




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

21 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Undoubtedly you have already had a report on much of the attached, reflecting the visit to General Eisenhower at Walter Reed yesterday of Ambassador Bunker, General Westmoreland, General Wheeler and myself. However, it may be useful to have this record of the principal points raised and discussed.

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as

  
A. J. GOODPASTER  
Lieutenant General, USA

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Eisenhower, 20 November 1967

A meeting was held with General Eisenhower at Walter Reed Hospital beginning at 4 P.M., on 20 November 1967. It lasted just over an hour and a half. Those visiting him were Ambassador Bunker, General Westmoreland, General Wheeler and myself.

Prior to the arrival of the others, I spent a few minutes with General Eisenhower giving him the answers that had been developed to several questions posed by him at the end of a meeting in Gettysburg on November 9. These were: How good are the SVN units; is economic life and commerce improving in SVN; and does General Westmoreland have the troops he needs to keep the initiative and react quickly? I provided the information as a preliminary response, noting that General Westmoreland and Ambassador Bunker would be able to give their impressions derived from on-the-spot experience. In addition, I left with General Eisenhower a brief chronology of principal steps in the development of our present operation and commitment in South Vietnam, extending back to 1950.

When General Wheeler, Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland arrived, the discussion took the form of responses and comments by Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland on questions and topics raised by General Eisenhower. The principal points follow:

First was how good the SVN units are. On the premise that the units reflect their commanders, General Westmoreland indicated that between 40 and 50% would be rated first-class, another 40 to 50% satisfactory, and the remaining 8 to 10% unsatisfactory. Six ARVN battalions have been awarded the U.S. Presidential Unit Citation. These can be taken to be outstanding units in anyone's Army. On the question how the ARVN units are doing in the revolutionary

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development role, General Westmoreland said that progress is being made through training and orientation, though much remains to be done.

General Eisenhower next asked whether public enthusiasm and support is developing for our cause in South Vietnam. Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland answered, indicating that there has been a rise by very realistic standards--including the turnout for the election, and the amount of intelligence being forwarded to ARVN, U.S. and allied troops by the Vietnamese people.

General Eisenhower next asked General Westmoreland if he feels he has the troops that he needs, and specifically whether he ought not have a "corps of maneuver". General Westmoreland answered at length reviewing the buildup of U.S. forces from two years ago when combat elements had to go into an area lacking in ports, roads and logistic forces, enabled simply to keep the enemy off balance and denying him further gains, to the present time when our forces are taking the offensive, destroying the enemy and denying him effective results on the battlefield. Sometime next year, General Westmoreland foresees that he will be able to use the 1st Cavalry Division as an uncommitted reserve in the northern two corps, and the 101st in the southern two corps.

General Eisenhower expressed his concern over the existence of sanctuaries for the enemy in the Cambodia, Laos and north of the DMZ. He said he would see merit in an operation, possibly an amphibious operation, just north of the DMZ to sweep through the area and destroy the enemy forces there, including the enemy artillery. General Westmoreland said he has given study to such an operation, although no decisions have been made, and no authority sought to date. In further discussion of the fact that the Viet Cong and NVA seem to be obtaining a considerable portion of the food to support themselves through purchases of rice from Chinese merchants in Cambodia, General Eisenhower suggested that the possibility of preemptive buying ought to be examined. All present thought this was a suggestion that should be pursued. (I have phoned Mr. Rostow about this, and he has undertaken to look into it.)

There was a good deal of discussion of the problem of informing U.S. public opinion about the war and of problems relating to the TV and the press. During this discussion Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland referred to their comments on this matter


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during their TV appearance last Sunday.

General Westmoreland showed General Eisenhower a series of data cards and graphs, covering indicators relating to various aspects of the war in Vietnam. General Eisenhower found these highly impressive, taking particular note of the chart on weapons losses, the significance of which was emphasized by General Westmoreland.

Also brought out during the discussion was the progress that has been made in opening up roads, railroads, and waterways, over which greatly increased commerce is now flowing. General Eisenhower found these statistics gratifying and encouraging.

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

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