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Monday, March 25, 1968
11:00 a.m. 89

MR. PRESIDENT:

You may wish to give some time today to consider the key questions you may well put to the Advisory Group tomorrow morning.

Here are my tentative suggestions; although I shall file a second memo tomorrow morning in the light of this evening's discussions.

I have tried to keep the questions as close to those of November 2 as possible so that you will be able to gauge the change of view between then and now; although, of course, new issues have arisen -- notably, additional troops; and the timing of our actions with respect to the ending of the winter-spring offensive (say, May 15).

Question 1. Should we send more troops to South Vietnam? Do you suggest any change of military strategy or tactics in South Vietnam?

Question 2. With respect to the North, should we: continue what we are doing? Mine the ports and plan to take down the dikes when the water is high? Unilaterally reduce or eliminate bombing of North Vietnam?

Question 3. In the light of our experiences with negotiating probes over the past year, should we:

- remain passive, awaiting a signal from Hanoi?
- initiate negotiations?
- if so, what formula of initiation do you recommend?
- when should we take the initiative?

Question 4. Taking into account all that you know, do you believe we should, in one way or another, get out of Vietnam and leave it to the Communists?

Question 5. If you believe we should stay the course in Vietnam, what measures would you suggest to rally and unite our own people behind the effort in Vietnam?

W. W. Rostow

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