUTTERCUP

Wednesday, November 8, 1967
9:00 a.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith, for information,
Sec. Rusk's suggestion to Amb. Bunker
that we not name U.S. prisoners, but
let them send out some in poor health.
The reason: U.S. picking some rather
than others by name would involve either
inequity or suggestion of importance of
individuals concerned, which could be
misleading.

W. W. Rostow

~~SECRET~~/EYES ONLY

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-477

By 48, NARA, Date 6-28-95

WWRostow:rla

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FM CIA
TO WHITE HOUSE
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~~SECRET~~ 060119Z VIA CAS CHANNELS CITE CAS WASHINGTON 50294
NODIS BUTTERCUP
FROM SECSTATE

TO AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON
THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVE FOR MR. ROSTOW
SECDEF, EXCLUSIVE FOR SECRETARY McNAMARA
SECSTATE, EXCLUSIVE FOR SECRETARY RUSK
DIRECTOR CIA, EXCLUSIVE FOR MR. HELMS
REF: A. SAI GON 526
B. SAIGON 509
C. CAS/WASHINGTON 49639

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NHJ 94-478

By , NARA, Date 4-3-96

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED IN OUR BUTTERCUP MESSAGES TO YOU,
THEY ARE SUBJECT TO OUR DESIRE TO LEAVE FINAL DECISIONS ON DETAILS
IN YOUR HANDS.

THE FOLLOWING ARE OUR PRESENT SUGGESTIONS:

1. WHILE WE AGREE ON DESIRABILITY OF TRYING TO OBTAIN RELEASE OF
US PWS AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT, WE DO NOT THINK IT ADVISABLE
TO GO BEYOND SUGGESTING THAT US WOULD REGARD IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OF SOME AMERICAN PWS (PARTICULARLY ANY WHO MAY BE IN POOR HEALTH)
AS SIGN OF NLF GOOD FAITH MATCHING OUR GOOD FAITH IN RELEASING
SAU HA AND THOSE CAPTURED THROUGH HIM AND OTHERWISE MEETING
NLF CONDITIONS. WE PREFER TO AVOID NAMING EITHER SPECIFIC IN-
DIVIDUALS OR EXACT NUMBER OF PERSONS WE EXPECT TO BE RELEASED.
2. WE SUGGEST THAT A SENTENCE BE ADDED AT END OF PARAGRAPH
5D OF REF C ON INDICATING THAT US WOULD REGARD IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OF SOME US PRISONERS (PARTICULARLY ANY WHO MAY BE IN POOR HEALTH)
AS APPROPRIATE SIGN OF VC GOOD FAITH. IN ORDER NOT TO DELAY
POSSIBLE RELEASE OF US PWS, THIS GESTURE OF GOOD FAITH SHOULD BE
PUT FORWARD AS SUGGESTION AND NOT AS PRIOR CONDITION. WE SHOULD
STAND ON OFFER CONTAINED IN PARAGRAPH 5D OF REF C.
3. IF WE ARE GOING TO SUGGEST IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF US PRISONERS,
WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD ALSO ADVANCE SOME POSSIBLE MECHANISM WHICH
WOULD AVOID GIVING CLEAR PUBLIC IMPRESSION OF AGREED EXCHANGE.
ONE METHOD MIGHT BE TO HAVE NLF NOTIFY US THAT PWS IN POOR HEALTH
WILL BE IN DESIGNATED AREA AT DESIGNATED TIME FOR EVACUATION BY
US HELICOPTER. THE RELEASE COULD BE PORTRAYED AS HUMANITARIAN
GESTURE.
4. WE ARE CONCERNED OVER POSSIBILITY RAISED IN REF B THAT SAU HA
MAY NOT WANT TO RETURN TO NLF. WHAT IS CAS EVALUATION?
5. WHILE WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD INITIATE FURTHER DISCUSSION
WITH LOAN ABOUT POLITICAL CONTENT OF MESSAGE FROM NLF YOU MAY WISH
TO OBSERVE, IF THIEU RAISES POINT, THAT WE DISAGREE WITH LOAN'S
INTERPRETATION (REF B PARA 1) THAT THERE IS SERIOUS INCONSISTENCY
IN NLF MESSAGE WHICH STATES BOTH THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT
BROADER ISSUES THAN PW EXCHANGE AND THAT NOW IS NOT RIGHT TIME
TO TALK PEACE. WE REGARD THE LATTER STATEMENT IN CONTEXT OF BAL-
ANCE OF MESSAGE PRIMARILY AS AN ATTEMPT TO SHOW NLF IN POSITION
OF STRENGTH.
6. WE ARE AWAITING YOUR DRAFT RESPONSE TO NLF MESSAGE.

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