

5 March 64

Dear Bo,

Enclosed is a paper carried and, hopefully, read by everybody in The McManara caravan. I know Sullivan, Bundy and Bell have read it. I have made clear that it is not an attempt to carve out a niche for myself but a try at establishing some framework for a political plan.

After receiving your cable, I have not sent another letter to Mike. Just give him my regards and hopes that he can steel his friend to demand what he needs - namely Ed.

Despite our efforts he will not be proposed by The Caravan, but The climate is such that Lodge can have what he wants. I have no definite evidence but have a feeling that

The Caravan is likely to propose Dick ^(G. M. Stillman) as The Coordinator with me as his civilian assistant, then attempting to get military support for the idea on the grounds that MACV would only cooperate if a military man headed it up. If Lodge could lead them into this, agreeing that a military man was needed and then saying that only Lonsdale would be acceptable we might have it sewed up. They may propose me alone for this job, ~~period~~. If they do I suggest

that Lodge ^{is} ^{not} ^{old} ^{at} for Ed. I ^{think} it is ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{air} when the caravan is leaving, he should fire back a request to discuss it with me personally. I could come out, then we could gang up on them back here. ~~What~~ Whatever the outcome I have made it plain that I want to come out temporarily for a personal discussion with Lodge before I accept anything. (Walter Starnon)

Believe you can trust Starnon to play it honestly in Uncle's best interests. He doesn't understand too much of the ins and outs of the Viet Situation but is pretty well up on Mission ~~politic~~ politics and disgusted with same. The Eccor contract problem has been flagged by me for his attention. When I got your last letter (forgotten whether I told you or not), I told him in outline what my letter to Mike was about, how it got shown to Lodge, what Lodge's reaction was (as evidenced by Mike's letter back to me) and the fact that this ^{probably} generated the famous cable. ^{Have} also brought him up to date on latest ^{non-favorable} Lodge reactions, Sullivan and Bell also aware of letter exchange but in less detail in case Lodge raises it.

Good luck. Hope something worthwhile comes off.

All the best,
R.