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Monday, November 6, 1967 -- 2:30 p.m.

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Pres file

Mr. President:

At the time you gave your instruction to Gen. Johnson to produce a plan for South Vietnam, I asked Bob Ginsburgh to do one on his own. He came up with the attached 10-point program.

As he notes, they are all listed somewhere in the "Blueprint" for Vietnam. The problem, as always, is to get top level concentrated attention in the field on programs which are now moving slowly and which ought to move faster.

That, in turn, requires a short list -- shorter than ten.

I have marked with yellow pen the 4 items (2, 4, 7 and 9) which, from a distance, seem most important to me. (For example, nothing could accelerate the breakdown of the Viet Cong more than success in "coordinated attack on VC infrastructure." But I know for certain that this program is going slowly. I am having a Situation Room meeting this week on it to see what can be done.)

Once we work out such a short list, we then must hold our top-level people accountable for moving it and regularly reporting progress.

That is the kind of result I should like to see from Bunker and Westmoreland's visit in Washington.

W. W. Rostow

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 94-475
By 4-6-95, NARA, Date 4-6-95 12 September 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

Herewith is my ten-point program of military measures to accelerate progress of the war:

1. Stress neutralization of priority enemy base areas.
2. Coordinated attack on VC infrastructure.
3. Expand area and scale of covert operations in Laos.
4. Increased use of ARVN in integrated operations with U.S.
5. Commit additional ARVN units to support pacification.
6. Furnish additional U.S. advisors to RF and PF.
7. Concept of active area security for RD rather than static defense --
emphasic ARVN search and destroy against VC provincial battalions.
8. Give operational control of all pacification forces in the province to province chief.
9. Supplement RD team effort with locally formed and trained
civil/military teams.
10. Stress opening and securing of LOCs, especially railroad and waterways.

All of the above, plus others, are included in the Blueprint for Vietnam. These ten may deserve special emphasis. In general, they can be pursued within existing or approved resources. Emphasis on these measures should result in an accelerated but unspectacular rate of progress.

If a more spectacular rate of progress were to be achieved, some combination of the following would be necessary.

- Authorize bombing of all targets on JCS recommended list, expand armed reconnaissance, mine inland waterways north of 20 degrees -- this is only a difference in degree rather than in kind from what we are already doing.

- Mount a shallow amphibious envelopment to trap NVN troops just north of the DMZ -- probably not feasible until next summer, if then.

- Mine the ports -- probably effective, possibly risky.

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- Conduct operations to destroy enemy bases in Cambodia -- worth considering if political pressure is ineffective -- and after amphibious entrapment above DMZ.

- Mobilize to demonstrate will and to provide additional troops -- untimely in view of very recent decision not to mobilize.

- Bomb dikes in order to flood Red River delta -- could be very effective -- but I can't see how the U.S. would go about rationalizing such a major policy change.

- Create wasteland with low yield nuclear weapons in southern part of NVN -- virtually unthinkable.

ROBERT N. GINSBURGH