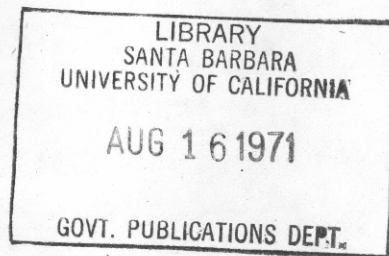


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(Pentagon Papers)

THE "PENTAGON PAPERS" AND RELATED U.S. PRESS REPORTS

A compilation of articles on United States involvement in Vietnam, appearing in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Boston Globe, the Chicago Sun Times, the St. Louis Dispatch, and Knight Newspapers. Also reports on Congressional interest in the U.S. vs. New York Times and Washington Post cases and the Supreme Court Decision.



Source: Congressional Record, June 14, 15, 21, 24, 28, 29, & 30, 1971.
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**VIETNAM ARCHIVE: PENTAGON STUDY TRACES
THREE DECADES OF GROWING U.S. INVOLVEMENTS**

(By Nell Sheehan)

A massive study of how the United States went to war in Indochina, conducted by the Pentagon three years ago, demonstrates that four administrations progressively developed a sense of commitment to a non-Communist Vietnam, a readiness to fight the North to protect the South, and an ultimate frustration with this effort—to a much greater extent than their public statements acknowledged at the time.

The 3,000-page analysis, to which 4,000 pages of official documents are appended, was commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and covers the American involvement in Southeast Asia from World War II to May, 1968—the start of the peace talks in Paris after President Lyndon B. Johnson had set a limit on further military commitments and revealed his intention to retire. Most of the study and many of the appended documents have been obtained by The New York Times and will be described and presented in a series of articles beginning today.

Though far from a complete history, even at 2.5 million words, the study forms a great archive of government decision-making on Indochina over three decades. The study led its 30 to 40 authors and researchers to many broad conclusions and specific findings, including the following:

That the Truman Administration's decision to give military aid to France in her colonial war against the Communist-led Vietminh "directly involved" the United States in Vietnam and "set" the course of American policy.

That the Eisenhower Administration's decision to rescue a fledgling South Vietnam from a Communist takeover and attempt to undermine the new Communist regime of North Vietnam gave the Administration a "direct role in the ultimate breakdown of the Geneva settlement" for Indochina in 1954.

That the Kennedy Administration, though ultimately spared from major escalation decisions by the death of its leader, transferred a policy of "limited-risk gamble," which it inherited, into a "broad commitment" that left President Johnson with a choice between more war and withdrawal.

That the Johnson Administration, though the President was reluctant and hesitant to take the final decisions, intensified the covert warfare against North Vietnam and began planning in the spring of 1964 to wage overt war, a full year before it publicly revealed the depth of its involvement and its fear of defeat.

That this campaign of growing clandestine military pressure through 1964 and the expanding program of bombing North Vietnam in 1965 were begun despite the judgment of the Government's intelligence community that the measures would not cause Hanoi to cease its support of the Vietcong insurgency in the South, and that the bombing

Source: New York Times, June 13 & 14, 1971.

June 14, 1971

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was deemed militarily ineffective within a few months.

That these four succeeding administrations built up the American political, military and psychological stakes in Indochina, often more deeply than they realized at the time, with large-scale military equipment to the French in 1950; with acts of sabotage and terror warfare against North Vietnam beginning in 1954; with moves that encouraged and abetted the overthrow of President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam in 1963; with plans, pledges and threats of further action that sprang to life in the Tonkin Gulf clashes in August, 1964; with the careful preparation of public opinion for the years of open warfare that were to follow; and with the calculation in 1965, as the planes and troops were openly committed to sustained combat; that neither accommodations inside South Vietnam nor early negotiations with North Vietnam would achieve the desired result.

The Pentagon study also ranges beyond such historical judgments. It suggests that the predominant American interest was at first containment of Communism and later the defense of the power, influence and prestige of the United States, in both stages irrespective of conditions in Vietnam.

And it reveals a great deal about the ways in which several administrations conducted their business on a fateful course, with much new information about the roles of dozens of senior officials of both major political parties and a whole generation of military commanders.

The Pentagon study was divided into chronological and thematic chapters of narrative and analysis, each with its own documentation attached. The Times—which has obtained all but one of nearly 40 volumes—has collated these materials into major segments of varying chronological length, from one that broadly covers the two decades before 1960 to one that deals intensively with the agonizing debate in the weeks following the 1968 Tet offensive.

The months from the beginning of 1964 to the Tonkin Gulf incident in August were a pivotal period, the study makes clear, and The Times begins its series with this phase.

VAST STUDY OF WAR TOOK A YEAR

(By Hedrick Smith)

In June, 1967, at a time of great personal disenchantment with the Indochina war and rising frustration among his colleagues at the Pentagon, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara commissioned a major study of how and why the United States had become so deeply involved in Vietnam.

The project took a year to complete and yielded a vast and highly unusual report of Government self-analysis. It was compiled by a team of 30 to 40 Government officials, civilian and military, many of whom had helped to develop or carry out the policies that they were asked to evaluate and some of whom were simultaneously active in the debates that changed the course of those policies.

While Mr. McNamara turned over his job to Clark M. Clifford, while the war reached a military peak in the 1968 Lunar New Year offensive, while President Johnson cut back the bombing of North Vietnam and announced his plan to retire, and while the peace talks began in Paris, the study group burrowed through Government files.

The members sought to probe American policy toward Southeast Asia from World War II pronouncements of President Franklin D. Roosevelt into the start of Vietnam peace talks in the spring of 1968. They wrote nearly 40 book-length volumes backed up by annexes of cablegrams, memorandums, draft proposals, dissents and other documents.

MANY INCONSISTENCIES

Their report runs to more than 7,000 pages—1.6 million words of historical narratives plus a million words of documents—enough to fill a small crate.

Even so, it is not a complete or polished history. It displays many inconsistencies and lacks a single all-embracing summary. It is an extended internal critique based on the documentary record, which the researchers did not supplement with personal interviews, partly because they were pressed for time.

The study emerged as a middle-echelon and official view of the war, incorporating material from the top-level files of the Defense Department into which flow papers from the White House, the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Some important gaps appear in the study. The researchers did not have access to the complete files of Presidents or to all the memorandums of their conversations and decisions.

Moreover, there are other important gaps in the copy of the Pentagon study obtained by The New York Times. It lacks the section on the secret diplomacy of the Johnson period.

But whatever its limitations, the Pentagon's study discloses a vast amount of new information about the unfolding American commitment to South Vietnam and the way in which the United States engaged itself in that conflict. It is also rich in insights into the workings of government and the reasoning of the men who ran it.

Throughout the narrative there is ample evidence of vigorous, even acrimonious, debate within the Government—far more than Congress, the press and the public were permitted to discover from official pronouncements.

But the Pentagon account and its accompanying documents also reveal that once the basic objective of policy was set, the internal debate on Vietnam from 1950 until mid-1967 dealt almost entirely with how to reach those objectives rather than with the basic direction of policy.

The study related that American governments from the Truman Administration onward felt it necessary to take action to prevent Communist control of South Vietnam. As a rationale for policy, the domino theory—that if South Vietnam fell, other countries would inevitably follow—was repeated in endless variations for nearly two decades.

CONFIDENCE AND APPREHENSIONS

Especially during the nineteen-sixties, the Pentagon study discloses, the Government was confident that American power—or even the threat of its use—would bring the war under control.

But the study reveals that high officials in the Johnson Administration were troubled by the potential dangers of Chinese Communist intervention and felt the need for self-restraint to avoid provoking Peking, or the Soviet Union, into combat involvement.

As some top policy makers came to question the effectiveness of the American effort in mid-1967, the report shows, their policy papers began not only to seek to limit the military strategies on the ground and in the air but also to worry about the impact of the war on American society.

"A feeling is widely and strongly held that the establishment is out of its mind," wrote John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense, in a note to Secretary McNamara in early May, 1967. Mr. McNaughton, who three years earlier had been one of the principal planners of the air war against North Vietnam, went on to say:

"The feeling is that we are trying to impose some U.S. image on distant peoples we cannot understand (any more than we can the younger generation here at home), and that

we are carrying the thing to absurd lengths. Related to this feeling is the increased polarization that is taking place in the United States with seeds of the worst split in our people in more than a century."

At the end of June, 1967, Mr. McNamara—deeply disillusioned with the war—decided to commission the Pentagon study of Vietnam policy that Mr. McNaughton and other high officials had encouraged him to undertake.

Mr. McNamara's instructions, conveyed orally and evidently in writing as well, were for the researcher to pull together the Pentagon's documentary record and, according to one well-placed former official, to produce an "objective and encyclopedic" study of the American involvement.

BROADEST POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION

The Pentagon researchers aimed at the broadest possible interpretation of events. They examined not only the policies and motives of American administrations, but also the effectiveness of intelligence, the mechanics and consequences of bureaucratic compromises, the difficulties of imposing American tactics on the South Vietnamese, the governmental uses of the American press, and many other tributaries of their main story.

The authors reveal, for example, that the American intelligence community repeatedly provided the policy makers with what proved to be accurate warnings that desired goals were either unattainable or likely to provoke costly reactions from the enemy. They cite some lapses in the accuracy of reporting and intelligence, but give a generally favorable assessment of the C.I.A. and other intelligence units.

The Pentagon researchers relate many examples of bureaucratic compromise forged by Presidents from the conflicting proposals of their advisers.

In the mid-fifties, they found, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were a restraining force, warning that successful defense of South Vietnam could not be guaranteed under the limits imposed by the 1954 Geneva accords and agreeing to send in American military advisors only on the insistence of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

In the nineteen-sixties, the report found, both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson chose partial measures, overriding advice that some military proposals were valid only as packages and could not be adopted piecemeal.

In examining Washington's constant difficulties with the governments in Saigon, the study found the United States so heavily committed to the regime of the moment and so fearful of instability that it was unable to persuade the South Vietnamese to make the political and economic reforms that Americans deemed necessary to win the allegiance of the people.

Though it ranges widely to explain events, the Pentagon report makes no summary effort to put the blame for the war on any single administration or to find fault with individual officials.

The writers appear to have stood at the political and bureaucratic center of the period, directing their criticisms toward both left and right.

In one section, Senator Eugene J. McCarthy, the antiwar candidate for the 1968 Democratic Presidential nomination, is characterized as "impudent and dovish," and as an "upstart challenger." At another point in the same section the demands of Adm. U.S. Grant Sharp, commander of Pacific forces, for all-out bombing of North Vietnam, are characterized as "fulminations."

For the most part, the writers assumed a calm and unemotional tone, dissecting their materials in detached and academic manner. They ventured to answer key questions only when the evidence was at hand. They found no conclusive answers to some of the most

widely asked questions about the war, including these:

Exactly how was Ngo Dinh Diem returned to South Vietnam in 1954 from exile and helped to power?

Who took the lead in preventing the 1958 Vietnam elections required under the Geneva accords of 1954—Mr. Diem or the Americans?

If President Kennedy had lived, would he have led the United States into a full-scale ground war in South Vietnam and an air war against North Vietnam as President Johnson did?

Was Secretary of Defense McNamara dismissed for opposing the Johnson strategy in mid-1967 or did he ask to be relieved because of disenchantment with Administration policy?

Did President Johnson's cutback of the bombing to the 20th Parallel in 1968 signal a lowering of American objectives for the war or was it merely an effort to buy more time and patience from a war-weary American public?

The research project was organized in the Pentagon's office of International Security Affairs—ISA, as it is known to Government insiders—the politico-military affairs branch, whose head is the third-ranking official in the Defense Department. This was Assistant Secretary McNaughton when the study was commissioned and Assistant Secretary Paul C. Warnke when the study was completed.

'IT REMAINS McNAMARA'S STUDY'

In the fall of 1968, it was transmitted to Mr. Warnke, who reportedly "signed off" on it. Former officials say this meant that he acknowledged completion of the work without endorsing its contents and forwarded it to Mr. Clifford.

Although it had been completed during Mr. Clifford's tenure, "in everyone's mind it always remained Mr. McNamara's study," one official said.

Because of its extreme sensitivity, very few copies were reproduced—from 6 to 15, by various accounts. One copy was delivered by hand to Mr. McNamara, then president of the World Bank. His reaction is not known, but at least one other former policy maker was reportedly displeased by the study's candor.

Other copies were said to have been provided to President Johnson, the State Department and President Nixon's staff, as well as to have been kept for Pentagon files.

The authors, mostly working part-time over several months, were middle-level officials, drawn from ISA, Systems Analysis, and the military staffs in the Pentagon, or lent by the State Department or White House staff. Probably two-thirds of the group had worked on Vietnam for the Government at one time or another.

Both the writing and editing were described as group efforts, through individuals with academic qualifications as historians, political scientists and the like were in charge of various sections.

For their research, the Pentagon depended primarily on the files of Secretary McNamara and Mr. McNaughton. William P. Bundy, former Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, provided some of his files.

For extended periods, probably the most serious limitation of the Pentagon history is the lack of access to White House archives. The researchers did possess the Presidential decision papers that normally circulated to high Pentagon officials, plus White House messages to commanders or ambassadors in Saigon. These provide insight into Presidential moods and motives, but only intermittently.

An equally important handicap is that the Pentagon researchers generally lacked records of the oral discussions of the National

Security Council or the most intimate gatherings of Presidents with their closest advisers, where decisions were often reached.

As the authors themselves remark, it is common practice for the final recommendations drafted before a key Presidential decision to be written to the President's spoken specifications on the basis of his reactions to earlier proposals. The missing link is often the meeting of the Administration's inner circle.

Also, because the Pentagon history draws almost entirely on internal Government papers, and primarily papers that circulated through the Defense Department, the picture of so important a figure as Secretary of State Dean Rusk remains shadowy. Mr. Rusk was known as a man who rarely committed himself to paper and who, especially during the Johnson Administration, saved his most sensitive advice for solitary talks with the President.

In the late months of the Johnson Administration, the lack of records of such meetings is a considerable weakness because, as the historians comment, Mr. Johnson operated a split-level Government. Only his most intimate advisers were aware of the policy moves he was contemplating, and some of the most important officials at the second level of government—Assistant Secretaries of State and Defense—were late to learn the drift of the President's thinking.

The Pentagon account notes that at times the highest Administration officials not only kept information about their real intentions from the press and Congress but also kept secret from the Government bureaucracy the real motives for their written recommendations or actions.

"The lesson in this," one Pentagon historian observes, "is that the rationales given in such pieces of paper (intended for fairly wide circulation among the bureaucracy, as opposed to tightly held memoranda limited to those closest to the decision maker), do not reliably indicate why recommendations were made the way they were." The words in parentheses are the historians'.

Another omission is the absence of any extended discussion of military or political responsibility for such matters as civilian casualties or the restraints imposed by the rules of land warfare.

NECESSARILY FRAGMENTED ACCOUNT

The approach of the writers varies markedly from section to section. Some of the historians are analytical and incisive. Others offer narrative compendiums of the most important available documents for their periods, with little comment or interpretation.

As a bureaucratic history, this account is necessarily fragmented. The writers either lacked time or did not choose to provide a coherent, integrated summary analysis for each of the four administrations that became involved in Vietnam from 1950 to 1968.

The Pentagon account divides the Kennedy period, for example, into five sections—dealing with the key decisions of 1961, the strategic-hamlet programs, the build-up of the American advisory mission in Vietnam, the development of plans for phased American withdrawal, and the coup d'état that ousted President Diem.

In the Johnson era, four simultaneous stories are told in separate sections—the land war in South Vietnam, the air war against the North, political relations with successive South Vietnamese government and the secret diplomatic search for negotiations. There is some overlapping, but no single section tries to summarize or draw together the various strands.

The over-all effect of the study, nonetheless, is to provide a vast storehouse of new information—the most complete and informative central archive available thus far on the Vietnam era. (See text.)

TEXTS OF DOCUMENTS

Following are the texts of key documents accompanying the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war, for the period December, 1963, through the Tonkin Gulf incident in August, 1964, and its aftermath. Except where excerpting is specified, the documents are printed verbatim, with only unmistakable typographical errors corrected.

McNAMARA REPORT TO JOHNSON ON THE SITUATION IN SAIGON IN 1963

(Memorandum, "Vietnam Situation," from Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to President Lyndon B. Johnson, Dec. 21, 1963.)

In accordance with your request this morning, this is a summary of my conclusions after my visit to Vietnam on December 19-20.

1. Summary. The situation is very disturbing. Current trends, unless reversed in the next 2-3 months, will lead to neutralization at best and more likely to a Communist-controlled state.

2. The new government is the greatest source of concern. It is indecisive and drifting. Although Minh states that he, rather than the Committee of Generals, is making decisions, it is not clear that this is actually so. In any event, neither he nor the Committee are experienced in political administration and so far they show little talent for it. There is no clear concept on how to re-shape or conduct the strategic hamlet program; the Province Chiefs, most of whom are new and inexperienced, are receiving little or no direction because the generals are so preoccupied with essentially political affairs. A specific example of the present situation is that General [name illegible] is spending little or no time commanding III Corps, which is in the vital zone around Saigon and needs full-time direction. I made these points as strongly as possible to Minh, Don, Kim, and Tho.

3. The County Team is the second major weakness. It lacks leadership, has been poorly informed, and is not working to a common plan. A recent example of confusion has been conflicting USOM and military recommendations both to the Government of Vietnam and to Washington on the size of the military budget. Above all, Lodge has virtually no official contact with Harkins. Lodge sends in reports with major military implications without showing them to Harkins, and does not show Harkins important incoming traffic. My impression is that Lodge simply does not know how to conduct a coordinated administration. This has of course been stressed to him both by Dean Rusk and myself (and also by John McCone), and I do not think he is consciously rejecting our advice; he has just operated as a loner all his life and cannot readily change now.

Lodge's newly-designated deputy, David Nes, was with us and seems a highly competent team player. I have stated the situation frankly to him and he has said he would do all he could to constitute what would in effect be an executive committee operating below the level of the Ambassador.

As to the grave reporting weakness, both Defense and CIA must take major steps to improve this. John McCone and I have discussed it and are acting vigorously in our respective spheres.

4. Viet Cong progress has been great during the period since the coup, with my best guess being that the situation has in fact been deteriorating in the countryside since July to a far greater extent than we realized because of our undue dependence on distorted Vietnamese reporting. The Viet Cong now control very high proportions of the people in certain key provinces, particularly those directly south and west of Saigon. The Strategic Hamlet Program was seriously over-

extended in those provinces, and the Viet Cong has been able to destroy many hamlets, while others have been abandoned or in some cases betrayed or pillaged by the government's own Self Defense Corps. In these key provinces, the Viet Cong have destroyed almost all major roads, and are collecting taxes at will.

As remedial measures, we must get the government to re-allocate its military forces so that its effective strength in these provinces is essentially doubled. We also need to have major increases in both military and USOM staffs, to sizes that will give us a reliable, independent U.S. appraisal of the status of operations. Thirdly, realistic pacification plans must be prepared, allocating adequate time to secure the remaining government-controlled areas and work out from there.

This gloomy picture prevails predominantly in the provinces around the capital and in the Delta. Action to accomplish each of these objectives was started while we were in Saigon. The situation in the northern and central areas is considerably better, and does not seem to have deteriorated substantially in recent months. General Harkins still hopes these areas may be made reasonably secure by the latter half of next year.

In the gloomy southern picture, an exception to the trend of Viet Cong success may be provided by the possible adherence to the government of the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao sects, which total three million people and control key areas along the Cambodian border. The Hoa Hao have already made some sort of agreement, and the Cao Dai are expected to do so at the end of this month. However, it is not clear that their influence will be more than neutralized by these agreements, or that they will in fact really pitch in on the government's side.

5. Infiltration of men and equipment from North Vietnam continues using (a) land corridors through Laos and Cambodia; (b) the Mekong River waterways from Cambodia; (c) some possible entry from the sea and the tip of the Delta. The best guess is that 1000-1500 Viet Cong cadres entered South Vietnam from Laos in the first nine months of 1963. The Mekong route (and also the possible sea entry) is apparently used for heavier weapons and ammunition and raw materials which have been turning up in increasing numbers in the south and of which we have captured a few shipments.

To counter this infiltration, we reviewed in Saigon various plans providing for cross-border operations into Laos. On the scale proposed, I am quite clear that these would not be politically acceptable or even militarily effective. Our first need would be immediate U-2 mapping of the whole Laos and Cambodian border, and this we are preparing on an urgent basis.

One other step we can take is to expand the existing limited but remarkably effective operations on the Laos side, the so-called Operation HARDNOSE, so that it at least provides reasonable intelligence on movements all the way along the Laos corridor; plans to expand this will be prepared and presented for approval in about two weeks.

As to the waterways, the military plans presented in Saigon were unsatisfactory, and a special naval team is being sent at once from Honolulu to determine what more can be done. The whole waterway system is so vast, however, that effective policing may be impossible.

In general, the infiltration problem, while serious and annoying, is a lower priority than the key problems discussed earlier. However, we should do what we can to reduce it.

6. Plans for Covert Action into North Vietnam were prepared as we had requested and were an excellent job. They present a wide variety of sabotage and psychological operations against North Vietnam from which I believe we should aim to select those that

provide maximum pressure with minimum risk. In accordance with your direction at the meeting, General Krulak of the JCS is chairing a group that will lay out a program in the next ten days for your consideration.

7. Possible neutralization of Vietnam is strongly opposed by Minh, and our attitude is somewhat suspect because of editorials by the New York Times and mention by Walter Lippmann and others. We reassured them as strongly as possible on this—and in somewhat more general terms on the neutralization of Cambodia. I recommend that you convey to Minh a Presidential message for the New Year that would also be a vehicle to stress the necessity of strong central direction by the government and specifically by Minh himself.

8. U.S. resources and personnel cannot usefully be substantially increased; I have directed a modest artillery supplement, and also the provision of uniforms for the Self Defense Corps, which is the most exposed force and suffers from low morale. Of greater potential significance, I have directed the Military Departments to review urgently the quality of the people we are sending to Vietnam. It seems to have fallen off considerably from the high standards applied in the original selections in 1962, and the JCS fully agree with me that we must have our best men there.

Conclusion. My appraisal may be overly pessimistic. Lodge, Harkins, and Minh would probably agree with me on specific points, but feel that January should see significant improvement. We should watch the situation very carefully, running scared, hoping for the best, but preparing for more forceful moves if the situation does not show early signs of improvement.

1964 McNAMARA REPORT ON STEPS TO CHANGE THE TREND OF THE WAR

(Excerpts from memorandum, "South Vietnam," from Secretary of Defense McNamara to President Johnson, March 16, 1964.)

I. U.S. OBJECTIVES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

We seek an independent non-Communist South Vietnam. We do not require that it serve as a Western base or as a member of a Western Alliance. Vietnam must be free, however, to accept outside assistance as required to maintain its security. This assistance should be able to take the form not only of economic and social pressures but also police and military help to root out and control insurgent elements.

Unless we can achieve this objective in South Vietnam, almost all of Southeast Asia will probably fall under Communist dominance (all of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), accommodate to Communism so as to remove effective U.S. and anti-Communist influence (Burma), or fall under the domination of forces not only explicitly Communist but likely then to become so (Indonesia taking over Malaysia). Thailand might hold for a period with our help, but would be under grave pressure. Even the Philippines would become shaky, and the threat to India to the west, Australia and New Zealand to the south, and Taiwan, Korea, and Japan to the north and east would be greatly increased.

All these consequences would probably have been true even if the U.S. had not since 1954, and especially since 1961, become so heavily engaged in South Vietnam. However, that fact accentuates the impact of a Communist South Vietnam not only in Asia, but in the rest of the world, where the South Vietnam conflict is regarded as a test case of U.S. capacity to help a nation meet a Communist "war of liberation."

Thus, purely in terms of foreign policy, the stakes are high. They are increased by domestic factors.

II. PRESENT U.S. POLICY IN SOUTH VIETNAM

We are now trying to help South Vietnam defeat the Viet Cong, supported from the

North, by means short of the unqualified use of U.S. combat forces. We are not acting against North Vietnam except by a very modest "covert" program operated by South Vietnamese (and a few Chinese Nationalists)—a program so limited that it is unlikely to have any significant effect. In Laos, we are still working largely within the framework of the 1962 Geneva Accords. In Cambodia we are still seeking to keep Sihanouk from abandoning whatever neutrality he may still have and fulfilling his threat of reaching an accommodation with Hanoi and Peking. As a consequence of these policies, we and the GVN have had to condone the extensive use of Cambodian and Laotian territory by the Viet Cong, both as a sanctuary and as infiltration routes.

1964 MEMO BY JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF DISCUSSING WIDENING OF THE WAR

(Memorandum from Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Secretary of Defense McNamara, Jan. 22, 1964, "Vietnam and Southeast Asia.")

1. National Security Action Memorandum No. 273 makes clear the resolve of the President to ensure victory over the externally directed and supported communist insurgency in South Vietnam. In order to achieve that victory, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are of the opinion that the United States must be prepared to put aside many of the self-imposed restrictions which now limit our efforts, and to undertake bolder actions which may embody greater risks.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are increasingly mindful that our fortunes in South Vietnam are an accurate barometer of our fortunes in all of Southeast Asia. It is our view that if the US program succeeds in South Vietnam it will go far toward stabilizing the total Southeast Asia situation. Conversely, a loss of South Vietnam to the communists will preface an early erosion of the remainder of our position in that sub-continent.

3. Laos, existing on a most fragile foundation now, would not be able to endure the establishment of a communist—or pseudo neutralist—state on its eastern flank. Thailand, less strong today than a month ago by virtue of the loss of Prime Minister Sarit, would probably be unable to withstand the pressures of infiltration from the north should Laos collapse to the communists in its turn. Cambodia apparently has estimated that our prospects in South Vietnam are not promising and, encouraged by the actions of the French, appears already to be seeking an accommodation with the communists. Should we actually suffer defeat in South Vietnam, there is little reason to believe that Cambodia would maintain even a pretense of neutrality.

4. In a broader sense, the failure of our programs in South Vietnam would have heavy influence on the judgments of Burma, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Taiwan, the Republic of Korea, and the Republic of the Philippines with respect to US durability, resolution, and trustworthiness. Finally, this being the first real test of our determination to defeat the communist wars of national liberation formula, it is not unreasonable to conclude that there would be a corresponding unfavorable effect upon our image in Africa and in Latin America.

5. All of this underscores the pivotal position now occupied by South Vietnam in our world-wide confrontation with the communists and the essentiality that the conflict there would be brought to a favorable end as soon as possible. However, it would be unrealistic to believe that a complete suppression of the insurgency can take place in one or even two years. The British effort in Malaya is a recent example of a counterinsurgency effort which required approximately ten years before the bulk of the rural

population was brought completely under control of the government, the police were able to maintain order, and the armed forces were able to eliminate the guerilla strongholds.

6. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are convinced that, in keeping with the guidance in NSAM 273, the United States must make plain to the enemy our determination to see the Vietnam campaign through to a favorable conclusion. To do this, we must prepare for whatever level of activity may be required and, being prepared, must then proceed to take actions as necessary to achieve our purposes surely and promptly.

7. Our considerations, furthermore, cannot be confined entirely to South Vietnam. Our experience in the war thus far leads us to conclude that, in this respect, we are not now giving sufficient attention to the broader area problems of Southeast Asia. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that our position in Cambodia, our attitude toward Laos, our actions in Thailand, and our great effort in South Vietnam do not comprise a compatible and integrated US policy for Southeast Asia. US objectives in Southeast Asia cannot be achieved by either economic, political, or military measures alone. All three fields must be integrated into a single, broad US program for Southeast Asia. The measures recommended in this memorandum are a partial contribution to such a program.

8. Currently we and the South Vietnamese are fighting the war on the enemy's terms. He has determined the locale, the timing, and the tactics of the battle while our actions are essentially reactive. One reason for this is the fact that we have obliged ourselves to labor under self-imposed restrictions with respect to limiting external aid to the Viet Cong. These restrictions include keeping the war within the boundaries of South Vietnam, avoiding the direct use of US combat forces, and limiting US direction of the campaign to rendering advice to the Government of Vietnam. These restrictions, while they may make our international position more readily defensible, all tend to make the task in Vietnam more complex, time-consuming, and in the end, more costly. In addition to complicating our own problem, these self-imposed restrictions may well now be conveying signals of irresolution to our enemies—encouraging them to higher levels of vigor and greater risks. A reversal of attitude and the adoption of a more aggressive program would enhance greatly our ability to control the degree to which escalation will occur. It appears probable that the economic and agricultural disappointments suffered by Communist China, plus the current rift with the Soviets, could cause the communists to think twice about undertaking a large-scale military adventure in Southeast Asia.

9. In advertent to actions outside of South Vietnam, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are aware that the focus of the counterinsurgency battle lies in South Vietnam itself, and that the war must certainly be fought and won primarily in the minds of the Vietnamese people. At the same time, the aid now coming to the Viet Cong from outside the country in men, resources, advice, and direction is sufficiently great in the aggregate to be significant—both as help and as encouragement to the Viet Cong. It is our conviction that if support of the insurgency from outside South Vietnam in terms of operational direction, personnel, and material were stopped completely, the character of the war in South Vietnam would be substantially and favorably altered. Because of this conviction, we are wholly in favor of executing the covert actions against North Vietnam which you have recently proposed to the President. We believe, however, that it would be idle to conclude that these efforts will have a decisive effect on the communist determination to support the insurgency; and it is our view that we must therefore be

prepared fully to undertake a much higher level of activity, not only for its beneficial tactical effect, but to make plain our resolution, both to our friends and to our enemies.

10. Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the United States must make ready to conduct increasingly bolder actions in Southeast Asia; specifically as to Vietnam to:

a. Assign to the US military commander responsibilities for the total US program in Vietnam.

b. Induce the Government of Vietnam to turn over to the United States military commander, temporarily, the actual tactical direction of the war.

c. Charge the United States military commander with complete responsibility for conduct of the program against North Vietnam.

d. Overfly Laos and Cambodia to whatever extent is necessary for acquisition of operational intelligence.

e. Induce the Government of Vietnam to conduct overt ground operations in Laos of sufficient scope to impede the flow of personnel and material southward.

f. Arm, equip, advise, and support the Government of Vietnam in its conduct of aerial bombing of critical targets in North Vietnam and in mining the sea approaches to that country.

g. Advise and support the Government of Vietnam in its conduct of large-scale commando raids against critical targets in North Vietnam.

h. Conduct aerial bombing of key North Vietnam targets, using US resources under Vietnamese cover, and with the Vietnamese openly assuming responsibility for the actions.

1. Commit additional US forces, as necessary, in support of the combat action within South Vietnam.

j. Commit US forces as necessary in direct actions against North Vietnam.

11. It is our conviction that any or all of the foregoing actions may be required to enhance our position in Southeast Asia. The past few months have disclosed that considerably higher levels of effort are demanded of us if US objectives are to be attained.

12. The governmental reorganization which followed the coup d'etat in Saigon should be completed very soon, giving basis for concluding just how strong the Vietnamese Government is going to be and how much of the load they will be able to bear themselves. Additionally, the five-month dry season, which is just now beginning, will afford the Vietnamese an opportunity to exhibit their ability to reverse the unfavorable situation in the critical Mekong Delta. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will follow these important developments closely and will recommend to you progressively the execution of such of the above actions as are considered militarily required, providing, in each case, their detailed assessment of the risks involved.

13. The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the strategic importance of Vietnam and of Southeast Asia warrants preparations for the actions above and recommend that the substance of this memorandum be discussed with the Secretary of State.

III. THE PRESENT SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

The key elements in the present situation are as follows:

A. The military tools and concepts of the GVN-US efforts are generally sound and adequate.* Substantially more can be done in the effective employment of military forces

*Mr. McCone emphasizes that the GVN/US program can never be considered completely satisfactory so long as it permits the Viet Cong a sanctuary in Cambodia and a continuing uninterrupted and unmolested source of supply and reinforcement from NVN through Laos.

and in the economic and civic action areas. These improvements may require some selective increases in the U.S. presence, but it does not appear likely that major equipment replacement and additions in U.S. personnel are indicated under current policy.

B. The U.S. policy of reducing existing personnel where South Vietnamese are in a position to assume the functions is still sound. Its application will not lead to any major reductions in the near future, but adherence to this policy as such has a sound effect in portraying to the U.S. and the world that we continue to regard the war as a conflict the South Vietnamese must win and take ultimate responsibility for. Substantial reductions in the numbers of U.S. military training personnel should be possible before the end of 1965. However, the U.S. should continue to reiterate that it will provide all the assistance and advice required to do the job regardless of how long it takes.

C. The situation has unquestionably been growing worse, at least since September:

1. In terms of government control of the countryside, about 40% of the territory is under Viet Cong control or predominant influence. In 22 of the 43 provinces, the Viet Cong control 60% or more of the land area, including 80% of Phuoc Tuy; 90% of Binh Duong; 75% of Hau Nghia; 90% of Long An; 80% of Kien Tuong; 90% of Dinh Tuong; 90% of Kien-Hoa and 85% of An Xuyen.

2. Large groups of the population are now showing signs of apathy and indifference, and there are some signs of frustration within the U.S. contingent. . . .

a. The ARVN and paramilitary desertion rates, and particularly the latter, are high and increasing.

b. Draft-dodging is high while the Viet Cong are recruiting energetically and effectively.

c. The morale of the hamlet militia and of the Self Defense Corps, on which the security of the hamlets depends, is poor and falling. . . .

3. In the last 90 days the weakening of the government's position has been particularly noticeable. . . .

4. The political control structure extending from Saigon down into the hamlets disappeared following the November coup. . . .

5. North Vietnamese support, always significant, has been increasing. . . .

D. The greatest weakness in the present situation is the uncertain viability of the Khanh government. Khanh himself is a very able man within his experience, but he does not yet have wide political appeal and his control of the army itself is uncertain.

E. On the positive side, we have found many reasons for encouragement in the performance of the Khanh Government to date. Although its top layer is thin, it is highly responsive to U.S. advice, and with a good grasp of the basic elements of rooting out the Viet Cong. . . .

2. Retaliatory Action. For example:

a. Overt high and/or low-level reconnaissance over North Vietnam to assist in locating and identifying the sources of external aid to the Viet Cong.

b. Retaliatory bombing strikes and commando raids on a tit-for-tat basis by the GVN against NVN targets (communication centers, training camps, infiltration routes, etc.)

c. Aerial mining by the GVN aircraft (possibly with U.S. assistance) of the major NVN ports.

3. Graduated Overt Military Pressure by GVN and U.S. Forces.

This program would go beyond reacting on a tit-for-tat basis. It would include air attacks against military and possibly industrial targets. The program would utilize

the combined resources of the GVN Air Force and the U.S. Farnigate Squadron, with the latter reinforced by three squadrons of B-57s presently in Japan. Before this program could be implemented it would be necessary to provide some additional air defense for South Vietnam and to ready U.S. forces in the Pacific for possible escalation.

The analysis of the more serious of these military actions (from 2 (b) upward) revealed the extremely delicate nature of such operations, both from the military and political standpoints. There would be the problem of marshalling the case to justify such action, the problem of communist escalation, and the problem of dealing with the pressures for premature or "stacked" negotiations. We would have to calculate the effect of such military actions against a specified political objective. That objective, while being cast in terms of eliminating North Vietnamese control and direction of the insurgency, would in practical terms be directed toward collapsing the morale and the self-assurance of the Viet Cong cadres now operating in South Vietnam and bolstering the morale of the Khanh regime. We could not, of course, be sure that our objective could be achieved by any means within the practical range of our options. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, unless and until the Khanh government has established its position and preferably is making significant progress in the South, an overt extension of operations into the North carries the risk of being mounted from an extremely weak base which might at any moment collapse and leave the posture of political confrontation worsened rather than improved.

The other side of the argument is that the young Khanh Government [two words illegible] reinforcement of some significant sources against the North and without [words illegible] the incountry program, even with the expansion discussed in Section [words illegible] may not be sufficient to stem the tide. [Words illegible] balance, except to the extent suggested in Section V below, I [words illegible] against initiation at this time of overt GVN and/or U.S. military [word illegible] against North Vietnam.

C. Initiate Measures to Improve the Situation in South Vietnam.

There were and are sound reasons for the limits imposed by present policy—the South Vietnamese must win their own fight; U.S. intervention on a larger scale, and/or GVN actions against the North, would disturb key allies and other nations; etc. In any case, it is vital that we continue to take every reasonable measure to assure success in South Vietnam. The policy choice is not an "either/or" between this course of action and possible pressures against the North; the former is essential without regard to our decision with respect to the latter. The latter can, at best, only reinforce the former.

The following are the actions we believe can be taken in order to improve the situation both in the immediate future and over a longer-term period. To emphasize that a new phase has begun, the measures to be taken by the Khanh government should be described by some term such as "South Vietnam's Program for National Mobilization."

Basic U.S. posture

1. The U.S. at all levels must continue to make it emphatically clear that we are prepared to furnish assistance and support for as long as it takes to bring the insurgency under control.
2. The U.S. at all levels should continue to make it clear that we fully support the Khanh government and are totally opposed to any further coups. The Ambassador should instruct all elements, including the military advisors, to report intelligence information of possible coups promptly, with the decision to be made by the ambassador whether to report such information to

Khanh. However, we must recognize that our chances would not be great of detecting and preventing a coup that had major military backing.

3. We should support fully the Pacification Plan now announced by Khanh (described in Annex B), and particularly the basic theory—now fully accepted both on the Vietnamese and U.S. sides—of concentrating on the more secure areas and working out from these through military operations to provide security, followed by necessary civil and economic actions to make the presence of the government felt and to provide economic improvements. . . .

V. POSSIBLE LATER ACTIONS

If the Khanh government takes hold vigorously—inspiring confidence, whether or not noteworthy progress has been made—or if we get hard information of significantly stepped-up VC arms supply from the North, we may wish to mount new and significant pressures against North Vietnam. We should start preparations for such a capability now. (See Annex C for an analysis of the situation in North Vietnam and Communist China.) Specifically, we should develop a capability to initiate within 72 hours the "Border Control" ** and "Retaliatory Actions," referred to on pages 6 and 6, and we should achieve a capability to initiate within 30 days' notice the program of "Graduated Overt Military Pressure." The reasoning behind this program of preparations for initiating action against North Vietnam is rooted in the fact that, even with progress in the pacification plan, the Vietnamese Government and the population in the South will still have to face the prospect of a very lengthy campaign based on a weary nation and operating against Viet Cong cadres who retain a great measure of motivation and assurance.

In this connection, General Khanh stated that his primary concern is to establish a firm base in the South. He favors continuation of covert activities against North Vietnam, but until such time as "rear-area security" has been established, he does not wish to engage in overt operations against the North.

In order to accelerate the realization of pacification and particularly in order to denigrate the morale of the Viet Cong forces, it may be necessary at some time in the future to put demonstrable retaliatory pressure on the North. Such a course of action might proceed according to the scenario outlined in Annex D. . . .

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that you instruct the appropriate agencies of the U.S. Government:

1. To make it clear that we are prepared to furnish assistance and support to South Vietnam for as long as it takes to bring the insurgency under control.
2. To make it clear that we fully support the Khanh government and are opposed to further coups.
3. To support a Program for National Mobilization (including a national service law) to put South Vietnam on a war footing.
4. To assist the Vietnamese to increase the armed forces (regular plus paramilitary) by at least 50,000 men.
5. To assist the Vietnamese to create a greatly enlarged Civil Administrative Corps for work at province, district and hamlet levels.
6. To assist the Vietnamese to improve and reorganize the paramilitary forces and increase their compensation.

**Authority should be granted immediately for covert Vietnamese operations into Laos, for the purposes of border control and of "hot pursuit" into Laos. Decision "hot pursuit" into Cambodia should await further study of our relations with that country.

7. To assist the Vietnamese to create an offensive guerrilla force.

8. To provide the Vietnamese Air Force 25 A-1H aircraft in exchange for the present T-28s.

9. To provide the Vietnamese Army additional M-113 armored personnel carriers (withdrawing the M-114s there), additional river boats, and approximately \$5-10 million of other additional material.

10. To announce publicly the Fertilizer Program and to expand it with a view within two years to doubling the amount of fertilizer made available.

11. To authorize continued high-level U.S. overflights of South Vietnam's borders and to authorize "hot pursuit" and South Vietnamese ground operations over the Laotian line for the purpose of border control. More ambitious operations into Laos involving units beyond battalion size should be authorized only with the approval of Souvanna Phouma. Operations across the Cambodian border should depend on the state of relations with Cambodia.

12. To prepare immediately to be in a position on 72 hours' notice to initiate the full range of Laotian and Cambodian "Border Control" actions (beyond those authorized in Paragraph 11 above) and the "Retaliatory Actions" against North Vietnam, and to be in a position on 30 days' notice to initiate the program of "Graduated Overt Military Pressure" against North Vietnam.

U.S. PREPARATION FOR RETALIATION AND REJECTION OF OTHER ACTIONS

(Excerpts from National Security Action Memorandum 288, "U.S. Objectives in South Vietnam," March 17, 1964, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. The words in brackets are the study's. The paragraph in italics is the paraphrase by a writer of the study.)

[The United States' policy is] to prepare immediately to be in a position on 72 hours' notice to initiate the full range of Laotian and Cambodian "Border Control actions" . . . and the "Retaliatory Actions" against North Vietnam, and to be in a position on 30 days' notice to initiate the program of "Graduated Overt Military Pressure" against North Vietnam. . . .

We seek an independent non-Communist South Vietnam. We do not require that it serve as a Western base or as a member of a Western Alliance. South Vietnam must be free, however, to accept outside assistance as required to maintain its security. This assistance should be able to take the form not only of economic and social measures but also police and military help to root out and control insurgent elements.

Unless we can achieve this objective in South Vietnam, almost all of Southeast Asia will probably fall under Communist dominance (all of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), accommodate to Communism so as to remove effective U.S. and anti-Communist influence (Burma), or fall under the domination of forces not now explicitly Communist but likely then to become so (Indonesia taking over Malaysia). Thailand might hold for a period without help, but would be under grave pressure. Even the Philippines would become shaky, and the threat to India on the West, Australia and New Zealand to the South, and Taiwan, Korea, and Japan to the North and East would be greatly increased.

All of these consequences would probably have been true even if the U.S. had not since 1954, and especially since 1961, become so heavily engaged in South Vietnam. However, that fact accentuates the impact of a Communist South Vietnam not only in Asia but in the rest of the world, where the South Vietnam conflict is regarded as a test case of U.S. capacity to help a nation to meet the Communist "war of liberation."

Thus, purely in terms of foreign policy, the stakes are high. . . .

We are now trying to help South Vietnam defeat the Viet Cong, supported from the North, by means short of the unqualified use of U.S. combat forces. We are not acting against North Vietnam except by a modest "covert" program operated by South Vietnamese (and a few Chinese Nationalists)—a program so limited that it is unlikely to have any significant effect. . . .

There were and are some sound reasons for the limits imposed by the present policy—the South Vietnamese must win their own fight; U.S. intervention on a larger scale, and/or GVN actions against the North, would disturb key allies and other nations; etc. In any case, it is vital that we continue to take every reasonable measure to assure success in South Vietnam. The policy choice is not an "either/or" between this course of action and possible pressure against the North; the former is essential and without regard to our decision with respect to the latter. The latter can, at best, only reinforce the former. . . .

Many of the actions described in the succeeding paragraphs fit right into the framework of the [pacification] plan as announced by Khanh. Wherever possible, we should tie our urgings of such actions to Khanh's own formulation of them, so that he will be carrying out a Vietnamese plan and not one imposed by the United States. . . .

Among the alternatives considered, but rejected for the time being . . . were overt military pressure on North Vietnam, neutralization, return of U.S. dependents, furnishing of a U.S. combat unit to secure the Saigon area, and a full takeover of the command in South Vietnam by the U.S. With respect to this last proposal, it was said that . . . the judgment of all senior people in Saigon, with which we concur, was that the possible military advantages of such action would be far outweighed by adverse psychological impact. It would cut across the whole basic picture of the Vietnamese winning their own war and lay us wide open to hostile propaganda both within South Vietnam and outside.

CABLE FROM PRESIDENT TO LODGE ON ESCALATION CONTINGENCIES

(Cablegram from President Johnson to Henry Cabot Lodge, United States Ambassador in Saigon, March 20, 1964.)

1. We have studied your 1770 and I am asking State to have Bill Bundy make sure that you get our latest planning documents on ways of applying pressure and power against the North. I understand that some of this was discussed with you by McNamara mission in Saigon, but as plans are refined it would be helpful to have your detailed comments. As we agreed in our previous messages to each other, judgment is reserved for the present on overt military action in view of the consensus from Saigon conversations of McNamara mission with General Khanh and you on judgment that movement against the North at the present would be premature. We have [sic] share General Khanh's judgment that the immediate and essential task is to strengthen the southern base. For this reason our planning for action against the North is on a contingency basis at present, and immediate problem in this area is to develop the strongest possible military and political base for possible later action. There is additional international reason for avoiding immediate overt action in that we expect a showdown between the Chinese and Soviet Communist parties soon and action against the North will be more practicable after than before a showdown. But if at any time you feel that more immediate action is urgent, I count on you to let me know specifically the reasons for such action, together with your recommendations for its size and shape.

2. On dealing with de Gaulle, I continue to think it may be valuable for you to go to Paris after Bohlen has made his first try. (State is sending you draft instruction to Bohlen, which I have not yet reviewed, for your comment.) It ought to be possible to explain in Saigon that your mission is precisely for the purpose of knocking down the idea of neutralization wherever it rears its ugly head and on this point I think that nothing is more important than to stop neutralist talk wherever we can by whatever means we can. I have made this point myself to Mansfield and Lippmann and I expect to use every public opportunity to restate our position firmly. You may want to convey our concern on this point to General Khanh and get his ideas on the best possible joint program to stop such talk in Saigon, in Washington, and in Paris. I imagine that you have kept General Khanh abreast of our efforts in Paris. After we see the results of the Bohlen approach you might wish to sound him out on Paris visit by you.

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONGRESS ON ACTIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

(Draft Resolution on Southeast Asia, May 25, 1964, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. The major paragraphs of the resolution as approved by Congress appear in the article accompanying the texts today.)

Whereas the signatories of the Geneva Accords of 1954, including the Soviet Union, the Communist regime in China, and Viet Nam agreed to respect the independence and territorial integrity of South Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia; and the United States, although not a signatory of the Accords, declared that it would view any renewal of aggression in violation of the Accords with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security;

Whereas the Communist regime in North Viet Nam, with the aid and support of the Communist regime in China, has systematically flouted its obligations under these Accords and has engaged in aggression against the independence and territorial integrity of South Viet Nam by carrying out a systematic plan for the subversion of the Government of South Viet Nam, by furnishing direction, training, personnel and arms for the conduct of guerrilla warfare within South Viet Nam, and by the ruthless use of terror against the peaceful population of that country;

Whereas in the face of this Communist aggression and subversion the Government and people of South Viet Nam have bravely undertaken the defense of their independence and territorial integrity, and at the request of that Government the United States has, in accordance with its Declaration of 1954, provided military advice, economic aid and military equipment;

Whereas in the Geneva Agreements of 1962 the United States, the Soviet Union, the Communist regime in China, North Viet Nam and others solemnly undertook to respect the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos;

Whereas in violation of these undertakings the Communist regime in North Viet Nam, with the aid and support of the Communist regime in China, has engaged in aggression against the independence, unity and territorial integrity of Laos by maintaining forces on Laotian territory, by the use of that territory for the infiltration of arms and equipment into South Viet Nam, and by providing direction, men and equipment for persistent armed attacks against the Government of (words illegible);

Whereas in the face of this Communist aggression the Government of National Unification and the non-Communist elements in Laos have striven to maintain the conditions

of unity, independence and neutrality envisioned for their country in the Geneva Agreements of 1962;

Whereas the United States has no territorial, military or political ambitions in Southeast Asia, but desires only that the peoples of South Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia should be left in peace by their neighbors to work out their own destinies in their own way, and, therefore, its objective is that the status established for these countries in the Geneva Accords of 1954 and the Geneva Agreements of 1962 should be restored with effective means of enforcement;

Whereas it is essential that the world fully understand that the American people are united in their determination to take all steps that may be necessary to assist the peoples of South Viet Nam and Laos to maintain their independence and political integrity.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

That the United States regards the preservation of the independence and integrity of the nations of South Viet Nam and Laos as vital to its national interest and to world peace;

Sec. 2. To this end, if the President determines the necessity thereof, the United States is prepared, upon the request of the Government of South Viet Nam or the Government of Laos, to use all measures, including the commitment of armed forces to assist that government in the defense of its independence and territorial integrity against aggression or subversion supported, controlled or directed from any Communist country.

Sec. 3. (a) The President is hereby authorized to use for assistance under this joint resolution not to exceed \$— during the fiscal year 1964, and not to exceed \$— during the fiscal year 1965, from any appropriations made available for carrying out the provisions of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended in accordance with the provisions of that Act, except as otherwise provided in this joint resolution. This authorization is in addition to other existing authorizations with respect to the use of such appropriations.

(b) Obligations incurred in carrying out the provisions of this joint resolution may be paid either out of appropriations for military assistance or appropriations for other than military assistance except that appropriations made available for Titles I, III, and VI of Chapter 2, Part I, of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, shall not be available for payment of such obligations.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, when the President determines it to be important to the security of the United States and in furtherance of the purposes of this joint resolution, he may authorize the use of up to \$— of funds available under subsection (a) in each of the fiscal years 1964 and 1965 under the authority of section 614 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and is authorized to use up to \$— of such funds in each such year pursuant to his certification that it is inadvisable to specify the nature of the use of such funds, which certification shall be deemed to be a sufficient [words illegible].

(d) Upon determination by the head of any agency making personnel available under authority of section 627 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, or otherwise under that Act, for purposes of assistance under this joint resolution, any officer or employee so made available may be provided compensation and allowances at rates other than those provided by the Foreign Service Act of 1946, as amended, the Career Compensation Act of 1949, as amended, and

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the Overseas Differentials and Allowances Act to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes of this joint resolution. The President shall prescribe regulations under which such rates of compensation and allowances may be provided. In addition, the President may utilize such provisions of the Foreign Service Act of 1946, as amended, as he deems appropriate to apply to personnel of any agency carrying out functions under this joint resolution.

CABLE FROM TAYLOR WARNING ON THE "MARCH NORTH" CAMPAIGN

(Excerpts from cablegram from Ambassador Taylor in Saigon to the State Department, July 25, 1964.)

The GVN public campaign for "Marching North" (reported EMBTEL 291) may take several courses. In the face of US coolness and absence of evidence of real grassroots support outside certain military quarters, it may die down for a while although it is hardly likely to disappear completely. On the other hand, the proponents of a "Quick Solution" may be able to keep it alive indefinitely as an active issue. In which case it is likely to foment an increasing amount of dissatisfaction with the US (assuming that we continue to give it no support) to the serious detriment of our working relations with the GVN and hence of the ultimate chances of success of the in-country pacification program. In such a case, Vietnamese leaders in and out of government, unable to find a vent to their frustration in "Marching North" may seek other panaceas in various forms of negotiation formulas. General Khanh may find in the situation an excuse or a requirement to resign.

Finally, this "March North" fever can get out of hand in an act of rashness—one maverick pilot taking off for Hanoi with a load of bombs—which could touch off an extension of hostilities at a time and in a form most disadvantageous to US interests.

Faced with these unattractive possibilities, we propose a course of action designed to do several things.

We would try to avoid head-on collision with the GVN which unqualified US opposition to the "March North" campaign would entail. We could do this by expressing a willingness to engage in joint contingency planning for various forms of extended action against GVN (sic). Such planning would not only provide an outlet for the martial head of steam now dangerously compressed but would force the generals to look at the hard facts of life which lie behind the neon lights of the "March North" slogans. This planning would also gain time badly needed to stabilize this government and could provide a useful basis for military action if adjudged in our interest at some future time. Finally, it would also afford US an opportunity, for the first time, to have a frank discussion with GVN leaders concerning the political objectives which they would envisage as the purposes inherent in military action against the DRV.

It would be important, however, in initiating such a line of action that we make a clear record that we are not, repeat, not assuming any commitment to supplement such plans.

U.S. NOTE TO CANADA ON POINTS FOR ENVOY TO RELAY TO HANOI

(United States note delivered at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, Aug. 8, 1964, for transmission to J. Blair Seaborn, Canadian member of the International Control Commission.)

Canadians are urgently asked to have Seaborn during August 10 visit make following points (as having been conveyed to him by US Government since August 6):

A. Re Tonkin Gulf actions, which almost certainly will come up:

1. The DRV has stated that Hon Ngu and Hon Me Islands were attacked on July 30. It should be noted that the USS Maddox was all of that day and into the afternoon of the next day, over 100 miles south of those islands, in international waters near the 17th parallel, and that the DRV attack on the Maddox took place on August 2d, more than two days later. Neither the Maddox or any other destroyer was in any way associated with any attack on the DRV islands.

2. Regarding the August 4 attack by the DRV on the two US destroyers, the Americans were and are at a complete loss to understand the DRV motive. They had decided to absorb the August 2 attack on the grounds that it very well might have been the result of some DRV mistake or miscalculation. The August 4 attack, however—from the determined nature of the attack as indicated by the radar, sonar, and eye witness evidence both from the ships and from their protecting aircraft—was, in the American eyes, obviously deliberate and planned and ordered in advance. In addition, premeditation was shown by the evidence that the DRV craft were waiting in ambush for the destroyers. The attack did not seem to be in response to any action by the South Vietnamese nor did it make sense as a tactic to further any diplomatic objective. Since the attack took place at least 60 miles from nearest land, there could have been no question about territorial waters. About the only reasonable hypothesis was that North Vietnam was intent either upon making it appear that the United States was a "paper tiger" or upon provoking the United States.

3. The American response was directed solely to patrol craft and installations acting in direct support of them. As President Johnson stated: "Our response for the present will be limited and fitting."

4. In view of uncertainty aroused by the deliberate and unprovoked DRV attacks this character, US has necessarily carried out precautionary deployments of additional air power to SVN and Thailand.

B. Re basic American position:

5. Mr. Seaborn should again stress that US policy is simply that North Vietnam should contain itself and its ambitions within the territory allocated to its administration by the 1954 Geneva Agreements. He should stress that US policy in South Vietnam is to preserve the integrity of that state's territory against guerrilla subversion.

6. He should reiterate that the US does not seek military bases in the area and that the US is not seeking to overthrow the Communist regime in Hanoi.

7. He should repeat that the US is fully aware of the degree to which Hanoi controls and directs the guerrilla action in South Vietnam and that the US holds Hanoi directly responsible for that action. He should similarly indicate US awareness of North Vietnamese control over the Pathet Lao movement in Laos and the degree of North Vietnamese involvement in that country. He should specifically indicate US awareness of North Vietnamese violations of Laotian territory along the infiltration route into South Vietnam.

8. Mr. Seaborn can again refer to the many examples of US policy in tolerance of peaceful coexistence with Communist regimes, such as Yugoslavia, Poland, etc. He can hint at the economic and other benefits which have accrued to those countries because their policy of Communism has confined itself to the development of their own national territories and has not sought to expand into other areas.

9. Mr. Seaborn should conclude with the following new points:

a. That the events of the past few days should add credibility to the statement made last time, that "US public and official pa-

tience with North Vietnamese aggression is growing extremely thin."

b. That the US Congressional Resolution was passed with near unanimity, strongly re-affirming the unity and determination of the US Government and people not only with respect to any further attacks on US military forces but more broadly to continue to oppose firmly, by all necessary means, DRV efforts to subvert and conquer South Vietnam and Laos.

c. That the US has come to the view that the DRV role in South Vietnam and Laos is critical. If the DRV persists in its present course, it can expect to continue to suffer the consequences.

d. That the DRV knows what it must do if the peace is to be restored.

e. That the US has ways and means of measuring the DRV's participation in, and direction and control of, the war on South Vietnam and in Laos and will be carefully watching the DRV's response to what Mr. Seaborn is telling them.

WILLIAM BUNDY MEMO ON ACTIONS AVAILABLE TO U.S. AFTER TONKIN

(Excerpts from second draft of a memorandum, "Next Courses of Action in Southeast Asia," by William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Aug. 11, 1964. A summary was cabled to the Pacific command and the embassies in Saigon and Vientiane on Aug. 14 with requests for comments. According to the Pentagon study, the full draft was edited in the office of Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton. Words that were deleted at that time are shown below in double parentheses; words that were inserted at that time are shown in italics. Small cap type denotes underlining in the original document. Also, according to the McNaughton office's editing, the second paragraph, beginning "We have agreed . . ." was to be moved below, to follow the heading "Phase One—Military Silence" (through August).")

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum examines the courses of action the U.S. might pursue, commencing in about two weeks, assuming that the Communist side does not react further the [sic] the events of last week.

We have agreed that the intervening period will be in effect a short holding phase, in which we would avoid actions that would in any way take the onus off the Communist side for escalation . . .

III. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF U.S. POLICY

A. SOUTH VIET-NAM is still the main theater. Morale and momentum there must be maintained. This means:

1. We must devise means of action that, for minimum risks, get maximum results ((for minimum risks)) in terms of morale in SVN and pressure on NVN.

2. We must continue to oppose any Viet-Nam conference, and must play the prospect of a Laos conference very carefully. We must particularly avoid any impression of rushing to a Laos conference, and must show a posture of general firmness into which an eventual Laos conference would fit without serious loss.

3. We particularly need to keep our hands free for at least limited measures against the Laos infiltration areas. . . .

C. Solution. Basically, a solution in both South Viet-Nam and Laos will require a combination of military pressures and some form of communication under which Hanoi (and Peking) eventually accept the idea of getting out. Negotiation without continued pressure, indeed without continued military action will not achieve our objectives in the foreseeable future. But military pressure could be accompanied by attempts to com-

Footnotes at end of article.

municate with Hanoi and perhaps Peiping—through third-country channels, through side conversations around a Laos conference of any sort—providing always that we make it clear both to the Communists and to South Viet-Nam that the pressure will continue until we have achieved our objectives. After, **NOT ONLY AFTER**, we have ((established a)) know that North Vietnamese are hurting and that the clear pattern of pressure has dispelled suspicions of our motives, we could ((then)) accept a conference broadened to include the Viet-Nam issue. (The UN now looks to be out as a communication forum, though this could conceivably change.)

IV. TIMING AND SEQUENCE OF ACTIONS

A. Phase One—"Military Silence" (through August (see p. 1))
(A.) B. Phase Two—Limited pressures (September through December)

There are a number of limited actions we could take that would tend to maintain the initiative and the morale of the GVN and Khanh, but that would not involve major risks of escalation. Such actions could be such as to fore-shadow stronger measures to come, though they would not in themselves go far to change Hanoi's basic actions.

1. 34A operations could be overtly acknowledged and justified by the GVN. Marine operations could be strongly defended on the basis of continued DRV sea infiltration, and successes could be publicized. Leaflet operations could also be admitted and defended, again on the grounds of meeting DRV efforts in the South, and their impunity (we hope) would tend to have its own morale value in both Vietnams. Air-drop operations are more doubtful; their justification is good and less clear than the other operations, and their successes have been few. With the others admitted, they could be left to speak for themselves—and of course security would forbid any mention of specific operations before they succeeded.

2. Joint planning between the US and the GVN already covers possible actions against the DRV and also against the Panhandle. It can be used in itself to maintain the morale of the GVN leadership, as well as to control and inhibit any unilateral GVN moves. With 34A outlined, it could be put right into the same framework. We would not ourselves publicize this planning but it could be leaked (as it probably would anyway) with desirable effects in Hanoi and elsewhere.

3. Stepped-up training of Vietnamese on jet aircraft should now be undertaken in any event in light of the presence of MIG's in North Vietnam. The JCS are preparing a plan, and the existence of training could be publicized both for its morale effect in the GVN and as a signal to Hanoi of possible future action.

4. Cross-border operations into the Panhandle could be conducted on a limited scale. To be successful, ground operations would have to be so large in scale as to be beyond what the GVN can spare, and we should not at this time consider major US or Thai ground action from the Thai side. But on the air side, there are at least a few worthwhile targets in the infiltration areas, and these could be hit by U.S. and/or (([deleted phrase illegible] and by)) GVN air. Probably we should use both (query if US strike should be under a [word illegible] cover) US & GVN; probably we should avoid publicity so as not to embarrass Souvanna; the Communist side might squawk, but in the past they have been silent on this area. The strikes should probably be timed and plotted on the map to bring them to the borders of North Vietnam at the end of December.

5. DESOTO patrols could be reintroduced at some point. Both for present purposes and to maintain the credibility of our account of the events of last week, they must be clearly dissociated from 34A operations both in fact

and in physical appearance. [Sentence deleted here is illegible.] In terms of course patterns, we should probably avoid penetrations of 11 miles or so and stay at least 20 miles off; whatever the importance of asserting our view of territorial waters, it is less than the international drawbacks of appearing to provoke attack unduly. [Previous sentence is marked in handwriting "disagree."]

6. Specific tit-for-tat actions could be undertaken for any VC or DRV activity suited to the treatment. [Deleted sentence illegible.] These would be "actions of opportunity." As Saigon 377 points out, the VC have "unnecessary dirty tricks" such as mining (or attacks) in the Saigon River, sabotage of major POL stocks, and terrorist attacks on US dependents. The first two, at least, would lend themselves to prompt and precise reprisal, e.g., by mining the Haiphong channel and attacking the Haiphong POL storage. Terrorism against US dependents would be harder to find the right reprisal target, and reprisal has some disadvantages in that it could be asked why this was different from the regular pattern of terrorism against South Vietnamese. However, we should look at possible [deleted word is illegible] classes for tit-for-tat situations.

7. The sequence and mix of US and GVN actions needs careful thought. At this point, both the GVN role ((and)) in the actions and the rationales directly ((related)) relating the actions to what is being done to the GVN should be emphasized. Overt 34A actions should ((certainly)) be the first moves, and the GVN might go first in air attacks on the Panhandle. But there are advantages in other respects to actions related to US forces. If we lost an aircraft in the Panhandle ((or a U-2 over the DRV)) we could act hard and fast, and of course similarly for any attack on the DESOTO patrols. The loss of a U-2 over NVN does not offer as good a case. Probably the sequence should be played somewhat by ear.

Summary. The above actions are in general limited and controllable. However, if we accept—as of course we must—the necessity of prompt retaliation especially for attacks on our own forces, they could amount to at least a pretty high noise level that might stimulate some pressures for a conference. The problem is that these actions are not in themselves a truly coherent program of strong enough pressures either to bring Hanoi around or to sustain a pressure posture into some kind of discussions. Hence, while we might communicate privately to Hanoi while all this was going on, we should continue absolutely opposed to any conference.

(B.) C. Phase Three—More Serious Pressures. (January 1965 and following).

All the above actions would be foreshadowing systematic military action against the DRV, and we might at some point conclude that such action was required either because of incidents arising from the above actions or because of deterioration in the situation in South Viet-Nam, particularly if there were to be clear evidence of greatly increased infiltration from the north. However, in the absence of such major new developments, we should probably be thinking of a contingency date, as suggested by Ambassador Taylor, of 1 January 1965. Possible categories of action ((are)) beginning at about that time, are:

1. Action against infiltration routes and facilities is probably the best opening gambit. It would follow logically the actions in the Sept.-Dec. Phase Two. It could be justified by evidence that infiltration was continuing and, in all probability, increasing. The family of infiltration-related targets starts with clear military installations near the borders. It can be extended almost at will northward, to inflict progressive damage that

would have a meaningful cumulative effect and would always be keyed to one rationale.

2. Action in the DRV against selected military-related targets would appear to be the next upward move. POL installations and the mining of Haiphong Harbor (to prevent POL import as its rationale) would be spectacular actions, as would action against key bridges and railroads. All of these could probably be designed so as to avoid major civilian casualties.

3. Beyond these points it is probably not useful to think at the present time. . . .

FOOTNOTES

*We have never defined precisely what we mean by "getting out"—what actions, what proofs, and what future guarantees we would accept. A small group should work on this over the next month. The actions we want the DRV to take are probably these:

(a) Stop training and sending personnel to wage war in SVN and Laos.

(b) Stop sending arms and supplies to SVN and Laos.

(c) Stop directing and controlling military actions in SVN and Laos.

(d) Order the VC and PL to stop their insurgencies and military actions.

(e) Remove VM forces and cadres from SVN and Laos.

(f) See that VC and PL stop attacks and incidents in SVN and Laos.

(g) See that VC and PL cease resistance to government forces.

(h) See that VC and PL turn in weapons and relinquish bases.

(i) See that VC and PL surrender for amnesty or expatriation.

**This is in Phase One also.

SUMMARY OF TAYLOR'S REPORT SENT TO McNAMARA BY JOINT CHIEFS

(Excerpts from Summary of Ambassador Taylor's first mission report from Saigon, on Aug. 10, 1964, as transmitted on Aug. 14 by Col. A. R. Brownfield, acting special assistant to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for counterinsurgency and special activities, to Secretary McNamara, through Col. Alfred J. F. Moody, the Secretary's military assistant. Colonel Brownfield's covering memorandum said this summary had also been supplied to Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and to Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus R. Vance, for their appearance before the House Armed Services Committee on Aug. 18.)

. . . The basis of this report and monthly reports hereafter are the results of a country-wide canvass of responsible U.S. advisors and observers. The canvass dealt with: Army and public morale, combat effectiveness of military units US/GVN counterpart relationships, and effectiveness of GVN officials.

In broad terms, the canvass results are surprisingly optimistic at the operational levels of both the civil and military organizations. This feeling of optimism exceeds that of most senior US officials in Saigon. Future reports should determine who is right.

VIET CONG SITUATION

Strategy

The communist strategy as defined by North Vietnam and the puppet National Liberation Front is to seek a political settlement favorable to the communists. This political objective to be achieved by stages, passing first through "neutrality" using the National Liberation Front machinery, and then the technique of a coalition government.

Tactics

The VC tactics are to harass, erode and terrorize the VN population and its leadership into a state of demoralization without an attempt to defeat the RVNAF or to conquer terrain by military means. US/GVN progress should be measured against this strategy and these tactics.

Status

In terms of equipment and training the VC are better armed and led today than ever in the past.

VC infiltration continues from Laos and Cambodia.

No indication that the VC are experiencing any difficulty in replacing their losses in men and equipment.

No reason to believe the VC will risk their gains in an overt military confrontation with GVN forces, although they have a sizable force with considerable offensive capability in the central highlands.

GVN SITUATION

Political

The slow pace of the CI campaign and the weakness of his government has caused Khanh to use the March North theme to rally the homefront, and offset the war weariness.

US observers feel the symptoms of defeatism are more in the minds of the inexperienced and untried leadership in Saigon than in the people and the Army.

We may face mounting pressure from the GVN to win the war by direct attack on Hanoi which if resisted will cause local politicians to seriously consider negotiation or local soldiers to consider a military adventure without US consent.

For the present, the Khanh government has the necessary military support to stay in power.

It is estimated that Khanh has a 50/50 chance of lasting out the year.

The government is ineffective, beset by inexperienced ministers who are jealous and suspicious of each other.

Khanh does not have confidence or trust in most of his ministers and is not able to form them into a group with a common loyalty and purpose.

There is no one in sight to replace Khanh. Khanh has, for the moment, allayed the friction between the Buddhists and Catholics.

Khanh has won the cooperation of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai.

Khanh has responded to our suggestions for improved relations between GVN and US Mission.

The population is confused and apathetic. Khanh has not succeeded in building active popular support in Saigon.

Population support in the countryside is directly proportionate to the degree of GVN protection.

There are grounds to conclude that no sophisticated psychological approach is necessary to attract the country people to the GVN at this time. The assurance of a reasonably secure life is all that is necessary.

The success of US attacks on North Vietnam, although furnishing a psychological lift to the GVN, may have whetted their appetite for further moves against the DRV . . .

Military

The regular and paramilitary personnel strengths are slowly rising and by January 1965 should reach 98% of the target strength of 446,000.

The RVNAF desertion rate has decreased to .572% or 1/2 the rate of last March.

Three VNAF squadrons of A-1H aircraft will be combat ready by 30 September 1964 and the fourth by 1 December 1964 with a two to one pilot to cockpit ratio.

The evaluation of RVNAF units reports the following number combat effective:

- 28 of 30 regiments.
- 100 of 101 infantry, marine and airborne battalions.
- 17 of 20 ranger battalions.
- 19 of 20 engineer battalions.

The principal defects are low present for duty strengths and weak leadership at the lower levels. Both are receiving corrective treatment.

Extensive intelligence programs are underway to improve our intelligence capability by the end of the year.

GVN OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Increase in percentage of population control represents progress toward stabilizing the in-country situation. Using July figures as a base, the following percentages should be attainable.

	[In percent]			
	Rural		Urban	
	July 31, 1964	Dec 31, 1964	July 31, 1964	Dec 31, 1964
GVN control.....	33	40	44	47
VC control.....	29	16	18	14
Contested.....	47	44	42	39

US MISSION OBJECTIVES

Do everything possible to bolster the Khanh Government.

Improve the in-country pacification campaign against the VC.

Concentrating efforts on strategically important areas such as the provinces around Saigon (The Hop Tac Plan).

Undertake "snow-window" social and economic projects in secure urban and rural areas.

Be prepared to implement contingency plans against North Vietnam with optimum readiness by January 1, 1965.

Keep the US public informed of what we are doing and why . . .

PACIFIC COMMANDER'S EVALUATION OF WASHINGTON'S ACTION SCENARIO

(Excerpts from cablegram from Adm. U.S. Grant Sharp, commander of Pacific forces, to Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Next Courses of Action in Southeast Asia," Aug. 17, 1964.)

2. Recent U.S. military actions in Laos and North Vietnam demonstrated our intent to move toward our objectives. Our operations and progress in Laos constitute one step along the route. Our directness and rapidity of reaction in bombing North Vietnamese installations and deploying U.S. combat forces to Southeast Asia were others. Each step played a part. Their effect was to interrupt the continually improving Communist posture, catch the imagination of the Southeast Asian peoples, provide some lift to morale, however temporary, and force CHICOM/DRV assessment or reassessment of U.S. intentions. But, these were only steps along the way. What we have not done and must do is make plain to Hanoi and Peking the cost of pursuing their current objectives and impeding ours. As essential element of our military action in this course is to proceed in the development of our physical readiness posture: deploying troops, ships, aircraft, and logistic resources in a manner which accords a maximum freedom of action. This is the thrust we should continue to pursue, one which is intended to provide more than one feasible course for consideration as the changed and changing Southeast Asian situation develops. Remarks in the paragraphs which follow are submitted in light of this assessment and with the view that pressures against the other side once instituted should not be relaxed by any actions or lack of them which would destroy the benefits of the rewarding steps previously taken in Laos and North Vietnam. . . .

3. Para I.

The proposed two weeks suspension of operations is not in consonance with desire to get the message to Hanoi and Peking. Pierce Arrow showed both force and restraint. Further demonstration of restraint alone could easily be interpreted as period of second thoughts about Pierce Arrow and events leading thereto as well as sign of weakness

and lack of resolve. Continuous and effective pressure should be applied to the Communists in both the PDJ and parhandle. Consequently, concur in continued RECCE of DRV, parhandle and PDJ. Concur in attempt to secure Phou Kout and continued T-28 and Triangle operations. Resumption of 34A actions and Desoto Patrols is considered appropriate. Each can be carefully conducted to avoid interference with the other. . . .

7. Para III A 1.

Concur that South Vietnam is current hot spot and main concern in S.E. Asia. RVN cannot be reviewed apart from S.E. Asia. It is merely an area in a large theater occupied by the same enemy. Action to produce significant results in terms of pressure on DRV and improvements of morale in RVN must entail risk. Temptation toward zero action and zero risk must be avoided. . . .

11. Para III C.

Concur with the thesis set forth that we make clear to all that military pressure will continue until we achieve our objectives. Our actions must keep the Communists apprehensive of what further steps we will take if they continue their aggression. In this regard, we have already taken the large initial step of putting U.S. combat forces into Southeast Asia. We must maintain this posture; to reduce it would have a dangerous impact on the morale and will of all people in Southeast Asia. And we must face up to the fact that these forces will be deployed for some time and to their need for protection from ground or air attack. RVN cannot provide necessary ground security without degradation of the counterinsurgency effort and has little air defense capability. A conference to include Vietnam, before we have overcome the insurgency, would lose U.S. our allies in Southeast Asia and represent a defeat for the United States.

12. Para IV A 1

Knowledge of success of 34A operations would have a highly beneficial effect morale in the RVN. Suggest that these operations might be leaked to the press rather than overtly acknowledging them. 34A operations should be resumed to keep up external pressure on the DRV. . . .

20. In considering more serious pressure, we must recognize that immediate action is required to protect our present heavy military investment in RVN. We have introduced large amounts of expensive equipment into RVN and a successful attack against Bien Hoa, Tan Son Nhut, Danang, or an installation such as a radar or communication site would be a serious psychological defeat for U.S. MACV reports that inability of GVN to provide requisite degree of security and therefore we must rely on U.S. troops. MACV has requested troops for defense of the three locations mentioned above. My comments on this request are being transmitted by separate message. In addition to the above, consideration should be given to creating a U.S. base in RVN. A U.S. base in RVN would provide one more indication of our intent to remain in S.E. Asia until our objectives are achieved. It could also serve as a U.S. command point or control center in event of the chaos which might follow another coup. By an acknowledged concrete U.S. (as received) commitment, beyond the advisory effort, it informs the Communists that an overt attack on the RVN would be regarded as a threat to U.S. forces. Such a base should be accessible by air and sea, possessed of well developed facilities and installations, and located in an area from which U.S. operations could be launched effectively. Danang meets these criteria. . . .

22. In conclusion, our actions of August 5 have created a momentum which can lead to the attainment of our objectives in S.E. Asia. We have declared ourselves forcefully both by overt acts and by the clear readiness

to do more. It is most important that we not lose this momentum.

STATE DEPARTMENT ADD'S REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN AFTER TONKIN

(Part VIII, "Immediate Actions in the Period Prior to Decision," of an outline for Assistant Secretary Bundy, Nov. 7, 1964. Markings indicate that it was drafted by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Marshall Green.)

The US, together with the RLG and GVN, are involved in a number of operations—34-A, Yankee Team, Recce, and RLAF T-28 ops—designed to warn and harass North Vietnam and to reduce enemy capabilities to utilize the Lao Panhandle for reinforcing the Vietcong in South Vietnam and to cope with FL/VM pressures in Laos. The US also has under consideration De Soto Patrols and Cross Border Ground Operations. The present status and outlook of these operations are described below, together with a checklist of outstanding problems relating to each of the field of operations.

In general the working group is agreed that our aim should be to maintain present signal strength and level of harassment, showing no signs of lessening of determination but also avoiding actions that would tend to prejudice the basic decision.

A. OPLAN 34-A

Although not all of Oplan 34-A was suspended after the first Tonkin Gulf incident, in effect little was accomplished during the remainder of August and the month of September. Several successful maritime and airborne operations have been conducted under the October schedule. A schedule for November is under discussion and will probably be approved November 7.

1. Maritime operations

Since the resumption of Marops under the October schedule, the following have been completed:

Recon L Day (Oct. 4) Probe to 12 miles of Vinh Sor.

Recon L + 2 (Oct. 10) Probe to 12 miles of Vinh Sor.

Loki IV L + 5 Junk capture failed 32 & 45 E L 8 (Oct. 28/29) Bombard Vin Son radar and Mui Dai observation post.

The following operation was refused approval:

44c L + 10 Demolition by frog men supported by fire team of bridge on Route 1.

Currently approved is:

34B L + 12 (Nov. 4, on) Bombardment of barracks on Hon Mat and Tiger Island.

The following maritime operations remain on the October schedule and presumably will appear on the November schedule along with some additional similar operations:

L + 13 Capture of prisoner by team from PTF.

L + 15 Junk capture.

L+19 Bombard Cap Mui Ron and Tiger Island.

L+25 Bombard Yen Phu and Sam Son radar.

L+28 Blow up Bridge Route 1 and bombard Cap Mui Dao.

L+30 Return any captives from L+1 15.

L+31 Bombard Hon Ne and Hon Me.

L+36 Blow up pier at Phuc Lot and bombard Hon Ngu.

L+38 Cut Hanoi-Vinh rail line.

L+41 Bombard Dong Hol and Tiger Island.

L+24 Bombard Nightingale Island.

2. Airborne operations

Five teams and one singleton agent were in place at the beginning of October. Since then one of the teams has been resupplied and reinforced. The remaining four were scheduled to be resupplied and reinforced but weather prevented flights. These operations, plus the dropping of an additional team, will appear on the November schedule. Two of the teams carried out successful

actions during October. One demolished a bridge, the other ambushed a north Vietnamese patrol. Both teams suffered casualties, the latter sufficient to cast doubt on the wisdom of the action.

3. Psychological operations

Both black and white radio broadcasts have been made daily. Black broadcasts have averaged eight to ten hours weekly, white broadcasts sixty hours weekly.

Letters posted through Hong Kong have averaged about from 50 to 100 weekly.

During September and October only one leaflet delivery was made by air. This was done in conjunction with a resupply mission.

The November schedule will call for a large number of leaflet and deception operations.

Reconnaissance flights

An average of four flights per week have covered the bulk of Oplan 34-A targets.

Problems

1. Surfacing of Marops—The question of whether to surface Marops remains unresolved. While Washington has suggested this be done, General Khanh has been reluctant to do so. It is argued that surfacing the operations would enable the US to offer some protection to them; the counterargument postulates US involvement in North Vietnam and consequent escalation.

2. Security of Operations—The postponement of an operation, whether because of unfavorable weather or failure of Washington to approve at the last moment jeopardizes the operation. Isolation of teams presents hazards.

3. Base Security—After the Bien Hoa shelling some attention has been given to the security of the Danang base. Perimeter guard has been strengthened, but action remains to be taken for marine security, although a survey is underway.

4. Team welfare—In-place teams Bell and Easy have been in dire need of supplies for several weeks. Weather has prevented resupply, which will be attempted again during the November moon phase.

5. NVN Counteraction—The capability of the North Vietnamese against Marops has improved somewhat, although not yet sufficiently to frustrate these operations.

B. YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS

For several months now the pattern of Yankee Team Operations has (words illegible) a two-week period and about ten flights during the same time interval (words illegible) for Panhandle coverage. Additionally, we have recently been authorized a maximum of two shallow penetration flights daily to give comprehensive detailed coverage of cross border penetration. We have also recently told MACV that we have a high priority requirement for night photo recce of key motorable routes in Laos. At present about 2 nights recce flights are flown along Route 7 areas within a two-week span.

YT supplies cap for certain T-28 corridor strikes. Cap aircraft are not authorized to participate in strike or to provide suppressive fire.

Pending questions include: (a) whether YT strikes should be made in support of RLAF T-28 corridor operations; (b) whether YT recce should be made of areas north of 20° parallel; (c) YT suppressive attacks against Route 7, especially Ban Ken Bridge; and (d) YT activity in event of large-scale ground offensive by PL (this issue has not arisen but undoubtedly would, should the PL undertake an offensive beyond the capabilities of Lao and sheep-dipped Thai to handle.)

C. T-28 OPERATIONS

There are now 27 T-28 (including three RT-28) aircraft in Laos, of which 22 are in operation. CINCPAC has taken action, in response to Ambassador Unger's request to build this inventory back up to 40 aircraft

for which a pilot capability, including Thal, is present in Laos.

The T-28's are conducting the following operations:

1. General harassing activities against Pathet Lao military installations and movement, primarily in Xieng Khouang and Sam Neua Provinces. This also includes efforts to interdict Route 7.

2. Tactical support missions for Operation Anniversary Victory No. 2 (Saleumsay), the FAR-Meo clearing operation up Route 4 and north of Tha Thom.

3. Tactical support for Operation Victorious Arrow (Sone Sal), a FAR clearing operations in southern Laos.

4. Strikes on targets of opportunity, including in support of FAR defensive actions such as at Ban Khen northwest Thakhek.

5. Corridor interdiction program. The original targets under this program have been hit and plans are now underway to hit four additional targets (including in the Tchepone area), plus restriking some of the original 13 targets. Ambassador Unger has submitted for approval under this program 6 additional targets.

6. The Ambassador has been authorized to discuss with the RLAF RT-28 reconnaissance in northwest Laos along the area just north of and to the east and west of the line from Veng Phou Kha-Muong Sal.

In recent weeks, the T-28's have been dropping a large number of surrender leaflets on many of their missions. These have already led, in some cases, to PL defections.

US participation in SAR operations for downed T-28's, is authorized.

We are faced by the following problems in connection with the T-28's:

1. Authority for Yankee Team aircraft to engage in suppressive strikes in the corridor area, in support of the T-28 strike program there, has not been given as yet.

2. Also withheld is authorization for YT suppressive fire attack on Ban Ken Bridge on Route 7.

3. We are investigating reports of greatly increased truck movement along Route 7 as well as enemy build-up of tanks and other equipment just across the border in NVN. Counteraction may be required involving attack on Ban Ken.

4. Thal involvement. Hanoi claims to have shot down a T-28 over DRV territory on August 18 and to have captured the Thai pilot flying the plane. Although the information the North Vietnamese have used in connection with this case seems to be accurate, it is not clear the pilot is alive and can be presented to the ICC. The possibility cannot be excluded, however, nor that other Thai pilots might be captured by the PL.

5. The DRV claims T-28's have violated North Vietnamese airspace and bombed/strafed NVM villages on August 1 and 2, and on October 16 and 17 and again on October 28. The charges are probably accurate with respect to the first two dates (along Route 7) and the last one (Mu Gia Pass area). The October 16 and 17 strikes were actually in disputed territory which was recognized by the 1964 Geneva Agreements as being in Laos.

6. The Pathet Lao has called to the attention of the ICC T-28 strikes in the corridor area and called for the ICC to stop them and inform the Co-Chairmen. The ICC has already agreed to investigate another PL charge concerning alleged US/SVN activities in the corridor area in violation of the Geneva Agreements.

D. DE SOTO PATROLS

Further DeSoto Patrols have been held in abeyance pending top-level decision. Ambassador Taylor (Saigon's 1378) sees no advantage in resuming DeSoto Patrols except for essential intelligence purposes. He believes we should tie our actions to Hanoi's

support of Viet Cong, not to the defense of purely U.S. interests.

E. CROSS BORDER GROUND OPERATIONS

Earlier in the year several eight-man reconnaissance teams were parachuted into Laos as part of Operation Leaping Lena. All of these teams were located by the enemy and only four survivors returned to RVN. As a result of Leaping Lena, Cross Border Ground Operations have been carefully reviewed and COMUSMACV has stated that he believes no effective Cross Border Ground Operations can be implemented prior to January 1, 1965 at the earliest.

F. COVERT OPERATIONS IN LAOS

Consideration is being given to improving Hardnose (including greater Thai involvement) and getting Hardnose to operate more effectively in the corridor infiltration areas. No change in status of Kha.

G. OTHER SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS

These include "Queen Bee", "Box Top", "Lucky Dragon" and "Blue Springs".

1964 MEMO FROM THE JOINT CHIEFS ON SEPTEMBER'S COVERT RAIDS

(Memorandum from Maj. Gen. Rollen H. Anthis, an Air Force aide to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Assistant Secretary of State Bundy and Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton, Aug. 27, 1964. The subject of the memorandum was given as "OPLAN 34A-September Schedule.")

1. Attached hereto is COMUSMACV'S proposed schedule of 34A actions for September.

2. All of the actions listed have either been specifically approved previously or are similar to such approved actions. For example, Action (3)(d) was specifically approved by consideration of JCSM-426-64 dated 19 May 1964, while Action (3)(b) is similar to a previously approved action against a security post.

3. The method of attack has been changed in some instances from destruction by infiltration of demolition teams to the concept of standoff bombardment from PTFs. These actions are so indicated in the attachment.

The proposed September 34A actions are as follows:

(1) INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION ACTION

(a) 1-30 September—Aerial photography to update selected targets along with pre and post-strike coverage of approved actions.

(b) 1-30 September—Two junk capture missions; remove captives for 36-48 hours interrogation; booby trap junk with anti-disturbance devices and release; captives returned after interrogation; timing depends upon sea conditions and current intelligence.

(2) PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

(a) 1-30 September—In conjunction with approved overflights and maritime operations, delivery of propaganda leaflets, gift kits, and deception devices simulating resupply of phantom teams.

(b) 1-30 September—Approximately 200 letters of various propaganda themes sent through third country mail channels to North Vietnam.

(c) 1-30 September—Black Radio daily 30-minute programs repeated once, purports to be voice of dissident elements in North Vietnam.

(d) 1-30 September—White Radio broadcast of eight-and-one-half hours daily, propaganda "Voice of Freedom".

(3) MARITIME OPERATIONS

(a) 1-30 September—Demolition of Route 1 bridge by infiltrated team accompanied by fire support teams, place short-delay charges against spans and caissons, place antipersonnel mines on road approaches. (This bridge previously hit but now repaired).

(b) 1-30 September—Bombard Cape Mul Dao observation post with 81 MM mortars and 40 MM guns from two PTFs.

(c) 1-30 September—Demolition of another Route 1 bridge (see map), concept same as (3)(a) above.

(d) 1-30 September—Bombard Sara Son radar, same as (3)(b).

(e) 1-30 September—Bombard Tiger Island barracks, same as (3)(b).

(f) 1-30 September—Bombard Hon Ngu Island, same as (3)(b).

(g) 1-30 September—Bombard Hon Matt Island, same as (3)(b) and run concurrently with (3)(f).

(h) 1-30 September—Destruction of section of Hanoi-Vinh railroad by infiltrated demolition team supported by two VN marine squads, by rubber boats from PTFs, place short-delay charges and antipersonnel mines around area.

(i) 1-30 September—Bombard Hon Me Island in conjunction with (3)(a) above, concept same as (3)(b).

(j) 1-30 September—Bombard Cape Falalso gun positions in conjunction with (3)(h) above, concept same as (3)(b).

(k) 1-30 September—Bombard Cape Mul Ron in conjunction with junk capture mission, concept same as (3)(b). (4) Airborne Operations—Light-of-moon period 18-28 September.

(a) Four missions for resupply of in-place teams.

(b) Four missions for reinforcement of in-place teams.

(c) Four missions to airdrop new psyops/sabotage teams depending upon development of drop zone and target information. These are low-key propaganda and intelligence gathering team with a capability for small-scale sabotage on order after locating suitable targets.

(5) Dates for actual launch of maritime and airborne operations are contingent upon the intelligence situation and weather conditions.

THE COVERT WAR

The Pentagon papers disclose that in this phase the United States had been mounting clandestine military attacks against North Vietnam and planning to obtain a Congressional resolution that the Administration regarded as the equivalent of a declaration of war. The papers make it clear that these far-reaching measures were not improvised in the heat of the Tonkin crisis.

When the Tonkin incident occurred, the Johnson Administration did not reveal these clandestine attacks, and pushed the previously prepared resolution through both houses of Congress on Aug. 7.

Within 72 hours, the Administration, drawing on a prepared plan, then secretly sent a Canadian emissary to Hanoi. He warned Premier Pham Van Dong that the resolution meant North Vietnam must halt the Communist-led insurgencies in South Vietnam and Laos or "suffer the consequences." (See text, Page 36.)

The section of the Pentagon study dealing with the internal debate, planning and action in the Johnson Administration from the beginning of 1964 to the August clashes between North Vietnamese PT boats and American destroyers—portrayed as a critical period when the groundwork was laid for the wider war that followed—also reveals that the covert military operations had become so extensive by August, 1964, that Thai pilots flying American T-28 fighter planes apparently bombed and strafed North Vietnamese villages near the Laotian border on Aug. 1 and 2.

Moreover, it reports that the Administration was able to order retaliatory air strikes on less than six hours' notice during the Tonkin incident because planning had progressed so far that a list of targets was available for immediate choice. The target list had been drawn up in May, the study reports, along with a draft of the Congressional resolution—

all as part of a proposed "scenario" that was to build toward openly acknowledged air attacks on North Vietnam.

Simultaneously, the papers reveal, Secretary McNamara and the Joint Chiefs of Staff also arranged for the deployment of air strike forces to Southeast Asia for the opening phases of the bombing campaign. Within hours of the retaliatory air strikes on Aug. 4 and three days before the passage of the Congressional resolution, the squadrons began their planned moves. [See text.]

PROGRESSIVELY ESCALATING PRESSURE

What the Pentagon papers call "an elaborate program of covert military operations against the state of North Vietnam" began on Feb. 1, 1964, under the code name Operation Plan 34A. President Johnson ordered the program, on the recommendation of Secretary McNamara, in the hope, held very faint by the intelligence community, that "progressively escalating pressure" from the clandestine attacks might eventually force Hanoi to order the Vietcong guerrillas and the Pathet Lao to halt their insurrections.

In a memorandum to the President on Dec. 21, 1963, after a two-day trip to Vietnam, Mr. McNamara remarked that the plans, drawn up by the Central Intelligence Agency station and the military command in Saigon, were "an excellent job."

"They present a wide variety of sabotage and psychological operations against North Vietnam from which I believe we should aim to select those that provide maximum pressure with minimum risk," Mr. McNamara wrote.

President Johnson, in this period, showed a preference for steps that would remain "non-committing" to combat, the study found. But weakness in South Vietnam and Communist advances kept driving the planning process. This, in turn, caused the Saigon Government and American officials in Saigon to demand ever more action.

Through 1964, the 34A operations ranged from flights over North Vietnam by U-2 spy planes and kidnappings of North Vietnamese citizens for intelligence information, to parachuting sabotage and psychological-warfare teams into the North, commando raids from the sea to blow up rail and highway bridges and the bombardment of North Vietnamese coastal installations by PT boats.

These "destructive undertakings," as they were described in a report to the President on Jan. 2, 1964, from Maj. Gen. Victor H. Krulak of the Marine Corps, were designed "to result in substantial destruction, economic loss and harassment." The tempo and magnitude of the strikes were designed to rise in three phases through 1964 to "targets identified with North Vietnam's economic and industrial well-being."

The clandestine operations were directed for the President by Mr. McNamara through a section of the Joint Chiefs organization called the Office of the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities. The study says that Mr. McNamara was kept regularly informed of planned and conducted raids by memorandums from General Krulak, who first held the position of special assistant, and then from Maj. Gen. Rollen H. Anthis of the Air Force, who succeeded him in February, 1964. The Joint Chiefs themselves periodically evaluated the operations for Mr. McNamara.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk was also informed, if in less detail.

The attacks were given "interagency clearance" in Washington, the study says, by coordinating them with the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency, including advance monthly schedules of the raids from General Anthis.

The Pentagon account and the documents show that William P. Bundy, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs,

and John T. McNaughton, head of the Pentagon's politico-military operations as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs were the senior civilian officials who supervised the distribution of the schedules and the other aspects of inter-agency coordination for Mr. McNamara and Mr. Rusk.

The analyst notes that the 34A program differed in a significant respect from the relatively low-level and unsuccessful intelligence and sabotage operations that the C.I.A. had earlier been carrying out in North Vietnam.

The 34A attacks were a military effort under the control in Saigon of Gen. Paul D. Harkins, chief of the United States Military Assistance Command there. He ran them through a special branch of his command called the Studies and Observations Group. It drew up the advance monthly schedules for approval in Washington. Planning was done jointly with the South Vietnamese and it was they or "hired personnel," apparently Asian mercenaries, who performed the raids, but General Harkins was in charge.

The second major segment of the Administration's covert war against North Vietnam consisted of air operations in Laos. A force of propeller-driven T-28 fighter-bombers, varying from about 25 to 40 aircraft, had been organized there. The planes bore Laotians Air Force markings, but only some belonged to that air force. The rest were manned by pilots of Air America (a pseudo-private airline run by the C.I.A.) and by Thai pilots under the control of Ambassador Leonard Unger. [See text]

AID FOR THE BOMBING RAIDS

Reconnaissance flights by regular United States Air Force and Navy jets, code-named Yankee Team, gathered photographic intelligence for bombing raids by the T-28's against North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao troops in Laos.

The Johnson Administration gradually stepped up these air operations in Laos through the spring and summer of 1964 in what became a kind of preview of the bombing of the North. The escalation occurred both because of ground advances by the North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao and because of the Administration's desire to bring more military pressure against North Vietnam.

As the intensity of the T-28 strikes rose, they crept closer to the North Vietnamese border. The United States Yankee Team jets moved from high-altitude reconnaissance at the beginning of the year to low-altitude reconnaissance in May. In June, armed escort jets were added to the reconnaissance missions. The escort jets began to bomb and strafe North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao troops and installations whenever the reconnaissance planes were fired upon.

The destroyer patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin, code-named De Soto patrols, were the third element in the covert military pressures against North Vietnam. While the purpose of the patrols was mainly psychological, as a show of force, the destroyers collected the kind of intelligence on North Vietnamese warning radars and coastal defenses that would be useful to 34A raiding parties or, in the event of a bombing campaign, to pilots. The first patrol was conducted by the destroyer Craig without incident in February and March, in the early days of the 34A operations.

SEPARATE CHAIN OF COMMAND

The analyst states that before the August Tonkin incident there was no attempt to involve the destroyers with the 34A attacks or to use the ships as bait for North Vietnamese retaliation. The patrols were run through a separate naval chain of command.

Although the highest levels of the Administration sent the destroyers into the gulf while the 34A raids were taking place, the Pentagon study, as part of its argument that

a deliberate provocation was not intended, in effect says that the Administration did not believe that the North Vietnamese would dare to attack the ships.

But the study makes it clear that the physical presence of the destroyers provided the elements for the Tonkin clash. And immediately after the reprisal air strikes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton put forward a "provocation strategy" proposing to repeat the clash as a pretext for bombing the North.

Of the three elements of the covert war, the analyst cites the 34A raids as the most important. The "unequivocal" American responsibility for them "carried with it an implicit symbolic and psychological intensification of the U.S. commitment," he writes. "A firebreak had been crossed."

The fact that the intelligence community and even the Joint Chiefs also gave the program little chance of compelling Hanoi to stop the Vietcong and the Pathet Lao, he asserts, meant that "a demand for more was stimulated and an expectation of more was aroused."

WARNING BY THE JOINT CHIEFS

On Jan. 22, 1964, a week before the 34A raids started, the Joint Chiefs warned Mr. McNamara in a memorandum signed by the Chairman, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, that while "we are wholly in favor of executing the covert actions against North Vietnam . . . it would be idle to conclude that these efforts will have a decisive effect" on Hanoi's will to support the Vietcong.

The Joint Chiefs said the Administration "must make ready to conduct increasingly bolder actions," including "aerial bombing of key North Vietnam targets, using United States resources under Vietnamese cover," sending American ground troops to South Vietnam and employing "United States forces as necessary in direct actions against North Vietnam."

And after a White House strategy meeting on Feb. 20, President Johnson ordered that "contingency planning for pressures against North Vietnam should be speeded up."

"Particular attention should be given to shaping such pressures so as to produce the maximum credible deterrent effect on Hanoi," the order said.

The impelling force behind the Administration's desire to step up the action during this period was its recognition of the steady deterioration in the positions of the pro-American government in Laos and South Vietnam, and the corresponding weakening of the United States hold on both countries. North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao advances in Laos were seen as having a direct impact on the morale of the anti-Communist forces in South Vietnam, the central American concern.

This deterioration was also concealed from Congress and the public as much as possible to provide the Administration with maximum flexibility to determine its moves as it chose from behind the scenes.

'THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM'

The United States found itself particularly unable to cope with the Vietcong insurgency, first through the Saigon military regime of Gen. Duong Van Minh and later through that of Gen. Nguyen Khanh, who seized power in a coup d'etat on Jan. 30, 1964. Accordingly, attention focused more and more on North Vietnam as "the root of the problem," in the words of the Joint Chiefs.

Walt W. Rostow, the dominant intellectual of the Administration, had given currency to this idea and provided the theoretical framework for escalation. His concept, first enunciated in a speech at Fort Bragg, N.C., in 1961, was that a revolution could be dried up by cutting off external sources of support and supply.

When North Vietnam was concerned, Mr. Rostow had evolved another theory—that a

credible threat to bomb the industry Hanoi had so painstakingly constructed out of the ruins of the French Indochina War would be enough to frighten the country's leaders into ordering the Vietcong to halt their activities in the South.

In a memorandum on Feb. 13, 1964, Mr. Rostow told Secretary of State Rusk that President Ho Chi Minh "has an industrial complex to protect; he is no longer a guerrilla fighter with nothing to lose."

The Administration was firmly convinced from interceptions of radio traffic between North Vietnam and the guerrillas in the South that Hanoi controlled and directed the Vietcong. Intelligence analyses of the time stated, however, that "the primary sources of Communist strength in South Vietnam are indigenous," arising out of the revolutionary social aims of the Communists and their identification with the nationalist cause during the independence struggle against France in the nineteen-fifties.

The study shows that President Johnson and most of his key advisers would not accept this intelligence analysis that bombing the North would have no lasting effect on the situation in the South, although there was division—even among those who favored a bombing campaign if necessary—over the extent to which Vietcong fortunes were dependent on the infiltration of men and arms from North Vietnam.

William Bundy and Mr. Rusk mentioned on several occasions the need to obtain more evidence of this infiltration to build a case publicly for stronger actions against North Vietnam.

FOCUS TURNS TO BOMBING

As the Vietcong rebellion gathered strength, so did interest in bombing the North as a substitute for successful prosecution of the counterinsurgency campaign in the South, or at least as an effort to force Hanoi to reduce guerrilla activity to a level where the feeble Saigon Government could handle it.

This progression in Administration thinking was reflected in Mr. McNamara's reports to President Johnson after the Secretary's trips to Vietnam in December and March.

In his December memorandum recommending initiation of the covert 34A raids, Mr. McNamara painted a "gloomy picture" of South Vietnam with the Vietcong controlling most of the rice and population heartland of the Mekong Delta south and west of Saigon. "We should watch the situation very carefully," he concluded, "running scared, hoping for the best, but preparing for more forceful moves if the situation does not show early signs of improvement."

Then, in his memorandum of March 16 on his latest trip, Mr. McNamara reported that "the situation has unquestionably been growing worse" and recommended military planning for two programs of "new and significant pressures upon North Vietnam."

The first, to be launched on 72 hours' notice, was described as "Border Control and Retaliatory Actions." These would include assaults by Saigon's army against infiltration routes along the Ho Chi Minh Trail network of supply lines through southeastern Laos, "hot pursuit" of the guerrillas into Cambodia, "retaliatory bombing strikes" into North Vietnam by the South Vietnamese Air Force "on a tit-for-tat basis" in response to guerrilla attacks, and "aerial mining . . . (possibly with United States assistance) of the major . . . ports in North Vietnam." The words in parentheses are Mr. McNamara's.

BEYOND A TIT-FOR-TAT BASIS

The second program, called "Graduated Overt Military Pressure," was to be readied to begin on 30 days' notice. "This program would go beyond reacting on a tit-for-tat basis," Mr. McNamara told the President. "It

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would include air attacks against military and possibly industrial targets." The raids would be carried out by Saigon's air force and by an American air commando squadron code-named Farmgate, then operating in South Vietnam with planes carrying South Vietnamese markings. To conduct the air strikes, they would be reinforced by three squadrons of United States Air Force B-57 jet bombers flown in from Japan.

President Johnson approved Mr. McNamara's recommendations at a National Security Council meeting on March 17, 1964, directing that planning "proceeds energetically."

Mr. McNamara had advocated trying a number of measures to improve the Saigon Government's performance first, before resorting to overt escalation. "There would be the problem of marshaling the case to justify such action, the problem of Communist escalation and the problem of dealing with pressures for premature or 'stacked' negotiations," he remarked in his March memorandum.

His description of negotiations echoed a belief in the Administration that the Government of General Khanh was incapable of competing politically with the Communists. Therefore, any attempt to negotiate a compromise political settlement of the war between the Vietnamese themselves was to be avoided because it would result in a Communist take-over and the destruction of the American position in South Vietnam.

Similarly, any internal accommodation between the opposing Vietnamese forces under the vague "neutralization" formula for Vietnam that had been proposed by President Charles de Gaulle of France that June was seen as tantamount to the same thing, a Communist victory. In his March memorandum, Mr. McNamara mentioned the dangerous growth of "neutralist sentiment" in Saigon and the possibility of a coup by neutralist forces who might form a coalition government with the Communists and invite the United States to leave.

A "SOLUTION" IN DISFAVOR

William Bundy would later refer to this possibility as a "Vietnam solution" that must be prevented.

In a glimpse into the President's thoughts at this time, the study shows he was concerned with the problem. Mr. Johnson told Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge in a cablegram to Saigon on March 20, 1964, that he was intent on "knocking down the idea of neutralization wherever it rears its ugly head, and on this point I think nothing is more important than to stop neutralist talk wherever we can by whatever means we can." [See text.]

Mr. Lodge was opposed to planning for "massive destruction actions" before trying what he described as "an essentially diplomatic carrot and stick approach, backed by covert military means".

This plan, which Mr. Lodge had been proposing since the previous October, involved sending a secret non-American envoy to Hanoi with an offer of economic aid, such as food imports to relieve the rice shortages in North Vietnam, in return for calling off the Vietcong. If the North Vietnamese did not respond favorably, the stick—unpublicized and unacknowledged air strikes, apparently with unmarked planes—would be applied until they did.

The President's message of March 20 shared Mr. Lodge's opinion that it was still too early for open assaults on the North.

"As we agreed in our previous messages to each other," Mr. Johnson cabled, "judgment is reserved for the present on overt military action in view of the consensus from Saigon conversations of McNamara mission with General Khanh and you on judgment that movement against the North at the present would be premature. We . . . share General Khanh's judgment that the immediate and

essential task is to strengthen the southern base. For this reason, our planning for action against the North is on a contingency basis at present, and immediate problem in this area is to develop the strongest possible military and political base for possible later action."

Mr. Johnson added that the Administration also expected a "showdown" soon in the Chinese-Soviet dispute "and action against the North will be more practicable" then.

PUSHING, YET HESITATING

This and the other sporadic insights the study gives into Mr. Johnson's thoughts and motivations during these months leading up to the Tonkin Gulf incident in August indicate a President who was, on the one hand, pushing his Administration to plan energetically for escalation while, on the other, continually hesitating to translate these plans into military action.

The glimpses are of a Chief Executive who was determined to achieve the goal of an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam" he had enunciated in a national security action memorandum in March, yet who was holding back on action to achieve that goal until he believed they were absolutely necessary.

Above all, the narrative indicates a President who was carefully calculating international and domestic political conditions before making any of his moves in public.

By the latter half of April, 1964, accordingly, planning for further attacks against the North had matured sufficiently through several scenarios for Secretary Rusk, William Bundy and Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, the Army Chief of Staff, to review the plans with Ambassador Lodge at a Saigon strategy meeting on April 19 and 20.

The scenario envisioned escalation in three stages from intensification of the current clandestine 34A raids, to "covert U.S. support of overt . . . aerial mining and air strike operations" by Saigon to "overt joint . . . aerial reconnaissance, naval displays, naval bombardments and air attacks" by the United States and South Vietnam.

The analyst does not mention any provision in the April planning scenario for a Congressional resolution that would constitute authority to wage war; he refers instead to "Presidential consultations with key Congressional leaders." But the idea of a resolution was already current by them. The author reports its first emergence in discussions in the State Department in mid-February, 1964, "on the desirability of the President's requesting a Congressional resolution, drawing a line at the borders of South Vietnam." He cites a Feb. 13 letter to Secretary Rusk to this effect from Mr. Rostow, then chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council.

At the April Saigon meeting and in the weeks immediately afterward, the author says, "a deliberate, cautious pacing of our actions" prevailed over a near-term escalation approach being pressed by the Joint Chiefs and Mr. Rostow.

One reason for this, the study explains, was that the Administration recognized that it "lacked adequate information concerning the nature and magnitude" of infiltration of trained guerrilla leaders and arms from the North and was beginning a major effort to try to gather enough concrete evidence to justify escalation if this became necessary.

ROSTOW PLEA FOR CLARIFICATION

"For example," the study reports, "citing the 'lack of clarity' on the 'role of external intrusion' in South Vietnam, [chairman of the interagency Vietnam coordinating committee] on the eve of [a] March visit to attempt to 'come back from Saigon with as lucid and agreed a picture' as possible on the extent of the infiltration and its influence on the Vietcong."

The direct outcome of Mr. Rusk's April visit to Saigon was his agreement to try Ambassador Lodge's carrot-and-stick approach. On April 30, 1964, the Secretary flew to Ottawa and arranged with the Canadian Government for J. Blair Seaborn, Canada's new representative on the International Control Commission, to convey the offer of United States economic aid to Premier Dong when Mr. Seaborn visited Hanoi in June.

On May 4 General Khanh, sensing a decline in his fortunes and beginning to abandon the idea of strengthening his government to the point where it could defeat the Vietcong in the South, told Ambassador Lodge that he wanted to declare war quickly on North Vietnam, have the United States start bombing and send 10,000 Special Forces troops of the United States Army into the South "to cover the whole Cambodian-Laotian border." Mr. Lodge deflected the suggestions.

Secretary McNamara, on a visit to Saigon May 13, was instructed to tell General Khanh that while the United States did not "rule out" bombing the North, "such actions must be supplementary to and not a substitute for successful counter-insurgency in the South" and that "we do not intend to provide military support nor undertake the military objective of 'rolling back' Communist control in North Vietnam."

But on May 17, when the Pathet Lao launched an offensive on the Plaine des Jarres that threatened to collapse the pro-American Government of Premier Souvanna Phouma and with it "the political underpinning of United States-Laotian policy," the study declares, this "deliberate, cautious approach" to escalation planning was suddenly thrown into "crisis management."

The Administration immediately turned the Laotian air operations up a notch by intensifying the T-28 strikes and, on May 21, by starting low-altitude target reconnaissance by United States Navy and Air Force jets over areas held by the Pathet Lao and the North Vietnamese.

In Washington, the chief planner, William Bundy, assisted by Mr. McNaughton and Mr. Sullivan, worked up a 30-day program culminating in full-scale bombing of the North. He submitted it as a formal draft Presidential memorandum for consideration by an executive committee of the National Security Council.

For a number of reasons, this May 23 scenario was never carried out as written. The President, in fact, delayed another nine months the scenario's denouement in an air war.

But the document is important because it reveals how far the Administration had progressed in its planning by this point and because a number of the steps in the scenario were carried out piece-meal through June and July and then very rapidly under the political climate of the Tonkin Gulf clash.

For the military side of the scenario, the President's order of March 17 to plan for retaliatory air strikes on 72 hours' notice and for full-scale air raids on 30 days' notice had borne fruit in Operation Plan 37-64.

This plan had been prepared in the Honolulu headquarters of Adm. Harry D. Felt, commander in chief of Pacific forces, or CINCPAC, and had been approved by the Joint Chiefs on April 17. It tabulated how many planes and what bomb tonnages would be required for each phase of the strikes, listed the targets in North Vietnam with damage to be achieved, and programmed the necessary positioning of air forces for the raids. A follow-up operation plan, designated 32-64, calculated the possible reactions of China and North Vietnam and the American ground forces that might be necessary to meet them.

The Joint Staff had refined the bombing plan with more target studies. These estimated that an initial category of targets as-

sociated with infiltration, such as bridges and depots of ammunition and petroleum, could be destroyed in only 12 days if all the air power in the western Pacific were used.

For the political side of the scenario, recommendations from William Bundy and Mr. Rusk had produced more evidence of infiltration by the North for public release to justify escalation. William J. Jordan, a former correspondent of The New York Times who had become a State Department official, had gone to South Vietnam and had pulled together the data available there for a possible new State Department white paper.

PENTAGON VERSION OF SCENARIO

Here is the scenario as the Pentagon analyst quotes it. The words in parentheses—and the numbers designating the length of time to "D-day"—were in the original scenario and the words in brackets were inserted by the analyst for clarification:

"1. Stall off any conference [Laos or] Vietnam until D-Day."

"2. Intermediary (Canadian?) tell North Vietnam in general terms that U.S. does not want to destroy the North Vietnam regime (and indeed is willing 'to provide a carrot') but is determined to protect South Vietnam from North Vietnam.

"3. (D-30) Presidential speech in general terms launching Joint Resolution.

"4. (D-20) Obtain joint resolution approving past actions and authorizing whatever is necessary with respect to Vietnam.

"Concurrently: An effort should be made to strengthen the posture in South Vietnam. Integrating (interlarding in a single chain of command) the South Vietnamese and U.S. military and civilian elements critical to pacification, down at least to the district level, might be undertaken.

"5. (D-16) Direct CINCPAC to take all pre-positioning and logistic actions that can be taken 'quietly' for the D-Day forces . . .

"6. (D-15) Get Khanh's agreement to start overt South Vietnamese air attacks against targets in the North (see D-Day Item 15 below), and inform him of U.S. guarantee to protect South Vietnam in the event of North Vietnamese and/or Chinese retaliation.

"7. (D-14) Consult with Thailand and the Philippines to get permission for U.S. deployments; and consult with them plus U.K., Australia, New Zealand and Pakistan, asking for their open political support for the undertaking and for their participation in the re-enforcing action to be undertaken in anticipation of North Vietnamese and/or Chinese retaliation.

"8. (D-13) Release an expanded 'Jordan Report,' including recent photography and evidence of the communication nets, giving full documentation of North Vietnamese supply and direction of the Vietcong.

"9. (D-12) Direct CINCPAC to begin moving forces and making specific plans on the assumption that strikes will be made on D-Day (see Attachment B* in backup materials for deployments).

"10. (D-10) Khanh makes speech demanding that North Vietnam stop aggression, threatening unspecified military action if he does not. (He could refer to a 'carrot.')

"11. (D-3) Discussions with allies not covered in item above.

"12. (D-3) President informs U.S. public (and thereby North Vietnam) that action may come, referring to Khanh speech (Item 10 above) and declaring support for South Vietnam.

"13. (D-1) Khanh announces that all efforts have failed and that attacks are imminent. (Again he refers to limited goal and possibly to 'carrot.')

"14. (D-Day) Become U.S. dependents.

"15. (D-Day) Launch first strikes. . . . Initially, mine their ports and strike North Vietnam's transport and related ability (bridge, trains) to move south; and then against targets which have maximum psy-

chological effect on the North's willingness to stop insurgency—POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) storage, selected airfields, barracks/training areas, bridges, railroad yards, port facilities, communications, and industries. Initially, these strikes would be by South Vietnamese aircraft; they could then be expanded by adding Farmgate, or U.S. aircraft, or any combination of them.

"16 (D-Day) Call for conference on Vietnam (and go to U.N.). State the limited objective: Not to overthrow the North Vietnam regime nor to destroy the country, but to stop D.R.V.-directed efforts in the South. Essential that it be made clear that attacks on the North will continue (i.e., no cease-fire) until (a) terrorism, armed attacks, and armed resistance to pacification efforts in the South stop, and (b) communications on the networks out of the North are conducted entirely in uncoded form."

THE ANALYST'S DEFINITION

The last paragraph was to provide a capsule definition of what the Administration meant when it later spoke publicly about "negotiations," a definition the analyst describes as "tantamount to unconditional surrender" for the other side.

The covering memorandum on the scenario pointed out that military action would not begin until after "favorable action" on the joint Congressional resolution. William Bundy drafted the resolution May 25.

Attached to the scenario were assessments of possible Soviet, Chinese and North Vietnamese reactions. These included a provision for reinforcing the South Vietnamese Army "by U.S. ground forces prepositioned in South Vietnam or on board ship nearby" if Hanoi reacted by intensifying Vietcong activity in the South.

After meetings on May 24 and 25, the Executive Committee of the National Security Council—including Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, and McGeorge Bundy, Presidential assistant for national security—decided to recommend to the President only piecemeal elements of the scenario. Among these were the sending of the Canadian emissary to Hanoi and the move for a joint Congressional resolution.

The documents do not provide a clear explanation for their decision, the analyst says, although an important factor seems to have been concern that "our limited objectives might have been obscured" if the Administration had begun a chain of actions to step up the war at this point.

Whether political considerations in an election year also prompted the President to limit the proposed escalation is a question that is not addressed by the study here. The narrative does attribute such motives to Mr. Johnson's similar hesitation to take major overt actions in the following month, June.

In any case, the account explains, the urgency was taken out of the Laos crisis by a Polish diplomatic initiative on May 27 for a new Laos conference that would not include discussions of Vietnam, a major fear of the Administration. The President instructed his senior advisers to convene another strategy conference in Honolulu at the beginning of June "to review for . . . final approval a series of plans for effective action."

On his way to the conference, after attending the funeral of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in New Delhi, Secretary Rusk stopped off in Saigon for conversations with General Khanh and Ambassador Lodge.

The Ambassador and Gen. William C. Westmoreland, who was replacing General Harkins as chief of the Military Assistance Command in Saigon, flew to Honolulu with Secretary Rusk for the strategy session at Admiral Felt's headquarters there on June 1 and 2, 1964. They were joined by William Bundy, Mr. McNamara, General Taylor, Mr. McCone and Mr. Sullivan.

While he had previously counseled patience, Mr. Lodge's chief recommendation at Honolulu reflected his growing nervousness over the shakiness of the Saigon regime. He argued for bombing the North soon.

The analyst writes: "In answer to Secretary Rusk's query about South Vietnamese popular attitudes, which supported Hanoi's revolutionary aims, the Ambassador stated his conviction that most support for the VC would fade as soon as some 'counterterrorism measures' were begun against the D.R.V.—the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam.

Admiral Felt's record of the first day's session quotes Mr. Lodge as predicting that "a selective bombing campaign against military targets in the North" would "bolster morale and give the population in the South a feeling of unity."

The Honolulu discussions concentrated on an air war, ranging over its entire implications, down to such details as the kind of antiaircraft guns North Vietnam had and how difficult these defenses might make attacks on particular targets. By now the Joint Chiefs had improved on Admiral Felt's Operation Plan 37-64 to the point of producing the first version of a comprehensive list of 94 targets, from bridges to industries, that Mr. McNamara and President Johnson would use to select the actual sites to be struck when sustained air raids began in the coming year.

Obtaining a Congressional resolution "prior to wider U. S. action in Southeast Asia" was a major topic. The analyst paraphrases and quotes from William Bundy's memorandum of record on the second day's talks to summarize the discussion concerning the resolution:

"Ambassador Lodge questioned the need for it if we were to confine our actions to 'tit-for-tat' air attacks against North Vietnam. However, Secretaries McNamara and Rusk and C.I.A. Director McCone all argued in favor of the resolution. In support, McNamara pointed to the need to guarantee South Vietnam's defense against retaliatory air attacks and against more drastic reactions by North Vietnam and Communist China. He added that it might be necessary, as the action unfolded . . . to deploy as many as seven divisions. Rusk noted that some of the military requirements might involve the calling up of reserves, always a touchy Congressional issue. He also stated that public opinion on our Southeast Asia policy was badly divided in the United States at the moment and that, therefore, the President needed an affirmation of support."

"General Taylor noted that there was a danger of reasoning ourselves into inaction," the memorandum goes on. "From a military point of view, he said the U.S. could function in Southeast Asia about as well as anywhere in the world except Cuba."

MORE TIME FOR ESTIMATES

The upshot of the conference, however, was that major actions "should be delayed for some time yet," the historian says. A separate briefing paper that William Bundy prepared for Secretary Rusk to use in communicating the conference's findings to the President at a White House meeting late on the afternoon of June 3 counseled more time "to refine our plans and estimates." Mr. Bundy emphasized the need for an "urgent" public relations campaign at home to "get at the basic doubts of the value of Southeast Asia and the importance of our stake there."

Secretary McNamara, General Taylor and Mr. McCone joined Secretary Rusk in making the June 3 report to the President on the Honolulu conference. A documentary record of this White House meeting is not available, but the study deduces the President's reaction and decisions from the subsequent actions taken by his senior advisers.

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Where decisive military actions were concerned, "the President apparently recognized the need for more and better information, but did not convey a sense of urgency regarding its acquisition," the analyst says. He notes that on the same day as the White House meeting, "possibly just following," Secretary McNamara told the Joint Chiefs that he wanted to meet with them on June 8, five days later, "to discuss North Vietnamese targets and troop movement capabilities."

But one element of the May 23 scenario, the positioning of forces for later action, began to fall into place right after the White House meeting. The Pentagon study says that "noncommitting military actions . . . were given immediate approval."

On June 4 Mr. McNamara directed the Army to take "immediate action . . . to improve the effectiveness and readiness status of its materiel prestocked for possible use in Southeast Asia."

The Secretary's directive specifically ordered the Army to augment stocks previously placed with Thailand's agreement at Korat, a town south of the Laotian border, to support potential combat operations by a United States Army infantry brigade and to give "first priority at the Okinawa Army Forward Depot to stocking non-air-transportable equipment" that would be required by another Army infantry brigade flown to the island staging base on sudden notice.

The President also "apparently encouraged" the intensified public-relations campaign recommended by William Bundy and the other Honolulu conference participants, the study asserts.

"In June, State and Defense Department sources made repeated leaks to the press affirming U.S. intentions to support its allies and uphold its treaty commitments in Southeast Asia," the analyst explains, citing several articles that month in *The New York Times*. The Administration also focused publicity through June and into July on its military repositioning moves. The augmentation of the Army war stocks at Korat in Thailand was given "extensive press coverage," the account says, citing a dispatch in *The Times* on June 21, 1964.

And what the analyst calls "the broad purpose of these positioning moves—to serve as steps in the operation plans—was not explained to the public."

DOWNING OF TWO NAVY JETS

The Administration did openly step up its air operations in Laos in mid-June, after the enemy provided it with a rationale of self-defense. On June 6 and 7 two Navy jets on low-altitude target reconnaissance flights were shot down by enemy ground fire. Washington immediately added armed escort jets to the reconnaissance flights and on June 9 the escort jets struck Pathet Lao gun positions and attacked a Pathet Lao headquarters.

A similar escalation of the T-28 operations and the involvement of Thai pilots was unofficially acknowledged in Washington, although the responsibility for these operations was laid to the Laotian Government. And subsequent strikes by the American escort jets against enemy positions were not made public.

At the end of June the Royal Laotian Air Force was secretly strengthened with more T-28's, and American planes began conducting troop transport operations and night reconnaissance flights for a successful counter-offensive by the Laotian Army to protect the key position of Muong Soui.

HIGHLIGHTS OF TONKIN PERIOD

Here, in chronological sequence, are highlights of the period covered in this article:

FEBRUARY, 1964

Start of Operation Plan 34A program of clandestine military operations against North Vietnam;

MARCH, 1964

Plans for "new and significant pressures on North Vietnam" urged by Mr. McNamara on return from Vietnam since new Government of Gen. Nguyen Khanh considered unable to improve South Vietnam outlook.

President Johnson approves; cables Henry Cabot Lodge, United States Ambassador in Saigon, that "our planning for action against the North is on a contingency basis at the present."

APRIL, 1964

Scenarios for escalation reviewed in Saigon by Mr. Lodge, William P. Bundy, Dean Rusk, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler. Plans cover details of stepping up United States military involvement to conform with Administration conviction that Hanoi controls Vietcong. Extent of Hanoi's involvement, should be "proven to the satisfaction of our own public of our allies and of the neutralists," according to Mr. Rusk.

List of 94 potential targets for bombing in North drawn up by Joint Chiefs.

MAY, 1964

General Khanh asks United States attacks on the North, tells Mr. Lodge Saigon wants to declare war on North Vietnam. Mr. McNamara does not "rule out" possibility of bombing, but stresses "such actions must be supplementary to and not a substitute for" success against Vietcong in South. Mr. Lodge cables Mr. Rusk that United States cannot "expect a much better performance" from Saigon Government "unless something" in the way of United States action is forthcoming.

William Bundy sends President 30-day scenario for graduated military pressure against the North that would culminate in full-scale bombing attacks. Includes Joint Congressional resolution "authorizing whatever is necessary with respect to Vietnam."

JUNE, 1964

Honolulu strategy meeting. Ambassador Lodge urges "a selective bombing campaign against military targets in the North" to bolster shaky morale in South. He questions need for Congressional resolution; Mr. Rusk, Mr. McNamara, John McCone of C.I.A., support it.

Preparatory military deployments under way in Southeast Asia.

J. Blair Seaborn, Canadian diplomat, meets secretly in Hanoi with Pham Van Dong, North Vietnam's Premier, warns of "the greatest devastation" that would result from escalation by North Vietnam.

President resists pressure to ask for Congressional resolution immediately and to step up the war effort.

Mr. Johnson queries C.I.A. on "domino theory." Agency replies only Cambodia is likely to "quickly succumb to Communism" if Laos and South Vietnam fall, but says U.S. prestige would be damaged.

JULY, 1964

General Khanh announces "March North" propaganda campaign.

South Vietnamese naval commandos raid two North Vietnamese islands in Gulf of Tonkin. Part of "growing operational capabilities" of 34A program, the Pentagon study says.

AUGUST 1964

Destroyer Maddox, on Gulf of Tonkin intelligence patrol, attacked by North Vietnamese raiders. Joined by the C. Turner Joy, attacked again by torpedo boats, history reports.

Less than 12 hours after news of second attack reaches Washington, bombers on way to North Vietnam on reprisal raiders from carrier.

Tonkin Gulf resolution, drafted by Administration, introduced. Administration officials testify; Mr. McNamara disclaims knowledge South Vietnamese attacks on islands. Resolution passes.

What study calls "an important threshold in the war"—U.S. reprisal air strikes against

North—crossed with "virtually no domestic criticism."

FIRMNESS, BUT RESTRAINT

President Johnson was projecting an image of firmness but moderation, the study notes. In early June, he first requested and then rejected a draft from Mr. Rostow for a major policy speech on Southeast Asia that took an "aggressive approach," and instead relied "on news conferences and speeches by other officials to state the official view," the account continues. "In contrast to the Rostow approach, [the President's] news conference on 23 June and Secretary Rusk's speech at Williams College, 14 June, emphasized the U.S. determination to support its Southeast Asian allies, but avoided any direct challenge to Hanoi and Peking or any hint of intent to increase our military commitment."

A formal question the President submitted to the C.I.A. in June also indicated what was on his mind. "Would the rest of Southeast Asia necessarily fall if Laos and South Vietnam came under North Vietnamese control?" he asked. The agency's reply on June 9 challenged the domino theory, widely believed in one form or another within the Administration.

"With the possible exception of Cambodia," the C.I.A. memorandum said, "it is likely that no nation in the area would quickly succumb to Communism as a result of the fall of Laos and South Vietnam. Furthermore, a continuation of the spread of Communism in the area would not be inexorable, and any spread which did occur would take time—time in which the total situation might change in any number of ways unfavorable to the Communist cause."

The C.I.A. analysis conceded that the loss of South Vietnam and Laos "would be profoundly damaging to the U.S. position in the Far East" and would raise the prestige of China "as a leader of world Communism" at the expense of a more moderate Soviet Union. But the analysis argued that so long as the United States could retain its island bases, such as those on Okinawa, Guam, the Philippines and Japan, it could wield enough military power in Asia to deter China and North Vietnam from overt military aggression against Southeast Asia in general.

SOME LEVERAGE AVAILABLE

Even in the "worst case," if South Vietnam and Laos were to fall through "a clear-cut Communist victory," the United States would still retain some leverage to affect the final outcome in Southeast Asia, according to the analysis.

It said that "the extent to which individual countries would move away from the U.S. towards the Communists would be significantly affected by the substance and manner of U.S. policy in the period following the loss of Laos and South Vietnam."

As in the case of the earlier C.I.A. analysis stating that the real roots of Vietcong strength lay in South Vietnam, the study shows that the President and his senior officials were not inclined to adjust policy along the lines of this analysis challenging the domino theory.

Only the Joint Chiefs, Mr. Rostow and General Taylor appear to have accepted the domino theory in its literal sense—that all of the countries of Southeast Asia, from Cambodia to Malaysia, would tumble automatically into the Communist camp if the linchpin, South Vietnam, were knocked out, and that the United States position in the rest of the Far East, from Indonesia through the Philippines to Japan and Korea, would also be irrevocably harmed.

Yet the President and most of his closet civilian advisers—Mr. Rusk, Mr. McNamara and McGeorge Bundy—seem to have regarded the struggle over South Vietnam in more or less these terms. [See text.]

In 1964, the Administration also feared an outbreak of other "wars of national liberation" in the Asian, African and Latin

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American countries, and, Mr. McNamara wrote in his March 16 memorandum to the President, "the South Vietnam conflict is regarded as a test case."

THE THREAT OF CHINA

The struggle in South Vietnam was likewise bound up with the idea of "containing China," whose potential shadow over Southeast Asia was viewed as a palpable threat by Mr. Rusk because of his World War II experience in Asia and the victory of Mao Tse-tung's revolution in China.

But behind these foreign-policy axioms about domino effects, wars of liberation and the containment of China, the study reveals a deeper perception among the President and his aides that the United States was now the most powerful nation in the world and that the outcome in South Vietnam would demonstrate the will and the ability of the United States to have its way in world affairs.

The study conveys an impression that the war was thus considered less important for what it means to the South Vietnamese people than for what it meant to the position of the United States in the world.

Mr. McNaughton would later capsule this perception in a memorandum to Mr. McNamara seeking to apportion American aims in South Vietnam:

"70 pct.—To avoid a humiliating U.S. defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor).

"20 pct.—To keep SVN (and then adjacent) territory from Chinese hands.

"10 pct.—To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.

"Also—To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used.

"Not—To 'help a friend,' although it would be hard to stay in if asked out."

The words in parentheses are Mr. McNaughton's.

Thus, he had reasoned in another memorandum, even if bombing North Vietnam did not force Hanoi to call off the Vietcong, "it would demonstrate that U.S. was a 'good doctor' willing to keep promises, be tough, take risks, get bloodied and hurt the enemy badly."

CONFIDENCE AT THE TOP

And while the study shows doubt and worry in the Administration, it also reveals an underlying confidence among the decision makers at the top, whose attitude would count, that if this mightiest nation resolved to use its vast power, the other side would buckle.

Mr. Rostow would articulate this confidence in a memorandum to Secretary Rusk that fall: "I know well the anxieties and complications on our side of the line. But there may be a tendency to underestimate both the anxieties and complications on the other side and also to underestimate that limited but real margin of influence on the outcome that flows from the simple fact that we are the greatest power in the world—if we behave like it."

Accordingly, in mid-June, the Administration carried out another element of the May 23 scenario, the element that had first been formulated by Ambassador Lodge as his "carrot and stick." On June 18, at the Administration's request, Mr. Seaborn, the new Canadian representative on the International Control Commission, paid the first of his two secret calls on Premier Dong in Hanoi.

Washington sought to convey to North Vietnam through Mr. Seaborn the more precise and threatening meaning of the preparatory military deployments to Southeast Asia that it was publicizing on a vaguer level in public. Back in May, Mr. Lodge had urged an unacknowledged air strike on some target in the North "as a prelude to his [Mr. Seaborn's] arrival" if the Vietcong had recently committed some terrorist act "of the proper magnitude" in the South, but the President apparently did not see fit to act on the suggestion by June.

The analyst says Mr. Seaborn stressed to

Premier Dong that while the United States' ambitions in Southeast Asia were limited and its intentions "essentially peaceful," its patience was not limitless. The United States was fully aware of the degree to which Hanoi controlled the Vietcong, Mr. Seaborn said, and "in the event of escalation the greatest devastation would of course result for the D.R.V. itself."

NO REPORT ON THE 'CARROT'

The North Vietnamese Premier, the study relates, "fully understood the seriousness and import of the warning conveyed by Seaborn." Whether Mr. Seaborn also proffered the "carrot" of food and other economic aid is not reported.

At the June 3 meeting at the White House, the President had also apparently approved continued work for the Congressional resolution, the historian says, because planning for it continued apace. "Its intended purpose," the historian comments, "was to dramatize and make clear to other nations the firm resolve of the United States Government in an election year to support the President in taking whatever action was necessary to resist Communist aggression in Southeast Asia."

By June 10, there was "firm support" from most of the foreign-policy-making machinery of the Government for obtaining the resolution, although the account notes that at an interagency meeting that day "five basic 'disagreeable questions' were identified for which the Administration would have to provide convincing answers to assure public support."

"These included: (1) Does this imply a blank check for the President to go to war in Southeast Asia? (2) What kinds of force could he employ under this authorization? (3) What change in the situation (if any) requires the solution now? (4) Can't our objectives be attained by means other than U.S. military force? (5) Does Southeast Asia mean enough to U.S. national interests?"

Despite the prospect of having to answer these questions publicly, William Bundy wrote in a memorandum for a second interagency meeting on June 12, the Administration required a Congressional resolution immediately as "a continuing demonstration of U.S. firmness and for complete flexibility in the hands of the executive in the coming political months." While the United States did not expect "to move in the near future to military action against North Vietnam," he said, events in South Vietnam or Laos might force it to reconsider this position.

POSTPONED FOR THE PRESENT

But in the opinion of the analyst, the President in June, 1964, already felt "the political conventions just around the corner and the election issues regarding Vietnam clearly drawn," and so he recoiled at this time from the repercussions of major escalation and of seeking a Congressional resolution. At a high-level meeting on both subjects June 15, McGeorge Bundy, the historian says, brought Presidential guidance to Secretaries Rusk and McNamara in the form of a White House memorandum that postponed a decision for the present.

On July 19, he started a "March North" campaign of militant slogans and oratory at a "unification rally" in Saigon. The same day, as the analyst puts it, Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, then chief of the South Vietnamese Air Force, "spilled the beans to reporters" on joint planning that the United States and the Saigon Government had secretly been conducting since June, with President Johnson's approval, for ground and air assaults in Laos. The planning envisioned eventual battalion-size attacks by Saigon's army and air strikes by the South Vietnamese against Communist infiltration routes along the Ho Chi Minh Trail network.

In an emotional meeting on July 23 with General Taylor, who had just replaced Mr.

Lodge as Ambassador, General Khanh asserted that North Vietnamese draftees had been taken prisoner with Vietcong guerrillas in fighting in the northern provinces. The United States should realize, he said, that the war had entered a phase that called for new measures.

ANOTHER HEATED MEETING

During another heated meeting on July 24, General Khanh asked Ambassador Taylor whether to resign. The Ambassador asked him not to do so and cabled Washington urging that the United States undertake covert joint planning with the South Vietnamese for bombing the North.

The State Department, the study says, immediately authorized Ambassador Taylor "to tell Khanh the U.S. G. had considered attacks on North Vietnam that might begin, for example, if the pressure from dissident South Vietnamese factions became too great. He must keep this confidential."

To restrain the South Vietnamese military, the Ambassador was also authorized to undertake joint planning for an air campaign.

The Pentagon narrative skims over the last few days in July, 1964, but a summary of a command and control study of the Tonkin Gulf incident done by the Defense Department's Weapons System Evaluation Group in 1965, which the Times obtained along with the Pentagon narratives, fills in the events of these few days.

The study discloses that after a National Security Council meeting called on July 25, apparently to discuss these critical developments in Saigon, the Joint Chiefs proposed air strikes by unmarked planes flown by non-American crews against several targets in North Vietnam, including the coastal bases for Hanoi's flotilla of torpedo boats.

Assistant Secretary McNaughton sent the Joint Chiefs' memorandum to Secretary Rusk on July 30, the study reports, the same day that a chain of events was to unfold that would make it unnecessary to carry out the Joint Chiefs' plan, even if the President had wanted to accept it.

The Pentagon narrative now remarks that the clandestine 34A raids against North Vietnam—after getting off to what the Joint Chiefs had called "a slow beginning" in a report to Mr. McNamara on May 19—picked up in tempo and size during the summer, although the analyst provides few details. The Joint Chiefs had informed Mr. McNamara that trained sabotage teams, electronic-intelligence-gathering equipment, C-123 transport for the air-drops and fast PT boats for the coastal raids were giving the program "growing operational capabilities. (See text.)"

ATTACK ON TWO ISLANDS

At midnight on July 30, South Vietnamese naval commandos under General Westmoreland's command staged an amphibious raid on the North Vietnamese islands of Hon Me and Hon Nieu in the Gulf of Tonkin.

While the assault was occurring, the United States destroyer Maddox was 120 to 130 miles away, heading north into the gulf on the year's second De Soto intelligence-gathering patrol. Her sailing orders said she was not to approach closer than eight nautical miles to the North Vietnamese coast and four nautical miles to North Vietnamese islands in the gulf.

The account does not say whether the captain of the Maddox had been informed about the 34A raid. He does state that the Maddox altered course twice on Aug. 2 to avoid a concentration of three North Vietnamese torpedo boats and a fleet of junks that were still searching the seas around the islands for the raiders.

The destroyer reached the northernmost point of her assigned patrol track the same day and headed south again.

"When the [North Vietnamese] PT boats began their high-speed run at her, at a

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distance of approximately 10 miles, the destroyer was 23 miles from the coast and heading further into international waters," the study says. "Apparently," it explains, "these boats . . . had mistaken Maddox for a South Vietnamese escort vessel."

In the ensuing engagement, two of the torpedo boats were damaged by planes launched from the aircraft carrier Ticonderoga, stationed to the south for reasons the study does not explain. A third PT boat was knocked dead in the water, sunk by a direct hit from one of the Maddox's five-inch guns.

NEW ORDERS FOR MADDOX

The next day, Aug. 3, President Johnson ordered the Maddox reinforced by the destroyer C. Turner Joy and directed that both destroyers be sent back into the gulf, this time with instructions not to approach closer than 11 nautical miles to the North Vietnamese coast. A second aircraft carrier, the Constellation, on a visit to Hong Kong, was instructed to make steam and join the Ticonderoga as quickly as possible.

The study terms these reinforcing actions "a normal precaution" in the light of the first attack on the Maddox and not an attempt to use the destroyers as bait for another attack that would provide a pretext for reprisal airstrikes against the North. "Moreover," it comments, "since the augmentation was coupled with a clear [public] statement of intent to continue the patrols and a firm warning to the D.R.V. that a repetition would bring dire consequences, their addition to the patrol could be expected to serve more as a deterrent than a provocation."

The study gives a clear impression that the Administration at this moment did not believe the North Vietnamese would dare to attack the reinforced destroyer patrol.

For on the night of Aug. 3, while the De Soto patrol was resuming, two more clandestine 34A attacks were staged. PT boats manned by South Vietnamese crews bombarded the Rhon River estuary and a radar installation at Vinson. This time the Maddox and the Turner Joy were definitely warned that the clandestine assaults were going to take place, the documents show.

Apparently expecting the President to order a resumption of the patrol, the admiral commanding the Seventh Fleet asked General Westmoreland on Aug. 2 to furnish him the general location of the planned raids so that the destroyers could steer clear of the 34A force. There was a good deal of cable traffic back and forth between the two commanders through the Pentagon communications center in Washington to modify the patrol's course on Aug. 3 to avoid any interference with the raiders.

On the night of Aug. 4, Tonkin Gulf time, approximately 24 hours after this second 34A assault, North Vietnamese torpedo boats then attacked both the Maddox and the Turner Joy in what was to be the fateful clash in the gulf.

MOTIVES STILL UNCLEAR

The Pentagon account says that Hanoi's motives for this second attack on the destroyers are still unclear. The narrative ties the attack to the chain of events set off by the 34A raids of July 30, but says that Hanoi's precise motive may have been to recover from the embarrassment of having two torpedo boats damaged and another sunk in the first engagement with the Maddox, without any harm to the American destroyer.

"Perhaps closer to the mark is the narrow purpose of prompt retaliation for an embarrassing and well-publicized rebuff by a much-maligned enemy," the narrative says. "Inexperienced in modern naval operations, D.R.V. leaders may have believed that under the cover of darkness it would be possible to even the score or to provide at least a psychological victory by severely damaging a U.S. ship."

The study does not raise the question whether the second 34A raid on the night of Aug. 3, or the apparent air strikes on North Vietnamese villages just across the Laotian border on Aug. 1 and 2 by T-28 planes, motivated the Hanoi leadership in any way to order the second engagement with the destroyers.

Marshall Green, then the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, mentioned the apparent bombing of the villages in a lengthy memorandum to William Bundy dated Nov. 7, 1964, on United States covert activities in Indochina. [See text.]

Listing complaints that North Vietnam had been making to the International Control Commission over the T-28 operations with Thai pilots, Mr. Green noted charges by Hanoi that "T-28s have violated North Vietnamese airspace and bombed/strafed NVN villages on Aug. 1 and 2, and on Oct. 16 and 17 and again on Oct. 28. The charges are probably accurate with respect to the first two dates (along Route 7) and the last one (Mugia Pass area)." The words in parentheses are Mr. Green's.

RAIDS POSSIBLY INADVERTENT

The context of the memorandum indicates that the raids on the North Vietnamese villages may have been inadvertent. But neither the narrative nor Mr. Green's memorandum says whether Hanoi thought this at the time the air strikes occurred.

Whatever the North Vietnamese motives for the second clash, President Johnson moved quickly now to carry out what the analyst calls "recommendations made . . . by his principal advisers earlier that summer and subsequently placed on the shelf."

Because of the Pacific time difference, the Pentagon received the first word that an attack on the Maddox and the Turner Joy might be imminent at 9:20 A.M. on the morning of Aug. 4, after the destroyers had intercepted North Vietnamese radio traffic indicating preparations for an assault. The flash message that the destroyers were actually engaged came into the communications center at 11 A.M.

The Joint Chiefs' staff began selecting target options for reprisal air strikes from the 94-target list, the first version of which was drawn up at the end of May. Adm. U.S. Grant Sharp, who had replaced Admiral Felt as commander in chief of Pacific forces, telephoned from Honolulu to suggest bombing the coastal bases for the torpedo boats.

Within 10 minutes, Mr. McNamara convened a meeting with the Joint Chiefs in his conference room on the third floor of the Pentagon to discuss possibilities for retaliation. Secretary Rusk and McGeorge Bundy came over to join them.

MEETING ALREADY SCHEDULED

Twenty-five minutes later the two secretaries and Mr. Bundy left for a previously scheduled National Security Council meeting at the White House. They would recommend reprisal strikes to the President, while the Joint Chiefs stayed at the Pentagon to decide on specific targets.

At 1:25 P.M., two and a half hour after the flash message of the engagement and possibly while Mr. McNamara, Mr. Rusk, Mr. McCone and McGeorge Bundy were still at lunch with the President, the director of the Joint Staff telephoned Mr. McNamara to say that the Chiefs had unanimously agreed on the targets. Fighter-bombers from the carriers Constellation and Ticonderoga should strike four torpedo boat bases at Hongay, Lochau, Phuclot and Quangkhe, and an oil storage depot near Vinh that held some 10 per cent of North Vietnam's petroleum supply.

At a second National Security Council meeting that afternoon, President Johnson ordered the reprisals, decided to seek the Congressional resolution immediately and discussed with his advisers the swift Southeast Asia deployment of the air strike forces

designated in Operation Plan 37-64 for the opening blows in a possible bombing campaign against the North. His approval for these preparatory air deployments, and for the readiness of Marine Corps and Army units planned to meet any Chinese or North Vietnamese retaliation to a bombing campaign, was apparently given later that day, the study shows.

Mr. McNamara returned to the Pentagon at 3 P.M. to approve the details of the reprisal strikes, code-named Pierce Arrow. An execution order was prepared by the Joint Staff, but at 4 P.M. Mr. McNamara learned from Admiral Sharp in a telephone conversation that there was now confusion over whether an attack on the destroyers had actually taken place.

The Secretary told Admiral Sharp that the reprisal order would remain in effect, but that the admiral was to check and make certain that an attack had really occurred before actually launching the planes. At 4:49 P.M., less than six hours after the first message of the attack had flashed into the Pentagon communications center, the formal execution order for the reprisals was transmitted to Honolulu. Admiral Sharp had not yet called back with confirming details of the attack. The order specified that the carriers were to launch their planes within about two and a half hours.

The admiral called back at 5:23 P.M. and again a few minutes after 6 o'clock to say that he was satisfied, on the basis of information from the task group commander of the two destroyers, that the attack had been genuine. The study says that in the meantime Mr. McNamara and the Joint Chiefs had also examined the confirming evidence, including intercepted radio messages from the North Vietnamese saying that their vessels were engaging the destroyers and that two torpedo boats had been sunk.

By now Mr. McNamara and the Chiefs had moved on to discussing the prepositioning of the air strike forces under Operation Plan 37-64.

At 6:45 P.M., President Johnson met with 18 Congressional leaders from both parties whom he had summoned to the White House. He told them that because of the second unprovoked attack on the American destroyers, he had decided to launch reprisal air strikes against the North and to ask for a Congressional resolution, the study says.

The Pentagon study gives no indication that Mr. Johnson informed the Congressional leaders of United States responsibility for and command of the covert 34A raids on July 30 and Aug. 3.

Nor does the history give any indication that Mr. Johnson told the Congressional leaders of what the historian describes as "the broader purpose of the deployments" under Operation Plan 37-64, which Mr. McNamara was to announce at a Pentagon news conference the next day and describe as a precautionary move.

"It is significant," the analyst writes, "that few of these additional units were removed from the western Pacific when the immediate crisis subsided. In late September the fourth attack aircraft carrier was authorized to resume its normal station in the eastern Pacific as soon as the regularly assigned carrier completed repairs. The other forces remained in the vicinity of their August deployment."

PLANES LEAVE TICONDEROGA

At 8:30 P.M. on Aug. 4, Mr. McNamara returned to the Pentagon and at 11:30 P.M., after several telephone calls to Admiral Sharp, he learned that the Ticonderoga had launched her bomb-laden aircraft at 10:43 P.M. They were expected to arrive over their targets in about an hour and 50 minutes.

The carriers had needed more time to get into launching position than the execution order had envisioned. The Constellation, steaming from Hong Kong, was not to launch her planes for another couple of hours.

The President did not wait. Sixteen minutes after Mr. McNamara's last phone call to Admiral Sharp, at 11:36 P.M., he went on television to tell the nation of the reprisal strikes. He characterized his actions as a "limited and fitting" response. "We still seek no wider war," he said.

Almost simultaneously, the air deployments under Operation Plan 37-64 had begun.

The first F-102 Delta Dagger jet fighters were landing at Saigon's airport around the time Mr. McNamara described the deployments at a Pentagon news conference on Aug. 5. He had given a brief post-midnight conference the same day to describe the reprisal strikes. He reported now that 25 North Vietnamese patrol craft had been destroyed or damaged along with 90 per cent of the oil storage tanks near Vinh.

"Last night I announced that moves were under way to reinforce our forces in the Pacific area," he continued. "These moves include the following actions:

"First, an attack carrier group has been transferred from the First Fleet on the Pacific coast to the western Pacific. Secondly, interceptor and fighter-bomber aircraft have been moved into South Vietnam. Thirdly, fighter-bomber aircraft have been moved into Thailand. Fourthly, interceptor and fighter-bomber squadrons have been transferred from the United States into advance bases in the Pacific. Fifthly, an anti-submarine task force group has been moved into the South China Sea. And finally, selected Army and Marine forces have been alerted and readied for movement."

FULBRIGHT A SENATE SPONSOR

The study notes that the Administration drafted the Congressional resolution for the two men who would sponsor its passage through both houses for the President: Senator J. W. Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Representative Thomas E. Morgan of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Precisely who drafted this final version of the resolution is not mentioned. The wording was less precise than that of the resolution drafted by William Bundy for the May 23 scenario, but the key language making the resolution in effect a declaration of war remained:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress approve and support the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.

"Sec. 2. The United States regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the maintenance of international peace and security in Southeast Asia. Consonant with the Constitution of the United States and the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with its obligations under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, the United States is, therefore, prepared, as the President determines, to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom."

Mr. McNamara and Secretary Rusk both testified on behalf of the resolution in secret sessions of the Senate and House foreign relations committees on Aug. 6. In his narrative, the Pentagon Analyst occasionally quotes from and refers to portions of their testimony, which have never been made public by the Pentagon. Along with the study, The Times also obtained more extensive quotations from this portion of the hearing transcript. The following account of the testimony on Aug. 6 thus contains both quota-

tions used by the Pentagon analyst and the fuller quotations obtained by The Times.

MORSE LEARNS OF ATTACKS

Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon had learned that boats manned by South Vietnamese crews had attacked the two North Vietnamese islands on July 30. Mr. Morse, one of two Senators who were to vote against the Tonkin Gulf resolution—the other was Ernest J. Gruening of Alaska—alleged during the secret hearing on Aug. 6 that Mr. McNamara had known about the raids and that the destroyers had been associated with it.

"First," Mr. McNamara replied, "our Navy played absolutely no part in, was not associated with, was not aware of, any South Vietnamese actions, if there were any. . . .

The Maddox was operating in international waters, was carrying out a routine patrol of the type we carry out all over the world at all times."

"I did not have knowledge at the time of the attack on the island," he said. "There is no connection between this patrol and any action by South Vietnam."

Mr. McNamara contended that whatever action had taken place against these North Vietnamese islands had been part of an anti-infiltration operation being conducted by a fleet of coastal patrol junks the United States had helped South Vietnam to organize in December, 1961.

"In the first seven months of this year they have searched 149,000 junks, some 570,000 people," he is quoted as telling the committee in this secret session. "This is a tremendous operation endeavoring to close the seacoasts of over 900 miles. In the process of that action, as the junk patrol has increased in strength, they have moved farther and farther north endeavoring to find the source of the infiltration."

"As part of that, as I reported to you earlier this week, [Mr. McNamara had testified before the committee in a secret session on Aug. 3 after the first attack on the Maddox], we understand that the South Vietnamese sea force carried out patrol action around these islands and actually shelled the parts they felt were associated with this infiltration."

"Our ships had absolutely no knowledge of it, were not connected with it; in no sense of the word can be considered to have backstopped the effort," he said.

Senator Frank Church of Idaho then asked Secretary Rusk at the same secret session: "I take it that our government which supplied these boats . . . did know that the boats would be used for attacks on North Vietnamese targets, and that we acquiesced in that policy, is that correct?"

". . . In the larger sense, that is so, but as far as any particular detail is concerned we don't from Washington follow that in great detail," Mr. Rusk replied.

CHURCH PRESSES QUESTIONS

"They are doing it with our acquiescence and consent, is that correct?" Senator Church continued.

"But within very limited levels as far as North Vietnam is concerned," Mr. Rusk said.

At a Pentagon news conference after his testimony before the committee, Mr. McNamara spoke about the coastal patrol junks again and avoided any specific mention of the July 30 raid:

Q. Mr. Secretary

A. Yes?

Q. Have there been any incidents that you know involving the South Vietnamese vessels and the North Vietnamese?

A. No, none that I know of, although I think that I should mention to you the South Vietnamese naval patrol activities that are carried on to prevent in the infiltration of men and materiel from the North into the South.

In the last seven months of 1961, for example, about 1,400 men were infiltrated

across the 17th Parallel from North Vietnam into South Vietnam. To prevent further infiltration of that kind, the South Vietnamese with our assistance have set up a naval patrol which is very active in that area which continues to inspect and examine junks and their personnel.

In one eight-month period that I can recall they discovered 140 Vietcong infiltrators.

Q. They operate on their own?

A. They operate on their own. They are part of the South Vietnamese Navy, commanded by the South Vietnamese Navy, operating in the coastal waters inspecting suspicious incoming junks, seeking to deter and prevent the infiltration of both men and materiel from North Vietnam into South Vietnam.

Q. Mr. Secretary. Do these junks go north into North Vietnam areas?

A. They have advanced closer and closer to the 17th Parallel and in some cases I think have moved beyond that in an effort to stop the infiltration closer to the point of origin.

Q. Do our naval vessels afford any cover for these operations?

A. Our naval vessels afford no cover whatsoever. Our naval personnel do not participate in the junk operations.

When Senator George S. McGovern of South Dakota subsequently brought up the July 30 attack on the islands during the Senate floor debate on the resolution, Senator Fulbright replied that he had been assured by the Administration that "our boats did not convoy or support or back up any South Vietnamese naval vessels" and that the destroyer patrol "was entirely unconnected or unassociated with any coastal forays the South Vietnamese themselves may have conducted."

The Congressional resolution passed on Aug. 7 by a vote of 88 to 2 in the Senate and 416 to 0 in the House.

The history shows that besides the May 19 progress report from the Joint Chiefs on the 34A Operations, Mr. McNamara had received other memorandums on the clandestine attacks from General Anthis, the special assistant to the Joint Chiefs, on June 13, July 1 and July 28, 1964. General Anthis drew up the advance monthly schedules of the covert operations for approval by William Bundy and Mr. McNaughton.

Where Mr. Rusk is concerned, the study reveals that he was kept reasonably well informed.

The study also makes it clear that there was no connection between the 34A raids and the coastal patrol junk fleet described by Mr. McNamara and referred to by Mr. Rusk.

TWO KEY ELEMENTS IN PLACE

Thus, in the space of three days, the Administration had put firmly into place two key elements of the May 23 scenario—positioning of major air strike forces and Congressional authorization for wider action.

Internal Administration planning for Congressional authorization to escalate also now disappears from the documentary record. The account notes that during the next round of planning "the question of Congressional authority for open acts of war against a sovereign nation was never seriously raised."

There was confusion in Congress, however, over precisely what the resolution meant, the historian says, commenting:

"Despite the nearly unanimous votes of support for the resolution, Congressional opinions varied as to the policy implications and the meaning of such support. The central belief seemed to be that the occasion necessitated demonstrating the nation's unity and collective will in support of the President's action and affirming U.S. determination to oppose further aggression. However, beyond that theme, there was a considerable variety of opinion. . . . Several spokesmen stressed that the resolution did not constitute a declaration of war, did not abdicate Congressional responsibility for determining

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national policy commitments and did not give the President carte blanche to involve the nation in a major Asian war."

The Administration would now communicate the meaning of the resolution to Hanoi by carrying out in a more significant manner an element of the May 23 scenario that Washington had already used once in June when the Canadian emissary had paid his first visit to Hanoi.

SECOND SEABORN MISSION

On Aug. 10, Mr. Seaborn was sent back with a second message for Premier Dong, which concluded:

"a. That the events of the past few days should add credibility to the statement made last time, that 'U.S. public and official patience with North Vietnamese aggression is growing extremely thin.'

"b. That the U.S. Congressional resolution was passed with near unanimity, strongly reaffirming the unity and determination of the U.S. Government and people not only with respect to any further attacks on U.S. military forces but more broadly to continue to oppose firmly, by all necessary means, D.R.V. efforts to subvert and conquer South Vietnam and Laos.

"c. That the U.S. has come to the view that the D.R.V. role in South Vietnam and Laos is critical. If the D.R.V. persists in its present course, it can expect to continue to suffer the consequences. [The word "continue" referred to the reprisal air strikes that followed the Tonkin incident.]

"d. That the D.R.V. knows what it must do if the peace is to be restored.

"e. That the U.S. has ways and means of measuring the D.R.V.'s participation in, and direction and control of, the war on South Vietnam and in Laos and will be carefully watching the D.R.V.'s response to what Mr. Seaborn is telling them." [See text.]

Mr. McNaughton had drafted the message on the day the resolution was passed.

During this, as in his first meeting with Mr. Seaborn in June, the history says, "Pham Van Dong showed himself utterly unflinching and calmly resolved to pursue the course upon which the D.R.V. was embarked to what he confidently expected would be its successful conclusion."

In the heat of the Tonkin clash, the Administration had also accomplished one of the major recommendations of the June strategy conference at Honolulu—preparing the American public for escalation.

'AN IMPORTANT FIREBREAK'

"The Tonkin Gulf reprisal constituted an important firebreak and the Tonkin Gulf resolution set U.S. public support for virtually any action," the study remarks.

Almost none of the "disagreeable questions" the Administration might have to answer about the resolution, which had given the President pause in mid-June, had been asked in the emotional atmosphere of the crisis.

And inside the Administration the planners were moving more quickly now.

On Aug. 10, three days after passage of the resolution, Ambassador Taylor cabled the President a situation report on South Vietnam. It said that the Khanh regime had only "a 50-50 chance of lasting out the year." Therefore, a major objective of the United States Mission in Saigon was to "be prepared to implement contingency plans against North Vietnam with optimum readiness by Jan. 1, 1965."

On Aug. 11, four days after passage of the resolution, William Bundy drew up a memorandum for a high-level State-Defense Departments policy meeting. The memorandum outlined graduated steps towards a possible full-scale air war against North Vietnam with "a contingency date, as suggested by Ambassador Taylor, of 1 January 1965." But until the end of August, Mr. Bundy said, there should be "a short holding phase,

in which we would avoid actions that would in any way take the onus off the Communist side for escalation." [See text.]

On Aug. 14, a lengthy summary of Mr. Bundy's memorandum was cabled to Ambassador Taylor, Ambassador Unger in Vientiane, and to Admiral Sharp in Honolulu for comments that would permit "further review and refinement."

The Tonkin Gulf reprisal air strikes, the analyst writes, "marked the crossing of an important threshold in the war, and it was accomplished with virtually no domestic criticism, indeed, with an evident increase in public support for the Administration. The precedent for strikes against the North was thus established and at very little apparent cost."

"There was a real cost, however," he concludes, in that the Administration was psychologically preparing itself for further escalation. "The number of unused measures short of direct military action against the North had been depleted. Greater visible commitment was purchased at the price of reduced flexibility." And "for all these reasons, when a decision to strike the North was faced again, it was much easier to take."

Admiral Sharp, in his cable to Washington on Aug. 17 commenting on Mr. Bundy's memorandum, "candidly" summed up this psychological commitment, the analyst says.

"Pressures against the other side once instituted should not be relaxed by any actions or lack of them which would destroy the benefits of the rewarding steps previously taken," the admiral wrote.

VIETNAM ARCHIVE: A CONSENSUS TO BOMB DEVELOPED BEFORE 1964 ELECTION, STUDY SAYS

(By Neil Sheehan)

The Johnson Administration reached a "general consensus" at a White House strategy meeting on Sept. 7, 1964, that air attacks against North Vietnam would probably have to be launched, a Pentagon study of the Vietnam war states. It was expected that "these operations would begin early in the new year."

"It is important to differentiate the consensus of the principals at this September meeting," the study says, "from the views which they had urged on the President in the preceding spring. In the spring the use of force had been clearly contingent on a major reversal—principally in Laos—and had been advanced with the apparent assumption that military actions hopefully would not be required. Now, however, their views were advanced with a sense that such actions were inevitable."

The administration consensus on bombing came at the height of the Presidential election contest between President Johnson and Senator Barry Goldwater, whose advocacy of full-scale air attacks on North Vietnam had become a major issue. That such a consensus had been reached as early as September is a major disclosure of the Pentagon study.

The consensus was reflected, the analysis says, in the final paragraph of a formal national security action memorandum issued by the President three days later, on Sept. 10. This paragraph spoke of "larger decisions" that might be "required at any time."

The last round of detailed planning of various political and military strategies for a bombing campaign began "in earnest," the study says, on Nov. 3, 1964, the day that Mr. Johnson was elected President in his own right.

Less than 100 days later, on Feb. 8, 1965, he ordered new reprisal strikes against the North. Then, on Feb. 13, the President gave the order for the sustained bombing of North Vietnam, code-named Rolling Thunder.

This period of evolving decision to attack North Vietnam, openly and directly, is shown in the Pentagon papers to be the second

major phase of President Johnson's defense of South Vietnam. The same period forms the second phase of the presentation of those papers by The New York Times.

The papers, prepared by a team of 30 to 40 authors in 1967-68 as an official study of how the United States went to war in Indochina, consist of 3,000 pages of analysis and 4,000 pages of supporting documents. The study covers nearly three decades of American policy on Southeast Asia. Yesterday The Times's first report on this study, and presentation of key documents, covered the period of clandestine warfare and planning before the Tonkin Gulf incidents in 1964.

In its glimpses into Lyndon B. Johnson's personal thoughts and motivations between the fateful September meeting and his decision to embark on an air war, the Pentagon study shows a President moving and being moved toward war, but reluctant and hesitant to act until the end.

But, the analyst explains, "from the September meeting forward, there was little basic disagreement among the principals (the term the study uses for the senior policy makers) on the need for military operations against the North. What prevented action for the time being was a set of tactical considerations."

The first tactical consideration, the analyst says, was that "the President was in the midst of an election campaign in which he was presenting himself as the candidate of reason and restraint as opposed to the glibly Barry Goldwater," who was publicly advocating full-scale bombing of North Vietnam. The historian also mentions other "temporary reasons of tactics":

The "shakiness" of the Saigon Government. A wish to hold the line militarily and diplomatically in Laos.

The "need to design whatever actions were taken so as to achieve maximum public and Congressional support. . . ."

The "implicit belief that overt actions at this time might bring pressure for premature negotiations—that is negotiations before the D.R.V. (Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam) was hurting."

Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton, the head of the Pentagon's Office of International Security Affairs, summed up these tactical considerations in the final paragraph of a Sept. 3 memorandum to Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, in preparation for the crucial White House strategy session four days later:

"Special considerations during the next two months. The relevant audiences of U.S. actions are the Communists (who must feel strong pressures), the South Vietnamese (whose morale must be buoyed), our allies (who must trust us as 'underwriters'), and the U.S. public (which must support our risk-taking with U.S. lives and prestige). During the next two months, because of the lack of 'rebuttal time' before election to justify particular actions which may be distorted to the U.S. public, we must act with special care—signaling to the D.R.V. that initiatives are being taken, to the G.V.N. (Government of (South) Vietnam) that we are behaving energetically despite the restraints of our political season, and to the U.S. public that we are behaving with good purpose and restraint." The words in parentheses are Mr. McNaughton's.

RUSK CABLE TO EMBASSY IN LAOS ON SEARCH AND RESCUE FLIGHTS

(Cablegram from Secretary of State Dean Rusk to the United States Embassy in Vientiane, Laos, Aug. 26, 1964. A copy of this message was sent to the Commander in Chief, Pacific.)

We agree with your assessment of importance SAR operations that Air America pilots can play critically important role, and SAR efforts should not discriminate between rescuing Americans, Thais and Lao. You are

also hereby granted as requested discretionary authority to use AA pilots in T-28's for SAR operations when you consider this indispensable rpt indispensable to success of operation and with understanding that you will seek advance Washington authorization wherever situation permits.

At same time, we believe time has come to review scope and control arrangements for T-28 operations extending into future. Such a review is especially indicated view fact that these operations more or less automatically impose demands for use of US personnel in SAR operations. Moreover, increased AA capability clearly means possibilities of loss somewhat increased, and each loss with accompanying SAR operations involves chance of escalation from one action to another in ways that may not be desirable in wider picture. On other side, we naturally recognize T-28 operations are vital both for their military and psychological effects in Laos and as negotiating card in support of Souvanna's position. Request your view whether balance of above factors would call for some reduction in scale of operations and/or dropping of some of better-defended targets. (Possible extension T-28 operations to Panhandle would be separate issue and will be covered by septel.)

On central problem our understanding is that Thai pilots fly missions strictly controlled by your Air Command Center with [word illegible] in effective control, but that this not true of Lao pilots. We have impression latter not really under any kind of firm control.

Request your evaluation and recommendations as to future scope T-28 operations and your comments as to whether our impressions present control structure correct and whether steps could be taken to tighten this.

RUSK QUERY TO VIENTIANE EMBASSY ON DESIRABILITY OF LAOS CEASE-FIRE

(Cablegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the United States Embassy in Laos, Aug. 7, 1964. Copies were also sent, with a request for comment, to the American missions in London, Paris, Saigon, Bangkok, Ottawa, New Delhi, Moscow, Phnompenh and Hong Kong, and to the Pacific command and the mission at the United Nations.)

1. As pointed out in your 219, our objective in Laos is to stabilize the situation again, if possible within framework of the 1962 Geneva settlement. Essential to stabilization would be establishment of military equilibrium in the country. Moreover, we have some concern that recent RLG successes and reported low PL morale may lead to some escalation from Communist side, which we do not now wish to have to deal with.

2. Limit now, Souvanna's and our position has been that military equilibrium would require Pathet Lao withdrawal from areas seized in PDJ since May 15 and that such withdrawal is also basic precondition to convening 14-nation conference. Question now arises whether territorial gains of Operation Triangle, provided they can be consolidated, have in practice brought about a situation of equilibrium and whether, therefore, it is no longer necessary to insist on Pathet Lao withdrawal from PDJ as precondition to 14-nation conference. This is in fact thought which has previously occurred to Souvanna (Vientiane's 191) and is also touched on in Secretary's letter to Butler (Deptel 88 to Vientiane). If Souvanna and we continued to insist on PDJ withdrawal other side would inevitably insist on our yielding Triangle gains, and our judgement is that such arrangement substantially worse than present fairly coherent geographical division. If withdrawal precondition were to be dropped, it could probably best be done at tripartite meeting where it might be used by Souvanna as bargaining counter in obtaining satisfaction on his other condition that he attend

conference as head of Laotian Government. Remaining condition would be cease-fire. While under present conditions cease-fire might not be of net advantage to Souvanna—we are thinking primarily of T-28 operations—Pathet Lao would no doubt insist on it. If so, Souvanna could press for effective ICC policing of cease-fire. Latter could be of importance in upcoming period.

3. Above is written with thought in mind that Polish proposals [one word illegible] effectively collapsed and that pressures continue for Geneva [word illegible] conference and will no doubt be intensified by current crisis brought on by DRV naval attacks. Conference on Laos might be useful safety valve for these generalized pressures while at same time providing some deterrent to escalation of hostilities on that part of the "front." We would insist that conference be limited to Laos and believe that it could in fact be so limited, if necessary by our withdrawing from the conference room if any other subject brought up, as we did in 1961-62. Side discussions on other topics could not be avoided but we see no great difficulty with this; venue for informal corridor discussion with PL, DRV, and Chicomis could be valuable at this juncture.

4. In considering this course of action, key initial question is of course whether Souvanna himself is prepared to drop his withdrawal precondition and whether, if he did, he could maintain himself in power in Vientiane. We gather that answer to first question is probably yes but we are much more dubious about the second. Request Vientiane's judgement on these points. Views of other addresses are so requested, including estimated reactions host governments. It is essential that these estimates take account of recent development: military successes non-Communist forces in Laos and latest demonstration US determination resist Communist aggression in Southeast Asia.

SAIGON EMBASSY'S RESPONSE ON DRAWBACKS IN LAOS TALKS

(Cablegram from Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor in Saigon to Secretary Rusk, Aug. 9, 1964, with copies to the embassies in Vientiane and Bangkok and the Pacific command.)

From our vantage point we can see positive disadvantages to our position in SEA in pursuing course of action outlined REFTEL.

1. In first place rush to conference table would serve to confirm to Chicomis that US retaliation for destroyer attacks was transient phenomenon and that firm Chicom response in form of commitment to defend NVN has given US "paper tiger" second thoughts. Moreover, much of beneficial effects elsewhere resulting from our strong reaction to events in Gulf of Tonkin would be swiftly dissipated.

2. In Vietnam sudden backdown from previous strongly held US position on PDJ withdrawal prior to conf on Laos would have potentially disastrous effect. Morale and will to fight, particularly willingness to push ahead with arduous pacification task and to enforce stern measure on Khanh's new emergency decree, would be undermined by what would look like evidence that US seeking to take advantage of any slight improvement in non-Communist position as excuse for extricating itself from Indochina via conf route. This would give strength to probable pro-Gaullist contention that GVN should think about following Laotian example by seeking negotiated solution before advantage of temporarily strengthened anti-Communist position recedes.

3. General letdown in Vietnam which would result from softening of our stand in Laos just after we had made great show of firmness vis-a-vis Communists would undoubtedly stifle Khanh's personal position

with prospects of increased political instability and coup plotting.

4. It should be remembered that our retaliatory action in Gulf of Tonkin is in effect an isolated US-DRV incident. Although this has relation, as Amb. Stevenson has pointed out, to larger problem of DRV aggression by subversion in Vietnam and Laos, we have not rpt not yet come to grips in a forceful way with DRV over the issue of this larger and much more complex problem. Instead, we are engaged, both in Vietnam and Laos, in proxy actions against proxy agents of DRV. If, as both Khanh and Souvanna hope, we are to parlay the consequences of our recent clash with the DRV into actions which specifically direct themselves against DRV violations of the 1954 and 1962 agreements, we must avoid becoming involved in political engagements which will tie our hands and inhibit our action. For example, any effort to undertake credible joint planning operations with GVN re interdictory air strikes upon infiltration network in southern DRV and especially in panhandle would be completely undercut if we were engaged in conf discussing the Laos territory in question.

5. Similarly, it would seem to us that Souvanna's willingness to hold fast on preconditions or substantive negotiations bears direct relationship to his assessment of US willingness to meet the problem where it originates—North Vietnam itself. This fact shines clearly through his recent brief letter to Pres. Johnson. Moreover, it would be folly to assume that Khanh, who is now in fairly euphoric state as result of our Gulf of Tonkin action, would do anything other than slump into deepest funk if we sought to persuade him to send GVN del to conf. [Two words illegible] is that he would resign rather than send [Two words illegible].

Intensified pressures for Geneva-type conf cited in REFTEL would appear to us to be coming almost entirely from those who are opposed to US policy objectives in SEA (except possibly UK which seems prepared jump on bandwagon). Under circumstances, we see very little hope that results of such conference would be advantageous to US. Moreover, prospects of limiting it to consideration of only Laotian problem appear at this time juncture to be dimmer than ever. Even though prior agreement reached to limit conf, we do not see how in actual practice we could limit discussion solely to Laos if others insist on raising other issues. To best our knowledge, we never "withdrew" from room when DRV attempted raise extraneous issues during 1961-1962 conf. Instead, we insisted to chair on point of order and had DRV ruled out of order. Prospect of informal corridor discussions with PL, DRV and Chicomis is just what GVN would fear most and may well increase pressures on GVN to undertake negotiated solution so as to avoid their fear, of being faced with "fait accompli" by US.

7. Rather than searching for "safety valve" to dissipate current "generalized pressures" SEA, it seems to us we should be looking for means which will channel those pressures against DRV; seems to us "safety valve," if needed (for example by Soviets), exists in current UNSC discussion. We should continue to focus attention in all forms on Communist aggressive actions as root cause of tension in SEA and reinforce our current stance. In the final analysis, this stance would be more valid deterrent to escalation by PL-VM than attempt seek accommodation within context Laos problem alone.

While not rpt not specifically within our province, we would point out that PL/VM appear to have capability of retaking territory regained by RLG in Operation Triangle at any time of their choosing and that therefore "territorial swap" envisaged in DEPTTEL may be highly illusory. Moreover, any territorial deal which seems to confirm permanent PL/VM control over corridor as an arrangement

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acceptable to US would be anathema to GVN and indicate our willingness accept infiltration network as tolerable condition on GVN frontiers. Such situation would in their and US mission opinions vitiate against any hope of successful pacification of GVN territory.

U.S. MISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON FURTHER MILITARY STEPS

(Cablegram from the United States Mission in Saigon to the State Department, Aug. 18, 1964.)

This is US Mission message. In preparing our reply, we have found it simpler to produce a new paper which undertakes to state the problem in South Viet Nam as we see it in two possible forms and then to provide course of action responding to each statement of the problem.

Underlying our analysis is the apparent assumption of Deptel 430 (which we believe is correct) that the present in-country pacification plan is not enough in itself to maintain national morale or to offer reasonable hope of eventual success. Something must be added in the coming months.

Statement of the problem—A. The course which US policy in South Viet Nam should take during the coming months can be expressed in terms of four objectives. The first and most important objective is to gain time for the Khanh government to develop a certain stability and to give some firm evidence of viability. Since any of the courses of action considered in this cable carry a considerable measure of risk to the US, we should be slow to get too deeply involved in them until we have a better feel of the quality of our ally. In particular, if we can avoid it, we should not get involved militarily with North Viet Nam and possibly with Red China if our base in South Viet Nam is insecure and Khanh's army is tied down everywhere by the VC insurgency. Hence, it is our interest to gain sufficient time not only to allow Khanh to prove that he can govern, but also to free Saigon from the VC threat which presently reigns (as received) and assure that sufficient GVN ground forces will be available to provide a reasonable measure of defense against any DRV ground reaction which may develop in the execution of our program and thus avoid the possible requirement for a major US ground force commitment.

A second objective in this period is the maintenance of morale in South Viet Nam particularly within the Khanh Government. This should not be difficult in the case of the government if we can give Khanh assurance of our readiness to bring added pressure on Hanoi if he provides evidence of ability to do his part. Thirdly while gaining time for Khanh, we must be able to hold the DRV in check and restrain a further build-up of Viet Cong strength by way of infiltration from the North. Finally, throughout this period, we should be developing a posture of maximum readiness for a deliberate escalation of pressure against North Viet Nam, using January 1, 1965 as a target D-Day. We must always recognize, however, that events may force US to advance D-Day to a considerably earlier date.

[Start of sentence illegible] we then need to design a course of action which will achieve the four objectives enumerated above. Such a course of action would consist of three parts: the first, a series of actions directed at the Khanh Government; the second, actions directed at the Hanoi Government; the third, following a pause of some duration, initiation of an orchestrated air attack against North Viet Nam.

In approaching the Khanh Government, we should express our willingness to Khanh to engage in planning and eventually to exert intense pressure on North Viet Nam, providing certain conditions are met in advance. In the first place before we would agree to go all out against the DRV, he must stabilize his government and make some

progress in cleaning up his operational backyard. Specifically, he must execute the initial phase of the Hop Tac Plan successfully to the extent of pushing the Viet Cong from the doors of Saigon. The overall pacification program, including Hop Tac, should progress sufficiently to allow earmarking at least three division equivalents for the defense of I Corps if the DRV step up military operations in that area.

Finally we should reach some fundamental understandings with Khanh and his government concerning war aims. We must make clear that we will engage in actions against North Viet Nam only for the purpose of assuring the security and independence of South Viet Nam within the territory assigned by the 1954 agreements; that we will not (rpt not) join in a crusade to unify the north and south; that we will not (rpt not) even seek to overthrow the Hanoi regime provided the latter will cease its efforts to take over the south by subversive warfare.

With these understandings reached, we would be ready to set in motion the following:

(1) Resume at once 34A (with emphasis on Marine operations) and Desoto patrols. These could start without awaiting outcome of discussions with Khanh.

(2) Resume U-2 overflights over all NVN.

(3) Initiate air and ground strikes in Laos against infiltration targets as soon as joint plans now being worked out with the Khanh Government are ready. Such plans will have to be related to the situation in Laos. It appears to US that Souvanna Phouma should be informed at an appropriate time of the full scope of our plans and one would hope to obtain his acquiescence in the anti-infiltration actions in Laos. In any case we should always seek to preserve our freedom of action in the Laotian corridor.

By means of these actions, Hanoi will get the word that the operational rules with respect to the DRV are changing. We should perhaps consider message to DRV that shooting down of U-2 would result in reprisals. We should now lay public base for justifying such flights and have plans for prompt execution in contingency to shoot down. One might be inclined to consider including at this state tit-for-tat bombing operations in our plans to compensate for VC depredations to SVN. However, the initiation of air attacks from SVN against NVN is likely to release a new order of military reaction from both sides, the outcome of which is impossible to predict. Thus, we do not visualize initiating this form of reprisal as a desirable tactic in the current plan but would reserve the capability as an emergency response if needed.

Before proceeding beyond this point, we should raise the level of precautionary military readiness (if not already done) by taking such visible measures as [words illegible] Hawk units to Danang and Saigon, landing a Marine force at Danang for defense of the airfield and beefing up MACV's support base. By this time (assumed to be late fall) we should have some reading on Khanh's performance.

Assuming that his performance has been satisfactory and that Hanoi has failed to respond favorably, it will be time to embark on the final phase of course of action A, a carefully orchestrated bombing attack on NVN directed primarily at infiltration and other military targets. At some point prior thereto it may be desirable to open direct communications with Hanoi if this not been done before. With all preparations made, political and military, the bombing program would begin, using US reconnaissance planes, VNAF/Farmgate aircraft against those targets which could be attacked safely in spite of the presence of the MIG's and additional US combat aircraft if necessary for the effective execution of the bombing programs.

Pros and cons of course of action—A. If successful course of action A will accomplish the objectives set forth at the outset as essential to the support of US policy in South Viet Nam. I will press the Khanh Government into doing its homework in pacification and will limit the diversion of interest to the out-of-country ventures it gives adequate time for careful preparation estimated at several months, while doing sufficient at once to maintain internal morale. It also provides ample warning to Hanoi and Peking to allow them to adjust their conduct before becoming overcommitted.

On the other hand, course of action A relies heavily upon the durability of the Khanh government. It assumes that there is little danger of its collapse without notice or of its possible replacement by a weaker or more unreliable successor. Also, because of the drawn-out nature of the program it is exposed to the danger of international political pressure to enter into negotiations before NVN is really hurting from the pressure directed against it.

Statement of the Problem—B. It may well be that the problem of US policy in SVN is more urgent than that depicted in the foregoing statement. It is far from clear at the present moment that the Khanh Government can last until January 1, 1965, although the application of course of action A should have the effect of strengthening the government [rest of sentence illegible].

[Start of sentence illegible] we would have to restate the problem in the following terms. Our objective avoid the possible consequences of a collapse of national morale. To accomplish these purposes, we would have to open the campaign against the DRV without delay, seeking to force Hanoi as rapidly as possible to resist from aiding the VC and to convince the DRV that it must cooperate in calling off the VC insurgency.

Course of Action—B. To meet this statement of the problem, we need an accelerated course of action, seeking to obtain results faster than under course of action A. Such an accelerated program would include the following actions:

Again we must inform Khanh of our intentions, this time expressing a willingness to begin military pressures against Hanoi at once, providing that he will undertake to perform as in course of action A. However, US action would not await evidence of performance.

Again we may wish to communicate directly on this subject with Hanoi or awaiting effect of our military actions. The scenario of the ensuing events would be essentially the same as under Course A but the execution would await only the readiness of plans to expedite relying almost exclusively on US military means.

Pros and cons of Course of Action B. This course of action asks virtually nothing from the Khanh Government, primarily because it is assumed that little can be expected from it. It avoids the consequence of the sudden collapse of the Khanh Government and gets underway with minimum delay the punitive actions against Hanoi. Thus, it lessens the chance of an interruption of the program by an international demand for negotiation by presenting a fait accompli to international critics. However, it increases the likelihood of US involvement in ground action since Khanh will have almost no available ground forces which can be released from pacification employment to mobilize resistance of DRV attacks.

Conclusion: It is concluded that Course of Action A offers the greater promised achievement of US policy objectives in SVN during the coming months. However, we should always bear in mind the fragility of the Khanh Government and be prepared to shift quickly to Course of Action B if the situation requires. In either case, we must be

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militarily ready for any response which may be initiated by NVN or by Chicom.

Miscellaneous: as indicated above, we believe that 34A operations should resume at once at maximum tempo, still on a covert basis; similarly, Desoto patrols should begin advance, operating outside 12-mile limit. We concur that a number of VNAF pilots should be trained on B-57's between now and first of year. There should be no change now with regard to policy on evacuation of US dependents.

Recommendation: It is recommended that USG adopt Course of Action A while maintaining readiness to shift to Course of Action B.

JOINT CHIEFS' RECOMMENDATIONS ON MILITARY COURSES OF ACTION

(Excerpts from memorandum, "Recommended Courses of Action—Southeast Asia," from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, Aug. 26, 1964.)

3. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have considered Ambassador Taylor's statements of objectives and courses of action. In recognition of recent events in SVN, however, they consider that his proposed course of action B is more in accord with the current situation and consider that such an accelerated program of actions with respect to the DRV is essential to prevent a complete collapse of the US position in Southeast Asia. Additionally, they do not agree that we should be slow to get deeply involved until we have a better feel for the quality of our ally. The United States is already deeply involved. The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that only significantly stronger military pressures on the DRV are likely to provide the relief and psychological boost necessary for attainment of the requisite governmental stability and viability.

4. Recently US military actions in Laos and against the DRV have demonstrated our resolve more clearly than any other US actions in some time. These actions showed force and restraint. Failure to resume and maintain a program of pressure through military actions could be misinterpreted to mean we have had second thoughts about Pierce Arrow and the events leading thereto, and could signal a lack of resolve. Accordingly, while maintaining a posture of readiness in the Western Pacific, the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that the US program should have as concurrent objectives: (1) improvements in South Vietnam, including emphasis on the Pacification Program and the Hop Tac plan to clear Saigon and its surroundings; (2) interdiction of the relatively unmolesed VC lines of communication (LOC) through Laos by operations in the Panhandle and of the LOC through Cambodia by strict control of the waterways leading therefrom; (3) denial of Viet Cong (VC) sanctuaries in the Cambodia-South Vietnam border area through the conduct of "hot pursuit" operations into Cambodia, as required; (4) increased pressure on North Vietnam through military actions. As part of the program for increased pressures, the OPLAN 34A operations and the Desoto patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin should be resumed, the former on an intensified but still covert basis.

5. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe, however, that more direct and forceful actions than these will, in all probability, be required. In anticipation of a pattern of further successful VC and Pathet Lao (PL) actions in RVN and Laos, and in order to increase pressure on the DRV, the US program should also provide for prompt and calculated responses to such VC/PL actions in the form of air strikes and other operations against appropriate military targets in the DRV.

6. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recognize that defining what might constitute appropriate counteroperations in advance is a most difficult task. We should therefore maintain our

prompt readiness to execute a range of selected responses, tailored to the developing circumstances and reflecting the principles in the Gulf of Tonkin actions, that such counteroperations will result in clear military disadvantage to the DRV. These responses, therefore, must be greater than the provocation in degree, and not necessarily limited to response in kind against similar targets. Air strikes in response might be purely VNAF; VNAF with US escort to provide protection from possible employment of MIG's; VNAF with US escort support in the offensive as well as the defensive role; or entirely US. The precise combination should be determined by the effect we wish to produce and the assets available. Targets for attack by air or other forces may be selected from appropriate plans including the Target Study for North Vietnam consisting of 84 targets, recently forwarded to you by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"PLAN OF ACTION" ATTRIBUTED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY MCNAUGHTON

(Excerpts from memorandum, Sept. 3, 1964, "Plan of Action for South Vietnam," which the Pentagon study indicates was drawn up by Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton.)

1. Analysis of the present situation. The situation in South Vietnam is deteriorating. Even before the government sank into confusion last week, the course of the war in South Vietnam had been downward, with Viet Cong incidents increasing in number and intensity and military actions becoming larger and more successful, and with less and less territory meaningfully under the control of the government. Successful ambushes had demonstrated an unwillingness of the population even in what were thought to be pacified areas to run the risk of informing on the Viet Cong. War weariness was apparent. The crisis of the end of August—especially since the competing forces have left the government largely "faceless" and have damaged the government's ability to manage the pacification program—promises to lead to further and more rapid deterioration. . . . The objective of the United States is to reverse the present downward trend. Failing that, the alternative objective is to emerge from the situation with as good an image as possible in US, allied and enemy eyes.

2. Inside South Vietnam. We must in any event keep hard at work inside South Vietnam. This means, inter alia, immediate action:

(a) to press the presently visible leaders to get a real government in operation;

(b) to prevent extensive personnel changes down the line;

(c) to see that lines of authority for carrying out the pacification program are clear.

New initiatives might include action:

(d) to establish a US Naval base, perhaps at Danang;

(e) to embark on a major effort to pacify one province adjacent to Saigon.

A separate analysis is being made of a proposal:

(f) to enlarge significantly the US military role in the pacification program inside South Vietnam—e.g., large numbers of US special forces, divisions of regular combat troops, US air, etc., to "interlard" with or to take over functions of geographical areas from the South Vietnamese armed forces. . . .

3. Outside the borders of South Vietnam. There is a chance that the downward trend can be reversed—or a new situation created offering new opportunities, or at least a convincing demonstration made of the great costs and risks incurred by a country which commits aggression against an ally of ours—if the following course of action is followed. The course of action is made up of actions outside the borders of South Vietnam designed to put increasing pressure on North Vietnam but designed also both to create as

little risk as possible of the kind of military action which would be difficult to justify to the American public and to preserve where possible the option to have no US military action at all. . . .

Actions. The actions, in addition to present continuing "extra-territorial" actions (US U-2 reconnaissance of DRV, US jet reconnaissance of Laos, T-28 activity in Laos), would be by way of an orchestration of three classes of actions, all designed to meet these five desiderata—(1) from the US, GVN and hopefully allied points of view, they should be legitimate things to do under the circumstances, (2) they should cause apprehension, ideally increasing apprehension, in the DRV, (3) they should be likely at some point to provoke a military DRV response, (4) the provoked response should be likely to provide good grounds for us to escalate if we wished, and (5) the timing and crescendo should be under our control, with the scenario capable of being turned off at any time. . . .

4. Actions of opportunity. While the above course of action is being pursued, we should watch for other DRV actions which would justify [words illegible]. Among such DRV actions might be the following:

a. Downing of US recon or US rescue aircraft in Laos (likely by AA, unlikely by MIG).

b. MIG action in Laos or South Vietnam (unlikely).

c. Mining of Saigon Harbor (unlikely).

d. VC attacks on South Vietnamese POL storage, RR bridge, etc. (dramatic incident required).

e. VC attacks (e.g., by mortars) on, or take-over of, air fields on which US aircraft are deployed (likely).

f. Some barbaric act of terrorism which inflames US and world opinion (unlikely). . . .

5. Chances to resolve the situation. Throughout the scenario, we should be alert to chances to resolve the situation:

a. To back the DRV down, so South Vietnam can be pacified.

b. To evolve a tolerable settlement: I. Explicit settlement (e.g., via a bargaining-from-strength conference, etc.).

II. Tacit settlement (e.g., via piecemeal live-and-let-live Vietnamese "settlements," a de facto "writing off" of indefensible portions of SVN, etc.).

c. If worst comes and South Vietnam disintegrates or their behavior becomes abominable, to "disown" South Vietnam, hopefully leaving the image of "a patient who died despite the extraordinary efforts of a good doctor."

7. Special considerations during next two months. The relevant "audiences" of US actions are the Communists (who must feel strong pressures), the South Vietnamese (whose morale must be buoyed), our allies (who must trust us as "underwriters"), and the US public (which must support our risk-taking with US lives and prestige). During the next two months, because of the lack of "rebuttal time" before election to justify particular actions which may be distorted to the US public, we must act with special care—signalling to the DRV that initiatives are being taken, to the GVN that we are behaving energetically despite restraints of our political season, and to the US public that we are behaving with good purpose and restraint.

TOP AIDES' PROPOSAL TO JOHNSON ON MILITARY STEPS IN LATE 1964

(Memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, William P. Bundy, for President Johnson, Sept. 8, 1964. The memorandum was headed "Courses of Action for South Vietnam.")

This memorandum records the consensus reached in discussions between Ambassador Taylor and Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara and General Wheeler, for review and decision by the President.

THE SITUATION

1. Khanh will probably stay in control and may make some headway in the next two-three months in strengthening the Government (GVN). The best we can expect is that he and the GVN will be able to maintain order, keep the pacification program ticking over (but not progressing markedly) and give the appearance of a valid Government.

2. Khanh and the GVN leaders are temporarily too exhausted to be thinking much about moves against the North. However, they do need to be reassured that the US continues to mean business, and as Khanh goes along in his Government efforts, he will probably want more US effort visible, and some GVN role in external actions.

3. The GVN over the next 2-3 months will be too weak for us to take any major deliberate risks of escalation that would involve a major role for, or threat to, South Vietnam. However, escalation arising from and directed against U.S. action would tend to lift GVN morale at least temporarily.

4. The Communist side will probably avoid provocative action against the US, and it is uncertain how much they will step up VC activity. They do need to be shown that we and the GVN are not simply sitting back after the Gulf of Tonkin.

COURSES OF ACTION

We recommend in any event:

1. US naval patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin should be resumed immediately (about September 12). They should operate initially beyond the 12-mile limit and be clearly dissociated from 34A maritime operations. The patrols would comprise 2-3 destroyers and would have air cover from carriers; the destroyers would have their own ASW capability. 2. 34A operations by the GVN should be resumed immediately thereafter (next week). The maritime operations are by far the most important. North Vietnam is likely to publicize them, and at this point we should have the GVN ready to admit that they are taking place and to justify and legitimize them on the basis of the facts on VC infiltration by sea. 34A air drop and leaflet operations should also be resumed but are secondary in importance. We should not consider air strikes under 34A for the present.

3. Limited GVN air and ground operations into the corridor areas of Laos should be undertaken in the near future, together with Lao air strikes as soon as we can get Souvanna's permission.

These operations will have only limited effect, however.

4. We should be prepared to respond on a tit-for-tat basis against the DRV in the event of any attack on US units or any special DRV/VC action against SVN. The response for an attack on US units should be along the lines of the Gulf of Tonkin attacks, against specific and related targets. The response to special action against SVN should likewise be aimed at specific and comparable targets.

The main further question is the extent to which we should add elements to the above actions that would tend deliberately to provoke a DRV reaction, and consequent retaliation by us. Example of actions to be considered would be running US naval patrols increasingly close to the North Vietnamese coast and/or associating them with 34A operations. We believe such deliberately provocative elements should not be added in the immediate future while the GVN is still struggling to its feet. By early October, however, we may recommend such actions depending on GVN progress and Communist reaction in the meantime, especially to US naval patrols.

The aim of the above actions, external to South Vietnam, would be to assist morale in SVN and show the Communists we still mean

business, while at the same time seeking to keep the risks low and under our control at each stage.

Further actions within South Vietnam are not covered in this memorandum. We believe that there are a number of immediate-impact actions we can take, such as pay raises for the police and civil administrators and spot projects in the cities and selected rural areas. These actions would be within current policy and will be refined for decision during Ambassador Taylor's visit. We are also considering minor changes in the US air role within South Vietnam, but these would not involve decisions until November.

MEMO ON JOHNSON'S APPROVAL OF RENEWED NAVAL OPERATIONS

(National security action memorandum from McGeorge Bundy, adviser to the President on national security, to Secretary of Defense McNamara and Secretary of State Rusk, Sept. 10, 1964.)

The President has now reviewed the situation in South Vietnam with Ambassador Taylor and with other advisers and has approved the following actions:

1. U.S. naval patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin will be resumed promptly after Ambassador Taylor's return. They will operate initially well beyond the 12-mile limit and be clearly dissociated from 34A maritime operations. The patrols will comprise two to three destroyers and would have air cover from carriers; the destroyers will have their own ASW capability.

2. 34A operations by the GVN will be resumed after completion of a first DeSoto patrol. The maritime operations are by far the most important. North Vietnam has already publicized them, and is likely to publicize them even more, and at this point we should have the GVN ready to admit that they are taking place and to justify and legitimize them on the basis of the facts of VC infiltration by sea. 34A air drop and leaflet operations should also be resumed but are secondary in importance. We should not consider air strikes under 34A for the present.

3. We should promptly discuss with the Government of Laos plans for limited GVN air and ground operations into the corridor areas of Laos, together with Laos air strikes and possible use of U.S. armed aerial reconnaissance. On the basis of these discussions a decision on action will be taken, but it should be recognized that these operations will in any case have only limited effect.

4. We should be prepared to respond as appropriate against the DRV in the event of any attack on US units or any special DRV/VC action against SVN.

5. The results of these decisions will be kept under constant review, and recommendations for changes or modifications or additions will be promptly considered.

6. The President reemphasizes the importance of economic and political actions having immediate impact in South Vietnam, such as pay raises for civilian personnel and spot projects in the cities and selected rural areas. The President emphasizes again that no activity of this kind should be delayed in any way by any feeling that our resources for these purposes are restricted. We can find the money which is needed for all worthwhile projects in this field. He expects that Ambassador Taylor and the country team will take most prompt and energetic action in this field.

7. These decisions are governed by a prevailing judgment that the first order of business at present is to take actions which will help to strengthen the fabric of the Government of South Vietnam; to the extent that the situation permits, such action should precede larger decisions. If such larger decisions are required at any time by a change in the situation, they will be taken.

CABLE AUTHORIZING AIR STRIKES ON LAOS INFILTRATION ROUTES

(Cablegram from the State Department and the Defense Department to the United States Embassy in Vientiane, Oct. 6, 1964. Copies of the cablegrams were sent to the United States Embassies in Saigon and Bangkok and to the commander in chief of Pacific forces. The embassy in Saigon was asked to relay the message to the United States Commander in Vietnam.)

You are authorized to urge the RLG to begin air attacks against Viet Cong infiltration routes and facilities in the Laos Panhandle by RLAF T-28 aircraft as soon as possible. Such strikes should be spread out over a period of several weeks, and targets should be limited to those deemed suitable for attacks by T-28s and listed Para. 8 Vientiane's 581, excluding Mu Gia pass and any target which Lao will not hit without U.S. air cover or fire support since decision this matter not yet made.

You are further authorized to inform Lao that Yankee Team suppressive fire strikes against certain difficult targets in Panhandle, interspersing with further T-28 strikes, are part of the over-all concept and are to be anticipated later but that such US strikes are not repeat not authorized at this time.

Report soonest proposed schedule of strikes and, upon implementation, all actual commitments of RLG T-28s, including targets attacked, results achieved, and enemy opposition. Also give us any views in addition to those in Vientiane's 581 as to any targets which are deemed too difficult for RLG air strikes and on which US suppressive strikes desired.

FYI: Highest levels have not authorized Yankee Team strikes at this time against Route 7 targets. Since we wish to avoid the impression that we are taking first step in escalation, we inclined defer decision on Route 7 strikes until we have strong evidence Hanoi's preparation for new attack in PDJ, some of which might come from RLAF operations over the Route. End FYI.

You may inform RLG, however, that US will fly additional RECCE over Route 7 to keep current on use being made of the Route by the PL and to identify Route 7 targets and air defenses. The subject of possible decision to conduct strikes on Route 7 being given study in Washington.

FYI: Cross border ground operations not repeat not authorized at this time.

WILLIAM BUNDY DRAFT ON HANDLING WORLD AND PUBLIC OPINION

(Draft section of a paper, "Conditions for Action and Key Actions Surrounding Any Decision," by Assistant Secretary of State Bundy, Nov. 5, 1964.)

1. Bien Hoa may be repeated at any time. This would tend to force our hand, but would also give us a good springboard for any decision for stronger action. The President is clearly thinking in terms of maximum use of a Gulf of Tonkin rationale, either for an action that would show toughness and hold the line till we can decide the big issue, or as a basis for starting a clear course of action under the broad options.

2. Congress must be consulted before any major action, perhaps only by notification if we do a reprisal against another Bien Hoa, but preferably by careful talks with such key leaders as Mansfield, Dirksen, the Speaker, Albert, Halleck, Fulbright, Hickenlooper, Morgan, Mrs. Bolton, Russell, Saitonstall, Rivers, (Vinson?), Arends, Ford, etc. He probably should wait till his mind is moving clearly in one direction before such a consultation, which would point to some time next week. Query if it should be combined with other topics (budget?) to lessen the heat.

3. We probably do not need additional Congressional authority, even if we decide

on very strong action. A session of this rump Congress might well be the scene of a messy Republican effort.

4. We are on the verge of intelligence agreement that infiltration has in fact mounted, and Saigon is urging that we surface this by the end of the week or early next week. Query how loud we want to make this sound. Actually Grose in the Times had the new estimate on Monday; so the splash and sense of hot new news may be less. We should decide this today if possible. . . . In general, we all feel the problem of proving North Vietnamese participation is less than in the past, but we should have the Jordan Report updated for use as necessary.

5. A Presidential statement with the rationale for action is high on any check list. An intervening fairly strong Presidential noise to prepare a climate for an action statement is probably indicated and would be important in any event to counter any SVN fears of a softening in our policy. We should decide the latter today too if possible.

6. Secretary Rusk is talking today to Dobrynin. For more direct communication Seaborn can be revved up to go up the 16th if we think it wise. He is not going anyway, and we could probably hold him back so that the absence of any message was not itself a signal.

7. Our international soundings appear to divide as follows:

a. We should probably consult with the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and possibly Thailand before we reach a decision. We would hope for firm moral support from the U.K. and for participation in at least token form from the others.

b. SEATO as a body should be consulted concurrently with stronger action. We should consult the Philippines a day or so before such action but not necessarily before we have made up our minds.

c. The NATO Council should be notified on the Cuban model, i.e., concurrently, by a distinguished representative.

d. For negative reasons, France probably deserves VIP treatment also.

e. In the UN, we must be ready with an immediate affirmative presentation of our rationale to proceed concurrently either with a single reprisal action or with the initiation of a broader course of action.

f. World-wide, we should select reasonably friendly chiefs of state for special treatment seeking their sympathy and support, and should arm all our representatives with the rationale and defense of our action whether individual reprisal or broader.

8. USIA must be brought into the planning process not later than early next week, so that it is getting the right kind of materials ready for all our information media, on a contingency basis. The same [word illegible] truc of CIA's outlets.

McNAUGHTON'S NOVEMBER DRAFT ON VIETNAM AIMS AND CHOICES

(Second draft of a paper, "Action for South Vietnam," by Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton, Nov. 6, 1964.)

1. U.S. aims:

(a) To protect U.S. reputation as a counter-subversion guarantor.

(b) To avoid domino effect especially in Southeast Asia.

(c) To keep South Vietnam's territory from Red hands.

(d) To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods.

2. Present situation:

The situation in South Vietnam is deteriorating. Unless new actions are taken, the new government will probably be unstable and ineffectual, and the VC will probably continue to extend their hold over the population and territory. It can be expected that, soon (6 months? two years?), (a) government officials at all levels will adjust their behavior to an eventual VC take-over, (b)

defections of significant military forces will take place, (c) whole integrated regions of the country will be totally denied to the GVN, (d) neutral and/or left-wing elements will enter the government, (e) a popular front regime will emerge which will invite the US out, and (f) fundamental concessions to the VC and accommodations to the DRV will put South Vietnam behind the Curtain.

3. Urgency:

"Bien Hoa" having passed, no urgent decision is required regarding military action against the DRV, but (a) such a decision, related to the general deteriorating situation in South Vietnam, should be made soon, and (b) in the event of another VC or DRV "spectacular," a decision (for at least a reprisal) would be urgently needed.

4. Inside South Vietnam:

Progress inside SVN is important, but it is unlikely despite our best ideas and efforts (and progress, if made, will take at least several months). Nevertheless, whatever other actions might be taken, great efforts should be made within South Vietnam: (a) to strengthen the government, its bureaucracy, and its civil-military coordination and planning, (b) to dampen ethnic, religious, urban and civil-military strife by a broad and positive GVN program designed (with US Team help) to enlist the support of important groups, and (c) to press the pacification program in the countryside.

5. Action against DRV:

Action against North Vietnam is to some extent a substitute for strengthening the government in South Vietnam. That is, a less active VC (on orders from DRV) can be matched by a less efficient GVN. We therefore should consider squeezing North Vietnam.

6. Options open to us:

We have three options open to us (all envision reprisals in the DRV for DVR/VC "spectaculars" against GVN as well as US assets in South Vietnam.)

Option A. Continue present policies. Maximum assistance within SVN and limited external actions in Laos and by the GVN covertly against North Vietnam. The aim of any reprisal actions would be to deter and punish large VC actions in the South, but not to a degree that would create strong international negotiating pressures. Basic to this option is the continued rejection of negotiating in the hope that the situation will improve.

Option B. Past full squeeze. Present policies plus a systematic program of military pressures against the north, meshing at some point with negotiation, but with pressure actions to be continued at a fairly rapid pace and without interruption until we achieve our central present objectives.

Option C. Progressive squeeze-and-talk. Present policies plus an orchestration of communications with Hanoi and a crescendo of additional military moves against infiltration targets, first in Laos and then in the DRV, and then against other targets in North Vietnam. The scenario would be designed to give the US the option at any point to proceed or not, to escalate or not, and to quicken the pace or not. The decision in these regards would be made from time to time in view of all relevant factors.

7. Analysis of option A. (To be provided).

8. Analysis of Option B. (To be provided).

9. Analysis of Option C.

(A) Military actions. Present policy. In addition to providing for reprisals in DRV for DRV actions against the US envisions (1) 34A Airrops and Marrops, (2) deSoto patrols, for intelligence purposes, (3) South Vietnamese shallow ground actions in Laos when practicable, and (4) T28 strikes against infiltration-associated targets in Laos. Additional actions should be:

Phase one (in addition to reprisals in DRV for VC "spectaculars" in South Vietnam):

(5) US strikes against infiltration-associated targets in Laos.

Phase two (in addition to reprisals in DRV against broader range of VC actions): (8) Low-level reconnaissance in southern DRV, (7) US/VNAP strikes against infiltration-associated targets in southern DRV.

Phase three: Either continue only the above actions or add one or more of the following, making timely deployment of US forces: (8) Aerial mining of DRV ports, (9) Naval quarantine of DRV, and (10) US/VNAP, in "crescendo," strike additional targets on "94 target list."

South Vietnamese forces should play a role in any action taken against the DRV.

(b) Political actions. Establish immediately a channel for bilateral US-DRV communication. This could be in Warsaw or via Seaborn in Hanoi. Hanoi should be told that we do not seek to destroy North Vietnam or to acquire a colony or base, but that North Vietnam must:

(1) Stop training and sending personnel to wage war in SVN and Laos.

(2) Stop sending arms and supplies to SVN and Laos.

(3) Stop directing and controlling military actions in SVN and Laos.

(4) Order the VC and PL to stop their insurgencies and military actions.

(5) Remove VM forces and cadres from SVN and Laos.

(6) Stop propaganda broadcasts to South Vietnam.

[(7) See that VC and PL stop attacks and incidents in SVN and Laos?]

[(8) See that VC and PL cease resistance to government forces?]

[(9) See that VC and PL turn in weapons and relinquish bases?]

[(10) See that VG and PL surrender for amnesty of expatriation?]

US demands should be accompanied by offers (1) to arrange a rice-barter deal between two halves of Vietnam and (2) to withdraw US forces from South Vietnam for as long as the terms are complied with.

We should not seek wider negotiations—in the UN, in Geneva, etc.—but we should evaluate and pass on each negotiating opportunity as it is pressed on us.

(c) Information actions. The start of military actions against the DRV will have to be accompanied by a convincing world-wide public information program. (The information problem will be easier if the first US action against the DRV is related in time and kind to a DRV or VC outrage or "spectacular", preferably against SVN as well as US assets.)

(d) VS/DRV/Chicom-USSR reactions. (To be elaborated later.) The DRV and China will probably not invade South Vietnam, Laos or Burma, nor is it likely that they will conduct air strikes on these countries. The USSR will almost certainly confine herself to political actions. If the DRV or China strike or invade South Vietnam, US forces will be sufficient to handle the problem.

(e) GVN Reactions. Military action against the DRV could be counter-productive in South Vietnam because (1) the VC could step up its activities, (2) the South Vietnamese could panic, (3) they could resent our striking their "brothers", and (4) they could tire of waiting for results. Should South Vietnam disintegrate completely beneath us, we should try to hold it together long enough to permit us to try to evacuate our forces and to convince the world to accept the uniqueness (and congenial impossibility) of the South Vietnamese case.

(f) Allied and neutral reactions. (To be elaborated later.) (1) Even if OPTION C failed, it would, by demonstrating US willingness to go to the mat, tend to bolster allied confidence in the US as an ally. (2) US military action against the DRV will probably prompt military actions elsewhere in the world—e.g., Indonesia against Malaysia or Timor, or Turkey against Cyprus.

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TAYLOR'S BRIEFING OF KEY OFFICIALS ON
SITUATION IN NOVEMBER 1964

(Excerpts from prepared briefing by Ambassador Taylor, "The Current Situation in South Vietnam—November, 1964," delivered to the "principals"—the senior officials to whom the Southeast Asia working group reported—at a Washington meeting on Nov. 27, 1964.)

After a year of changing and ineffective government, the counter-insurgency program country-wide is bogged down and will require heroic treatment to assure revival. Even in the Saigon area, in spite of the planning and the special treatment accorded the Hop Tac plan, this area also is lagging. The northern provinces of South Viet-Nam which a year ago were considered almost free of Viet-Cong are now in deep trouble. In the Quang Ngai-Binh Dinh area, the gains of the Viet-Cong have been so serious that once more we are threatened with a partition of the country by a Viet-Cong salient driven to the sea. The pressure on this area has been accompanied by continuous sabotage of the railroad and of Highway 1 which in combination threaten an economic strangulation of northern provinces.

This deterioration of the pacification program has taken place in spite of the very heavy losses inflicted almost daily on the Viet-Cong and the increase in strength and professional competence of the Armed Forces of South Viet-Nam. Not only have the Viet-Cong apparently made good their losses, but of late, have demonstrated three new or newly expanded tactics: the use of stand-off mortar fire against important targets, as in the attack on the Bien Hoa airfield; economic strangulation on limited areas; finally, the stepped-up infiltration of DRV military personnel moving from the north. These new or improved tactics employed against the background of general deterioration offer a serious threat to the pacification program in general and to the safety of important bases and installations in particular.

Perhaps more serious than the downward trend in the pacification situation, because it is the prime cause, is the continued weakness of the central government. Although the Huong government has been installed after executing faithfully and successfully the program laid out by the Khanh government for its own replacement, the chances for the long life and effective performance of the new line-up appear small. Indeed, in view of the factionalism existing in Saigon and elsewhere throughout the country it is impossible to foresee a stable and effective government under any name in anything like the near future. Nonetheless, we do draw some encouragement from the character and seriousness of purpose of Prime Minister Huong and his cabinet and the apparent intention of General Khanh to keep the Army out of politics, at least for the time being.

As our programs plod along or mark time, we sense the mounting feeling of war weariness and hopelessness which pervade South Viet-Nam, particularly in the urban areas. Although the provinces for the most part appear steadfast, undoubtedly there is chronic discouragement there as well as in the cities. Although the military leaders have not talked recently with much conviction about the need for "marching North," assuredly many of them are convinced that some new and drastic action must be taken to reverse the present trends and to offer hope of ending the insurgency in some finite time.

The causes for the present unsatisfactory situation are not hard to find. It stems from two primary causes, both already mentioned above, the continued ineffectiveness of the central government, and the other, the increasing strength and effectiveness of the Viet-Cong and their ability to replace losses. While, in view of the historical record of South Viet-Nam, it is not surprising to

have these governmental difficulties, this chronic weakness is a critical liability to future plans. Without an effective central government with which to mesh the U.S. effort the latter is a spinning wheel unable to transmit impulsion to the machinery of the GVN. While the most critical governmental weaknesses are in Saigon, they are duplicated to a degree in the provinces. It is most difficult to find adequate provincial chiefs and supporting administrative personnel to carry forward the complex programs which are required in the field for successful pacification. It is true that when one regards the limited background of the provincial chiefs and their associates, one should perhaps be surprised by the results which they have accomplished, but unfortunately, these results are generally not adequate for the complex tasks at hand or for the time schedule which we would like to establish.

As the past history of this country shows, there seems to be a national attribute which makes for factionalism and limits the development of a truly national spirit. Whether this tendency is innate or a development growing out of the conditions of political suppression under which successive generations have lived is hard to determine. But it is an inescapable fact that there is no national tendency toward team play or mutual loyalty to be found among many of the leaders and political groups within South Viet-Nam. Given time, many of these [words illegible] undoubtedly change for the better, but we are unfortunately pressed for time and unhappily perceive no short term solution for the establishment of stable and sound government.

The ability of the Viet-Cong continuously to rebuild their units and to make good their losses is one of the mysteries of this guerrilla war. We are aware of the recruiting methods by which local boys are induced or compelled to join the Viet-Cong ranks and have some general appreciation of the amount of infiltration personnel from the outside. Yet taking both of these sources into account, we still find no plausible explanation of the continued strength of the Viet-Cong if our data on Viet-Cong losses, are even approximately correct. Not only do the Viet-Cong units have the recuperative powers of the phoenix, but they have an amazing ability to maintain morale. Only in rare cases have we found evidences of bad morale among Viet-Cong prisoners or recorded in captured Viet-Cong documents.

Undoubtedly one cause for the growing strength of the Viet-Cong is the increased direction and support of their campaign by the government of North Viet-Nam. This direction and support take the form of endless radioed orders and instructions, and the continuous dispatch to South Viet-Nam of trained cadre and military equipment over infiltration routes by land and by water. While in the aggregate, this contribution to the guerrilla campaign over the years must represent a serious drain on the resources of the DRV, that government shows no sign of relaxing its support of the Viet-Cong. In fact, the evidence points to an increased contribution over the last year, a plausible development, since one would expect the DRV to press hard to exploit the obvious internal weaknesses in the south.

If, as the evidence shows, we are playing a losing game in South Vietnam, it is high time we change and find a better way. To change the situation, it is quite clear that we need to do three things: first, establish an adequate government in SVN; second, improve the conduct of the counterinsurgency campaign; and finally, persuade or force the DRV to stop its aid to the Viet-Cong and to use its directive powers to make the Viet-Cong desist from their efforts to overthrow the government of South Viet-Nam.

In bringing military pressure to bear on North Viet-Nam, there are a number of vari-

ations which are possible. At the bottom of the ladder of escalation, we have the initiation of intensified covert operations, anti-infiltration attacks in Laos, and reprisal bombings mentioned above as a means for stiffening South Vietnamese morale. From this level of operations, we could begin to escalate progressively by attacking appropriate targets in North Viet-Nam. If we justified our action primarily upon the need to reduce infiltration, it would be natural to direct these attacks on infiltration-related targets such as staging areas, training facilities, communications centers and the like. The tempo and weight of the attacks could be varied according to the effects sought. In its final forms, this kind of attack could extend to the destruction of all important fixed targets in North Viet-Nam and to the interdiction of movement on all lines of communication.

We reach the point where a decision must be taken as to what course or courses of action we should undertake to change the tide which is running against us. It seems perfectly clear that we must work to the maximum to make something out of the present Huong government or any successor thereto. While doing so, we must be thinking constantly of what we would do if our efforts are unsuccessful and the government collapses. Concurrently, we should stay on the present in-country program, intensifying it as possible in proportion to the current capabilities of the government. To bolster the local morale and restrain the Viet-Cong during this period, we should step up the 34-A operations, engage in bombing attacks and armed reconnaissance in the Laotian corridor and undertake reprisal bombing as required. It will be important that United States forces take part in the Laotian operations in order to demonstrate to South Viet-Nam our willingness to share in the risks of attacking the North.

If this course of action is inadequate, and the government falls then we must start over again or try a new approach. At this moment, it is premature to say exactly what these new measures should be. In any case, we should be prepared for emergency military action against the North if only to shore up a collapsing situation.

If, on the other hand as we hope, the government maintains and proves itself, then we should be prepared to embark on a methodical program of mounting air attacks in order to accomplish our pressure objectives vis-a-vis the DRV and at the same time do our best to improve in-country pacification program. We will leave negotiation initiatives to Hanoi. Throughout this period, our guard must be up in the Western Pacific, ready for any reaction by the DRV or of Red China. Annex I suggests the train of events which we might set in motion.

VIEW OF CHIEFS' REPRESENTATIVE ON OPTIONS
B AND C

(Memorandum from Vice Adm. Lloyd M. Mustin of the staff of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Assistant Secretary Bundy as chairman of the Working Group on Southeast Asia, Nov. 14, 1964. The memorandum was headed "Additional Material for Project on Courses of Action in Southeast Asia.")

References: a. Your memorandum of 13 November 1964 to the NSC Working Group
b. JCSM 802-64, dated 27 October 1964
c. JCSM 933-64, dated 4 November 1964
d. JCSM 955-64, dated 14 November 1964
1. Reference a requests JCS views spelling out Option "B" as a preferred alternative, with something like Option "C" as a fall-back alternative. Because of the way in which formal JCS views in the premises have been developed and expressed, this requires some degree of interpretation.

2. Reference b is the most recent recommendation by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for courses of action with respect to South Viet-

nam, framed in context of initiation "in cold blood." Various JCS papers, the most recent dated 22 October 1964, identify the corresponding recommendations with respect to Laos. Reference b specifically identifies certain of its listed actions to begin now, with the balance of them "implemented as required, to achieve US objectives in Southeast Asia."

3. Reference c formalized the most recent JCS recommendation for reprisal (hot blood) actions and reference d provided an analysis of DRV/CHICOM reactions to these strikes, and the probable results thereof. The proposed actions are essentially the same as in reference c except for the principal difference that the "hot blood" actions are initiated at a substantial higher level of military activity.

4. Only in that the courses of action in either of these sets of documents can be completed in minimum time consistent with proper conduct of military operations do they match Option "B" as defined for purposes of the NSC Working Group study. The distinction is that while the Joint Chiefs of Staff offer the capability for pursuing Option "B" as defined, they have not explicitly recommended that the operations be conducted on a basis necessarily that inflexible. All implementing plans do in fact explicitly recognize a controlled phase which would permit suspension whenever desired by national authority.

5. I believe my draft contribution to PART VI provides a reasonable application of the JCS recommendations to Option "B" as defined for the study, but this does not mean that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended Option "B" as defined in the study.

6. There is in an advanced state of completion a JCS fall-back recommendation for a course of action which, subject to possible further modifications by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will provide essentially the same military actions listed in my draft input to PART VII. These include the same military actions listed in the above, but without the stress upon starting forthwith, and with more specific emphasis on some extension of the overall time for execution of the complete list. Thus it imposes what amount to some arbitrary delays, which would provide additional intervals for diplomatic exchanges.

7. Because of the time delays which it reflects, it is specifically the JCS fall-back position.

8. For information, the analysis in referenced develops and supports the conclusion that the United States and its Allies can deal adequately with any course of action the DRV and/or CHICOMS decide to pursue. You may note that this conclusion is developed in the context of the most intense of all courses of action prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This reflects a position less pessimistic than some which have appeared in project drafts.

9. A final overall comment by the Joint Staff member of the Working Group:

We recognize quite clearly that any effective military action taken by the United States will generate a hue and cry in various quarters. The influence that this kind of "pressure" may have upon the United States acting in support of its national interests will be no more than what we choose to permit it to be. There are repeated expressions in various project draft materials indicating that this influence will necessarily be great. We do not agree. There are too many current examples of countries acting in what they presumably believe to be their own [word illegible] self-interest, in utter disregard for "world opinion," for us to accept the position that the United States must at all times conduct all its affairs on the basis of a world popularity contest. In short, we believe that certain strong US actions are required in Southeast Asia, that we must take them regardless of opinion in various other quarters,

and that results of our failing to take them would be substantially more serious to the United States than would be any results of world opinions if we did take them. And as far as that goes, we do not believe that if we took the necessary actions the adverse pressures from other countries would prove to be very serious after all—at least from countries that matter to us.

FINAL DRAFT POSITION PAPER PRODUCED BY WORKING GROUP

"Draft Position Paper on Southeast Asia" circulated to the principal top-level officials concerned, Nov. 29, 1964. The draft was accompanied by memorandum from William Bundy saying: "I attach a draft action paper for review at the meeting at 1:30 on Monday in Secretary Rusk's conference room. Secretary Rusk has generally approved the format of these papers, and they have been given a preliminary review for substance by Ambassador Taylor and Messrs. McNaughton and Forrestal. However, I am necessarily responsible for the way they are now drafted." The Pentagon study says this paper was originally a draft national security action memorandum but that it was changed to a draft position paper at the instructions of the principals. Words and phrases that were deleted from the final version are shown in italics. Handwritten interpolations or revisions are shown in double parentheses.)

I. CONCEPT

A. US objectives in South Vietnam (SVN) are unchanged. They are to:

1. Get Hanoi and North Vietnam (DRV) support and direction removed from South Vietnam, and, to the extent possible, obtain DRV cooperation in ending Viet Cong (VC) operations in SVN.

2. Re-establish an independent and secure South Vietnam with appropriate international safeguards, including the freedom to accept US and other external assistance as required.

3. Maintain the security of other non-Communist nations in Southeast Asia including specifically the maintenance and observance of the Geneva Accords of 1962 in Laos.

B. We will continue to press the South Vietnamese Government (GVN) in every possible way to make the government itself more effective and to push forward with the pacification program.

C. We will join at once with the South Vietnamese and Lao Governments in a determined action program aimed at DRV activities in both countries and designed to help GVN morale and to increase the costs and strain on Hanoi, foreshadowing still greater pressures to come. Under this program the first phase actions ((see TAB D)) within the next thirty days will be intensified forms of action already under way, plus (1) US armed reconnaissance strikes in Laos, and already under way, plus (1) US armed reconnaissance strikes in Laos, and (2) GVN and possible US air strikes against the DRV, as reprisals against any major or spectacular Viet Cong action in the south, whether against US personnel and installations or not.

D. Beyond the thirty-day period, first phase actions may be continued without change, or additional military measures may be taken including the withdrawal of dependents and the possible initiation of strikes a short distance across the border against the infiltration routes from the DRV. In the later case this would become a transitional phase. (Be prepared to stop flow of dependents to SVN at [illegible word] time we start air strikes in force.)

E. Thereafter, if the GVN improves its effectiveness to an acceptable degree and Hanoi does not yield on acceptable terms, or if the GVN can only be kept going by stronger action the U.S. is prepared—at

a time to be determined—to enter into a second phase program, in support of the GVN and RLG, of graduated military pressures directed systematically against the DRV. Such a program would consist principally of progressively more serious air strikes, of a weight and tempo adjusted to the situation as it develops (possibly running from two to six months). Targets in the DRV would start with infiltration targets south of the 19th parallel and work up to targets north of that point. This could eventually lead to such measures as air strikes on all major military-related targets, aerial mining of DRV ports, and a U.S. naval blockade of the DRV. The whole sequence of military actions would be designed to give the impression of a steady, deliberate approach, and to give the U.S. the option at any time (subject to enemy reaction) to proceed or not, to escalate or not, and to quicken the pace or not. Concurrently, the U.S. would be alert to any sign of yielding by Hanoi, and would be prepared to explore negotiated solutions that attain U.S. objectives in an acceptable manner. The U.S. would seek to control any negotiations and would oppose any independent South Vietnamese efforts to negotiate.

HEADING ILLEGIBLE

A. A White House statement will be issued following the meeting with Ambassador Taylor, with the text as in Tab B, attached.

B. Ambassador Taylor will consult with the GVN promptly on his return, making a general presentation (in accordance with the draft instructions) as stated in Tab B, attached. He will further press for the adoption of specific measures as listed in the Annex to Tab B.

C. At the earliest feasible date, we will publicize the evidence of increased DRV infiltration. This action will be coordinated by Mr. Chester Cooper in order to insure that the evidence is sound and that senior government officials who have testified on this subject in the past are in a position to defend and explain the differences between the present estimates and those given in the past. The publicizing will take four forms:

1. An on-the-record presentation to the press in Washington, concurrently with an on-the-record or background presentation to the press in Saigon.

2. Available Congressional leaders will be given special briefings. (No special leadership meeting will be convened for this purpose).

3. The Ambassadors of key allied nations will be given special briefings.

4. A written report will be prepared and published within the next ten days giving greater depth and background to the evidence.

D. Laos and Thailand

The US Ambassadors in these countries will inform the government leaders ((in general terms) of the concept we propose to follow and of specific actions requiring their concurrence or participation. In the case of Laos, we will obtain RLG approval of an intensified program of ((US armed)) reconnaissance strikes both in the Panhandle area of Laos and along the key infiltration routes in central Laos. These actions will not be publicized except to the degree approved by the RLG. It is important, however, for purposes of morale in SV, that their existence be generally known.

Thailand will be asked to support our program fully, to intensify its own efforts in the north and northeast, and to give further support to operations in Laos, such as additional pilots and possibly artillery teams.

E. Key Allies

We will consult immediately with the UK, ((DC)) Australia, New Zealand, ((Bundy)) and the Philippines, ((Humphrey?))

1. UK. The President will explain the concept and proposed actions fully to Prime Minister Wilson, seeking full British sup-

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... but without asking for any additional British contribution in view of the British role in Malaysia.

2. Australia and New Zealand will be pressed through their Ambassadors, not only for support but for additional contributions.

3. The Philippines will be particularly pressed for contributions along the lines of the program for approximately 1800 men already submitted to President Macapagal.

F. We will press generally for more third country aid, stressing the gravity of the situation and our deepening concern. A summary of existing third country aid and of the types of aid that might now be obtained is in Tab C, attached.

G. Communist Countries

1. We will convey to Hanoi our unchanged determination ((and)) our objectives, and that we have a growing concern at the DRV role, to see if there is any sign of change in Hanoi's position.

2. We will make no special approaches to Communist China in this period.

3. We will convey our determination and grave concern to the Soviets, not in the expectation of any change in their position but in effect to warn them to stay out, and with some hope they will pass on the message to Hanoi and Peking.

H. Other Countries

1. We will convey our grave concern to key interested governments such as Canada, India, and France, but avoid spelling out the concept fully.

2. In the event of a reprisal action, will explain and defend our action in the UN as at the time of the Gulf of Tonkin incident. We do not plan to raise the issue otherwise in the UN. (The Lao Government may stress the DRV infiltration in Laos in its speech, and we should support this and spread the information.)

I. Intensified Military Actions

1. The GVN maritime operations (MAROPS) will be intensified, ((including U.S. air protection of GVN vessels from attacks by MIGs or DRV surface vessels)) and we will urge the GVN to surface and defend these as wholly justified in response to the wholly illegal DRV actions.

2. Lao air operations will be intensified, especially in the corridor areas and close to the DRV border. US air cover and flak suppression will ((may)) be supplied where ((if)) needed.

3. US high-level reconnaissance over the DRV will be stepped up.

4. US armed ((air)) reconnaissance ((and air)) strikes will be carried out in Laos, first against the corridor area and within a short time against Route 7 and other infiltration routes. In a major operation to cut key bridges. (These actions will be publicized only to the degree agreed with Souvanna.) ((At this time we prepare to stop flow of dependents to V.N.))

J. Reprisal Actions.

For any VC provocation similar to the following, a reprisal will be undertaken, preferably with 24 hours, against one or more selected targets in the DRV. GVN forces will be used to the maximum extent, supplemented as necessary by US forces. The exact reprisal will be decided at the time, in accordance with a quick-reaction procedure which will be worked out.

The following may be appropriate occasions for reprisals, but we should be alert for any appropriate occasion.

1. Attacks on airfields.
2. Attack on Saigon.
3. Attacks on provincial or district capitals.
4. Major attacks on US citizens.
5. Attacks on major POL facilities. ((expand))
6. Attacks on bridges and railroad lines after the presently damaged facilities have been restored and warning given.
7. Other "spectaculars" such as earlier attack on a US transport carrier at a pier in Saigon.

In these or similar cases, the reprisal action would be linked as directly as possible to DRV infiltration, so that we have a common threat of justification.

A flexible list of reprisal targets has been prepared running from infiltration targets in the southern part of the DRV up to airfields, ports, and naval bases also located south of the 19th parallel.

K. US/GVN joint planning will be initiated both for reprisal actions and for possible later air strikes across the border into the DRV.

L. Major statement or speech. Depending on US public reaction, a major statement or speech may be undertaken by the President during this period. This will necessarily be required if a reprisal action is taken, but some other significant action, such as the stopping of the flow of US dependents, might be the occasion. Such a statement of speech would re-state our objectives and our determination, why we are in South Vietnam, and how gravely we view the situation. It should in any event follow the full publicizing of infiltration evidence.

M. Dependents. The flow of dependents to South Vietnam will be stopped (at an early date, probably immediately after Ambassador Taylor has consulted with the GVN) (at the start of the second phase), and this will be public announced.

N. Deferred Actions. ((See TAB D))

The following actions will not be taken with in the thirty-day period, but will be considered for adoption in the transitional or second phases of the program:

1. Major air deployment to the area.
2. Furnishing US air cover for GVN MAROOPS.

((2)) 3. ((Be required to resume)) Resuming destroyer patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin. If attacked, these would be an alternative basis for reprisals, and should be considered primarily in this light.

((5)) 4. ((Be prepared to evacuate)) Evacuation of US dependents

((3)) 5. US low-level reconnaissance into the DRV.

((4)) 6. GVN/((LAO)) US air strikes across the border ((s)), initially against the infiltration routes and installations and then against other targets south of the 19th parallel.

NOTE.—The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend initiation of sharply intensified military pressures against the DRV, starting with a sharp and early attack in force on the DRV, subsequent to brief operations in Laos and US low-level reconnaissance north of the boundary to divert DRV attention prior to the attack in force. This program would be designed to destroy in the first three days Phuc Yen airfield near Hanoi, other airfields, and major POL facilities, clearly to establish the fact that the US intends to use military force to the full limits of what military force can contribute to achieving US objectives in Southeast Asia, and to afford the GVN respite by curtailing DRV assistance to and direction of the Viet Cong. The follow-on-military program—involving armed reconnaissance of infiltration routes in Laos, air strikes on infiltration targets in the DRV, and then progressive strikes throughout North Vietnam—could be suspended short of full destruction of the DRV if our objectives were earlier achieved. The military program would be conducted rather swiftly, but the tempo could be adjusted as needed to contribute to achieving our objectives.

REPORT OF MEETING OF U.S. ENVOYS TO REVIEW OPERATIONS IN LAOS

(Excerpt from cablegram, signed by Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor, from United States Embassy in Saigon to State Department, Defense Department and Commander in Chief, Pacific, Sept. 19, 1964)

Following is a summary, coordinated with Vientiane and Bangkok, of the conclusions

of the meeting of the three posts held at Saigon September 11 to review air and limited ground operations of the Lao corridor:

1. Air operations in corridor. This involves attack of 22 targets for which folders available at Vientiane and Saigon. If objective is primarily military, i.e., to inflict maximum damage to targets, to prevent VN/PL dispersal and protective measures, and impede rapid VN/PL riposte, it was agreed that a series of sharp, heavy attacks must be made in a relatively short timespan, which would involve substantial U.S. and/or VNAF/Farmgate attacks. If objective primarily psychological, military disadvantages of attacks over longer time frame would be acceptable and chief reliance could be placed on RLAFF T-28s with some Yankee team strikes against harder targets, e.g., five bridges. Estimated sortie requirements for this second option 188 T 28 sorties and 80 USAF sorties. Time required [number illegible] days. Vientiane representatives believe Souvanna would [words illegible] would probably wish [words illegible] such attacks spread out over considerable period of time. Also felt Souvanna would prefer VNAF not conduct air strikes in corridor. It was general consensus that best division of targeting for immediate future would be RLAFF/YANKEE team mix.

Vientiane is very reluctant to see VNAF participation such strikes and would hope that by keeping GVN informed of actions being taken by RLAFF and US in corridor, psychological needs of GVN could reasonably be met. Saigon will seek to do this, but if there are compelling reasons for covert VNAF participation Vientiane would be given prior info on necessity, timing, and place of such strikes.

Alternatively, it was agreed that, if possible, joint Lao, Thai, RVN, and US participation in a common effort against a common enemy would be desirable but, recognizing that, even if possible, arrangements for such an effort would take some time to achieve. If such negotiations are conducted, however, RLAFF/Yankee team strikes should not be precluded. Vientiane has since stated it does not consider that it would be desirable to seek to formalize such four country participation in corridor operations as to do so would raise question of degree of Souvanna Phouma's knowledge and involvement which Vientiane feels would jeopardize success of operations.

2. Ground operations.

A. Although it was agreed that northern Route 9 area offered most profitable targets, conference proceeded on assumption that Vientiane would find operations astride Route 9 politically unacceptable at this time. However, Vientiane's 448 to dept. dispatched after return of conferees, now indicates that "shallow penetration raids (20 kilometers) . . . in Rte. 9 area . . . by company-sized units" would be acceptable and would not require clearance by the RLG.

F. It was the view of Saigon group that authority for U.S. advisors to accompany units is a prerequisite to successful operations. Without this US participation probability of success is judged so low that the advisability of conducting cross border operations would be questionable. Vientiane representatives were strongly opposed to presence US advisors because of difficulty with current SAR operations in Laos and political importance of US maintaining credible stance of adhering to provisions Geneva accords.

F. Embassy Vientiane had earlier indicated that they would insist on advanced clearance of cross border operations. All representatives agreed that this requirement would be met by Vientiane having opportunity to comment on all plans submitted to Washington for approval. Once approval to execute is received, Vientiane would be kept informed of day-to-day operations as

Information addressee on operational traffic between Saigon/Washington/CINCPAC. . . .

ACCOUNT OF TAYLOR'S MEETING WITH SAIGON GENERALS ON UNREST

(Excerpts from Saigon telegram to the State Department, Dec. 24, 1964, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. Ambassador Taylor and his deputy, U. Alexis Johnson, met with the so-called Young Turk leaders, among them Generals Nguyen Cao Ky, Nguyen Van Thieu and Nguyen Khanh Thi and an Admiral identified as Cang.)

Ambassador TAYLOR: Do all of you understand English? (Vietnamese officers indicated they did, although the understanding of General Thi was known to be weak.) I told you all clearly at General Westmoreland's dinner we Americans were tired of coups. Apparently I wasted my words. Maybe this is because something is wrong with my French because you evidently didn't understand. I made it clear that all the military plans which I know you would like to carry out are dependent on governmental stability. Now you have made a real mess. We cannot carry you forever if you do things like this. Who speaks for this group? Do you have a spokesman?

General KY: I am not the spokesman for the group but I do speak English. I will explain why the Armed Forces took this action last night.

We understand English very well. We are aware of our responsibilities, we are aware of the sacrifices of our people over twenty years. We know you want stability, but you cannot have stability until you have unity. . . . But still there are rumors of coups and doubts among groups. We think these rumors come from the HNC, not as an organization but from some of its members. Both military and civilian leaders regard the presence of these people in the HNC as divisive of the Armed Forces due to their influence.

Recently the Prime Minister showed us a letter he had received from the Chairman of the HNC. This letter told the Prime Minister to beware of the military, and said that maybe the military would want to come back to power. Also the HNC illegally sought to block the retirement of the generals that the Armed Forces Council unanimously recommended be retired in order to improve unity in the Armed Forces.

General THIEU: The HNC cannot be bosses because of the Constitution. Its members must prove that they want to fight.

General KY: It looks as though the HNC does not want unity. It does not want to fight the Communists.

It has been rumored that our action of last night was an intrigue of Khanh against Minh, who must be retired. Why do we seek to retire these generals? Because they had their chance and did badly. . . .

Yesterday we met, twenty of us, from 1430 to 2030. We reached agreement that we must take some action. We decided to arrest the bad members of the HNC, bad politicians, bad student leaders, and the leaders of the Committee of National Salvation, which is a Communist organization. We must put the trouble-making organizations out of action and ask the Prime Minister and the Chief of State to stay in office.

After we explain to the people why we did this at a press conference, we would like to return to our fighting units. We have no political ambitions. We seek strong, unified, and stable Armed Forces to support the struggle and a stable government. Chief of State Suu agrees with us. General Khanh saw Huong who also agreed.

We did what we thought was good for this country; we tried to have a civilian government clean house. If we have achieved it, fine. We are now ready to go back to our units.

Ambassador TAYLOR: I respect the sincerity of you gentlemen. Now I would like to talk

to you about the consequences of what you have done. But first, would any of the other officers wish to speak?

Admiral CANO: It seems that we are being treated as though we were guilty. What we did was good and we did it only for the good of the country.

Ambassador TAYLOR: Now let me tell you how I feel about it, what I think the consequences are: first of all, this is a military coup that has destroyed the government-making process that, to the admiration of the whole world, was set up last fall largely through the statesman-like of the Armed Forces.

You cannot go back to your units, General Ky. You military are now back in power. You are up to your neck in politics.

Your statement makes it clear that you have constituted yourselves again substantially as a Military Revolutionary Committee. The dissolution of the HNC was totally illegal. Your decree recognized the Chief of State and the Huong Government but this recognition is something that you could withdraw. This will be interpreted as a return of the military to power. . . .

Ambassador TAYLOR: Who commands the Armed Forces? General Khanh?

General KY: Yes, sir . . .

General THIEU: In spite of what you say, it should be noted that the Vietnamese Commander-in-Chief is in a special situation. He therefore needs advisors. We do not want to force General Khanh; we advise him. We will do what he orders . . .

Ambassador TAYLOR: Would your officers be willing to come into a government if called upon to do so by Huong? I have been impressed by the high quality of many Vietnamese officers. I am sure that many of the most able men in this country are in uniform. Last fall when the HNC and Huong Government was being formed, I suggested to General Khanh there should be some military participation, but my suggestions were not accepted. It would therefore be natural for some of them now to be called upon to serve in the government. Would you be willing to do so? . . .

General KY: Nonetheless, I would object to the idea of the military going back into the government right away. People will say it is a military coup.

Ambassador TAYLOR and Ambassador JOHNSON: (together) People will say it anyway . . .

Ambassador TAYLOR: You have destroyed the Charter. The Chief of State will still have to prepare for elections. Nobody believes that the Chief of State has either the power or the ability to do this without the HNC or some other advisory body. If I were the Prime Minister, I would simply overlook the destruction of the HNC. But we are preserving the HNC itself. You need a legislative branch and you need this particular step in the formation of a government with National Assembly . . .

Ambassador TAYLOR: It should be noted that Prime Minister Huong has not accepted the dissolution of the HNC . . .

General THIEU: What kind of concession does Huong want from us?

Ambassador TAYLOR again noted the need for the HNC function.

General KY: Perhaps it is better if we now let General Khanh and Prime Minister Huong talk.

General THIEU: After all, we did not arrest all the members of the HNC. Of nine members we detained only five. These people are not under arrest. They are simply under controlled residence . . .

Ambassador TAYLOR: Our problem now, gentlemen, is to organize our work for the rest of the day. For one thing, the government will have to issue a communique.

General THIEU: We will still have a press conference this afternoon but only to say why we acted as we did.

Ambassador TAYLOR: I have real troubles on the US side. I don't know whether we will continue to support you after this. Why don't you tell your friends before you act? I regret the need for my blunt talk today but we have lots at stake . . .

Ambassador TAYLOR: And was it really all that necessary to carry out the arrests that very night? Couldn't this have been put off a day or two? . . .

In taking a friendly leave, Ambassador Taylor said: You people have broken a lot of dishes and now we have to see how we can straighten out this mess.

THE OPTIONS HARDENED

The September discussions had established a consensus that bombing of the North "would be required at some proximate future date for a variety of reasons" and individual and institutional pressures all tended to harden the options toward this end as they were finally presented to the National Security Council and then the President.

The analyst gives a number of examples of this stiffening process from the successive draft papers developed by the group during its three weeks of deliberations.

"The extreme withdrawal option was rejected almost without surfacing for consideration" because of its conflict with the policy memorandums. "Fallback positions" outlined in an original working-group draft suffered a similar fate.

FIRST FALLBACK POSITION

The first fallback position, the study says, "would have meant holding the line—placing an immediate, low ceiling on the number of U.S. personnel in SVN, and taking vigorous efforts to build on a stronger base elsewhere, possibly Thailand."

"The second alternative would have been to undertake some spectacular, highly visible supporting action like a limited-duration selective bombing campaign as a last effort to save the South; to have accompanied it with a propaganda campaign about the unwinnability of the war given the GVN's ineptness and, then, to have sought negotiations through compromise and neutralization when the bombing failed."

But because of "forceful objections" by Admiral Mustin, the Joint Chiefs representative, both of these possibilities were downgraded in the final paper presented to the National Security Council on Nov. 21. In effect they were "rejected before they were fully explored," the study says.

Thus all three options, labeled A, B and C, entailed some form of bombing, with "the distinctions between them" tending to blur as they evolved during the group's three weeks of deliberations, the analyst says. Mr. McNaughton and William Bundy collaborated closely on their formulation.

A similar convergence occurred on the question of negotiations.

THE MINIMUM POSITION

Here the minimum United States position was defined as forcing Hanoi to halt the insurgency in the South and to agree to the establishment of a secure, non-Communist state there, a position the analyst defines as "acceptance or else." Moreover, talks of any kind with Hanoi were to be avoided until the effects of bombing had put the United States into a position to obtain this minimum goal in negotiations.

"The only option that provided for bargaining in the usual sense of the word was Option C," the study says. Here the United States would be willing to bargain away international supervisory machinery to verify Hanoi's agreement.

"The policy climate in Washington simply was not receptive to any suggestion that U.S. goals might have to be compromised," the study comments.

These are the options in their final form as the study summarizes them:

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"a. Within 24-36 hours Pacific Command (PACOM) forces take initial U.S. military actions as follows:

"(1) Conduct air strikes in Laos against targets No. 3 (Tchepone barracks, north-west), No. 4 (Tchepone military area), No. 19 (Banthay military area), No. 8 (Nape highway bridge), and the Banken bridge on Route 7.

"(2) Conduct low-level air reconnaissance of infiltration routes and of targets in North Vietnam south of Latitude 19 degrees.

"b. Prior to air attacks on the D.R.V., land the Marine special landing forces at Danang and airlift Army or Marine units from Okinawa to the Saigon-Tansonnhut-Bienhoa area, to provide increased security for US personnel and installations.

"c. Use aircraft engaged in airlift (subparagraph b, above) to assist in evacuation of U.S. dependents from Saigon, to commence concurrently with the daylight air strikes against the D.R.V. (subparagraph d, below).

"d. Assemble and prepare necessary forces so that:

"(1) Within 60 to 72 hours, 30 B-52's from Guam conduct a night strike on D.R.V. target No. 6 (Phucyen airfield). [Phucyen, 13 miles from Hanoi, is the principal North Vietnamese air base].

"(2) Commencing at first light on the day following subparagraph (1) above, PACOM air and naval forces conduct air strikes against D.R.V. targets No. 6 (Phucyen airfield) (daylight follow-up on the above night strike), No. 3 (Hanoi Gianam airfield), No. 8 (Halphong Catbi airfield), No. 48 (Halphong POL), and No. 49 (Hanoi POL). (POL is a military abbreviation for petroleum, oil and lubricants.)

"(3) Concurrently with subparagraph (2), above the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) will strike DRV target No. 36 (Vitthulu barracks).

"(4) Combat air patrols (CAP), flak suppressive fire, strike photographic reconnaissance, and search and rescue operations (S.A.R.) are conducted as appropriate.

"(5) The above actions are followed by:

"(a) Armed reconnaissance on infiltration routes in Laos.

"(b) Air strikes against infiltration routes and targets in the D.R.V.

"(c) Progressive PACOM and SAC [Strategic Air Command] strikes against the targets listed in 94 Target Study.

"(d) Thai bases be used as necessary in connection with the foregoing, with authority to be obtained through appropriate channels. . . .

"Recognizing that security of this plan is of critical importance, they [the Joint Chiefs] consider that external agencies, such as the VNAF, should be apprised only of those parts of the plan necessary to insure proper and effective coordination. The same limited revelation of plans should govern discussions with the Thais in securing authority for unlimited use of Thai bases."

CAUTION FROM SAIGON

From Saigon, Ambassador Taylor cabled for a more restrained response consisting of "retaliation bombing attacks on selected D.R.V. targets" using both American and South Vietnamese planes and for a "policy statement that we will act similarly in like cases in the future."

But the President felt otherwise for the moment. "Apparently, the decision was made to do nothing," the analyst says, adding that the documentary evidence does not provide an adequate explanation.

At a White House meeting the same day, the account continued, the President expressed concern that United States retaliatory strikes might bring counterretaliation by North Vietnam or China against American bases and civilian dependents in the South.

In briefing the press, Administration officials, unidentified in the study, drew a contrast "between this incident and the Tonkin

Gulf attacks where our destroyers were 'on United States business.'"

"A second [White House] meeting to discuss possible U.S. actions was 'tentatively scheduled' for 2 November, but the available materials contain no evidence that it was held," the account continues. "President Johnson was scheduled to appear in Houston that afternoon, for his final pre-election address, and it may be that the second White House meeting was called off."

"One thing is certain," the writer concludes. "There were no retaliatory strikes authorized following the attack on the U.S. bomber base."

A PANEL UNDER BUNDY

But the President had not altogether decided to act on Nov. 1. He had appointed an interagency working group under William Bundy to draw up various political and military options for direct action against North Vietnam. This was the one "concrete result" of the Nov. 1 mortar raid on Bienhoa, the account reports.

The Bundy working group, as it would be unofficially called in the Government, held its first meeting at 9:30 A.M. on Nov. 3, the day that Mr. Johnson was elected to the Presidency in his own right by a huge landslide.

"Bienhoa may be repeated at any time," Mr. Bundy wrote in a memorandum to the group on Nov. 5. "This would tend to force our hand, but would also give us a good springboard for any decision for stronger action. The President is clearly thinking in terms of maximum use of a Gulf of Tonkin rationale, either for an action that would show toughness and hold the line till we can decide the big issue, or as a basis for starting a clear course of action under the broad options." [See text, McGeorge Bundy drafts, Nov. 5.]

Ostensibly, the Bundy group had a mandate to re-examine the entire American policy toward Vietnam and to recommend to the National Security Council a broad range of options. Its membership represented the entire foreign-policy-making machine of the Government—Mr. Bundy; Marshall Green; Michael V. Forrestal, head of the inter-agency Vietnam coordinating committee, and Robert Johnson of the State Department; Mr. McNaughton from the civilian hierarchy of the Pentagon; Vice Adm. Lloyd M. Mustin from the Joint Chiefs' staff and Harold Ford of the Central Intelligence Agency.

REMARKABLE LITTLE LATITUDE

But, the account says, "there appears to have been, in fact, remarkably little latitude for reopening the basic question about U.S. involvement in the Vietnam struggle."

The basic national objective of "an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam," established by the President's National Security Action Memorandum 288 of the previous March, "did not seem open to question."

Ambassadors Unger and Taylor both warned that the Laotian Government, without some participation by the American jets, would not persevere in attacking targets on the Communist infiltration routes. Accordingly, the day before the T-28 strikes began on Oct. 14 with Premier Souvanna Phouma's approval, Washington authorized the Yankee Team jets to fly combat air patrol over the T-28's to raise morale and protect them from any interference by North Vietnamese MIG's.

MINOR EXTENSION ONLY

Ambassador Taylor said in his cable that the combat air patrol missions could be achieved by "a relatively minor extension" of the current rules of engagement for American aircraft in Indochina.

The President also postponed for the present the planned ground forays into Laos by the South Vietnamese. Ambassador Taylor pointed out in a cable on Oct. 9 that these

would not be possible "in foreseeable future" in any case because the South Vietnamese Army was so tied down fighting the guerrillas in its own country.

Several eight-man South Vietnamese reconnaissance teams were parachuted into Laos in an operation called Leaping Lena, but the Nov. 7 report to William Bundy on covert operations would note that "all of these teams were located by the enemy and only four survivors returned. . . ."

On Nov. 1, two days before the election, the Vietcong struck with a devastating mortar barrage on American planes and facilities at Bienhoa airfield near Saigon. The attack put the President under great internal pressure, the analyst says, to strike back openly, as he had said in his directive of Sept. 10 that he was prepared to do "in the event of any attack on U.S. units or any special D.R.V./VC action against SVN."

In the enemy's barrage, four Americans were killed, five B-57 bombers were destroyed and eight damaged. These were some of the B-57's that had earlier been sent from Japan to the Philippines at Mr. McNamara's suggestion as part of the preparations for possible bombing of the North. They had since been moved into South Vietnam, however, to try to shore up the Khanh Government's military position by bringing more air power to bear upon the Vietcong.

"As of the end of October (in anticipation of resumed De Soto patrols), elements of our Pacific forces were reported as 'poised and ready' to execute reprisals for any D.R.V. attacks on our naval vessels. Thus, there was a rather large expectancy among Administration officials that the United States would do something in retaliation," the analyst writes. The words in parentheses are his.

CHANGE OF GROUND RULES

The Joint Chiefs told Mr. McNamara that the Bienhoa attack had been "a deliberate act of escalation and a change of the ground rules under which the VC had operated up to now." Asserting that "a prompt and strong response is clearly justified," they proposed, on the same day as the incident, "that the following specific actions be taken" (the words in parentheses are those of the Joint Chiefs; words in brackets have been inserted by The Times for clarification):

BREAKDOWN IN NEGOTIATIONS

"It will be recalled that the latter point was the issue on which progress toward a cease-fire became stalled," the analyst remarks. The negotiations broke down in Paris late in September.

American mission representatives from Bangkok and Vientiane met in Saigon on Sept. 11 under Ambassador Taylor's auspices, however, and decided that the South Vietnamese Air Force should not participate in the stepped-up air action in Laos authorized by the President in his directive of Sept. 10.

A list of 23 targets in the Laotian panhandle had been drawn up during the summer for the possibility of such raids, including one on a control point at the Mugla Pass, just across the North Vietnamese border.

South Vietnamese air strikes would offend Premier Souvanna Phouma by complicating his political position, the meeting determined, so the air attacks would be confined to clandestine raids by the T-28's in Laos and the United States Navy and Air Force jets—code-named Yankee Team—operating over Laos. Accord was also reached that South Vietnamese troops, possibly accompanied by American advisers, would also make ground forays into Laos up to a depth of 20 kilometers, or 12 miles.

"The mission representatives agreed that, once the [air and ground] operations began, they should not be acknowledged publicly," the analyst writes. "In effect, then, they would supplement the other covert pressures being exerted against North Vietnam. Moreover, while the Lao Government would, of

course, know about the operations of their T-28's. Souvanna was not to be informed of the GVN/U.S. [ground] operations. The unacknowledged nature of these operations would thus be easier to maintain."

JOINT DEPARTMENTAL MESSAGE

On Oct. 6, a joint State and Defense Department message authorized Ambassador Unger in Laos to obtain Premier Souvanna Phouma's approval for the T-28 strikes "as soon as possible."

But as the analyst points out, the message showed that the President had decided to postpone the accompanying strikes by Yankee Team jets, the "U.S. armed aerial reconnaissance" mentioned in Mr. Johnson's National Security Action Memorandum 314.

Five of the targets in the Laotian panhandle, well-defended bridges, had been specifically marked for the American jets, and fire by the Yankee Team planes would also be required against antiaircraft batteries defending the Mugla Pass. The message from Washington excluded these targets from the list of 22.

"You are further authorized to inform Lao that Yankee Team suppressive-fire strikes against certain difficult targets in panhandle, interspersing with further T-28 strikes, are part of the over-all concept and are to be anticipated later, but that such U.S. strikes are not repeat not authorized at this time," the cable said. [See text, cable on Laos Strikes, Sept. 10.]

The U-2 spy plane flights over North Vietnam and the parachuting of supplies and reinforcements to sabotage and psychological warfare teams in the North continued throughout this period and had not been affected by the President's suspension of the coastal raids after the original Tonkin Gulf incident.

The covert step-up in the air operations in Laos ordered by the President did not take place until mid-October. The Pentagon account says that one reason for the delay was the Administration's need to "await the uncertain outcome" of negotiations then taking place in Paris between the right-wing, neutralist and pro-Communist factions in Laos. The objective of the talks was to arrange a cease-fire that might lead to a new 14-nation Geneva conference to end the Laotian civil war.

"However, a Laotian cease-fire was not compatible with current perceptions of U.S. interest," the analyst writes.

The Administration feared that during an ensuing Geneva conference on Laos, international pressures, particularly from the Communist countries, might force the discussions onto the subject of Vietnam. Negotiations in the present circumstances were considered certain to unravel the shaky anti-Communist regime in Saigon.

The Administration also believed that even the convening of a conference on Laos might create an impression in Saigon that Washington was going to seek a negotiated withdrawal from South Vietnam and set off a political collapse there and the emergence of a neutralist coalition regime that would ask the United States to leave.

The account notes that in his Aug. 11 high-level policy memorandum on Southeast Asia, William Bundy had "characterized U.S. strategy" toward the Paris talks with the statement that "we should wish to slow down any progress toward a conference and to hold Souvanna to the firmest possible position." Mr. Bundy had referred to a suggestion by Ambassador Leonard Unger that "Prince Souvanna Phouma insist on three-faction administration of the Plaine des Jarres as "a useful delaying gambit."

"Significantly," the analyst says, "this proposal was advanced at Paris by Souvanna Phouma on 1 September—illustrating the fact that Souvanna was carefully advised by U.S. diplomats both prior to and during the

Paris meetings. Other features of Souvanna's negotiating posture which apparently were encouraged as likely to have the effect of drawing out the discussions were insistence on Communist acceptance of (1) Souvanna's political status as Premier and (2) unhampered operations by the I.C.C. [International Control Commission]."

"Insistence on Souvanna's position is another point on which he should insist, and there would also be play in the hand on the question of free I.C.C. operations." Mr. Bundy wrote in his Aug. 11 memorandum.

Reactivation of the 34A coastal raids, this time after completion of the first De Soto patrol. The directive added that "we should have the GVN ready to admit they are taking place and to justify and legitimize them on the basis of the facts of VC infiltration by sea." The account explains, "It was believed that this step would be useful in establishing a climate of opinion more receptive to expanded (air) operations against North Vietnam when they became necessary." The word in parentheses is the historian's.

An arrangement with the Laotian Government of Premier Souvanna Phouma to permit "limited GVN air and ground operations into the corridor areas of [southeastern] Laos, together with Lao air strikes and possible use of U.S. armed aerial reconnaissance." Armed aerial reconnaissance is a military operation in which the pilot has authority to attack unprogramed targets, such as gun installations or trucks, at his own discretion.

The United States "should be prepared" to launch "tit for tat" reprisal air strikes like those during the Tonkin Gulf incident "as appropriate against the D.R.V. in the event of any attack on U.S. units or any special D.R.V.-VC action against SVN."

The President also ordered "economic and political actions" in South Vietnam, such as pay raises for Vietnamese civil servants out of American funds, to try to strengthen the Saigon regime.

The United States destroyers Morton and Edwards resumed the De Soto patrols in the Tonkin Gulf on Sept. 12, two days after Mr. Johnson's directive. They were attacked in a third Tonkin incident on the night of Sept. 18, and the President glossed over it.

However, he went ahead with his decision to resume the 34A coastal raids, still covertly, the account says. The order to reactivate them was issued by Mr. Johnson on Oct. 4, with the specification that they were to be conducted under tightened American controls.

Each operation on the monthly schedules now had to be "approved in advance" by Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus R. Vance for Secretary McNamara, Llewellyn A. Thompson, acting Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, for Secretary Rusk, and McGeorge Bundy at the White House for the President.

During October, a subsequent report to William Bundy on covert activities said, the 34A coastal raids consisted of two shallow probes of North Vietnamese defenses, an attempt to capture a junk, and successful shellings of the radar station at Vinhson and the observation post at Muldao.

TWO SABOTAGE ACTIONS

Two of the sabotage teams that had previously been parachuted into the North also "carried out successful actions during October," the report said. "One demolished a bridge, the other ambushed a North Vietnamese patrol. Both teams suffered casualties, the latter sufficient to cast doubt on the wisdom of the action."

A BASE FOR WIDER ACTION

The Pentagon account concludes from the Sept. 7 strategy discussions that by now the Saigon regime was being regarded less and less as a government capable of de-

feating the Vietcong insurgency than "in terms of its suitability as a base for wider action."

Despite the pessimistic analyses of Ambassador Taylor and the Joint Chiefs for future escalation, some of those at the White House meeting hoped the Khanh regime could be somewhat stabilized. Citing handwritten notes of the meeting in the Pentagon files, the analyst quotes Mr. McNamara as saying that he understood "we are not acting more strongly because there is a clear hope of strengthening the GVN."

"But he went on," the account continues, "to urge that the way be kept open for stronger actions even if the GVN did not improve or in the event the war were widened by the Communists."

The handwritten notes of the meeting quote the President as asking, "Can we really strengthen the GVN?"

And in his memorandum of the consensus, William Bundy wrote: "Khanh will probably stay in control and may make some headway in the next 2-3 months in strengthening the Government (GVN). The best we can expect is that he and the GVN will be able to maintain order, keep the pacification program ticking over (but not progressing markedly), and give the appearance of a valid government."

On Sept. 10, therefore, the President ordered a number of interim measures in National Security Action Memorandum 314, issued over the signature of his special assistant, McGeorge Bundy. These were intended, in the words of William Bundy's memorandum of consensus, "to assist morale in SVN and show the Communists we still mean business, while at the same time seeking to keep the risks low and under our control at each stage."

A REFLECTION OF CONSENSUS

The most important orders Mr. Johnson gave dealt with covert measures. The final paragraph in the President's memorandum also reflected the consensus, the analyst finds, of the Sept. 7 meeting and other strategy discussions of the time—"the extent to which the new year was anticipated as the occasion for beginning overt military operations against North Vietnam."

This final paragraph read: "These decisions are governed by a prevailing judgment that the first order of business at present is to take actions which will help to strengthen the fabric of the Government of South Vietnam; to the extent that the situation permits, such action should precede larger decisions. If such larger decisions are required at any time by a change in the situation, they will be taken." [See text, McGeorge Bundy memo, Sept. 10.]

The interim measures Mr. Johnson ordered included these:

Resumption of the De Soto patrols by American destroyers in the Tonkin Gulf. They would "operate initially well beyond the 12-mile limit and be clearly disassociated from 34A maritime operation," but the destroyers "would have air cover from carriers."

A resumption of the covert coastal raids on North Vietnam under Operation Plan 34A, which President Johnson had temporarily suspended since the Tonkin Gulf incident. The South Vietnamese Government would announce them publicly, declaring them "fully justified as necessary to assist in interdiction of infiltration by sea."

A resumption of patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin by United States destroyers, code-named De Soto patrols, although these would still be physically "disassociated" from the 34A attacks. Mr. McNaughton noted that "the U.S. public is sympathetic to reasonable insistence on the right of the U.S. Navy to ply international waters."

MAJORITY IN DISAGREEMENT

But a majority of the officials at the Sept. 7 White House strategy meeting disagreed. They decided for the present against adopt-

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ing a provocation strategy for reprisal air attacks, precisely because the Khanh regime was so weak and vulnerable and the morale-lifting benefits of such strikes might be offset by possible Communist retaliation, the analyst says. The meeting was attended by the President; Secretary of State Dean Rusk; Secretary McNamara; Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, the new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs; Ambassador Taylor, who had flown in from Saigon, and John A. McCone, the Director of Central Intelligence.

"We believe such deliberately provocative elements should not be added in the immediate future while the GVN is still struggling to its feet," Assistant Secretary of State William P. Bundy wrote in a memorandum recording the consensus recommendations formally made to the President after the meeting.

"By early October, however, we may recommend such actions depending on GVN progress and Communist reaction in the meantime, especially to U.S. naval patrols." A resumption of the destroyer patrols was one outcome of the Sept. 7 meeting.

The analyst says that a similar reason was given for the decision against beginning a sustained bombing campaign against the North, with or without a provocation strategy, in the near future. "The GVN over the next 2-3 months will be too weak for us to take any major deliberate risks of escalation that would involve a major role for, or threat to, South Vietnam," the Bundy memorandum states.

Ambassador Taylor had acknowledged in his cable of Aug. 18 that bombing the North to prevent a collapse in the South if the Khanh regime continued to decline "increases the likelihood of U.S. involvement in ground action since Khanh will have almost no available ground forces which can be released from pacification employment to mobile resistance of D.R.V. attacks."

His cable was designated a joint United States mission message, meaning that Deputy Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson and Gen. William C. Westmoreland, chief of the United States Military Assistance Command, had concurred with the Ambassador's views.

On Aug. 26, three days before the President's speech at the barbecue in Stonewall, Tex., the Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted a memorandum to Secretary McNamara agreeing with Ambassador Taylor. They said that bombing under his second criterion, to stave off a breakdown in Saigon, was "more in accord with the current situation" in their view and added that an air war against the North was now "essential to prevent a complete collapse of the U.S. position in Southeast Asia."

The Joint Chiefs' memorandum was the first appearance, the account says, of a "provocation strategy" that was to be discussed at the Sept. 7 White House session—in the words of the narrative, "deliberate attempts to provoke the D. R. V. into taking actions which could then be answered by a systematic U.S. air campaign."

The memorandum itself is not this explicit, although it does seem to suggest attempting to repeat the Tonkin Gulf clashes as a pretext for escalation.

In a Sept. 3 memorandum to Secretary McNamara, however, McNaughton was specific. He outlined several means of provocation that could culminate in a sustained air war. In the meantime, they could be employed to conduct reprisal air strikes that would help hold the situation in South Vietnam together and, the analyst notes, permit postponing "probably until November or December any decision as to serious escalation."

DEFINES SERIOUS ESCALATION

This serious escalation Mr. McNaughton defined as "a crescendo of GVN-U.S. military actions against the D.R.V., such as mining harbors and gradually escalating air raids.

He described his provocation program to Mr. McNamara as "an orchestration of three classes of actions, all designed to meet these five desiderata—(1) From the U.S., GVN and hopefully allied points of view they should be legitimate things to do under the circumstances, (2) they should cause apprehension, ideally increasing apprehension in the D.R.V., (3) they should be likely at some point to provoke a military D.R.V. response, (4) the provoked response should be likely to provide good grounds for us to escalate if we wished, and (5) the timing and crescendo should be under our control, with the scenario capable of being turned off at any time." [See text, McNaughton plan, Sept. 3.]

The classes of actions were:

South Vietnamese air strikes at enemy infiltration routes through southeastern Laos that would "begin in Laos near the South Vietnamese border and slowly 'march' up the trails and eventually across the North Vietnamese border."

The President was already communicating this sense of restraint to the voters. On the night of Aug. 29, in an address to a crowd at an outdoor barbecue a few miles from his ranch in Texas, when two tons of beef were served in a belated celebration of his 56th birthday, he made a statement that he was to repeat in numerous election speeches.

"I have had advice to load our planes with bombs," the President said, "and to drop them on certain areas that I think would enlarge the war and escalate the war, and result in our committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to help protect their own land."

The policy of the United States toward Vietnam, the President explained later in his speech was "to furnish advice, give counsel, express good judgment, give them trained counselors, and help them with equipment to help themselves."

IT IS A WAR AND A BIG WAR

"We are doing that," he said. "We have lost less than 200 men in the last several years, but to each one of those 200 men—and we lost about that many in Texas on accidents on the Fourth of July—to each of those 200 men who have given their life to preserve freedom, it is a war and a big war and we recognize it."

"But we think it is better to lose 200 than to lose 200,000. For that reason we have tried very carefully to restrain ourselves and not to enlarge the war."

Eleven days earlier, on Aug. 18, Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor had cabled from Saigon that he agreed with an "assumption" now held in the Administration in Washington that the Vietcong guerrillas—the VC, as they were usually termed—could not be defeated and the Saigon Government preserved by a counterinsurgency war confined to South Vietnam itself.

"Something must be added in the coming months," the Ambassador said in his message. What General Taylor proposed to add was "a carefully orchestrated bombing attack on NVN [North Vietnam], directed primarily at infiltration and other military targets" with "Jan. 1, 1965, as a target D-Day."

The bombing should be undertaken under either of two courses of action, the Ambassador said. The first course would entail using the promise of the air attacks as an inducement to persuade the regime of Gen. Nguyen Khanh to achieve some political stability and get on seriously with the pacification program. Under the second course, the United States would bomb the North, regardless of whatever progress General Khanh made, to prevent "a collapse of national morale" in Saigon.

For the Ambassador cautioned that "it is far from clear at the present moment that the Khanh Government can last until Jan. 1,

1965." The Ambassador said that before bombing the North the United States would also have to send Army Hawk antiaircraft missile units to the Saigon and Danang areas to protect the airfields there against retaliatory Communist air attacks—assumed possible from China or North Vietnam—and to land a force of American Marines at Danang to protect the air base there against possible ground assaults.

Option A—Conduct U.S. reprisal air strikes on North Vietnam "not only against any recurrence of VC 'spectaculars' such as Bien Hoa," intensify the coastal raids of Operation Plan 34A, resume the destroyer patrols in the gulf, step up the air strikes by T-28's against infiltration targets in Laos and seek reforms in South Vietnam.

Option B—What Mr. McNaughton called "a fast/full squeeze." Bomb the North "at a fairly rapid pace and without interruption," including early air raids on Phuoc Yen Airfield near Hanoi and key bridges along the road and rail links with China until full American demands are met. "Should pressures for negotiations become too formidable to resist and discussion begin before a Communist agreement to comply," the analyst writes, "it was stressed that the United States should define its negotiating position 'in a way which makes Communist acceptance unlikely.' In this manner it would be 'very likely that the conference would break up rather rapidly,' thus enabling our military pressures to be resumed."

Option C—Mr. McNaughton's "slow squeeze"; the option he and William Bundy favored. Gradually increasing air strikes "against infiltration targets, first in Laos and then in the D.R.V., and then against other targets in North Vietnam" intended to "give the impression of a steady deliberate approach . . . designed to give the United States the option at any time to proceed or not, to escalate or not and to quicken the pace or not." This option also included the possibility of a "significant ground deployment to the northern part of South Vietnam" as an additional bargaining counter.

A SELECT COMMITTEE MEETS

On Nov. 24, a select committee of the National Security Council met to discuss the option papers formally presented to the council three days earlier. This group comprised Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, Mr. McCone, General Wheeler, McGeorge Bundy and Under Secretary of State George W. Ball. William Bundy attended to keep a record and to represent the working group.

In the account of this meeting, Mr. Ball makes his first appearance in the Pentagon history as the Administration dissenter on Vietnam. William Bundy's memorandum of record says Mr. Ball "indicated doubt" that bombing the North in any fashion would improve the situation in South Vietnam and "argued against" a judgment that a Vietcong victory in South Vietnam would have a falling-domino effect on the rest of Asia.

While the working-group sessions had been in progress, the study discloses, Mr. Ball had been writing a quite different policy paper "suggesting a U.S. diplomatic strategy in the event of an imminent GVN collapse."

"In it, he advocated working through the U.K. [United Kingdom, or Britain] who would in turn seek cooperation from the U.S.S.R., in arranging an international conference (of smaller proportions than those at Geneva) which would work out a compromise political settlement for South Vietnam," the analyst says. The words in parentheses are the analyst's.

Of those present at the November 24 meeting, the memorandum of record indicates, only Mr. Ball favored Option A. The study gives the impression this was conceived as a throwaway option by the Working Group. The group's analysis labeled it "an indefinite course of action" whose "sole advantages" were these:

"(a) Defeat would be clearly due to GVN failure, and we ourselves would be less im-

licated than if we tried Option B or Option C, and failed.

"(b) The most likely result would be a Vietnamese negotiated deal, under which an eventually unified Communist Vietnam would reassert its traditional hostility to Communist China and limit its own ambitions to Laos and Cambodia."

SECRETARY RUSK DISAGREES

At the Nov. 24 meeting, however, Mr. Rusk said that while he favored bombing North Vietnam, he did not accept an analysis by Mr. McNaughton and William Bundy that if the bombing failed to save South Vietnam "we would obtain international credit merely for trying."

"In his view," the analyst writes, "the harder we tried and then failed, the worse our situation would be."

McGeorge Bundy demurred to some extent, the account goes on, but Mr. Ball "expressed strong agreement with the last Rusk point."

General Wheeler, reflecting the viewpoint of the Joint Chiefs, argued that the hard, fast bombing campaign of Option B actually entailed "less risk of a major conflict before achieving success." In words of the study, than the gradually rising air strikes of Option C.

The study adds that Mr. Bundy and Mr. McNaughton may have deliberately loaded the language of Option B to try to frighten the President out of adopting it lest it create severe international pressure for quick negotiations.

General Wheeler's argument presaged a running controversy between the Joint Chiefs and the civilian leadership after the bombing campaign began in the coming year.

The meeting on Nov. 24 ended without a clear majority decision on which option should be recommended to the President. The principals resumed when Ambassador Taylor reached Washington to join the strategy talks on Nov. 27, 1964.

TAYLOR'S THREE PURPOSES

In a written briefing paper, he told the conferees:

"If, as the evidence shows, we are playing a losing game in South Vietnam . . . it is high time we change and find a better way." He proposed gradually increasing air strikes against the North for a threefold purpose:

"First, establish an adequate government in SVN; second, improve the conduct of the counterinsurgency campaign; finally persuade or force the D.R.V. to stop its aid to the Vietcong and to use its directive powers to make the Vietcong desist from their efforts to overthrow the Government of South Vietnam."

To improve anti-Communist prospects in the South, the Ambassador proposed using the lever of American air strikes against the North to obtain promises from the Saigon leaders that they would achieve political stability, strengthen the army and the police, suppress dissident Buddhist and student factions, replace incompetent officials and get on with the war effort.

The analyst says that the Ambassador had thus revised his earlier view that Washington should bomb the North merely to prevent "a collapse of national morale" in Saigon. He still favored some form of bombing in an emergency, but now he wanted something solid from the Saigon leaders in exchange for a coherent program of rising air war.

In the course of discussions on Nov. 27, however, the Ambassador acknowledged that while bombing "would definitely have a favorable effect" in South Vietnam, ". . . he was not sure this would be enough really to improve the situation," the analyst reports, again quoting from William Bundy's memorandum of record.

"Others, including McNamara, agreed with Taylor's evaluation, but the Secretary [Mr. McNamara] added that 'the strengthening

effect of Option C could at least buy time, possibly measured in years.'"

Ambassador Taylor proposed that the Administration therefore adopt a two-phase program culminating in the bombing of infiltration facilities south of the 19th Parallel in North Vietnam, in effect Option A plus the first stages of Option C. Phase I would consist of 30 days of the Option A type of actions, such as intensification of the coastal raids on the North, air strikes by American jets at infiltration routes and one or two reprisal raids against the North. Meanwhile, Ambassador Taylor would obtain the promises of improvement from the Saigon leadership.

At the end of the 30 days, with the promises in hand, the United States would then move into Phase II, the air war. The air raids were to last two to six months, during which Hanoi was apparently expected to yield.

The other agreed, and the proposal was redefined further at a meeting on Nov. 28. William Bundy was assigned the task of drawing up a formal policy paper outlining the proposal. The Cabinet-level officials agreed to recommend it to the President at a White House meeting scheduled for Dec. 1, right after Mr. Johnson's Thanksgiving holiday at his ranch.

On Nov. 28, the same day that his closest advisers made their decision to advise him to bomb North Vietnam, Mr. Johnson was asked at a news conference at the ranch:

"Mr. President, is expansion of the Vietnam war into Laos or North Vietnam a live possibility at this moment?"

"WHEN YOU CRAWL OUT"

"I don't want to give you any particular guide posts as to your conduct in the matter," Mr. Johnson told the newsmen about their articles. "But when you crawl out on a limb, you always have to find another one to crawl back on."

"I have just been sitting here in this serene atmosphere of the Federales for the last few days reading about the wars that you [speculating newsmen] have involved us in and the additional undertakings that I have made decisions on or that General Taylor has recommended or that Mr. McNamara plans or Secretary Rusk envisages. I would say, generally speaking, that some people are speculating and taking positions that I think are somewhat premature."

"At the moment," he concluded, "General Taylor will report to us on developments. We will carefully consider these reports. . . . I will meet with him in the early part of the week. I anticipate there will be no dramatic announcement to come out of these meetings except in the form of your speculation."

William Bundy's draft policy paper, written the next day, said the bombing campaign "would consist principally of progressively more serious air strikes, of a weight and tempo adjusted to the situation as it develops (possibly running from two to six months)." The words in parentheses are Mr. Bundy's.

The draft paper added: "Targets in the D.R.V. would start with infiltration targets south of the 19th Parallel and work up to targets north of that point. This could eventually lead to such measures as air strikes on all major military-related targets, aerial mining of D.R.V. ports, and a U.S. naval blockade of the D.R.V."

"Concurrently," it continued, "the U.S. would be alert to any sign of yielding by Hanoi, and would be prepared to explore negotiated solutions that attain U.S. objectives in an acceptable manner." [See text, working group's draft, Nov. 29.]

Apparently at Mr. McNamara's suggestion, the analyst says, a final sentence in this paragraph was deleted; it read, "The U.S. would seek to control any negotiations and would oppose any independent South Vietnamese efforts to negotiate." Also removed,

possibly during a final meeting of the top officials on Nov. 30 to review the policy paper and "apparently on the advice of McGeorge Bundy," was a proposal that the President make a major speech indicating the new direction that Washington's policy was taking. Likewise deleted was a provision to brief "available Congressional leaders . . . (no special leadership meeting will be convened for this purpose)" on new evidence being compiled on North Vietnamese infiltration into the South, as a public justification of the bombing.

A separate recommendation from the Joint Chiefs for a series of major raids—like those in their retaliation proposal for the Vietcong mortar strike at Bienhoa air base on Nov. 1—was deleted for unspecified reasons, the analyst says. "In effect, presenting a united front to the President."

The paper that was sent to the President made no mention of American ground troops to provide security for airfields in the South when the bombing began, as General Wheeler had reminded the conferees on Nov. 24 would be necessary.

The writer notes the "gap" between the drastic concessions expected from Hanoi and the relatively modest bombing campaign that was expected to break Hanoi's will. He puts forward "two by no means contradictory explanations of this gap." This is the first:

CALCULATED "DOSES OF FORCE"

"There is some reason to believe that the principals thought that carefully calculated doses of force could bring about predictable and desirable responses from Hanoi. Underlying this optimistic view was a significant underestimate of the level of the D.R.V. commitment to victory in the South and an overestimate of the effectiveness of U.S. pressures in weakening that resolve."

A related factor, the account says, "which, no doubt, commended the proposal to the Administration was the relatively low cost—in political terms—of such actions." The context here indicates that the Administration thought the public would find an air war less repugnant than a ground war.

The President seems to have shared the view of his chief advisers, the analyst writes, that "the threat implicit in minimum but increasing amounts of force ('slow squeeze') would . . . ultimately bring Hanoi to the table on terms favorable to the U.S."

"McGeorge Bundy, as the President's assistant for national security affairs, was in a position to convey President Johnson's mood to the group," the account goes on. It adds that notes taken at a White House meeting on Dec. 1 when the senior officials met with Mr. Johnson to present the bombing plan "tend to confirm that the President's mood was more closely akin to the measures recommended" than to other, harsher bombing plans.

"A second explanation of the gap between ends and means is a more simple one," the account comments. "In a phrase, we had run out of alternatives other than pressures."

A memorandum by Assistant Secretary McNaughton on Nov. 6, 1964, made the point succinctly: "Action against North Vietnam is to some extent a substitute for strengthening the Government in South Vietnam. That is, a less active VC (on orders from D.R.V.) can be matched by a less efficient GVN. We therefore should consider squeezing North Vietnam." The words in parentheses are Mr. McNaughton's [See text.]

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERIOD

Between the Tonkin Gulf resolution of August, 1964, and the start of concentrated United States bombing of North Vietnam in 1965, the details of such an air war were being planned, discussed and debated in the Johnson Administration, according to the secret Pentagon chronicle.

Here, chronologically, are highlights of those months of decision-making.

AUGUST 1964

Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor cables agreement with Administration "assumption" that something must be added in the coming months" to forestall "a collapse of national morale" in Saigon. Suggests "carefully orchestrated bombing attack" on North.

Joint Chiefs of Staff concur, call air war "essential to prevent a complete collapse of the U.S. position in Southeast Asia." Propose what study calls "provocation strategy."

SEPTEMBER 1964

John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, outlines provocation plan "to provide good grounds for us to escalate if we wished. . . ." Includes South Vietnamese air strikes on Laos infiltration routes; coastal raids on North; resumption U.S. destroyer patrols in Gulf of Tonkin.

White House strategy meeting. Analyst finds "general consensus" on necessity for early 1965 air strikes but says "tactical considerations" require delay. Cites President's "presenting himself as the candidate of reason and restraint," need for "maximum public and Congressional support," fear of "premature negotiations," Saigon weakness.

President orders low-risk interim measures, says William P. Bundy memo, "to assist morale . . . and show the Communist we still mean business. . . ." Coastal raids, destroyer patrols included.

OCTOBER 1964

Air strikes on Laos infiltration routes start, following delay awaiting outcome Laotian cease-fire talks. U.S. feared new Geneva conference. Analyst says this "not compatible with current perceptions of U.S. interest."

NOVEMBER 1964

Vietcong attack Bienhoa airfield. Joint Chiefs urge "prompt and strong response" including air strikes on North. Ambassador Taylor urges bombing "selected" targets.

President declines, directs interagency working group under Bundy to consider, recommend Vietnam options, policy.

Group's three recommended options all include bombing North. Analyst says group's deliberations showed "remarkably little latitude for reopening the basic questions about U.S. involvement."

Option A—reprisal air strikes, covert pressure intensified.

Option B—bomb North "at a fairly rapid pace and without interruption" till all U.S. demands met; U.S. to define negotiating position, chronicle says, "in a way which makes Communist acceptance unlikely," if U.S. pressed to negotiate "before a Communist agreement to comply."

Option C—graduated air war, possible deployment ground troops.

National Security Council select committee meets. George W. Ball, Under Secretary of State, indicates "doubt" about effectiveness bombing North, argues against domino theory, says Bundy memo. Mr. Ball's policy paper suggests diplomatic strategy-leading to international Vietnam conference.

DECEMBER 1964

President approves recommended plan—Option A for 30 days, then Option C. Stresses he feels "pulling the South Vietnamese together" basic to any other action.

Operation Barrel Roll—U.S. air strikes at infiltration routes Laotian panhandle—under way. National Security Council agrees to "no public statements" unless a plane is lost, then "to insist that we were merely escorting reconnaissance flights."

Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky and ex-Premier Nguyen Khanh attempt coup. Ambassador Taylor tells them U.S. is "tired of coups," warns that "all the military plans which I know you would like to carry out are dependent on government stability."

JANUARY 1965

Two U.S. jets lost over Laos. Press reports on "Barrel Roll."

South Vietnam forces trounced at Binhla. Study says Saigon "final collapse" and Vietcong take-over seem "distinct possibility."

Mr. Bundy, in memo, says "shaky" Saigon morale due partly to "widespread feeling that the U.S. is not ready for stronger action" and is "insisting on perfectionism" in Saigon. Urges "stronger action" despite "grave difficulties."

Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, Mr. McNaughton favor "initiating air strikes"; agree U.S. aim "not to 'help friend' but to contain China," chronicle says.

FEBRUARY 1965

Vietcong attack U.S. military advisers' compound at Pleiku. Study says this "triggered a swift, though long-contemplated Presidential decision to 'give an appropriate and fitting response'."

Forty-nine U.S. jets in first reprisal strike, raid Conghol.

Second reprisal strike follows guerrilla attack on U.S. barracks.

Operation Rolling Thunder—sustained air war—ordered.

DOUBTS AT TWO POLES

The two dissenters from the view that "calculated doses of force" would bring Hanoi around were, at opposite poles, the Joint Chiefs and the Intelligence agencies.

"The J.C.S. differed from this view on the grounds that if we were really interested in affecting Hanoi's will, we would have to hit hard at its capabilities," the account says. The Joint Chiefs wanted the United States to demonstrate a willingness to apply unlimited force.

Their bombing plan, deleted from the position paper before it was presented to the President, asserted that the destruction of all of North Vietnam's major airfields and its petroleum supplies "in the first three days" was intended to "clearly . . . establish the fact that the U.S. intends to use military force to the full limits of what military force can contribute to achieving U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia . . . The follow-on military program—involving armed reconnaissance of infiltration routes in Laos, air strikes on infiltration targets in the D.R.V. and then progressive strikes throughout North Vietnam—could be suspended short of full destruction of the D.R.V. if our objectives were achieved earlier."

The analyst remarks that the Joint Chiefs' plan was "shunted aside because both its risks and costs were too high," but the author does not attempt to evaluate the possible effect of his plan on Hanoi's will.

Like Mr. Ball, the account says, the intelligence community "tended toward a pessimistic view" of the effect of bombing on the Hanoi leaders.

The intelligence panel within the Bundy working group, composed of representatives from the three leading intelligence agencies—the C.I.A., the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency—"did not concede very strong chances for breaking the will of Hanoi," the author writes.

ANALYSIS OF ENEMY POLICY

"The course of actions the Communists have pursued in South Vietnam over past few years implies a fundamental estimate on their part that the difficulties facing the U.S. are so great that U.S. will and ability to maintain resistance in that area can be gradually eroded—without running high risks that this would wreak heavy destruction on the D.R.V. or Communist China," the panel's report said.

If the United States now began bombing,

the panel said, the Hanoi leadership would have to ask itself "a basic question" about how far the United States was willing to step up the war "regardless of the danger of war with Communist China and regardless of the international pressures that could be brought to bear. . . ." The decision of the Hanoi leadership was thus uncertain for a number of reasons, the panel cautioned, and "in any event, comprehension of the other's intentions would almost certainly be difficult on both sides, and especially as the scale of hostilities mounted."

The panel then cast doubt on the so-called Rostow thesis of how much Hanoi feared destruction of its industry. This thesis, named for its proponent, Walt W. Rostow, chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, underlay much of the Administration's hope for the success of a bombing campaign.

The panel said: "We have many indications that the Hanoi leadership is acutely and nervously aware of the extent to which North Vietnam's transportation system and industrial plant is vulnerable to attack. On the other hand, North Vietnam's economy is overwhelmingly agricultural and, to a large extent, decentralized in a myriad of more or less economically self-sufficient villages. Interdiction of imports and extensive destruction of transportation facilities and industrial plants would cripple D.R.V. industry. These actions would also seriously restrict D.R.V. military capabilities, and would degrade, though to a lesser extent, Hanoi's capabilities to support guerrilla warfare in South Vietnam and Laos. We do not believe that such actions would have a crucial effect on the daily lives of the overwhelming majority of the North Vietnam population. We do not believe that attacks on industrial targets would so greatly exacerbate current economic difficulties as to create unmanageable control problems. It is reasonable to infer that the D.R.V. leaders have a psychological investment in the work of reconstruction they have accomplished over the last decade. Nevertheless, they would probably be willing to suffer some damage to the country in the course of a test of wills with the U. S. over the course of events in South Vietnam."

NO CHANGE OF POLICY

As in the case of earlier intelligence findings that contradicted policy intentions, the study indicates no effort on the part of the President or his most trusted advisers to reshape their policy along the lines of this analysis.

One part of the intelligence panel's report that the Administration did accept was a prediction that China would not react in any major way to a bombing campaign unless American or South Vietnamese troops invaded North Vietnam or northern Laos. The study indicates that this analysis eased Administration fears on this point.

Chinese reaction to systematic bombing of North Vietnam was expected to be limited to providing Hanoi with anti-aircraft artillery, jet fighters and naval patrol craft. The panel predicted that the Soviet role was "likely to remain a minor one," even where military equipment was concerned. However, the Russians subsequently sent large-scale shipments for formidable anti-aircraft equipment to North Vietnam.

"CAUTIOUS AND EQUIVOCAL"

Now that a decision to bomb North Vietnam was drawing near, the study says, Mr. Johnson became "cautious and equivocal" in approaching it. Two analysis of this period, in fact, differ in their characterization of his decision at the two-and-a-half-hour White House meeting on Dec. 1, 1964, a month after the election, when the bombing plan was presented to him.

One analyst says that at this meeting the President "made a tentative decision" to bomb, ordering the preparatory Phase I put into effect and approving Phase II, the air war itself, "in principle."

The second analyst says that while the President approved the entire bombing plan "in general outline at least . . . it is also clear that he gave his approval to implement only the first phase of the concept."

The President tied the actual waging of air war to reforms by the Saigon Government, this analyst says, and left an impression by the end of the meeting that he was "considerably less than certain that future U.S. actions against North Vietnam [the air war] would be taken, or that they would be desirable."

NO FOLLOWING MEMORANDUM

The study notes that "the precise nature of the President's decisions" at the meeting is not known because a national security action memorandum was not issued afterward.

"However," the study continues, "from handwritten notes of the meeting, from instructions issued to action agencies and from later reports of diplomatic and military actions taken, it is possible to reconstruct the approximate nature of the discussion and the decisions reached." The footnotes do not indicate who made the handwritten notes found in the Pentagon files, although the indication is that it was Mr. McNaughton or Mr. McNamara.

After a briefing by Ambassador Taylor on the situation in South Vietnam, the discussion turned to a draft statement, prepared by William Bundy, that the Ambassador was to deliver to the Saigon leaders. The statement explained the two-phase bombing plan and tied Phase II to a serious attempt by the Saigon leadership to achieve some political stability and get on with the war effort against the Vietcong.

In Saigon, General Khanh had nominally surrendered authority to a civilian cabinet headed by Premier Tran Van Huong. The general was intriguing against the Huong Cabinet, however, as the ostensible commander in chief of the armed forces and head of a Military Revolutionary Committee of South Vietnamese generals. Within this council, a group headed by Air Vice Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, the chief of the air force, was intriguing both with and against General Khanh.

Against this background, the study says of the White House meeting:

"The President made it clear that he considered that pulling the South Vietnamese together was basic to anything else the United States might do. He asked the Ambassador specifically which groups he [Ambassador Taylor] might talk to and what more we might do to help bring unity among South Vietnam's leaders. He asked whether we could not say to them 'we just can't go on' unless they pulled together. To this, Taylor replied that we must temper our insistence somewhat . . ."

WHICH ONES TO BRIEF

The meeting then moved into a discussion of which allied countries were to be briefed on the proposed air war. The President said he wanted "new, dramatic effective" forms of assistance from several, specifically mentioning Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the Philippines. These briefings by special envoys were included in the draft position paper laying out the bombing plan as the important diplomatic element in Phase I.

"In each case," the study says, "the representative was to explain our concept and proposed actions and request additional contributions by way of forces in the event the second phase of U.S. actions were entered."

The plan made no provision for similar consultations with Congressional leaders and there is no evidence in the study that Mr. Johnson conducted any.

In approving the statement General Taylor was to make to the Saigon leaders, the President also gave his assent to ready the military signal that was formally to sound the beginning of the 30 days of Phase I—Operation Barrel Roll, air strikes by United States Air Force and Navy jets of Yankee Team against infiltration routes and facilities in the Laotian panhandle, which was to be the final step-up in the Laos air operations.

At the end of the meeting, the account continues, Ambassador Taylor "slipped out the White House rear entrance" to avoid the press and "only a brief, formal statement" was issued. This analyst, remarks that the White House press statement release immediately afterward "contained only two comments regarding any determinations that had been reached."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAYLOR

One said, "The President instructed Ambassador Taylor to consult urgently with the South Vietnamese Government as to measures that should be taken to improve the situation in all its aspects."

The other, the concluding paragraph, said the President had "reaffirmed the basic U.S. policy of providing all possible and useful assistance to the South Vietnamese people and Government in their struggle to defeat the externally supported insurgency and aggression being conducted against them."

The final sentence in this paragraph, the analyst notes, was one "specifically linking this policy" with Congress' Tonkin Gulf resolution. The sentence read: "It was noted that this policy accords with the terms of the Congressional joint resolution of Aug. 10, 1964, which remains in full force and effect."

Then, on Dec. 3, emerging from a second meeting with Mr. Johnson, "presumably having received the final version of his instructions," the account goes on, Ambassador Taylor told reporters assembled at the White House "that he was going to hold 'across-the-board' discussions with the GVN."

"Asserting that U.S. policy for South Vietnam remained the same, he stated that his aim would be to improve the deteriorating situation in South Vietnam. Although he hinted of changes 'in tactics and method,' he quite naturally did not disclose the kind of operations in which the United States was about to engage or any future actions to which immediate activity could lead."

The Administration now moved quickly. William Bundy left for Australia and New Zealand the next day, Dec. 4, to brief their governments on both phases of the bombing plan, the writer says.

WILSON VISITS WASHINGTON

Prime Minister Harold Wilson of Britain was "thoroughly briefed on the forthcoming U.S. actions" during a state visit to Washington Dec. 7 to 9, the narrative continues, while other envoys briefed the Canadians and the Asian allies. The writer notes that while Britain, Australia and New Zealand were given "the full picture," the Canadians were "told slightly less" and the Philippines, South Korea and the Chinese Nationalist Government on Taiwan were "briefed on Phase I only." What the Thais and the Laotians were told is not made explicit.

The New Zealand Government "expressed grave doubts" that the bombing would break Hanoi's will, the writer says, and predicted that it might increase infiltration to South Vietnam.

In meetings in Saigon on Dec. 7 and 9 with General Khanh and Premier Huong, Ambassador Taylor exacted the desired promises in exchange for the bombing. At the second meeting, the Ambassador presented them with a draft press release describing the desired improvements, including strengthening of the army and the police, which the Saigon Government released in its own name, at the United States' request, on Dec. 11.

William H. Sullivan, newly appointed as

Ambassador to Laos, obtained Premier Souvanna Phouma's agreement on Dec. 19 to the American air strikes at infiltration routes along the Ho Chi Minh Trail supply network through the Laotian panhandle, and Operation Barrel Roll got under way on Dec. 14 with attacks by American jets on "targets of opportunity"—that is, unprogrammed targets sighted by the pilots.

At a meeting of the National Security Council on Dec. 12, when the final details for Barrel Roll were reviewed and approved the study reports, it was "agreed that there would be no public operations statements about armed reconnaissance in Laos unless a plane were lost."

"In such an event the principals stated, the Government should continue to insist that we were merely escorting reconnaissance flights as requested by the Laotian Government."

LEVEL OF ATTACKS SET

McGeorge Bundy was quoted in the memorandum of record as stating that the agreed plan "fulfilled precisely the President's wishes."

On Dec. 18 Secretary McNamara set the level of Barrel Roll attacks for the 30 days of Phase I—the analyst indicates that he did so at the President's wishes—at two missions of four aircraft apiece each week.

The Administration also stepped up the raids by T-28 fighter planes in Laos with a joint message on Dec. 8 from Secretaries McNamara and Rusk to Ambassador Sullivan. The cable instructed him to have the Laotians intensify bombing "in the corridor areas and close to the D.R.V. border."

The analyst reports that in the three months between the beginning of October and the end of December there were 77 sorties by the T-28's in the panhandle area—a sortie is a strike by a single plane—and that by early December the air raids had "already precipitated several complaints from the D.R.V." to the International Control Commission "alleging U.S.-sponsored air attacks on North Vietnamese territory."

Events in Saigon had meanwhile gone awry. Political turmoil broke out there again with Buddhist and student demonstrations against Premier Huong's Cabinet.

On Dec. 20, in defiance of Ambassador Taylor's wishes, General Khanh, in a temporary alliance with the so-called Young Turks—the young generals led by Marshal Ky—announced the dissolution of the High National Council, a body that was supposed to be functioning as a temporary legislature to draw up a constitution for a permanent civilian government. They also made a large number of political arrests by night, seizing several members of the High National Council.

That day, Ambassador Taylor summoned the Young Turks to the embassy and, in the writer's words, read them "the riot act." They included Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, now President of South Vietnam.

According to the embassy's cable to Washington, the conversation began like this:

"Ambassador Taylor: Do all of you understand English? (Vietnamese officers indicated they did . . .)

"I told you all clearly at General Westmoreland's dinner we Americans were tired of coups. Apparently I wasted my words. Maybe this is because something is wrong with my French because you evidently didn't understand. I made it clear that all the military plans which I know you would like to carry out are dependent on government stability. Now you have made a real mess. We cannot carry you forever if you do things like this."

Marshal Ky and other Vietnamese generals denied that they had staged a coup and said they were trying to achieve unity by getting rid of divisive elements, the account goes on.

The Ambassador tried to persuade them to support the civilian regime of Premier Huong and apparently to restore the High

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National Council. The Vietnamese officers would not agree.

The embassy cable describes the end of the conversation:

"In taking a friendly leave, Ambassador Taylor said: 'You people have broken a lot of dishes and now we have to see how we can straighten out this mess.'" [See text, Taylor message, Dec. 12.]

By the end of the month, Ambassador Taylor, Deputy Ambassador Johnson and General Westmoreland had apparently despaired of trading a bombing campaign against the North for a stable Saigon Government that would prosecute the war in the South. On Dec. 31, the account continues, they sent a joint message to Washington saying, in effect, that the United States should go ahead with the air campaign against the North "under any conceivable alliance condition short of complete abandonment of South Vietnam."

A FIRMER BASE SOUGHT

The account indicates, however, that the President was reluctant to proceed into Phase II without at least the appearance of a firmer base in Saigon since the turmoil there was making it more difficult for him to justify escalation to the American public.

The writer remarks that at the meeting of the senior National Security Council Members on Dec. 24, Secretary Rusk "raised an issue that was high among Administration concerns—namely that the American public was worried about the chaos in the GVN, and particularly with respect to its viability as an object of increased U.S. commitment."

On Christmas Eve, the Vietcong planted a bomb in the Brinks, an officers billet in Saigon, killing two Americans in the blast and wounding 58 others; the President declined to authorize reprisal air strikes against the North despite vigorous recommendations from Ambassador Taylor, Admiral Sharp in Honolulu and the Joint Chiefs, who were now pressing hard for escalation.

"Highest levels today reached negative decision on proposal . . . for reprisal action," Mr. Rusk cabled the Ambassador on Dec. 29.

Five days earlier, Mr. Rusk had also instructed Ambassador Taylor to halt, until the turmoil in Saigon subsided, the planned, piecemeal release to the press of evidence of a major increase in infiltration from the North during 1964, the writer says. The Ambassador had first reported the increase to Washington in October, along with a report of the appearance of individual North Vietnamese Army regulars, and the Administration began leaking the information in November through background briefings.

MAKING A CASE IN PUBLIC

By this time, the Administration felt that it had sufficient information on infiltration to make a public case for bombing the North. The intelligence community had obtained evidence that a minimum of 19,000 and a maximum of 34,000 infiltrators, mostly former southerners who had fought against the French in the Vietnam, had entered the South since 1959. Chester L. Cooper, a former intelligence officer, had put together a major report on Hanoi's support and direction of the guerrillas, but the Administration had decided earlier in December against public disclosure of the document itself because this might create "undesirable speculation," and had instead instructed the Ambassador to continue the piecemeal approach. Now, the analyst says, Mr. Rusk wanted this halted as well for fear that more publicity might create pressure for action prematurely.

DEBATE GROWS IN CONGRESS

The political upheaval in Saigon, the writer continues, was fueling a Vietnam debate in Congress, which, while it did not exhibit much antiwar sentiment, did show considerable confusion and dismay, the writer says.

Secretary Rusk, on television on Jan. 3, 1965, felt it necessary to defend the Administration 'in the context of a year-end foreign policy report,' the account adds.

Mr. Rusk did not hint at the Administration's plans for possible bombing of the North. "Ruling out either a U.S. withdrawal or a major expansion of the war," the writer says, "Rusk gave assurances that with internal unity, and our aid and persistence the South Vietnamese could themselves defeat the insurgency."

On Jan. 14, however, as a result of the loss of two American jets over Laos in Operation Barrel Roll, "accounts of U.S. air operations against Laotian infiltration routes gained wide circulation for the first time," the writer says. A dispatch from Laos by United Press International, he adds, "in effect blew the lid on the entire Yankee Team operation in Laos since May of 1964."

"Despite official State or Defense refusal to comment on the nature of the Laotian air missions, these disclosures added new fuel to the public policy debate," the writer continues. The disclosures were complicating matters for the President by giving ammunition to the very small minority of antiwar senators who were taking seriously the press speculation that the United States might be getting ready to bomb the North.

In a Senate speech on Jan. 19, the account goes on, Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon charged that the Yankee Team air strikes had ignored the 1962 Geneva accords on Laos and "violated the nation's belief in substituting the rule of law for the jungle law of military might." Broadening his attack, he warned, that "there is no hope of avoiding a massive war in Asia" if U.S. policy towards Southeast Asia were to continue without change.

Within the Administration in Washington, key policy makers were coming to the same conclusion that Ambassador Taylor and his colleagues had reached in Saigon—that it was desirable to bomb the North regardless of what state of government existed in the South.

The political turmoil in Saigon, the narrative says, appears "to have been interpreted in Washington as an impending sellout" to the National Liberation Front. Fear increased that a neutralist coalition government would emerge and invite the United States to leave.

VICTORY FOR THE VIETCONG

Washington's sense of crumbling in the military situation was heightened when Saigon's army suffered a "highly visible" setback in a ferocious battle at Binhgia, southeast of the capital, between Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. Vietcong guerrillas nearly destroyed two South Vietnamese Marine battalions.

"All evidence pointed to a situation in which a final collapse of the GVN appeared probable and a victorious consolidation of VC power a distinct possibility," the narrative says.

AS THE HOUR APPROACHED

William Bundy communicated the feeling in a memorandum he wrote to Secretary Rusk on Jan. 6 for a meeting Mr. Rusk was to have with the President that afternoon. Mr. Bundy explained that the memorandum encompassed besides his own thoughts, those of Michael V. Forrestal, head of the interagency Vietnam coordinating committee, and Ambassador Unger, who had recently been transferred back to Washington from Vientiane.

"I think we must accept that Saigon morale in all quarters is now very shaky indeed," he said in part, "and that this relates directly to a widespread feeling that the U.S. is not ready for stronger action and indeed is possibly looking for a way out. We may regard this feeling as irrational and

contradicted by our repeated statements, but Bill Sullivan was very vivid in describing the existence of such feelings in October, and we must honestly concede that our actions and statements since the election have not done anything to offset it. The blunt fact is that we have appeared to the Vietnamese (and to wide circles in Asia and even in Europe) to be insisting on a more perfect government than can reasonably be expected, before we consider any additional action—and that we might even pull out our support unless such a government emerges.

"In key parts of the rest of Asia, notably Thailand, our present posture also appears weak. As such key parts of Asia see us, we looked strong in May and early June, weaker in later June and July, and then appeared to be taking a quite firm line in August with the Gulf of Tonkin. Since then we must have seemed to be gradually weakening—and, again, insisting on perfectionism in the Saigon Government before we moved.

"The sum total of the above seems to us to point—together with almost certainly stepped-up Vietcong actions in the current favorable weather—to a prognosis that the situation in Vietnam is now likely to come apart more rapidly than we had anticipated in November. We would still stick to the estimate that the most likely form of coming apart would be a government of key groups starting to negotiate covertly with the Liberation Front or Hanoi, perhaps not asking in the first instance that we get out, but with that necessarily following at a fairly early stage. In one sense this would be a 'Vietnam solution,' with some hope that it would produce a Communist Vietnam that would assert its own degree of independence from Peking and that would produce a pause in Communist pressure in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, it would still be virtually certain that [sic] Laos would then become untenable and that Cambodia would accommodate in some way. Most seriously, there is grave question whether the Thai in these circumstances would retain any confidence at all our continued support. In short, the outcome would be regarded in Asia, and particularly among our friends, as just as humiliating a defeat as any other form. As events have developed, the American public would probably not be too sharply critical, but the real question would be whether Thailand and other nations were weakened and taken over thereafter.

"The alternative of stronger action obviously has grave difficulties. It commits the U.S. more deeply, at a time when the picture of South Vietnamese will is extremely weak. To the extent that it included actions against North Vietnam, it would be vigorously attacked by many nations and disapproved initially even by such nations as Japan and India, on present indications. Most basically, its stiffening effect on the Saigon political situation would not be at all sure to bring about a more effective government, nor would limited actions against the southern D.R.V. in fact sharply reduce infiltration or, in present circumstances, be at all likely to induce Hanoi to call it off.

"Nonetheless, on balance we believe that such action would have some faint hope of really improving the Vietnamese situation, and, above all, would put us in a much stronger position to hold the next line of defense, namely Thailand. Accepting the present situation—or any negotiation on the basis of it—would be far weaker from this latter key standpoint. If we moved into stronger actions, we should have in mind that negotiations would be likely to emerge from some quarter in any event, and that under existing circumstances, even with the additional element of pressure, we could not expect to get an outcome that would really secure an independent South Vietnam. Yet

even on an outcome that produced a progressive deterioration in South Vietnam and an eventual Communist take-over, we would still have appeared to Asians to have done a lot more about it.

"In specific terms, the kinds of action we might take in the near future would be:

"a. An early occasion for reprisal action against the D.R.V.

"b. Possibly beginning low-level reconnaissance of the D.R.V. at once.

"Concurrently with a or b, an early orderly withdrawal of our dependents [from Saigon, but only if] stronger action [is contemplated]. If we are to clear our decks in this way—and we are more and more inclined to think we should—it simply must be, for this reason alone, in the context of some stronger action. . . .

"Introduction of limited U.S. ground forces into the northern area of South Vietnam still has great appeal to many of us, concurrently with the first air attacks into the D.R.V. It would have a real stiffening effect in Saigon, and a strong signal effect to Hanoi. On the disadvantage side, such forces would be possible attrition targets for the Vietcong."

A SIMILAR MEMORANDUM

Mr. McNaughton, Mr. Bundy's counterpart at the Pentagon, had given Mr. McNamara a similar memorandum three days earlier.

"The impact of these views can be seen in the policy guidance emanating from Washington in mid and late January, 1965," the Pentagon's narrative says.

In a cablegram to Saigon on Jan. 11, the writer goes on, Secretary Rusk instructed Ambassador Taylor "to avoid actions that would further commit the United States to any particular form of political solution" to the turmoil there. If another military regime emerged from the squabbling "we might well have to swallow our pride and work with it," Mr. Rusk said.

Another memorandum to Mr. McNamara from Mr. McNaughton, on Jan. 27, along with Mr. McNamara's pencilled comments on it, "adds perspective to this viewpoint," the historian says. Mr. McNaughton stated "and Mr. McNamara agreed" that the United States objective in South Vietnam was "not to 'help friend' but to contain China," and "both favored initiating strikes against North Vietnam."

Paraphrasing the memorandum and Mr. McNamara's comments, the writer says, "At first they believed these [air attacks] should take the form of reprisals; beyond that, the Administration would have to 'feel its way' into stronger, graduated pressures. McNaughton doubted that such strikes would actually help the situation in South Vietnam, but thought they should be carried out anyway. McNamara believed they probably would help the situation, in addition to their broader impacts on the U.S. position in Southeast Asia."

"Clear indication that the Administration was contemplating some kind of increased military activity" had gone out to Saigon two days earlier in another cablegram from Mr. Rusk, the account goes on, "Ambassador Taylor was asked to comment on the 'departmental view' that U.S. dependents should be withdrawn to 'clear the decks' in Saigon and enable better concentration of U.S. efforts on behalf of South Vietnam."

THE SIGNAL FOR 'D-DAY'

Ever since the original bombing scenario of May 23, 1964, the evacuation of American women and children had been the signal for "D-Day."

"The Rusk cable made specific reference to a current interest in reprisal actions," the analyst says.

The initial blow came in about two weeks. The Vietcong attacked the United States military advisers' compound at Pleiku in the

Central Highlands and an Army helicopter base at Camp Holloway, four miles away. Nine Americans were killed and 70 wounded.

"The first flash from Saigon about the assault came on the ticker at the National Military Command Center at the Pentagon at 2:38 P.M. Saturday, Feb. 6, Washington time," the narrative says. "It triggered a swift, though long-contemplated Presidential decision to give an 'appropriate and fitting' response. Within less than 14 hours, by 4 P.M. Sunday, Vietnam time, 40 U.S. Navy jets—A-4 Skyhawks and F-8 Crusaders from the Seventh Fleet carriers U.S.S. Coral Sea and U.S.S. Hancock—had penetrated a heavy layer of monsoon clouds to deliver their bombs and rockets upon North Vietnamese barracks and staging areas at Donghol, a guerrilla training garrison 40 miles north of the 17th Parallel.

"Though conceived and executed as a limited one-shot tit-for-tat reprisal, the drastic U.S. action, long on the military planners' drawing boards under the operational code name Flaming Dart precipitated a rapidly moving sequence of events that transformed the character of the Vietnam war and the U.S. role in it."

Then the guerrillas attacked an American barracks at Quinhon, on the central coast, and on Feb. 11, the President launched a second and heavier reprisal raid, Flaming Dart II.

Two days later, on Feb. 13, he decided to begin Operation Rolling Thunder, the sustained air war against North Vietnam.

"As is readily apparent," the analyst concludes, "there was no dearth of reasons for striking North. Indeed, one almost has the impression that there were more reasons than were required. But in the end, the decision to go ahead with the strikes seems to have resulted as much from the lack of alternative proposals as from any compelling logic in their favor."

SOME KEY FIGURES IN THE PENTAGON NARRATIVE: WHO THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY ARE NOW

M'GEORGE BUNDY

Special assistant to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson for national security affairs, 1961-66 . . . since 1966, president of the Ford Foundation. Born Boston March 30, 1919 . . . graduated from Yale, 1940, majoring in classics and mathematics . . . ran as a Republican for seat on Boston City Council, 1941 . . . served as aid to Adm. Alan G. Kirk, World War II . . . foreign-policy adviser to Thomas E. Dewey, Republican Presidential candidate, 1948 . . . joined Harvard faculty, 1949 . . . became dean of Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 1953 . . . named by President Kennedy to White House post . . . often described as principal architect of U.S. Vietnam policy . . . was recalled briefly by President Johnson during the Arab-Israeli crisis in summer of 1967 . . . often seen as a potential Secretary of State . . . just as visible—and controversial—as foundation head as when directing foreign policy from White House basement office . . . now lives in New York.

WILLIAM PUTNAM BUNDY

From 1951 to end of Johnson Administration, "the other Bundy" held sensitive positions in government departments, from the Central Intelligence Agency to State Department . . . now a senior research associate at Center for International Studies of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and will assume editorship of Foreign Affairs, the quarterly, after October, 1972. Born in Washington, Sept. 24, 1917 . . . earned bachelor's degree from Yale, 1939; master's from Harvard, 1940; law degree from Harvard, 1947 . . . married to a daughter of Dean Acheson, former Secretary of State . . . practiced law, Washington, 1947-51 . . . a Democrat . . . with the C.I.A., 1951-61 . . . served consecu-

tively as Assistant and Deputy Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 1961-64 . . . Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 1964-60 . . . always, compared with younger brother McGeorge, an anonymous figure . . . lives in Cambridge, Mass.

MICHAEL VINCENT FORRESTAL

White House specialist on Vietnam, 1962-65 . . . In private law practice New York now . . . newly elected chairman of board, Metropolitan Opera Guild. Born Nov. 26, 1927, in New York . . . graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy . . . studies at Princeton interrupted to serve on staff of W. Averell Harriman at Paris headquarters of Economic Cooperation Administration, 1948-50 . . . his father, late James V. Forrestal, was the first Secretary of Defense . . . received law degree from Harvard, 1953 and practiced in New York till 1960 . . . returned to firm of Shearman & Sterling, where he is partner, in 1965 . . . as Kennedy and Johnson aide, served on National Security Council . . . In July, 1964, appointed chairman White House interdepartmental Vietnam coordinating committee . . . accompanied Mrs. John F. Kennedy on 1967 visit to Cambodia . . . early supporter of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's Presidential bid . . . member Council on Foreign Relations . . . lives in New York.

NGUYEN KHANH

South Vietnam's Premier—on and off—from February, 1964, through Mid-February, 1965. Since 1966, in exile in Paris. Born in Travinh, South Vietnam, Nov. 8, 1927 . . . educated military academy at Dalet, 1950, also in France, at U.S. Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan. fought as guerrilla against French . . . sent to Saigon on mission . . . joined French colonial forces . . . paratrooper, reached rank of major . . . helped foil 1960 coup against Ngo Dinh Diem . . . stayed on sidelines during 1963 coup . . . ousted Gen. Duong Van Minh Jan. 30, 1964 . . . In August, assumed dictatorial powers led coup against incumbent . . . survived coup attempt February . . . is deposed as commander in chief by military . . . sent abroad as roving ambassador . . . a Buddhist, but not popular with Buddhists . . . short, jaunty, goateed . . . liked to wear paratrooper's red beret . . . fond of saying: "I am a fighter."

JOHN T. MCNAUGHTON

Mr. McNaughton, a close and trusted associate of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara from 1961 to 1967, and his wife and their younger son died in plane collision near Asheville, N.C., July 19, 1967, a week before he was to be sworn in as Secretary of Navy. Born Nov. 21, 1921, in Bicknell, Ind. . . graduated from DePauw University, 1942 . . . served four years in Navy during World War II . . . graduated from Harvard Law School, 1948 . . . studied at Oxford as Rhodes scholar, working with European Cooperation Administration in Paris during vacations . . . also wrote for Pekin (Ill.) Times, owned by father . . . two years as editor of that paper . . . returned to Harvard as assistant professor, 1953, professor, 1956 . . . chosen by Mr. McNamara in 1961 to serve as Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs . . . general counsel to Defense Department, 1962 . . . Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 1964-67, heading Pentagon's foreign-affairs planning staff.

MAXWELL DAVENPORT TAYLOR

Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, 1962-64; United States Ambassador to South Vietnam, 1964-65; special consultant to the President, 1965-69; now on the board of the Institute for Defense Analyses, chairman of Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Born Keytesville, Mo., Aug. 28, 1901 . . . graduated from United States Military Academy, 1927 . . .

June 14, 1971

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

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Command and General Staff School 1933... Army War College 1940... taught French, Spanish, at West Point... assistant military attaché, Pekin, 1937... commander 101st Airborne Division, World War II... took part invasions Normandy, Holland... Superintendent United States Military Academy, 1945-49... United States Commander, Berlin, 1950 Commander of Eighth Army, Korea, 1953... Army Chief of Staff, 1956... resigned 1959 in "limited war" strategy dispute... recalled as advisor by President Kennedy, 1961... was influential in both Kennedy, Johnson administrations... scholarly, much-decorated... now living in Chevy Chase, Md.

GLOSSARY TERMS USED IN TEXT

ARVN—Army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam.
Black Radio—In psychological warfare, broadcasts by one side that are disguised as broadcasts by the other.
Blue Springs—Apparently a covert operation not further identified in the study of the documents.
Box Top—Apparently a code name for a covert project not further identified in documents.
Candy Machine—Code name for an allied operation in Vietnam not otherwise identified in the documents.
CAP—Combat air patrol.
CI—Counterinsurgency.
CHICOM—Chinese Communist.
CHINAT—Chinese Nationalist.
CINCPAC—Commander In Chief, Pacific. Position held by Adm. Harry D. Felt, 1958-64; Adm. U.S. Grant Sharp, 1964-68.
COMUSMACV—Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Position held by Gen. Paul D. Harkins in 1964; Gen. William C. Westmoreland, 1964-68; Gen. Creighton W. Abrams since.
Country Team—Council of Senior United States officials in Vietnam, including Ambassador, commander of American forces, C.I.A. chief and others.
DEPTEL—State Department telegram.
De Soto Patrols—United States destroyer patrols in Tonkin Gulf.
EMBTTEL—United States Embassy telegram.
Farmgate—Clandestine United States Air Force strike unit in Vietnam, 1964.
GVN—Government of (South) Vietnam.
Hardnose—Code name, apparently for a covert project, not otherwise identified in the documents.
I.C.C.—International Control Commission, established under 1954 Geneva accords, comprising representatives of Poland, Canada and India.
JCSM—Joint Chiefs of Staff memorandum.
Leaping Lena—Code name for an allied operation not further identified in the documents.
Lucky Dragon—Code name, apparently for a covert allied operation in Vietnam, not otherwise identified.
MACV—Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
NSAM—National security action memorandum.
NVR—North Vietnam.
OPLAN—Operation Plan.
PDJ—Palais des Jarrés.
Pierce Arrow—Code name for the U.S. reprisal bombing of North Vietnam after the Gulf of Tonkin incidents.
PL—Pathet Lao.
PL/VM—Pathet Lao-Vietminh.
POL—Petroleum, oil, lubricants.
PSYOPS—Psychological operations.
Queen Bee—Code name for an allied operation not otherwise identified in the documents.
RECCE—Reconnaissance.
RLAF—Royal Laotian Air Force.

RLG—Royal Laotian Government.
RTC—Royal Thai Government.
RVNAF—Republic of (South) Vietnam Air Force; also Republic of (South) Vietnam armed forces.
SAR—Search and rescue.
SEPTTEL—Separate telegram.
SVN—South Vietnam.
34A—Operation plan, 1964, covering covert ground, air and sea raids against North Vietnam.
Triangle—Code name for an operation in South Vietnam not otherwise identified in the documents.
USOM—United States Operation Mission, the American economic aid apparatus in Saigon.
VNAF—(South) Vietnam Air Force; (South) Vietnam armed forces.
Water Glass—Code name of an operation in Vietnam not otherwise identified in the documents.
White Radio—In psychological warfare, broadcasts that are openly attributed to the side transmitting them.
Yankee Team—Phase of the Indochina bomb action.

Source: New York Times,
June 15, 1971.

VIETNAM ARCHIVE: STUDY TELLS HOW JOHNSON OPENED WAY TO GROUND COMBAT

(By Neil Sheehan)

President Johnson decided on April 1, 1965, to use American ground troops for offensive action in South Vietnam because the Administration had discovered that its long-planned bombing of North Vietnam—which had just begun—was not going to stave off collapse in the South, the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war discloses. He ordered that the decision be kept secret.

"The fact that this departure from a long-held policy had momentous implications was well recognized by the Administration leadership," the Pentagon analyst writes, alluding to the policy axiom since the Korean conflict that another land war in Asia should be avoided.

Although the President's decision was a "pivotal" change, the study declares, "Mr. Johnson was greatly concerned that the step be given as little prominence as possible."

The decision was embodied in National Security Action Memorandum 328, on April 6, which included the following paragraphs:

"5. The President approved an 18-20,000 man increase in the U.S. military support forces to fill out existing units and supply needed logistic personnel.

"6. The President approved the deployment of two additional Marine Battalions and one Marine Air Squadron and associated headquarters and support elements.

"7. The President approved a change of mission for all Marine Battalions deployed to Vietnam to permit their more active use under conditions to be established and approved by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretary of State."

The paragraph stating the President's concern about publicity gave stringent orders in writing to members of the National Security Council:

"11. The President desires that with respect to the actions in paragraphs 5 through 7, premature publicity be avoided by all possible precautions. The actions themselves should be taken as rapidly as practicable, but in ways that should minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy, and official statements on these troop movements will be made only with the direct approval of the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State. The President's desire is that these movements and changes should be understood as being gradual and wholly consistent with existing policy." [See text, action memorandum on change of mission, April 6, 1965, Page 21.]

The period of increasing ground-combat involvement is shown in the Pentagon papers to be the third major phase of President Johnson's commitment to South Vietnam. This period forms another section of the presentation of those papers by The New York Times.

The papers, prepared by a large team of authors in 1967-68 as an official study of how the United States went to war in Indochina, consist of 3,000 pages of analysis and 4,000 pages of supporting documents. The study covers nearly three decades of American policy toward Southeast Asia. Thus far The Times's reports on the study, with presentation of key documents, have covered the period of clandestine warfare before the Tonkin Gulf incidents in 1964 and the planning for

sustained bombing of North Vietnam to begin early the next year.

In the spring of 1965, the study discloses, the Johnson Administration planned its hopes on air assaults against the North to break the enemy's will and persuade Hanoi to stop the Vietcong insurgency in the South. The air assaults began on a sustained basis on March 2.

"Once set in motion, however, the bombing effort seemed to stiffen rather than soften Hanoi's backbone, as well as the willingness of Hanoi's allies, particularly the Soviet Union, to work toward compromise," the study continues.

"Official hopes were high that the Rolling Thunder program . . . would rapidly convince Hanoi that it should agree to negotiate a settlement to the war in the South. After a month of bombing with no response from the North Vietnamese, optimism began to wane," the study remarks.

"The U.S. was presented essentially with two options: (1) to withdraw unilaterally from Vietnam leaving the South Vietnamese to fend for themselves, or (2) to commit ground forces in pursuit of its objectives. A third option, that of drastically increasing the scope and scale of the bombing, was rejected because of the concomitant high risk of inviting Chinese intervention."

And so within a month, the account continues, with the Administration recognizing that the bombing would not work quickly enough, the crucial decision was made to put the two Marine battalions already in South Vietnam on the offensive. The 3,600 marines landed at Danang on March 8—bringing the total United States force in South Vietnam to 27,000. The restricted mission of the marines had been the static defense of the Danang airfield.

ORDERS PUT IN WRITING

As a result of the President's wish to keep the shift of mission from defense to offense imperceptible to the public, the April 1 decision received no publicity "until it crept out almost by accident in a State Department release on 8 June," in the words of the Pentagon study.

The day before, the hastily improvised static security and enclave strategies of the spring were overtaken by a request from Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the American commander in Saigon, for nearly 200,000 troops. He wanted these forces, the Pentagon study relates, to hold off defeat long enough to make possible a further build-up of American troops.

"Swiftly and in an atmosphere of crisis," the study says, President Johnson gave his approval to General Westmoreland's request a little more than a month later, in mid-July. And once again, the study adds, Mr. Johnson concealed his decision.

But the President, the narrative continues, was now heeding the counsel of General Westmoreland to embark on a full-scale ground war. The study for this period concludes that Mr. Johnson and most of his Administration were in no mood for compromise on Vietnam.

As an indication of the Administration's mood during this period, the study cites "a marathon public-information campaign" conducted by Secretary of State Dean Rusk late in February and early in March as sustained bombing was getting under way.

Mr. Rusk, the study says, sought "to signal a seemingly reasonable but in fact quite tough U.S. position on negotiations, demanding that Hanoi stop doing what it is doing against its neighbors before any negotiations could prove fruitful.

"Rusk's disinterest in negotiations at this time was in concert with the view of virtually all of the President's key advisers, that the path to peace was not then open," the Pentagon account continues. "Hanoi held sway over more than half of South Vietnam and

could see the Saigon Government crumbling before her very eyes. The balance of power at this time simply did not furnish the U.S. with a basis for bargaining and Hanoi had no reason to accede to the hard terms that the U.S. had in mind. Until military pressures on North Vietnam could tilt the balance of forces the other way, talk of negotiation could be little more than a hollow exercise."

A POSITION OF COMPROMISE

The study also says that two of the President's major moves involving the bombing campaign in the spring of 1965 were designed, among other aims, to quiet critics and obtain public support for the air war by striking a position of compromise. But in fact, the account goes on, the moves masked publicly unstated conditions for peace that "were not 'compromise' terms, but more akin to a 'cease and desist' order that, from the D.R.V./VC point of view, was tantamount to a demand for their surrender." "D.R.V." denotes the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; "VC" the Vietcong.

In Mr. Johnson's first action, his speech at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore on April 7, he offered to negotiate "without posing any pre-conditions" and also held out what the study calls a "billion-dollar carrot" in the form of a regional economic-development program for the Mekong Delta, financed by the United States, in which North Vietnam might participate.

The second action was the unannounced five-day pause in bombing in May, during which the President called upon Hanoi to accept a "political solution" in the South. This "seemed to be aimed more at clearing the decks for a subsequent intensified resumption than it was at evoking a reciprocal act of deescalation by Hanoi," the study says, Admiral Raborn, in his May 6 memorandum, had suggested a pause for this purpose and as an opportunity for Hanoi "to make concessions with some grace."

The air attacks had begun Feb. 8 and Feb. 11 with reprisal raids, code-named Operations Flaming Dart I and II, announced as retaliation for Vietcong attacks on American installations at Pleiku and Qui Nhon.

In public Administration statements on the air assaults, the study goes on, President Johnson broadened "the reprisal concept as gradually and imperceptibly as possible" into sustained air raids against the North, in the same fashion that the analyst describes him blurring the shift from defensive to offensive action on the ground during the spring and summer of 1965.

The study declares that the two February strikes—unlike the Tonkin Gulf reprisals in August, 1964, which were tied directly to a North Vietnamese attack on American ships—were publicly associated with a "larger pattern of aggression" by North Vietnam. Flaming Dart II, for example, was characterized as "a generalized response to 'continued acts of aggression,'" the account notes.

"Although discussed publicly in very muted tones," it goes on, "the second Flaming Dart operation constituted a sharp break with past U.S. policy and set the stage for the continuing bombing program that was now to be launched in earnest."

In another section of the study, a Pentagon analyst remarks that "the change in ground rules . . . posed serious public-information and stage-managing problems for the President."

It was on Feb. 13, two days after this second reprisal, that Mr. Johnson ordered Operation Rolling Thunder. An important influence on his unpublicized decision was a memorandum from his special assistant for national security affairs, McGeorge Bundy, who was heading a fact-finding mission in Vietnam when the Vietcong attack at Pleiku occurred on Feb. 7. With Mr. Bundy were

Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Leonard Unger.

"A policy of sustained reprisal against North Vietnam" was the strategy advocated by Mr. Bundy in his memorandum, drafted on the President's personal Boeing 707, Air Force One, while returning from Saigon the same day. [See text, Bundy memorandum, Feb. 7, 1965.]

The memorandum explained that the justification for the air attacks against the North, and their intensity, would be keyed to the level of Vietcong activity in the South.

"SUSTAINED PRESSURE" SOUGHT

"We are convinced that the political values of reprisal require a continuous operation," Mr. Bundy wrote. "Episodic responses geared on a one-for-one basis to 'spectacular' outrages would lack the persuasive force of sustained pressure. More important still, they would leave it open to the Communists to avoid reprisals entirely by giving up only a small element of their own program. . . . It is the great merit of the proposed scheme that to stop it the Communists would have to stop enough of their activity in the South to permit the probable success of a determined pacification effort."

The analyst notes, however, that Mr. Bundy's memorandum was a "unique articulation of a rationale for the Rolling Thunder policy" because Mr. Bundy held out as the immediate benefit an opportunity to rally the anti-Communist elements in the South and achieve some political stability and progress in pacification. "Once such a policy is put in force," Mr. Bundy wrote, in summary conclusions in his memorandum, "we shall be able to speak in Vietnam on many topics and in many ways, with growing force and effectiveness."

It was also plausible, he said, that bombing in the North, "even in a low key, would have a substantial depressing effect upon the morale of Vietcong cadres in South Vietnam."

Mr. Bundy, the study remarks, thus differed from most other proponents of bombing. These included Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor, who deplored of improving the Saigon Government's effectiveness and who wanted bombing primarily as a will-breaking device "to inflict such pain or threat of pain upon the D.R.V. that it would be compelled to order a stand-down of Viet Cong violence," in the study's words.

As several chapters of the Pentagon study show, a number of Administration strategists—particularly Walt W. Rostow, chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council—had assumed for years that "calculated doses" of American air power would accomplish this end.

Mr. Bundy, while not underrating the bombing's "impact on Hanoi" and its use "as a means of affecting the will of Hanoi," saw this as a "longer-range purpose."

"THIS PROGRAM SEEMS CHEAP"

The bombing might not work. Mr. Bundy acknowledged. "Yet measured against the costs of defeat in Vietnam," he wrote, "this program seems cheap. And even if it fails to turn the tide—as it may—the value of the effort seems to us to exceed its cost."

President Johnson informed Ambassador Taylor of his Rolling Thunder decision in a cablegram drafted in the White House and transmitted to Saigon late in the afternoon of Sunday, Feb. 13.

The cable told the Ambassador that "we will execute a program of measured and limited air action jointly with the GVN [the Government of Vietnam] against selected military targets in D.R.V. remaining south of the 19th Parallel until further notice."

"Our current expectation," the message added, "is that these attacks might come about once or twice a week and involve two or three targets on each day of operation." [See text of White House cable, Feb. 13.]

Mr. Johnson said he hoped "to have appropriate GVN concurrence by Monday if possible. . . ."

The study recounts that "Ambassador Taylor received the news of the President's new program with enthusiasm. In his response, however, he explained the difficulties he faced in obtaining authentic GVN concurrence 'in the condition of virtual nongovernment' which existed in Saigon at that moment."

Gen. Nguyen Khanh, the nominal commander of the South Vietnamese armed forces, had ousted the civilian cabinet of Premier Tran Van Huong on Jan. 27. Led by Air Vice Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, a group of young generals—the so-called Young Turks—were in turn intriguing against General Khanh.

(A footnote in the account of the first reprisal strikes, on Feb. 8, says that Marshal Ky, who led the South Vietnamese planes participating in the raid, caused "consternation" among American target controllers by dropping his bombs on the wrong targets. "In a last minute switch," the footnote says, Marshal Ky "dumped his flight's bomb loads on an unassigned target in the Vinhlinh area, in order, as he later explained, to avoid colliding with U.S.A.F. aircraft which, he claimed, were striking his originally assigned target when his flight arrived over the target area." Adm. U. S. Grant Sharp, Commander of United States forces in the Pacific, reported the incident to the Joint Chiefs.)

CABLES TO THE EMBASSIES

Referring to the political situation in Saigon, the account says: "This Alice-in-Wonderland atmosphere notwithstanding, Taylor was undaunted."

"It will be interesting to observe the effect of our proposal on the internal political situation here," the Ambassador cabled back to Mr. Johnson in Washington about the bombing. "I will use the occasion to emphasize that a dramatic change is occurring in U.S. policy, one highly favorable to GVN interests but demanding a parallel dramatic change of attitude on the part of the GVN. Now is the time to install the best possible Government as we are clearly approaching a climax in the next few months."

Ambassador Taylor apparently obtained what concurrence was possible and on Feb. 8 another cable went out from the State Department to London and eight United States Embassies in the Far East besides the one in Saigon. The message told the ambassadors of the forthcoming bombing campaign and instructed them to "inform head of government or State (as appropriate) of above in strictest confidence and report reactions." [See text, cable to U.S. envoys, Feb. 13.]

Both McGeorge Bundy and Ambassador Taylor had recommended playing down publicity on the details of the raids. "Careful public statements of U.S.G. [United States Government], combined with fact of continuing air actions, are expected to make it clear that military action will continue while aggression continues," the cable said. "But focus of public attention will be kept as far as possible on DRV aggression; not on joint GVN/US military operations."

The President had scheduled the first of the sustained raids, Rolling Thunder I, for Feb. 20. Five hours after the State Department transmitted that cable, a perennial Saigon plotter, Col. Pham Ngoc Thao, staged an unsuccessful "semi-coup" against General Khanh and "pandemonium reigned in Saigon," the study recounts. "Ambassador Taylor promptly recommended cancellation of the Feb. 20 air strikes and his recommendation was equally promptly accepted" by Washington, the Pentagon study says.

The State Department sent a cablegram to the various embassies rescinding the instructions to notify heads of government or state of the planned air war until further notice "in view of the disturbed situation in Saigon."

The situation there, the study says, remained "disturbed" for nearly a week while the Young Turks also sought to get rid of General Khanh.

"The latter made frantic but unsuccessful efforts to rally his supporters," the study says, and finally took off in his plane to avoid having to resign as commander in chief. "Literally running out of gas in Nhatrang shortly before dawn on Feb. 21, he submitted his resignation, claiming that a 'foreign hand' was behind the coup. No one, however, could be quite certain that Khanh might not 're-coup' once again, unless he were physically removed from the scene."

This took three more days to accomplish, and on Feb. 25 General Khanh finally went into permanent exile as an ambassador at large, with Ambassador Taylor seeing him off at the airport, "glassily polite," in the study's words. "It was only then that Taylor was able to issue, and Washington could accept, clearance for the long-postponed and frequently rescheduled first Rolling Thunder strike."

Less than three weeks earlier, in his memorandum to the President predicting that "a policy of sustained reprisal" might bring a better government in Saigon, McGeorge Bundy had said he did not agree with Ambassador Taylor that General Khanh "must somehow be removed from the . . . scene."

"We see no one else in sight with anything like his ability to combine military authority with some sense of politics," the account quotes Mr. Bundy as having written.

In the meantime two more Rolling Thunder strikes—II and III—had also been scheduled and then canceled because, the study says, the South Vietnamese Air Force was on "coup alert" in Saigon.

During part of this period, air strikes against North Vietnam were also inhibited by a diplomatic initiative from the Soviet Union and Britain. They moved to reactivate their co-chairmanship of the 1954 Geneva conference on Indochina to consider the current Vietnam crisis. Secretary Rusk cabled Ambassador Taylor that the diplomatic initiative would not affect Washington's decision to begin the air war, merely its timing.

According to the Pentagon study, the Administration regarded the possibility of reviving the Geneva conference of 1954, which had ended the French Indochina War, "not as a potential negotiating opportunity, but as a convenient vehicle for public expression of a tough U.S. position."

But, the account adds, this "diplomatic gambit" had "languished" by the time General Khanh left Saigon, and the day of his departure Mr. Johnson scheduled a strike, Rolling Thunder IV, for Feb. 26.

The pilots had been standing by, for nearly a week, with the orders to execute a strike being canceled every 24 hours.

But the order to begin the raid was again canceled, a last time, by monsoon weather for four more days.

Rolling Thunder finally rolled on March 2, 1965, when F-100 Super Sabre and F-105 Thunderchief jets of the United States Air Force bombed an ammunition depot at Xombang while 19 propeller-driven A-1H fighter-bombers of South Vietnam struck the Quangke naval base.

The various arguments in the Administration over how the raids ought to be conducted, which had developed during the planning stages, were now revived in sharper form by the opening blow in the actual air war.

Secretary McNamara, whose attention to management of resources and cost-effectiveness is cited repeatedly by the study, was concerned about improving the military efficacy of the bombing even before the sustained air war got under way.

He had received bomb damage assessments on the two reprisal strikes in February, re-

porting that of 491 buildings attacked, only 47 had been destroyed and 22 damaged. The information "caused McNamara to fire off a rather blunt memorandum" to General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on Feb. 17, the account says.

"I AM QUITE SATISFIED"

"Although the four missions [flown during the two raids] left the operations at the targets relatively unimpaired, I am quite satisfied with the results," Mr. McNamara began. "Our primary objective, of course, was to communicate our political resolve. This I believe we did. Future communications or resolve, however, will carry a hollow ring unless we accomplish more military damage than we have to date. . . . Surely we cannot continue for months accomplishing no more with 287 sorties than we did on these four missions." A sortie is a flight by a single plane.

General Wheeler replied that measures were being taken to heighten the destructiveness of the strikes and said that one way to accomplish this was to give the operational commander on the scene "adequate latitude" to attack the target as he saw fit, rather than seeking to control the details from Washington.

One measure approved by the President on March 9 was the use of napalm in North Vietnam.

And the day before, the day that 3,600 marines came ashore at Danang to protect the airfield there, Ambassador Taylor had already expressed, in two cables to Washington, what the historian describes as "sharp annoyance" with the "unnecessarily timid and ambivalent" way in which the air war was being conducted.

No air strikes had been authorized by the President beyond the initial Rolling Thunder raids that began on March 2, and, according to the study, the Ambassador was irritated at "the long delays between strikes, the marginal weight of the attacks and the great ado about behind-the-scenes diplomatic feelers."

GENERAL WESTMORELAND CONCURS

With the concurrence of General Westmoreland, Ambassador Taylor proposed "a more dynamic schedule of strikes, a several week program relentlessly marching north" beyond the 19th Parallel, which President Johnson had so far set as a limit, "to break the will of the D.R.V."

Ambassador Taylor cabled: "Current feverish diplomatic activity particularly by French and British" was interfering with the ability of the United States to "progressively turn the screws on D.R.V."

"It appears to me evident that to date D.R.V. leaders believe air strikes at present levels on their territory are meaningless and that we are more susceptible to international pressure for negotiations than they are," the Ambassador said. He cited as evidence a report from J. Blair Seaborn, the Canadian member of the International Control Commission, who, in Hanoi earlier that month, had performed one of a series of secret diplomatic missions for the United States.

Mr. Seaborn had been sent back to convey directly to the Hanoi leaders an American policy statement on Vietnam that had been delivered to China on Feb. 24 through its embassy in Warsaw.

"NO DESIGNS" ON THE D.R.V.

In essence, the Pentagon study reports, the policy statement said that while the United States was determined to take whatever measures were necessary to maintain South Vietnam, it "had no designs on the territory of North Vietnam, nor any desire to destroy the D.R.V."

The delivery of the message to the Chinese was apparently aimed at helping to stave off any Chinese intervention as a result of the forthcoming bombing campaign.

But the purpose in sending Mr. Seaborn back, the study makes clear, was to convey the obvious threat that Hanoi now faced "extensive future destruction of . . . military and economic investments" if it did not call off the Vietcong guerrillas and accept a separate, non-Communist South.

Premier Pham Van Dong of North Vietnam, who had seen Mr. Seaborn on two earlier visits, declined this time, and the Canadian had to settle for the chief North Vietnamese liaison officer for the commission, to whom he read Washington's statement.

The North Vietnamese officer, the account says, commented that the message "contained nothing new and that the North Vietnamese had already received a briefing on the Warsaw meeting" from the Chinese Communists.

This treatment led the Canadian to sense "a mood of confidence" among the Hanoi leaders, Ambassador Taylor told Washington in a cablegram, and Mr. Seaborn felt "that Hanoi has the impression that our air attacks are a limited attempt to improve our bargaining position and hence are no great cause for immediate concern."

"Our objective should be to induce in U.S. objectives in as short a time as possible in order to avoid a build-up of international pressure to negotiate," the Ambassador said.

Therefore, he went on, it was necessary to "begin at once a progression of U.S. strikes north of 19th Parallel in a slow but steadily ascending movement" to dispel any illusions in Hanoi.

"If we tarry too long in the south [below the 19th Parallel], we will give Hanoi a weak and misleading signal which will work against our ultimate purpose," he said.

The next Rolling Thunder strikes, on March 14 and 15, were the heaviest of the air war so far, involving 100 American and 24 South Vietnamese planes against barracks and depots on Tiger Island off the North Vietnamese coast and the ammunition dump near Phuqui, 10 miles southwest of Hanoi.

For the first time, the planes used napalm against the North, a measure approved by Mr. Johnson on May 9 to achieve the more efficient destruction of the targets that Mr. McNamara was seeking and to give the pilots protection from antiaircraft batteries.

"MOUNTING CRESCENDO" URGED

But the Ambassador regarded these, too, as an "isolated, stage-managed joint U.S./GVN operation," the Pentagon study says. He sent Washington another cable, saying that "through repeated delays we are failing to give the mounting crescendo to Rolling Thunder which is necessary to get the desired results."

Meanwhile, Admiral Sharp in Honolulu and the Joint Chiefs in Washington were quickly devising a number of other programs to broaden and intensify the air war now that it had begun.

On March 21, Admiral Sharp proposed a "radar busting day" to knock out the North Vietnamese early-warning system, and a program "to attrite, harass and interdict the D.R.V. south" of the 20th Parallel by cutting lines of communication, "LOC" in official terminology.

The "LOC cut program" would choke off traffic along all roads and rail lines through southern North Vietnam by bombing strikes and would thus squeeze the flow of supplies into the South.

"All targets selected are extremely difficult or impossible to bypass," the admiral said in a cable to the Joint Chiefs. "LOC network cutting in this depth will degrade tonnage arrivals at the main 'funnels' and will develop a broad series of new targets such as backed-up convoys, offloaded materiel dumps and personnel staging areas at one or both sides of cuts."

These probable effects might in turn "force major D.R.V. log flow to sea-carry and into

surveillance and attack by our SVN [South Vietnamese] coastal sanitization forces," the admiral added.

In Washington at this time, the narrative goes on, the Joint Chiefs were engaged in an "interservice division" over potential ground-troop deployments to Vietnam and over the air war itself.

Gen. John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff of the Air Force adopted a "maverick position" and was arguing for a short and violent 28-day bombing campaign. All of the targets on the original 94-target list drawn up in May 1964, from bridges to industries, would be progressively destroyed.

"He proposed beginning the air strikes in the southern part of North Vietnam and continuing at two-to six-day intervals until Hanoi was attacked," the study continues.

The raids would be along the lines of the mighty strikes, including the use of B-52 bombers, that the Joint Chiefs had proposed in retaliation for the Vietcong mortar attack in Binhhoa airfield on Nov. 1, 1964, the narrative says. General McConnell contended that his plan was consistent with previous bombing proposals by the Joint Chiefs.

The general abandoned his proposal, however, when the other members of the Joint Chiefs decided to incorporate Admiral Sharp's "LOC cut program" and some of General McConnell's individual target concepts into a bombing program of several weeks. They proposed this to Mr. McNamara on March 27.

This plan proposed an intense bombing campaign that would start on road and rail lines south of the 20th Parallel and then "march north" week by week to isolate North Vietnam from China gradually by cutting road and rail lines above Hanoi. In later phases upon which the Joint Chiefs had not yet fully decided, the port facilities were to be destroyed to isolate North Vietnam from the sea. Then industries outside populated areas would be attacked "leading up to a situation where the enemy will realize that the Hanoi and Haiphong areas will be the next logical targets in our continued air campaign."

But the President and Mr. McNamara declined to approve any multiweek program, the study relates. "They clearly preferred to retain continual personal control over attack concepts and individual target selection."

ALTERNATE TARGETS APPROVED

In mid-March, after a Presidential fact-finding trip to Vietnam by Gen. Harold K. Johnson, the Army Chief of Staff, the President did regularize the bombing campaign and relaxed some of the restrictions. Among the innovations was the selection of the targets in weekly packages with the precise timing of the individual attacks left to the commanders on the scene. Also, "the strikes were no longer to be specifically related to VC atrocities" and "publicity on the strikes was to be progressively reduced," the study says.

The President did not accept two recommendations from General Johnson relating to a possible ground war. They were to dispatch a division of American troops to South Vietnam to hold coastal enclaves or defend the Central Highlands in order to free Saigon Government forces for offensive action against the Vietcong. The social proposal was to create a four-division force of American and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization troops, who, to interdict infiltration, would patrol both the demilitarized zone along the border separating North and South Vietnam and the Laotian border region.

Better organization for the air war meant that concepts such as Admiral Sharp's "LOC cut program" and his "radar busting" were now incorporated into the weekly target packages. But President Johnson and Secretary McNamara continued to select the tar-

gets and to communicate them to the Joint Chiefs—and thus, eventually, to the operating strike forces—in weekly Rolling Thunder planning messages issued by the Secretary of Defense.

HOPES WERE WANING

Operation Rolling Thunder was thus being shifted from an exercise in air power "dominated by political and psychological considerations" to a "militarily more significant, sustained bombing program" aimed at destroying the capabilities of North Vietnam to support a war in the south.

But the shift also meant that "early hopes that Rolling Thunder could succeed by itself" in persuading Hanoi to call off the Vietcong were also waning.

"The underlying question that was being posed for the Administration at this time was well formulated," the study says, by John McNaughton in a memorandum drafted on March 24 for Secretary McNamara in preparation for the April 1-2 National Security Council meetings.

"Can the situation inside SVN be bottomed out (a) without extreme measures against the DRV and/or (b) without deployment of large numbers of U.S. (and other) combat troops inside SVN?"

Mr. McNaughton's answer was "perhaps, but probably no." (See Text, McNaughton action plan, March 24.)

General Westmoreland stated his conclusions in a half-inch-thick report labeled "Commander's Estimate of the situation in SVN." The document, "a classic Leavenworth-style analysis," the analyst remarks, referring to the Command and General Staff College, was completed in Saigon on March 28 and delivered to Washington in time for the April 1-2 strategy meeting.

The Saigon military commander and his staff had begun working on this voluminous report on March 13, the day after General Johnson left Vietnam with his ground war proposals of an American division to hold enclaves and a four-division American and SEATO force along the borders, the study notes.

General Westmoreland predicted that the bombing campaign against the North would not show tangible results until June at the earliest, and that in the meantime the South Vietnamese Army needed American reinforcements to hold the line against growing Vietcong strength and to carry out an "orderly" expansion of its own ranks.

And, paraphrasing the report, the study says that the general warned that the Saigon troops, "although at the moment performing fairly well, would not be able in the face of a VC summer offensive to hold in the South long enough for the bombing to become effective."

General Westmoreland asked for reinforcements equivalent to two American divisions, a total of about 70,000 troops, counting those already in Vietnam.

They included 17 maneuver battalions. The general proposed adding two more Marine battalion landing teams to the two battalions already at Danang in order to establish another base at the airfield at Phubai to the north; putting an Army brigade into the Bienhoa-Vungtau area near Saigon, and using two more Army battalions to garrison the central coastal ports of Quihnon and Nhatrang as logistics bases. These bases would sustain an army division that General Westmoreland proposed to send into active combat in the strategic central highlands inland to "defeat" the Vietcong who were seizing control there.

General Westmoreland said that he wanted the 17 battalions and their initial supporting elements in South Vietnam by June and indicated that more troops might be required thereafter if the bombing failed to achieve results.

The Saigon military commander and General Johnson were not alone in pressing for

American ground combat troops to forestall a Vietcong victory, the study points out.

On March 20, the Joint Chiefs as a body had proposed sending two American divisions and one South Korean division to South Vietnam for offensive combat operations against the guerrillas.

Secretary McNamara, the Joint Chiefs and Ambassador Taylor all discussed the three-division proposal on March 29, the study relates, while the Ambassador was in Washington for the forthcoming White House strategy conference.

The Ambassador opposed the plan, the study says, because he felt the South Vietnamese might resent the presence of so many foreign troops—upwards of 100,000 men—and also because he believed there was still no military necessity for them.

The Joint Chiefs "had the qualified support of McNamara," however, the study continues, and was one of the topics discussed at the national security council meeting.

CONCERN WITH DEPLOYMENT

Thus, the study says, at the White House strategy session of April 1-2, "the principal concern of Administration policy makers at this time was with the prospect of major deployment of U.S. and third-country combat forces to SVN."

A memorandum written by McGeorge Bundy before the meeting, which set forth the key issues for discussion and decision by the President, "gave only the most superficial treatment to the complex matter of future air pressure policy," the Pentagon analyst remarks.

The morning that Ambassador Taylor left Saigon to attend the meeting, March 29, the Vietcong guerrillas blew up the American Embassy in Saigon in what the study calls "the boldest and most direct Communist action against the U.S. since the attacks at Pleiku and Quihnon which had precipitated the Flaming Dart reprisal airstrikes."

Admiral Sharp requested permission to launch a "spectacular" air raid on North Vietnam in retaliation, the narrative continues, but the "plea . . . did not fall on responsive ears" at the White House.

"At this point, the President preferred to maneuver quietly to help the nation get used to living with the Vietnam crisis. He played down any drama intrinsic in Taylor's arrival" and refused to permit a retaliation raid for the embassy bombing.

"After his first meeting with Taylor and other officials on March 31, the President responded to press inquiries concerning dramatic new developments by saying: 'I know of no far-reaching strategy that is being suggested or promulgated.'"

"But the President was being less than candid," the study observes. "The proposals that were at that moment being promulgated, and on which he reached significant decision the following day, did involve a far-reaching strategy change: acceptance of the concept of U.S. troops engaged in offensive ground operations against Asian insurgents. This issue greatly overshadowed all other Vietnam questions then being reconsidered."

The analyst is referring to the President's decision at the White House strategy conference on April 1-2 to change the mission of the marine battalions at Danang from defense to offense.

McGeorge Bundy embodied the decision in National Security Action Memorandum 328, which he drafted and signed on behalf of the President on April 6. The analyst says that this "pivotal document" followed almost "verbatim" the text of another memorandum that Mr. Bundy had written before the N.S.C. meeting to outline the proposals for discussion and decision by the President.

The Pentagon study notes that the actual landing of 3,500 marines at Danang the previous month had "caused surprisingly little outcry."

Secretary of State Dean Rusk had explained on a television program the day before the marines came ashore that their mission was solely to provide security for the air base and "not to kill the Vietcong," in the words of the study. Thus initial mission for the marines was later to be referred to as the short-lived strategy of security that would apply only to this American troop movement into South Vietnam.

"A DEAD LETTER" QUICKLY

The President's decision to change their mission to offense now made the strategy of base security "a dead letter," the study says, when it was less than a month old.

At the April 1-2 meeting, Mr. Johnson had also decided to send ashore two more marine battalions, which General Westmoreland had asked for in a separate request on March 17. Mr. Johnson further decided to increase support forces in South Vietnam by 18,000 to 20,000 men.

The President was "doubtless aware" of the general's additional request for the equivalent of two divisions, and of the Joint Chiefs' for three divisions, the Pentagon account says, but Mr. Johnson took no action on these requests.

"The initial steps in ground build-up appear to have been grudgingly taken," the study says, "indicating that the President . . . and his advisers recognized the tremendous inertial complications of ground troop deployments. Halting ground involvement was seen to be a manifestly greater problem than halting air or naval activity."

"It is pretty clear, then, that the President intended, after the early April N.S.C. meetings, to cautiously and carefully experiment with the U.S. forces in offensive roles," the analyst concludes.

National Security Action Memorandum 328 did not precisely define or limit the offensive role it authorized, and Ambassador Taylor, who had attended the National Security Council meeting during his visit to Washington, was not satisfied with the guidance he received from the State Department. Therefore, on his way back to Saigon on April 4, the Ambassador, formerly President John F. Kennedy's military adviser and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, sent a cable from the Honolulu headquarters of the commander of Pacific forces to the State Department, saying:

"I propose to describe the new mission to [Premier Pham Huy] Quat as the use of marines in a mobile counter-insurgency role in the vicinity of Danang for the improved protection of that base and also in a strike role as a reserve in support of ARVN operations anywhere within 50 miles of the base. This latter employment would follow acquisition of experience on local counter-insurgency missions."

Ambassador Taylor's 50-mile limit apparently became an accepted rule-of-thumb boundary for counterinsurgency strikes.

And so, the analyst sums up, with the promulgation of National Security Action Memorandum 328, "the strategy of security effectively becomes a dead letter on the first of April," and the strategy of enclave begins.

TEXTS OF DOCUMENTS

Following are texts of key documents accompanying the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war, covering the opening of the sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnam in the first half of 1965. Except where excerpting is indicated, the documents are printed verbatim, with only unmistakable typographical errors corrected.

LETTER FROM ROSTOV FAVORING COMMITMENT OF TROOPS BY UNITED STATES

(Personal letter from Walt W. Rostow, chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, to Secretary McNamara,

Nov. 16, 1964, "Military Dispositions and Political Signals.")

Following on our conversation of last night I am concerned that too much thought is being given to the actual damage we do in the North, not enough thought to the signal we wish to send.

The signal consists of three parts:
a) damage to the North is now to be inflicted because they are violating the 1954 and 1962 accords;

b) we are ready and able to go much further than our initial act of damage;

c) we are ready and able to meet any level of escalation they might mount in response, if they are so minded.

Four points follow.

1. I am convinced that we should not go forward into the next stage without a U.S. ground force commitment of some kind:

a. The withdrawal of those ground forces could be a critically important part of our diplomatic bargaining position. Ground forces can sit during a conference more easily than we can maintain a series of mounting air and naval pressures.

b. We must make clear that counter escalation by the Communists will run directly into US strength on the ground; and, therefore the possibility of radically extending their position on the ground at the cost of air and naval damage alone, is ruled out.

c. There is a marginal possibility that in attacking the airfield they were thinking two moves ahead; namely, they might be planning a pre-emptive ground force response to an expected US retaliation for the Bien Hoa attack.

2. The first critical military action against North Vietnam should be designed merely to install the principle that they will, from the present forward, be vulnerable to retaliatory attack in the north for continued violations for the 1954 and 1962 Accords. In other words, we would signal a shift from the principle involved in the Tonkin Gulf response. This means that the initial use of force in the north should be as limited and as unsanguinary as possible. It is the installation of the principle that we are initially interested in, not tit for tat.

3. But our force dispositions to accompany an initial retaliatory move against the north should send three further signals lucidly:

a. that we are putting in place a capacity subsequently to step up direct and naval pressure on the north, if that should be required;

b. that we are prepared to face down any form of escalation North Vietnam might mount on the ground; and

c. that we are putting forces into place to exact retaliation directly against Communist China, if Peiping should join in an escalatory response from Hanoi. The latter could take the form of increased aircraft on Formosa plus, perhaps, a carrier force sitting off China distinguished from the force in the South China Sea.

4. The launching of this track, almost certainly, will require the President to explain to our own people and to the world our intentions and objectives. This will also be perhaps the most persuasive form of communication with Ho and Mao. In addition, I am inclined to think the most direct communication we can mount (perhaps via Vientiane and Warsaw) is desirable, as opposed to the use of cut-outs. They should feel they now confront an LBJ who has made up his mind. Contrary to an anxiety expressed at an earlier stage, I believe it quite possible to communicate the limits as well as the seriousness of our intentions without raising seriously the fear in Hanoi that we intend at our initiative to land immediately in the Red River Delta, in China, or seek any other objective than the re-installation of the 1954 and 1962 Accords.

MEMO FROM ROSTOW ADVOCATING GROUND TROOPS AND AIR ATTACKS

(Memorandum from Mr. Rostow to Secretary Rusk, Nov. 23, 1964, "Some Observations as We Come to the Crunch in Southeast Asia.")

I leave for Lima this Saturday for the CIAP and CIES meetings. I presume that in early December some major decisions on Southeast Asia will be made. I should, therefore, like to leave with you some observations on the situation. I have already communicated them to Bill Bundy.

1. We must begin by fastening our minds as sharply as we can around our appreciation of the view in Hanoi and Peiping of the Southeast Asia problem. I agree almost completely with SNIE 10-3-84 of October 9. Here are the critical passages:

"While they will seek to exploit and encourage the deteriorating situation in Saigon, they probably will avoid actions that would in their view unduly increase the chances of a major US response against North Vietnam (DRV) or Communist China. We are almost certain that both Hanoi and Peiping are anxious not to become involved in the kind of war in which the great weight of superior US weaponry could be brought against them. Even if Hanoi and Peiping estimated that the US would not use nuclear weapons against them, they could not be sure of this. . . .

"In the face of new US pressures against the DRV, further actions by Hanoi and Peiping would be based to a considerable extent on their estimate of US intentions, i.e., whether the US was actually determined to increase its pressures as necessary. Their estimates on this point are probably uncertain, but we believe that fear of provoking severe measures by the US would lead them to temper their responses with a good deal of caution. . . .

"If despite Communist efforts, the US attacks continued, Hanoi's leaders would have to ask themselves whether it was not better to suspend their support of Viet Cong military action rather than suffer the destruction of their major military facilities and the industrial sector of their economy. In the belief that the tide has set almost irreversibly in their favor in South Vietnam, they might calculate that the Viet Cong could stop its military attacks for the time being and renew the insurrection successfully at a later date. Their judgment in this matter might be reinforced by the Chinese Communist concern over becoming involved in a conflict with US air and naval power."

Our most basic problem is, therefore, how to persuade them that a continuation of their present policy will risk major destruction in North Viet Nam; that a preemptive move on the ground as a prelude to negotiation will be met by US strength off the ground; and that Communist China will not be a sanctuary if it assists North Viet Nam in counter-escalation.

2. In terms of force dispositions, the critical moves are, I believe, these.

a. The introduction of some ground forces in South Viet Nam and, possibly, in the Laos corridor.

b. A minimal installation of the principle that from the present forward North Viet Nam will be vulnerable to retaliatory attacks for continued violation of the 1954-1962 Accords.

c. Perhaps most important of all, the introduction into the Pacific Theater of massive forces to deal with any escalatory response, including forces evidently aimed at China as well as North Viet Nam, should the Chinese Communists enter the game. I am increasingly confident that we can do this in ways which would be understood—and not dangerously misinterpreted—in Hanoi and Peiping.

3. But the movement of forces, and even

bombing operations in the north, will not, in themselves, constitute a decisive signal. They will be searching, with enormous sensitivity, for the answer to the following question: Is the President of the United States deeply committed to reinstalling the 1954-1962 Accords; or is he putting on a demonstration of force that would save face for, essentially, a US political defeat at a diplomatic conference? Here their judgment will depend not merely on our use of force and force dispositions but also on the posture of the President, including commitments he makes to our own people and before the world, and on our follow-through. The SNIE accurately catches the extent of their commitments and their hopes in South Viet Nam and Laos. They will not actually accept a setback until they are absolutely sure that we really mean it. They will be as searching in this matter as Khrushchev was before he abandoned the effort to break our hold on Berlin and as Khrushchev was in searching us out on the Turkish missiles before he finally dismantled and removed his missiles from Cuba. Initial rhetoric and military moves will not be enough to convince them.

4. Given the fundamental assessment in this SNIE, I have no doubt we have the capacity to achieve a reinstallation of the 1954-1962 Accords if we enter the exercise with the same determination and staying power that we entered the long test on Berlin and the short test on the Cuba missiles. But it will take that kind of Presidential commitment and staying power.

5. In this connection, the SNIE is quite sound in emphasizing that they will seek, if they are permitted, either to pretend to call off the war in South Viet Nam, without actually doing so; or to revive it again when the pressure is off. (We can see Castro doing this now in Venezuela.) The nature of guerrilla war, infiltration, etc., lends itself to this kind of ambiguous letdown and reacceleration. This places a high premium on our defining precisely what they have to do to remove the pressure from the north. It is because we may wish to maintain pressure for some time to insure their compliance that we should think hard about the installation of troops not merely in South Viet Nam south of the seventeenth parallel, but also in the infiltration corridor of Laos. The same consideration argues for a non-sanguinary but important pressure in the form of naval blockade which will be easier to maintain during a negotiation or quasi-negotiation phase than bombing operations.

6. The touchstones for compliance should include the following: the removal of Viet Minh troops from Laos; the cessation of infiltration of South Viet Nam from the north; the turning off of the tactical radio network; and the overt statement on Hanoi radio that the Viet Cong should cease their operations and pursue their objectives in South Viet Nam by political means. On the latter point, even if contrary covert instructions are given, an overt statement would have important political and psychological impact.

7. As I said in my memorandum to the President of June 8, no one can be or should be dogmatic about how much of a war we still would have—and for how long—if the external element were thus radically reduced or eliminated. The odds are pretty good, in my view, that, if we do these things in this way, the war will either promptly stop or we will see the same kind of fragmentation of the Communist movement in South Viet Nam that we saw in Greece after the Yugoslav frontier was closed by the Tito-Stalin split. But we can't proceed on that assumption. We must try to gear the whole operation with the best counter-insurgency effort we can mount with our Vietnamese friends outside the country; and not withdraw US forces from Viet Nam until the war

is truly under control. (In this connection, I hope everyone concerned considers carefully RAND proposal of November 17, 1964, entitled "SIAT: Single Integrated Attack Team, A Concept for Offensive Military Operations in South Viet-Nam.")

8. I do not see how, if we adopt this line, we can avoid heightened pressures from our allies for either Chinese Communist entrance into the UN or for a UN offer to the Chinese Communists on some form of two-China basis. This will be livable for the President and the Administration if—but only if—we get a clean resolution of the Laos and South Viet Nam problems. The publication of a good Jordan Report will help pin our allies to the wall on a prior reinstallation of the 1954 and 1962 Accords.

9. Considering these observations as a whole, I suspect what I am really saying is that our assets, as I see them, are sufficient to see this thing through if we enter the exercise with adequate determination to succeed. I know well the anxieties and complications on our side of the line. But there may be a tendency to underestimate both the anxieties and complications on the other side and also to underestimate that limited but real margin of influence on the outcome which flows from the simple fact that at this stage of history we are the greatest power in the world—if we behave like it.

10. In the President's public exposition of his policy, I would now add something to the draft I did to accompany the June 6 memorandum to the President. I believe he should hold up a vision of an Asian community that goes beyond the Mekong passage in that draft. The vision, essentially, should hold out the hope that if the 1954 and 1962 Accords are reinstalled, these things are possible:

- a. peace;
- b. accelerated economic development;
- c. Asians taking a larger hand in their own destiny;
- d. as much peaceful coexistence between Asian Communists and non-Communists as the Communists wish.

11. A scenario to launch this track might begin as follows:

- A. A Presidential decision, communicated to but held by the Congressional leaders. Some leakage would not be unhelpful.
- B. Immediate movement of relevant forces to the Pacific.
- C. Immediate direct communication to Hanoi to give them a chance to back down before faced with our actions, including a clear statement of the limits of our objectives but our absolute commitment to them.
- D. Should this first communication fail (as is likely) installation of our ground forces and naval blockade, plus first attack in North, to be accompanied by publication updated Jordan Report and Presidential speech.

McGEORGE BUNDY MEMO TO JOHNSON ON "SUSTAINED REPRISAL" POLICY

(Annex A. "A Policy of Sustained Reprisal," to memorandum to President Lyndon B. Johnson from McGeorge Bundy, Presidential assistant for national security, Feb. 7, 1965.)

I. INTRODUCTORY

We believe that the best available way of increasing our chance of success in Vietnam is the development and execution of a policy of sustained reprisal against North Vietnam—a policy in which air and naval action against the North is justified by and related to the whole Viet Cong campaign of violence and terror in the South.

While we believe that the risks of such a policy are acceptable, we emphasize that its costs are real. It implies significant U.S. air losses even if no full air war is joined, and it seems likely that it would eventually require an extensive and costly effort against the whole air defense system of North Vietnam. U.S. casualties would be higher—and

more visible to American feelings—than those sustained in the struggle in South Vietnam.

Yet measured against the costs of defeat in Vietnam, this program seems cheap. And even if it fails to turn the tide—as it may—the value of the effort seems to us to exceed its cost.

II. OUTLINE OF THE POLICY

1. In partnership with the Government of Vietnam, we should develop and exercise the option to retaliate against any VC act of violence to persons or property.

2. In practice, we may wish at the outset to relate our reprisals to those acts of relatively high visibility such as the Pleiku incident. Later, we might retaliate against the assassination of a province chief, but not necessarily the murder of a hamlet official; we might retaliate against a grenade thrown into a crowded cafe in Saigon, but not necessarily to a shot fired into a small shop in the countryside.

3. Once a program of reprisals is clearly underway, it should not be necessary to connect each specific act against North Vietnam to a particular outrage in the South. It should be possible, for example, to publish weekly lists of outrages in the South and to have it clearly understood that these outrages are the cause of such action against the North as may be occurring in the current period. Such a more generalized pattern of reprisal would remove much of the difficulty involved in finding precisely matching targets in response to specific atrocities. Even in such a more general pattern, however, it would be important to insure that the general level of reprisal action remained in close correspondence with the level of outrages in the South. We must keep it clear at every stage both to Hanoi and to the world, that our reprisals will be reduced or stopped when outrages in the South are reduced or stopped—and that we are not attempting to destroy or conquer North Vietnam.

4. In the early stages of such a course, we should take the appropriate occasion to make clear our firm intent to undertake reprisals on any further acts, major or minor, that appear to us and the GVN as indicating Hanoi's support. We would announce that our two governments have been patient and forbearing in the hope that Hanoi would come to its senses without the necessity of our having to take further action; but the outrages continue and now we must react against those who are responsible; we will not provoke; we will not use our force indiscriminately; but we can no longer sit by in the face of repeated acts of terror and violence for which the DRV is responsible.

5. Having once made this announcement, we should execute our reprisal policy with as low a level of public noise as possible. It is to our interest that our acts should be seen—but we do not wish to boast about them in ways that make it hard for Hanoi to shift its ground. We should instead direct maximum attention to the continuing acts of violence which are the cause of our continuing reprisals.

6. This reprisal policy should begin at a low level. Its level of force and pressure should be increased only gradually—and as indicated above should be decreased if VC terror visibly decreases. The object would not be to "win" an air war against Hanoi, but rather to influence the course of the struggle in the South.

7. At the same time it should be recognized that in order to maintain the power of reprisal without risk of excessive loss, an "air war" may in fact be necessary. We should therefore be ready to develop a separate justification for energetic flank suppression and if necessary for the destruction of Communist air power. The essence of such an explanation should be that these actions are intended solely to insure the effectiveness of a policy of reprisal, and in no sense represent any intent to wage offensive war against the

North. These distinctions should not be difficult to develop.

8. It remains quite possible, however, that this reprisal policy would get us quickly into the level of military activity contemplated in the so-called Phase II of our December planning. It may even get us beyond this level with both Hanoi and Peking, if there is Communist counter-action. We and the GVN should also be prepared for a spurt of VC terrorism, especially in urban areas, that would dwarf anything yet experienced. These are the risks of any action. They should be carefully reviewed—but we believe them to be acceptable.

9. We are convinced that the political values of reprisal require a continuous operation. Episodic responses geared on a one-for-one basis to "spectacular" outrages would lack the persuasive force of sustained pressure. More important still, they would leave it open to the Communists to avoid reprisals entirely by giving up only a small element of their own program. The Gulf of Tonkin affair produced a sharp upturn in morale in South Vietnam. When it remained an isolated episode, however, there was a severe relapse. It is the great merit of the proposed scheme that to stop it the Communists would have to stop enough of their activity in the South to permit the probable success of a determined pacification effort.

III. EXPECTED EFFECT OF SUSTAINED REPRISAL POLICY

1. We emphasize that our primary target in advocating a reprisal policy is the improvement of the situation in South Vietnam. Action against the North is usually urged as a means of affecting the will of Hanoi to direct and support the VC. We consider this an important but longer-range purpose. The immediate and critical targets are in the South—in the minds of the South Vietnamese and in the minds of the Viet Cong cadres.

2. Predictions of the effect of any given course of action upon the states of mind of people are difficult. It seems very clear that if the United States and the Government of Vietnam join in a policy of reprisal, there will be a sharp immediate increase in optimism in the South, among nearly all articulate groups. The Mission believes—and our own conversations confirm—that in all sectors of Vietnamese opinion there is a strong belief that the United States could do much more if it would, and that they are suspicious of our failure to use more of our obviously enormous power. At least in the short run, the reaction to reprisal policy would be very favorable.

3. This favorable reaction should offer opportunity for increased American influence in pressing for a more effective government—at least in the short run. Joint reprisals would imply military planning in which the American role would necessarily be controlling, and this new relation should add to our bargaining power in other military efforts—and conceivably on a wider plane as well if a more stable government is formed. We have the whip hand in reprisals as we do not in other fields.

4. The Vietnamese increase in hope could well increase the readiness of Vietnamese factions themselves to join together in forming a more effective government.

5. We think it plausible that effective and sustained reprisals, even in a low key, would have a substantial depressing effect upon the morale of Viet Cong cadres in South Vietnam. This is the strong opinion of CIA Saigon. It is based upon reliable reports of the initial Viet Cong reaction to the Gulf of Tonkin episode, and also upon the solid general assessment that the determination of Hanoi and the apparent timidity of the mighty United States are both major items in Viet Cong confidence.

6. The long-run effect of reprisals in the South is far less clear. It may be that like

other stimulants, the value of this one would decline over time. Indeed the risk of this result is large enough so that we ourselves believe that a very major effort all along the line should be made in South Vietnam to take full advantage of the immediate stimulus of reprisal policy in its early stages. Our object should be to use this new policy to effect a visible upward turn in pacification, in governmental effectiveness, in operations against the Viet Cong, and in the whole U.S./GVN relationship. It is changes in these areas that can have enduring, long-term effects.

7. While emphasizing the importance of reprisals in the South, we do not exclude the impact on Hanoi. We believe, indeed, that it is of great importance that the level of reprisal be adjusted rapidly and visibly to both upward and downward shifts in the level of Viet Cong offenses. We want to keep before Hanoi the carrot of our desisting as well as the stick of continued pressure. We also need to conduct the application of force so that there is always a prospect of worse to come.

8. We cannot assert that a policy of sustained reprisal will succeed in changing the course of the contest in Vietnam. It may fail, and we cannot estimate the odds of success with any accuracy—they may be somewhere between 25% and 75%. What we can say is that even if it fails, the policy will be worth it. At a minimum it will damp down the charge that we did not do all that we could have done, and this charge will be important in many countries, including our own. Beyond that, a reprisal policy—to the extent that it demonstrates U.S. willingness to employ this new norm in counter-insurgency—will set a higher price for the future upon all adventures of guerrilla warfare, and it should therefore somewhat increase our ability to deter such adventures. We must recognize, however, that that ability will be gravely weakened if there is failure for any reason in Vietnam.

IV. PRESENT ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This general recommendation was developed in intensive discussions in the days just before the attacks on Pleiku. These attacks and our reaction to them have created an ideal opportunity for the prompt development and execution of sustained reprisals. Conversely, if no such policy is now developed, we face the grave danger that Pleiku, like the Gulf of Tonkin, may be a short-run stimulant and a long-term depressant. We therefore recommend that the necessary preparations be made for continuing reprisals. The major necessary steps to be taken appear to us to be the following:

(1) We should complete the evacuation of dependents.

(2) We should quietly start the necessary westward deployments of [word illegible] contingency forces.

(3) We should develop and refine a running catalogue of Viet Cong offenses which can be published regularly and related clearly to our own reprisals. Such a catalogue should perhaps build on the foundation of an initial White Paper.

(4) We should initiate joint planning with the GVN on both the civil and military level. Specifically, we should give a clear and strong signal to those now forming a government that we will be ready for this policy when they are.

(5) We should develop the necessary public and diplomatic statements to accompany the initiation and continuation of this program.

(6) We should insure that a reprisal program is matched by renewed public commitment to our family of programs in the South, so that the central importance of the southern struggle may never be neglected.

(7) We should plan quiet diplomatic communication of the precise meaning of what we are and are not doing, to Hanoi, to Peking and to Moscow.

(8) We should be prepared to defend and to justify this new policy by concentrating attention in every forum upon its cause—the aggression in the South.

(9) We should accept discussion on these terms in any forum, but we should not now accept the idea of negotiations of any sort except on the basis of a stand down of Viet Cong violence. A program of sustained reprisal, with its direct link to Hanoi's continuing aggressive actions in the South, will not involve us in nearly the level of international recrimination which would be precipitated by a go-North program which was not so connected. For this reason the international pressures for negotiation should be quite manageable.

DRAFT BY WILLIAM BUNDY ON RESULTS OF POLICY IN 1965

(Draft paper by William Bundy, "Where Are We Heading?", Feb. 18, 1965. An attached note, dated June 25, says, "Later than November paper, and unfinished.")

This memorandum examines possible developments and problems if the U.S. pursues the following policy with respect to South Viet-Nam:

a. Intensified pacification within South Viet-Nam. To meet the security problem, this might include a significant increase in present U.S. force strength.

b. A program of measured, limited, and spaced air attacks, jointly with the GVN, against the infiltration complex in the DRV. Such attacks would take place at the rate of about one a week, unless spectacular Viet Cong action dictated an immediate response out of sequence. The normal pattern of such attacks would comprise one GVN and one gets south of the 18th parallel, with variations in severity depending on the tempo of VC action, but with a slow upward trend in severity as the weeks went by.

c. That the U.S. itself would take no initiative for talks, but would agree to cooperate in consultations—not a conference—undertaken by the UK and USSR as Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference. As an opening move, the British would request an expression of our views, and we would use this occasion to spell out our position fully, including our purposes and what we regard as essential to the restoration of peace. We would further present our case against the DRV in the form of a long written document to be sent to the President of the United Nations Security Council and to be circulated to members of the UN.

1. Communist responses.

a. Hanoi would almost certainly not feel itself under pressure at any early point to enter into fruitful negotiations or to call off its activity in any way. They would denounce the continued air attacks and seek to whip up maximum world opposition to them. Within South Viet-Nam, they might avoid spectacular actions, but would certainly continue a substantial pattern of activity along past lines, probably with emphasis on the kind of incidents we have seen this week, in which Communist agents stirred up a village "protest" against government air attacks, and against the U.S. Basically, they would see the situation in South Viet-Nam as likely to deteriorate further ("crumble", as they have put it), and would be expecting that at some point someone in the GVN will start secret talks with them behind our backs.

b. Communist China might supply additional air defense equipment to the DRV, but we do not believe they would engage in air operations from Communist China, at least up to the point where the MIGs in the DRV were engaged and we had found it necessary to attack Fukien or possibly—if the MIGs had been moved there—Vinh.

c. The Soviets would supply air defense equipment to the DRV and would continue to protest our air attacks in strong terms. However, we do not believe they would make

any new commitment at this stage, and they would probably not do so even if the Chicom became even more deeply involved—provided that were not ourselves attacking Communist China. At that point, the heat might get awfully great on them, and they would be in a very difficult position to continue actively working as Co-Chairman. However, their approach to the British on the Co-Chairmanship certainly suggests that they would find some relief in starting to act in that role, and might use it as a hedge against further involvement, perhaps pointing out to Hanoi that the Co-Chairman exercise serves to prevent us from taking extreme action and that Hanoi will get the same result in the end if a political track is operating and if, in fact, South Viet-Nam keeps crumbling. They might also argue to Hanoi that the existence of the political track tends to reduce the chances of the Chicom having to become deeply involved—which we believe Hanoi does not want unless it is compelled to accept it.

2. Within South Viet-Nam the new government is a somewhat better one, but the cohesive effects of the strikes to date have at most helped things a bit. The latest MACV report indicates a deteriorating situation except in the extreme south, and it is unlikely that this can be arrested in any short period of time even if the government does hold together well and the military go about their business. We shall be very lucky to see a leveling off, much less any significant improvement, in the next two months. In short, we may have to hang on quite a long time before we can hope to see an improving situation in South Viet-Nam—and this in turn is really the key to any negotiating position we could have at a time.

3. On the political track we believe the British will undertake their role with vigor, and that the Soviets will be more reserved. The Soviet can hardly hope to influence Hanoi much at this point, and they certainly have no leverage with Communist China. In the opening rounds, the Soviets will probably fire off some fairly sharp statements that the real key to the situation is for us to get out and to stop our attacks, and the opposing positions are so far apart that it is hard to see any useful movement for some time to come. We might well find the Soviets—or even the Canadians—sounding us out on whether we would stop our attacks in return for some moderation in VC activity. This is clearly unacceptable, and the very least we should hold out on is a verified cessation of infiltration (and radio silence) before we stop our attacks. Our stress on the cessation of infiltration may conceivably lead to the Indians coming forward to offer policing forces—a suggestion they have made before—and this would be a constructive move we could pick up. But, as noted above, Hanoi is most unlikely to trade on this basis for a long time to come.

4. In sum—the most likely prospect is for a prolonged period without major risks of escalation but equally without any give by Hanoi. If, contrary to our present judgment, the GVN should start to do better.

WHITE HOUSE CABLE TO TAYLOR ON THE ROLLING THUNDER DECISION

(Excerpts from cablegram from the State Department to Ambassador Taylor, Feb. 13, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. The words in brackets are those of the study. The narrative says this message was drafted at the White House.)

The President today approved the following program for immediate future actions in follow-up decisions he reported to you in Deptel 1653. [The first Flaming Dart reprisal decision.]

1. We will intensify by all available means the program of pacification within SVN.

2. We will execute a program of measured and limited air action jointly with GVN against selected military targets in DRV, re-

maintaining south of 19th parallel until further notice.

FYI. Our current expectation is that these attacks might come about once or twice a week and involve two or three targets on each day of operation. End FYI.

3. We will announce this policy of measured action in general terms and at the same time, we will go to UN Security Council to make clear case that aggressor is Hanoi. We will also make it plain that we are ready and eager for 'talks' to bring aggression to an end.

4. We believe that this 3-part program must be concerted with SVN, and we currently expect to announce it by Presidential statement directly after next authorized air action. We believe this action should take place as early as possible next week.

5. You are accordingly instructed to seek immediate GVN agreement on this program. You are authorized to emphasize our conviction that announcement of readiness to talk is stronger diplomatic position than awaiting inevitable summons to Security Council by third parties. We would hope to have appropriate GVN concurrence by Monday [Feb. 14th] if possible here.

In presenting above to GVN, you should draw fully, as you see fit, on following arguments:

a. We are determined to continue with military actions regardless of Security Council deliberations and any 'talks' or negotiations when [words illegible]. [Beginning of sentence illegible] that they cease [words illegible] and also the activity they are directing in the south.

b. We consider the UN Security Council initiative, following another strike, essential if we are to avoid being faced with really damaging initiatives by the USSR or perhaps by such powers as India, France, or even the UN.

c. At an early point in the UN Security Council initiative, we would expect to see calls for the DRV to appear in the UN. If they failed to appear, as in August, this will make doubly clear that it is they who are refusing to desist, and our position in pursuing military actions against the DRV would be strengthened. For some reason we would now hope GVN itself would appear at UN and work closely with US.

d. With or without Hanoi, we have every expectation that any 'talks' that may result from our Security Council initiative would in fact go on for many weeks or perhaps months and would above all focus constantly on the cessation of Hanoi's aggression as the precondition to any cessation of military action against the DRV. We further anticipate that any detailed discussions about any possible eventual form of agreement returning to the essentials of the 1954 Accords would be postponed and would be subordinated to the central issue. . . .

CABLE TO U.S. ENVOYS IN ASIA ANNOUNCING SUSTAINED BOMBING

(Cablegram from State Department to heads of nine United States diplomatic missions in the Far East, Feb. 18, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study.)

Policy on Viet-Nam adopted today calls for the following:

1. Joint program with GVN of continuing air and naval action against North Viet-Nam whenever and wherever necessary. Such action to be against selected military targets and to be limited and fitting and adequate as response to continuous aggression in South Viet-Nam directed in Hanoi. Air strikes will be jointly planned and agreed with GVN and carried out on joint basis.

2. Intensification by all available means of pacification program within South Viet-Nam, including every possible step to find and attack VC concentrations and headquarters within SVN by all conventional means available to GVN and US.

3. Early detailed presentation to nations of world and to public of documented case against DRV as aggressor. Forum and form of this presentation not yet decided, but we do not repeat nor expect to touch upon readiness for talks or negotiations at this time. We are considering reaffirmation of our objectives in some form in the near future.

4. Careful public statements of USG, combined with fact of continuing air action, are expected to make it clear that military action will continue while aggression continues. But focus of public attention will be kept as far as possible on DRV aggression; not on joint GVN-US military operations. There will be no comment of any sort on future actions except that all such actions will be adequate and measured and fitting to aggression. (You will have noted President's statement of yesterday, which we will probably allow to stand.)

Addressees should inform head of government or State (as appropriate) of above in strictest confidence and report reactions. In the case of Canberra and Wellington [several words illegible] subject to security considerations of each operation as it occurs, as we did with respect to operations of February 7 and 11.

McNAUGHTON DRAFT FOR McNAMARA ON "PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION"

(First draft of "Annex—Plan for Action for South Vietnam," appended to memorandum from John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, for Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, March 24, 1965.)

- 1. US aims:
 - 70%—To avoid a humiliating US defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor).
 - 20%—To keep SVN (and the adjacent) territory from Chinese hands.
 - 10%—To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.

ALSO—To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used.

NOT—To "help a friend," although it would be hard to stay in if asked out.

2. The situation: The situation in general is bad and deteriorating. The VC have the initiative. Defeatism is gaining among the rural population, somewhat in the cities, and even among the soldiers—especially those with relatives in rural areas. The Hop Tac area around Saigon is making little progress; the Delta stays bad; the country has been severed in the north. GVN control is shrinking to the enclaves, some burdened with refugees. In Saigon we have a remission: Quat is giving hope on the civilian side, the Buddhists have calmed, and the split generals are in uneasy equilibrium.

3. The preliminary question: Can the situation inside SVN be bottomed out (a) without extreme measures against the DRV and/or (b) without deployment of large numbers of US (and other) combat troops inside SVN? The answer is perhaps, but probably no.

4. Ways GVN might collapse:

- (a) VC successes reduce GVN control to enclaves, causing:
 - (1) insurrection in the enclaved population.
 - (2) massive defections of ARVN soldiers and even units.
 - (3) aggravated dissension and impotence in Saigon.
 - (4) defeatism and reorientation by key GVN officials.
 - (5) entrance of left-wing elements into the government.
 - (6) emergence of a popular-front regime,
 - (7) request that US leave,
 - (8) concessions to the VC, and
 - (9) accommodations to the DRV
- (b) VC with DRV volunteers concentrated on I and II Corps.
 - (1) conquering principal GVN-held enclaves there,
 - (2) declaring Liberation Government,

(3) joining the I & II Corps areas to the DRV, and

(4) pressing the course in (a) above for rest of SVN.

(c) While in a temporary funk, GVN might throw in sponge:

- (1) dealing under the table with VC,
- (2) asking the US to cease at least military aid,
- (3) bringing left-wing elements into the government,
- (4) leading to a popular-front regime, and
- (5) ending in accommodations to the VC and DRV.

(d) In a surge of anti-Americanism, GVN could ask the US out and pursue course otherwise similar to (c) above.

5. The "trilemma": US policy appears to be drifting. This is because, while there is consensus that efforts inside SVN (para 8) will probably fail to prevent collapse, all three of the possible remedial courses of action have so far been rejected:

a. Will-breaking strikes on the North (para 7) are balked (1) by flash-point limits, (2) by doubts that the DRV will cave and (3) by doubts that the VC will obey a caving DRV. (Leaving strikes only a political and anti-infiltration nuisance.)

b. Large US troop deployments (para 9) are balked by "French-defeat" and "Korea" syndromes, and Quat is queasy. (Troops could be net negatives, and be besieged.)

c. Exit by negotiations (para 9) is tainted by the humiliation likely to follow.

Effort inside South Vietnam: Progress inside SVN is our main aim. Great, imaginative efforts on the civilian political as well as military side must be made, bearing in mind that progress depends as much on GVN efforts and luck as on added US efforts. While only a few of such efforts can pay off quickly enough to affect the present ominous deterioration, some may, and we are dealing here in small critical margins. Furthermore, such investment is essential to provide a foundation for the longer run.

a. Improve spirit and effectiveness (fill out further, drawing from State memo to the President).

- (1) Achieve governmental stability.
- (2) Augment the pay-war program.
- (3) Build a stronger pro-government infrastructure.

b. Improve physical security, (fill out)

c. Reduce infiltration. (fill out)

STRIKES ON THE NORTH (PROGRAM OF PROGRESSIVE MILITARY PRESSURE)

a. Purposes:

- (1) to reduce DRV/VC activities by affecting DRV will.
- (2) To improve the GVN/VC relative "balance of morale."
- (3) To provide the US/GVN with a bargaining counter.
- (4) To reduce DRV infiltration of men, and materiel.
- (5) To show the world the lengths to which US will go for a friend.

b. Program: Each week, 1 or 2 "mission days" with 100-plane high-damage US-VNAF strikes each "day" against important targets, plus 3 armed recon missions—all moving upward in weight of effort, value of target or proximity to Hanoi and China.

Alternative one: 12-week DRV-wide program shunning only "population" targets.

Alternative two: 12-week program short of taking out Phuc Yen (Hanoi) airfield.

c. Other actions:

(1) Blockade of DRV ports by VNAF/US-dropped mines or by ships.

(2) South Vietnamese-implemented 34A MAROPS.

(3) Reconnaissance flights over Laos and the DRV.

(4) Daily Barrell Roll armed recon strikes in Laos (plus T-28s).

(5) Four-a-week Barrel Roll chokepoint strikes in Laos.

(6) US/VNAF air & naval strikes against VC ops and bases in SVN.

(7) Westward deployment of US forces.

(8) No de Soto patrols or naval bombardment of DRV at this time.

d. Red "flash points." There are events which we can expect to imply substantial risk of escalation.

(1) Air strikes north of 17° (This one already passed.)

(2) First US/VNAF confrontation with DRV MIGs.

(3) Strike on Phuoc Yen MIG base near Hanoi.

(4) First strikes on Tonkin industrial/population targets.

(5) First strikes on Chinese railroad near China.

(6) First US/VNAF confrontation with Chicom MIGs.

(7) First hot pursuit of Chicom MIGs into China.

(8) First flak-suppression of Chicom or Soviet-manned SAM.

(9) Massive introduction of US ground troops into SVN.

(10) US/ARVN occupation of DRV territory (e.g., Ile de Tigre).

(11) First Chi/Sov-US confrontation or sinking in blockade.

e. Blue "flash points." China/DRV surely are sensitive to events which might cause us to escalate.

(1) All of the above "red" flash point.

(2) VC ground attack on Danang.

(3) Sinking of a US naval vessel.

(4) Open deployment of DRV troops into South Vietnam.

(5) Deployment of Chinese troops into North Vietnam.

(6) Deployment of FROGs or SAMs in North Vietnam.

(7) DRV air attack on South Vietnam.

(8) Announcement of Liberation Government in I/II Corps area.

f. Major risks:

(1) Losses to DRV MIGs, and later possibly to SAMs.

(2) Increased VC activities, and possibly Liberation Government.

(3) Panic or other collapse of GVN from under us.

(4) World-wide revulsion against us (against strikes, blockades, etc.)

(5) Sympathetic fires over Berlin, Cyprus, Kashmir, Jordan waters.

(6) Escalation to conventional war with DRV, China (and USSR?)

(7) Escalation to the use of nuclear weapons.

g. Other Red moves:

(1) More jets to NVN with DRV or Chicom pilots.

(2) More AA (SAMs?) and radar gear (Soviet-manned?) to MVN.

(3) Increased air and ground forces in South China.

(4) Other "defensive" DRV retaliation (e.g., shoot-down of a U-2).

(5) PL land grabs in Laos.

(6) PL declaration of new government in Laos.

(7) Political drive for "neutralization" of Indo-China.

h. Escalation control. We can do three things to avoid escalation too-much or too-fast:

(1) Stretch out. Retard the program (e.g., 1 not 2 fixed strikes a week).

(2) Circuit breaker. Abandon at least temporarily the theory that our strikes are intended to break DRV will, and "plateau" them below the "Phuc Yen Airfield" flash point on one or the other of these tenable theories:

(a) That we strike as necessary to interdict infiltration.

(b) That our level of strikes is generally responsive to the level of VC/DRV activities in South Vietnam.

(3) Shunt. Plateau the air strikes per para (2) and divert the energy into:

(a) A mine—and/or ship—blockade of DRV ports.

(b) Massive deployment of US (and other?) troops into SVN (and Laos?):

(1) To man the "enclaves", releasing ARVN forces.

(2) To take over Pleiku, Kontum, Darlac provinces.

(3) To create a (word illegible) sea-Thailand infiltration wall.

i. Import miscellany:

(1) Program should appear to be relentless (i.e., possibility of employing "circuit-breakers" should be secret).

(2) Enemy should be kept aware of our limited objectives.

(3) Allies should be kept on board.

(4) USSR should be kept in passive role.

(5) Information program should preserve US public support.

PROGRAM OF LARGE U.S. GROUND EFFORT IN SVN AND SEA

a. Purposes:

(1) To defeat the VC on the ground.

(2) To improve GVN/VC relative "morale balance."

(3) To improve US/GVN bargaining position.

(4) To show world lengths to which US will go to fulfill commitments.

b. Program:

(1) Continue strike-North "crescendo" or "plateau" (para 7 above.)

(2) Add any "combat support" personnel needed by MACV; and (3) Deploy remainder of the III Marine Expeditionary Force to Danang; and (4) Deploy one US (plus one Korean?) division to defeat VC in Pleiku-Kontum-Darlac area, and/or (5) Deploy one US (plus one Korean?) division to hold enclaves (Bien Hoa/Ton Son Nhut, Nha Trang, Qui Non, Pleiku); and/or (6) Deploy 2-5 US divisions (with "international" elements) across Laos-SVN infiltration routes and at key SVN population centers.

c. Advantages:

(1) Improve (at least initially) manpower ratio vs. the VC.

(2) Boost GVN morale and depress DRV/VC morale.

(3) Firm up US commitment in eyes of all Reds, allies and neutrals.

(4) Deter (or even prevent) coups in the South.

d. Risks:

(1) Deployment will suck Chicom troops into DRV.

(2) Deployment will suck counter-balancing DRV/Chinese troops into SVN.

(3) Announcement of deployment will cause massive DRV/Chicom effort preemptively to occupy new SVN territory.

(4) US losses will increase.

(5) Friction with GVN (and Koreans?) over command will arise.

(6) GVN will tend increasingly to "let the US do it."

(7) Anti-US "colonialist" mood may increase in and outside SVN.

(8) US forces may be surrounded and trapped.

e. Important miscellany:

(1) There are no obvious circuitbreakers. Once US troops are in, it will be difficult to withdraw them or to move them, say, to Thailand without admitting defeat.

(2) It will take massive deployments (many divisions) to improve the GVN/US:VC ratio to the optimum 10+:1.

(3) In any event, our Project 22 planning with the Thais for defense of the Mekong towns must proceed apace.

EXIT BY NEGOTIATIONS

a. Bargaining counters:

(1) What DRV could give—

(a) Stop training and sending personnel to SVN/Laos.

(b) Stop sending arms and supplies into SVN/Laos.

(c) Stop directing military actions into SVN/Laos.

(d) Order the VC/PL to stop their insurgencies.

(e) Stop propaganda broadcasts to South Vietnam.

(f) Remove VM forces and cadres from SVN and Laos.

(g) See that VC/PL stop incidents in SVN and Laos.

(h) See that VC/PL cease resistance.

(i) See that VC/PL turn in weapons and bases.

(j) See that VC/PL surrender for amnesty/expatriation.

(2) What GVN/US could give:

(a) Stop (or not increase) air strikes on DRV.

(b) Remove (or not increase) US troops in SVN.

(c) Rice supply to DRV.

(d) Assurance that US/GVN have no designs on NVN.

(e) Assurance that US/GVN will not demand public renunciation by the DRV of Communist goals.

(f) Assurance that "peaceful coexistence" (e.g., continuation of Red propaganda in SVN) is acceptable.

(g) Capitulation: Leftists in GVN, coalition government, and eventual incorporation of SVN into DRV.

b. Possible outcomes.

(1) Pacified non-Communist South Vietnam.

(2) "Laotian" solution, with areas of de facto VC dominion, a "government of national unity," and a Liberation Front ostensibly weened from DRV control.

(3) Explicit partition of SVN, with each area under a separate government.

(4) A "semi-equilibrium"—a slow-motion war—with slowly shifting GVN-VC lines.

(5) Loss of SVN to the DRV.

c. Techniques to minimize impact of bad outcomes. If/when it is estimated that even the best US/GVN efforts mean failure ("flash" or defeat), it will be important to act to minimize the after-damage to US effectiveness and image by steps such as these:

(1) Publicize uniqueness of congenial impossibility of SVN case (e.g., Viet Minh held much of SVN in 1954, long sleeve-like borders, unfavorable terrain, no national tradition, few administrators, mess left by French, competing factions, Red LOC advantage, late US start, etc.).

(2) Take opportunity offered by next coup or GVN anti-US tantrum to "ship out" (coupled with advance threat to do so if they fail to "shape up").

(3) Create diversionary "offensives" elsewhere in the world (e.g., to shore up Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, India, Australia; to launch an "anti-poverty" program for underdeveloped areas).

(4) Enter multi-nation negotiations calculated to shift opinions and values.

d. Risks. With the physical situation and the trends as they are the fear is overwhelming that an exit negotiated now would result in humiliation for the US.

Evaluation: It is essential—however badly SEA may go over the next 1-3 years—that US emerge as a "good doctor." We must have kept promises, been tough, taken risks, gotten blooded, and hurt the enemy very badly. We must avoid harmful appearances which will affect judgments by, and provide pretexts to, other nations regarding how the US will behave in future cases of particular interest to those nations—regarding US policy, power, resolve and competence to deal with their problems. In this connection, the relevant audiences are the Communists (who must feel strong pressures), the South Vietnamese (whose morale must be buoyed), our allies (who must trust us as "underwriters") and the US public (which must support our risk-taking with US lives and prestige).

Urgency: If the strike-North program (para 7) is not altered: we will reach the

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MIG/Phuc Yen flash point in approximately one month. If the program is altered only to stretch out the crescendo: up to 3 months may be had before that flash point, at the expense of a less persuasive squeeze. If the program is altered to "plateau" or dampen the strikes: much of their negotiating value will be lost. (Furthermore, there is now a hint of flexibility on the Red side: the Soviets are struggling to find a Gordian knot-cutter; the Chicomms may be wavering (Paris 5326).)

POSSIBLE COURSE

(1) Redouble efforts inside SVN (get better organized for it).

(2) Prepare to deploy US combat troops in phases, starting with one Army division at Pleiku and a Marine MEF at DaNang.

(3) Stretch out strike-North program, postponing Phuc Yen until June (exceed flash points only in specific retaliations).

(4) Initiate talks along the following lines, bearing in mind that formal partition, or even a "Laos" partition, is out in SVN; we must break the VC back or work out an accommodation.

Phase one talks:

(A) When: Now, before an avoidable flash point.

(B) Who: US USSR, perhaps also US-India. (Not with China or Liberation Front; not through UK or France or U Thant; keep alert to possibility that GVN officials are talking under the table.)

(C) How: With GVN consent, private, quiet (refuse formal talks).

(D) What:

(1) Offer to stop strikes on DRV and withhold deployment of large US forces in trade for DRV stoppage of infiltration, communications to VC, and VC attacks, sabotage and terrorism, and for withdrawal of named units in SVN.

(2) Compliance would be policed unilaterally. If as is likely, complete compliance by the DRV is not forthcoming, we would carry out occasional strikes.

(3) We make clear that we are not demanding cessation of Red propaganda nor a public renunciation by Hanoi of its doctrines.

(4) Regarding "defensive" VC attacks—i.e., VC defending VC-held areas from encroaching ARVN forces—we take the public position that ARVN forces must be free to operate throughout SVN, especially in areas where amnesty is offered (but in fact, discretion will be exercised).

(5) Terrorism and sabotage, however, must be dampened markedly throughout the country, and civilian administrators must be free to move and operate freely, certainly in so-called contested areas (and perhaps even in VC base areas).

Phase two talks:

(A) When: At the end of Phase One.

(B) Who: All interested nations.

(C) How: Publicly in large conference.

(D) What:

(1) Offer to remove US combat forces from South Vietnam in exchange for repatriation (or regroupment?) of DRV infiltrators and for erection of international machinery to verify the end of infiltration and communication.

(2) Offer to seek to determine the will of the people under international supervision, with an appropriate rejection of those who favor the VC.

(3) Any recognition of the Liberation Front would have to be accompanied by disarming the VC and at least avowed VC independence from DRV control.

Phase three talks: Avoid any talks regarding the future of all of Southeast Asia. Thailand's future should not be up for discussion; and we have the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Accords covering the rest of the area. c. Special Points:

(1) Play on DRV's fear of China.

(2) To show good will, suspend strikes on North for a few days if requested by Soviets during efforts to mediate.

(3) Have a contingency plan prepared to evacuate US personnel in case a para-9-type situation arises.

(4) If the DRV will not "play" the above game, we must be prepared (a) to risk passing some flash points, in the Strike-North program, (b) to put more US troops into SVN, and/or (c) to reconsider our minimum acceptable outcome.

McCONE MEMO TO TOP OFFICIALS ON FORCEFULNESS OF AIR WAR

(Memorandum from John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, to Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, McGeorge Bundy and Ambassador Taylor, April 2, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon's study. Paragraphs in Italics are the study's paraphrase or explanation.)

McCone did not inherently disagree with the change in the U.S. ground-force role, but felt that it was inconsistent with the decision to continue the air strike program at the feeble level at which it was then being conducted. McCone developed his argument as follows:

I have been giving thought to the paper that we discussed in yesterday's meeting, which unfortunately I had little time to study, and also to the decision made to change the mission of our ground forces in South Vietnam from one of advice and static defense to one of active combat operations against the Viet Cong guerrillas.

I feel that the latter decision is correct only if our air strikes against the North are sufficiently heavy and damaging really to hurt the North Vietnamese. The paper we examined yesterday does not anticipate the type of air operation against the North necessary to force the NVN to reappraise their policy. On the contrary, it states, "We should continue roughly the present slowly ascending tempo of ROLLING THUNDER operations ——" and later, in outlining the types of targets, states, "The target systems should continue to avoid the effective GI range of MIG's," and these conditions indicate restraints which will not be persuasive to the NVN and would probably be read as evidence of a U.S. desire to temporize.

I have reported that the strikes to date have not caused a change in the North Vietnamese policy of directing Viet Cong insurgency, infiltrating cadres and supplying material. If anything, the strikes to date have hardened their attitude.

I have now had a chance to examine the 12-week program referred to by General Wheeler and it is my personal opinion that this program is not sufficiently severe and [words illegible] policy.

On the other hand, we must look with care to our position under a program of slowly ascending tempo of air strikes. With the passage of each day and each week, we can expect increasing pressure to stop the bombing. This will come from various elements of the American public, from the press, the United Nations and world opinion. Therefore time will run against us in this operation and I think the North Vietnamese are counting on this.

Therefore I think what we are doing is starting on a track which involves ground force operations, which, in all probability, will have limited effectiveness against guerrillas, although admittedly will restrain some VC advances. However, we can expect requirements for an ever-increasing commitment of U.S. personnel without materially improving the chances of victory. I support and agree with this decision but I must point out that in my judgment, forcing submission of the VC can only be brought about by a decision in Hanoi. Since the contemplated actions against the North are modest in scale, they will not impose unacceptable damage on it, nor will they threaten the DRV's vital interests. Hence, they will not present them with a situation with which they cannot live, though such actions will cause the DRV pain and inconvenience.

I believe our proposed track offers great danger of simply encouraging Chinese Communists and Soviet support of the DRV and VC cause, if for no other reason than the risk for both will be minimum. I envision that the reaction of the NVN and Chinese Communists will be to deliberately, carefully, and probably gradually, build up the Viet Cong capabilities by covert infiltration on North Vietnamese and, possibly, Chinese cadres and thus bring an ever-increasing pressure on our forces. In effect, we will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort that we cannot win, and from which we will have extreme difficulty in extracting ourselves.

Therefore it is my judgment that if we are to change the mission of the ground forces, we must also change the ground rules of the strikes against North Vietnam. We must hit them harder, more frequently, and inflict greater damage. Instead of avoiding the MIG's, we must go in and take them out. A bridge here and there will not do the job. We must strike their airfields, their petroleum resources, power stations and their military compounds. This, in my opinion, must be done promptly and with minimum restraint.

If we are unwilling to take it this kind of a decision now, we must not take the actions concerning the mission of our ground forces for the reasons I have mentioned [words illegible].

TERMS IN TEXTS

ARVN—Army of Republic of (South) Vietnam.

A.S.A.P.—As soon as possible.

B.L.T.—Battalion landing team.

CINPAC—Commander in Chief, Pacific.

DEPTTEL—Department telegram.

D.O.D.—Department of Defense.

DRV—Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam.

EMBTEL—Embassy telegram.

ISA—International Security Agency.

JCS—Joint Chiefs of Staff.

L.O.C.—Lines of communication.

MACV—Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

NLF—National Liberation Front.

NLF SVN—National Front for Liberation of South Vietnam.

PAVN—People's Army of (North) Vietnam.

P.I.—Philippine Islands.

P.L.—Patrol Loo.

P.O.L.—Petroleum, oil, lubricants.

R.O.K.—Republic of (South) Korea.

RVNAF—Republic of (South) Vietnam Armed Forces.

SAM—Surface-to-air missile.

SEA—Southeast Asia.

SVN—South Vietnam.

U.S.G.—U.S. Government.

VM—Vietminh.

APRIL, 1965, ORDER INCREASING GROUND FORCE AND SHIFTING MISSION

(National Security Action Memorandum 328, April 6, 1965, signed by McGeorge Bundy and addressed to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence.)

On Thursday, April 1, The President made the following decisions with respect to Vietnam:

1. Subject to modifications in light of experience, to coordination and direction both in Saigon and in Washington, the President approved the 41-point program of non-military actions submitted by Ambassador Taylor in a memorandum dated March 31, 1965.

2. The President gave general approval to the recommendations submitted by Mr. Rowan in his report dated March 16, with the exception that the President withheld approval of any request for supplemental funds at this time—it is his decision that this program is to be energetically supported by all agencies and departments and by the re-

programming of available funds as necessary within USIA.

3. The President approved the urgent exploration of the 12 suggestions for covert and other actions submitted by the Director of Central Intelligence under date of March 31.

4. The President repeated his earlier approval of the 21-point program of military actions submitted by General Harold K. Johnson under date of March 14 and re-emphasized his desire that aircraft and helicopter reinforcements under this program be accelerated.

5. The President approved an 18-20,000 man increase in U.S. military support forces to fill out existing units and supply needed logistic personnel.

6. The President approved the deployment of two additional Marine Battalions and one Marine Air Squadron and Associated headquarters and support elements.

7. The President approved a change of mission for all Marine Battalions deployed to Vietnam to permit their more active use under conditions to be established and approved by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretary of State.

8. The President approved the urgent exploration, with the Korean, Australian, and New Zealand Governments, of the possibility of rapid deployment of significant combat elements from their armed forces in parallel with the additional Marine deployment approved in paragraph 6.

9. Subject to continuing review, the President approved the following general framework of continuing action against North Vietnam and Laos:

We should continue roughly the present slowly ascending tempo of Rolling Thunder operations being prepared to add strikes in response to a higher rate of VC operations, or conceivably to slow the pace in the unlikely event VC slacked off sharply for what appeared to be more than a temporary operational lull.

The target systems should continue to avoid the effective GGI range of MIGs. We should continue to vary the types of targets, stepping up attacks on lines of communication in the near future, and possibly moving in a few weeks to attacks on the rail lines north and northeast of Hanoi.

Leaflet operations should be expanded to obtain maximum practicable psychological effect on North Vietnamese population.

Blockade or aerial mining of North Vietnamese ports need further study and should be considered for future operations. It would have major political complications, especially in relation to the Soviets and other third countries, but also offers many advantages.

Air operation in Laos, particularly route blocking operations in the Panhandle area, should be stepped up to the maximum remunerative rate.

10. Ambassador Taylor will promptly seek the reactions of the South Vietnamese Government to appropriate sections of this program and their approval as necessary, and in the event of disapproval or difficulty at that end, these decisions will be appropriately reconsidered. In any event, no action into Vietnam under paragraphs 6 and 7 above should take place without GVN approval or further Presidential authorization.

11. The President desires that with respect to the actions in paragraphs 5 through 7, premature publicity be avoided by all possible precautions. The actions themselves should be taken as rapidly as practicable, but in ways that should minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy, and official statements on these troop movements will be made only with the direct approval of the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State. The President's

desire is that these movements and changes should be understood as being gradual and wholly consistent with existing policy.

TAYLOR CABLE TO WASHINGTON ON STEP-UP IN GROUND FORCES

(Cablegram April 17, 1965, from Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor in Saigon to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, with a copy to the White House for the attention of McGeorge Bundy.)

This message undertaken to summarize instructions which I have received over the last ten days with regard to the introduction of third-country combat forces and to discuss the preferred way of presenting the subject to the GVN.

As the result of the meeting of the President and his advisors on April 1 and the NSC meeting on the following day, I left Washington and returned to Saigon with the understanding that the reinforcement of the Marines already ashore by two additional BLTs and a F-4 squadron and the progressive introduction of JIAWPNFPF support forces were approved but that decision on the several proposals for bringing in more US combat forces and their possible modes of employment was withheld in an offensive counterinsurgency role. State was to explore with the Korean, Australian and New Zealand govts the possibility or rapid deployment of significant combat elements in parallel with the Marine reinforcement.

Since arriving home, I have received the following instructions and have taken the indicated actions with respect to third-country combat forces.

April 6 and 8. Received GVN concurrence to introduction of the Marine reinforcements and to an expanded mission for all Marines in Danang-Phu Bai area.

April 8. Received Deptel 2229 directing approach to GVN, suggesting request to Australian govt for an infantry battalion for use in SVN. While awaiting a propitious moment to raise the matter, I received Deptel 2237 directing approach be delayed until further orders. Nothing further has been received since.

April 14. I learned by JCS 009012 to Cincpac of apparent decision to deploy 173rd airborne brigade immediately to Bein Hoa-Vung Tau. By Embtel 3373, delay in this deployment was urgently recommended but no reply has been received. However, Para 2 of Doc 152339 apparently makes reference to this project in terms which suggest that is something less than as an approved immediate action. In view of the uncertainty of its status, I have not broached the matter with Quat.

April 15. Received Deptel 2314 directing that embassy Saigon discuss with GVN introduction of Rok regimental combat team and suggest GVN request such a force asap. Because of Quat's absence from Saigon, I have not been able to raise matter. As matter of fact, it should not be raised until we have a clear concept of employment.

April 16. I have just seen state-defense message Dod 152339 cited above which indicates a favorable attitude toward several possible uses of US combat forces beyond the NSC decisions of April 2. I am told to discuss these and certain other non-military matters urgently with Quat. The substance of this cable will be addressed in a separate message. I can not raise these matters with Quat without further guidance.

Faced with this rapidly changing picture of Washington desires and intentions with regard to the introduction of third-country (as well as US) combat forces, I badly need a clarification of our purposes and objectives. Before I can present our case to GVN, I have to know what that case is and why. It is not going to be easy to get ready con-

currence for the large-scale introduction of foreign troops unless the need is clear and explicit.

Let me suggest the kind of instruction to the ANB which it would be most helpful to receive for use in presenting to GVN what I take to be a new policy of third-country participation in ground combat.

"The USG has completed a thorough review of the situation in SVN both in its national and international aspects and has reached certain important conclusions. It feels that in recent weeks there has been a somewhat favorable change in the overall situation as the result of the air attacks on DRV, the relatively small but numerous successes in the field against the VC and the encouraging progress of the Quat govt. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that, in all probability, the primary objective of the GVN and the USG of changing the will of the DRV to support the VC insurgency can not be attained in an acceptable time-frame by the methods presently employed. The air campaign in the North must be supplemented by signal successes against the VC on the South before we can hope to create that frame of mind in Hanoi which will lead to the decisions we seek.

"The JCS have reviewed the military resources which will be available in SVN by the end of 1965 and have concluded that even with an attainment of the highest feasible mobilization goals, ARVN will have insufficient forces to carry out the kind of successful campaign against the VC which is considered essential for the purposes discussed above. If the ground war is not to drag into 1968 and even beyond, they consider it necessary to reinforce GVN ground forces with about 23 battalion equivalents in addition to the forces now being recruited in SVN. Since these reinforcements can not be raised by the GVN, they must inevitably come from third-country sources.

"The USG accepts the validity of this reasoning of the JCS and offers its assistance to the GVN to raise these additional forces for the purpose of bringing the VC insurgency to an end in the shortest possible time. We are prepared to bring in additional US ground forces provided we can get a reasonable degree of participation from other third countries. If the GVN will make urgent representation to them, we believe it entirely possible to obtain the following contributions: Korea, one regimental combat team; Australia, one infantry battalion; New Zealand, one battery and one company of tanks; PK, one battalion. If forces of the foregoing magnitude are forthcoming, the USG is prepared to provide the remainder of the combat reinforcements as well as the necessary logistic personnel to support the third-country contingents. Also, it will use its good offices as desired in assisting the GVN approach to these govts.

"You (the Ambassador) will seek the concurrence of the GVN to the foregoing program, recognizing that a large number of questions such as command relationships, concepts of employment and disposition of forces must be worked out subsequently." Armed with an instruction such as the foregoing, I would feel adequately equipped to initiate what may be a sharp debate with the GVN. I need something like this before taking up the pending troop matters with Quat.

JOHNSON'S MESSAGE TO TAYLOR ON THE MAY 10 HALT IN BOMBING

(Message from President Johnson to Ambassador Taylor, May 10, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study.)

I have learned from Bob McNamara that nearly all Rolling Thunder operations for this week can be completed by Wednesday noon, Washington time. This fact and the days of Buddha's birthday seem to me to provide an

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excellent opportunity for a pause in air attacks which might go into next week and which I could use to good effect with world opinion.

My plan is not to announce this brief pause but simply to call it privately to the attention of Moscow and Hanoi as soon as possible and tell them that we shall be watching closely to see whether they respond in any way. My current plan is to report publicly after the pause ends on what we have done.

Could you see Quat right away on Tuesday and see if you can persuade him to concur in this plan. I would like to associate him with me in this decision if possible, but I would accept a simple concurrence or even willingness not to oppose my decision. In general, I think it important that he and I should get together in such matters, but I have no desire to embarrass him if it is politically difficult for him to join actively in a pause over Buddha's birthday.

[Words illegible] noted your [words illegible] but do not yet have your appreciation of the political effect in Saigon of acting around Buddha's birthday. From my point of view it is a great advantage to use Buddha's birthday to mask the first days of the pause here, if it is at all possible in political terms for Quat. I assume we could undertake to enlist the Archbishop and the Nuncio in calming the Catholics.

You should understand that my purpose in this plan is to begin to clear a path either toward restoration of peace or toward increased military action, depending upon the reaction of the Communists. We have amply demonstrated our determination and our commitment in the last two months, and I now wish to gain some flexibility.

I know that this is a hard assignment on short notice, but there is no one who can bring it off better.

I have kept this plan in the tightest possible circle here and wish you to inform no one but Alexis Johnson. After I have your report of Quat's reaction I will make a final decision and it will be communicated to senior officers concerned.

ROSTOW MEMORANDUM ON "VICTORY AND DEFEAT IN GUERRILLA WARS"

(Memorandum from Walt W. Rostow, chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, for Secretary of State Rusk, "Victory and Defeat in Guerrilla Wars: The Case of South Vietnam," May 20, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon's study.)

In the press, at least, there is a certain fuzziness about the possibility of clear-cut victory in South Viet-Nam; and the President's statement that a military victory is impossible is open to misinterpretation.

1. Historically, guerrilla wars have generally been lost or won cleanly: Greece, China mainland, North Viet-Nam, Malaya, Philippines. Laos in 1954 was an exception, with two provinces granted the Communists and a de facto split imposed on the country.

2. In all the cases won by Free World forces, there was a phase when the guerrillas commanded a good part of the countryside and, indeed, placed Athens, Kuala Lumpur, and Manila under something close to siege. They failed to win because all the possible routes to guerrilla victory were closed and, in failing to win, they lost. They finally gave up in discouragement. The routes to victory are:

- a) Mao Stage Three: going to all-out conventional war and winning as in China in 1947-49;
- b) Political collapse and takeover: North Viet-Nam;
- c) Political collapse and a coalition government in which the Communists get control over the security machinery; army and/or police. This has been an evident Viet Cong objective in this [rest illegible].

d) Converting the bargaining pressure generated by the guerrilla forces into a partial victory by splitting the country: Laos. Also, in a sense, North Viet-Nam in 1954 and the Irish Rebellion after the First World War.

3. If we succeed in blocking these four routes to victory, discouraging the Communist force in the South, and making the continuance of the war sufficiently costly to the North there is no reason we cannot win as clear a victory in South Viet-Nam as in Greece, Malaya, and the Philippines. Unless political morale in Saigon collapses and the ARVN tends to break up, case c), the most realistic hope of the VC, should be avoidable. This danger argues for more rather than less pressure on the North, while continuing the battle in the South in such a way as to make VC hopes of military and political progress wane.

4. The objective of the exercise is to convince Hanoi that its bargaining position is being reduced with the passage of time; for, even in the worst case for Hanoi, it wants some bargaining position (rather than simply dropping the war) to get U.S. forces radically reduced in South Viet-Nam and to get some minimum face-saving formula for the VC.

5. I believe Hanoi understands its dilemma well. As of early February it saw a good chance of a quiet clean victory via route c). It now is staring at quite clear-cut defeat, with the rising U.S. strength and GVN morale in the South and rising costs in the North. That readjustment in prospects is painful; and they won't in my view, accept its consequences unless they are convinced time has ceased to be their friend, despite the full use of their assets on the ground in South Viet-Nam, in political warfare around the world, and in diplomacy.

6. Their last and best hope will be, of course, that if they end the war and get us out, the political, social, and economic situation in South Viet-Nam will deteriorate in such a way as to permit Communist political takeover, with or without a revival of guerrilla warfare. It is in this phase that we will have to consolidate, with the South Vietnamese, a victory that is nearer our grasp than we (but not Hanoi) may think.

GEORGE BALL MEMO FOR JOHNSON ON "A COMPROMISE SOLUTION"

(Memorandum, "A Compromise Solution in South Vietnam," from Under Secretary of State George W. Ball for President Johnson, July 1, 1965.)

(1) A Losing War: The South Vietnamese are losing the war to the Viet Cong. No one can assure you that we can beat the Viet Cong or even force them to the conference table on our terms, no matter how many hundred thousand white, foreign (U.S.) troops we deploy.

No one has demonstrated that a white ground force of whatever size can win a guerrilla war—which is at the same time a civil war between Asians—jungle terrain in the midst of a population that refuses cooperation to the white forces (and the South Vietnamese) and thus provides a great intelligence advantage to the other side. Three recent incidents vividly illustrate this point: (a) the sneak attack on the Da Nang Air Base which involved penetration of a defense perimeter guarded by 9,000 Marines. This raid was possible only because of the cooperation of the local inhabitants; (b) the B52 raid that failed to hit the Viet Cong who had obviously been tipped off; (c) the search and destroy mission of the 173rd Air Borne Brigade which spent three days looking for the Viet Cong, suffered 23 casualties, and never made contact with the enemy who had obviously gotten advance word of their assignment.

(2) The Question to Decide: Should we

limit our liabilities in South Vietnam and try to find a way out with minimal long-term costs?

The alternative—no matter what we may wish it to be—is almost certainly a protracted war involving an open-ended commitment of U.S. forces, mounting U.S. casualties, no assurance of a satisfactory solution, and a serious danger of escalation at the end of the road.

(3) Need for a Decision Now: So long as our forces are restricted to advising and assisting the South Vietnamese, the struggle will remain a civil war between Asian peoples. Once we deploy substantial numbers of troops in combat it will become a war between the U.S. and a large part of the population of South Vietnam, organized and directed from North Vietnam and backed by the resources of both Moscow and Peking.

The decision you face now, therefore, is crucial. Once large numbers of U.S. troops are committed to direct combat, they will begin to take heavy casualties in a war they are ill-equipped to fight in a non-cooperative if not downright hostile countryside.

Once we suffer large casualties, we will have started a well-nigh irreversible process. Our involvement will be so great that we cannot—without national humiliation—stop short of achieving our complete objectives. Of the two possibilities I think humiliation would be more likely than the achievement of our objectives—even after we have paid terrible costs.

(4) Compromise Solution: Should we commit U.S. manpower and prestige to a terrain so unfavorable as to give a very large advantage to the enemy—or should we seek a compromise settlement which achieves less than our stated objectives and thus cut our losses while we still have the freedom of maneuver to do so.

(5) Costs of a Compromise Solution: The answer involves a judgment as to the cost to the U.S. of such a compromise settlement in terms of our relations with the countries in the area of South Vietnam, the credibility of our commitments, and our prestige around the world. In my judgment, if we act before we commit substantial U.S. troops to combat in South Vietnam we can, by accepting some short-term costs, avoid what may well be a long-term catastrophe. I believe we tended grossly to exaggerate the costs involved in a compromise settlement. An appreciation of probable costs is contained in the attached memorandum.

(6) With these considerations in mind, I strongly urge the following program:

- (a) Military Program
 - (1) Complete all deployments already announced—15 battalions—but decide not to go beyond a total of 72,000 men represented by this figure.
 - (2) Restrict the combat role of the American forces to the June 19 announcement making it clear to General Westmoreland that this announcement is to be strictly construed.
 - (3) Continue bombing in the North but avoid the Hanoi-Haiphong area and any targets nearer to the Chinese border than those already struck.
- (b) Political Program
 - (1) In any political approaches so far, we have been the prisoners of whatever South Vietnamese government that was momentarily in power. If we are ever to move toward a settlement, it will probably be because the South Vietnamese government pulls the rug out from under us and makes its own deal or because we go forward quietly without advance prearrangement with Saigon.
 - (2) So far we have not given the other side a reason to believe there is any flexibility in our negotiating approach. And the other side has been unwilling to accept what in their terms is complete capitulation.

(3) Now is the time to start some serious diplomatic feelers looking towards a solution based on some application of self-determination principle.

(4) I would recommend approaching Hanoi rather than any of the other probable parties, the NLF—or Peiping. Hanoi is the only one that has given any signs of interest in discussion. Peiping has been rigidly opposed. Moscow has recommended that we negotiate with Hanoi. The NLF has been silent.

(5) There are several channels to the North Vietnamese but I think the best one is through their representative in Paris, Mai Van Bo. Initial feelers of Bo should be directed toward a discussion both of the four points we have put forward and the four points put forward by Hanoi as a basis for negotiation. We can accept all but one of Hanoi's four points, and hopefully we should be able to agree on some ground rules for serious negotiation—including no preconditions.

(6) If the initial feelers lead to further secret, exploratory talks, we can inject the concept of self-determination that would permit the Viet Cong some hope of achieving some of their political objectives through local elections or some other device.

(7) The contact on our side should be handled through a non-governmental cut-out (possibly a reliable newspaper man who can be repudiated).

(8) If progress can be made at this level a basis can be laid for a multinational conference. At some point, obviously, the government of South Vietnam will have to be brought on board, but I would postpone this step until after a substantial feeling out of Hanoi.

(9) Before moving to any formal conference we should be prepared to agree once the conference is started:

(a) The U.S. will stand down its bombing of the North

(b) The South Vietnamese will initiate no offensive operations in the South, and

(c) the DRV will stop terrorism and other aggressive action against the South.

(8) The negotiations at the conference should aim at incorporating our understanding with Hanoi in the form of a multinational agreement guaranteed by the U.S., the Soviet Union and possibly other parties, and providing for an international mechanism to supervise its execution.

PROBABLE REACTIONS TO THE CUTTING OF OUR LOSSES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

We have tended to exaggerate the losses involved in a complete settlement in South Vietnam. There are three aspects to the problem that should be considered. First, the local effect of our action on nations in or near Southeast Asia. Second, the effect on our action on the credibility of our commitments around the world. Third, the effect on our position of world leadership.

A. Free Asian Reactions to a Compromise Settlement in South Vietnam Would Be Highly Parochial.

With each country interpreting the event primarily in terms of (a) its own immediate interest, (b) its sense of vulnerability to Communist invasion or insurgency, and (c) its confidence in the integrity of our commitment to its own security based on evidence other than that provided by our actions in South Vietnam.

Within this framework the following groupings emerge:

(1) The Republic of China and Thailand: staunch allies whose preference for extreme U.S. actions including a risk of war with Communist China sets them apart from all other Asian nations;

(2) The Republic of Korea and the Philippines: equally staunch allies whose support for strong U.S. actions short of a war with Communist China would make post-settlement reassurance a pressing U.S. need;

(3) Japan: it would prefer wisdom to valor in an area remote from its own interests where escalation could involve its Chinese or Eurasian neighbors or both;

(4) Laos: a friendly neutral dependent on a strong Thai-U.S. guarantee of support in the face of increased Vietnamese and Laos pressures.

(5) Burma and Cambodia: suspicious neutrals whose fear of antagonizing Communist China would increase their leaning toward Peiping in a conviction that the U.S. presence is not long for Southeast Asia; and

(6) Indonesia: whose opportunistic marriage of convenience of both Hanoi and Peiping would carry it further in its overt aggression against Malaysia, convinced that foreign imperialism is a fast fading entity in the region.

JAPAN

Government cooperation (words illegible) essential in making the following points to the Japanese people:

(1) U.S. support was given in full measure as shown by our casualties, our expenditures and our risk taking;

(2) The U.S. record in Korea shows the credibility of our commitment so far as Japan is concerned.

The government as such supports our strong posture in Vietnam but stops short of the idea of a war between the U.S. and China.

THAILAND

Thai commitments to the struggle within Laos and South Vietnam are based upon a careful evaluation of the regional threat to Thailand's security. The Thais are confident they can contain any threats from Indochina alone. They know, however, they cannot withstand the massive power of Communist China without foreign assistance. Unfortunately, the Thai view of the war has seriously erred in fundamental respects. They believe American power can do anything, both militarily and in terms of shoring up the Saigon regime. They now assume that we really could take over in Saigon and win the war if we felt we had to. If we should fail to do so, the Thais would initially see it as a failure of U.S. will. Yet time is on our side, providing we employ it effectively. Thailand is an independent nation with a long national history, and unlike South Vietnam, an acute national consciousness. It has few domestic Communists and none of the instability that plague its neighbors, Burma and Malaysia. Its one danger area in the northeast is well in hand so far as preventive measures against insurgency are concerned. Securing the Mekong Valley will be critical in any long-run solution, whether by the partition of Laos with Thai-U.S. forces occupying the western half or by some (word illegible) arrangement. Providing we are willing to make the effort, Thailand can be a foundation of rock and not a bed of sand in which to base our political/military commitment to Southeast Asia.

With the exception of the nations in Southeast Asia, a compromise settlement in South Vietnam should not have a major impact on the credibility of our commitments around the world . . . Chancellor Erhard has told us privately that the people of Berlin would be concerned by a compromise settlement of South Vietnam. But this was hardly an original thought, and I suspect he was telling us what he believed we would like to hear. After all, the confidence of the West Berliners will depend more on what they see on the spot than on (word illegible) news or events half-way around the world. In my observation, the principal anxiety of our NATO Allies is that we have become too preoccupied with an area which seems to them an irrelevance and may be tempted in neglect to our NATO responsibilities.

Moreover, they have a vested interest in an easier relationship between Washington and Moscow. By and large, therefore, they will be inclined to regard a compromise solu-

tion in South Vietnam more as new evidence of American maturity and judgment than of American loss of face . . . On balance, I believe we would more seriously undermine the effectiveness of our world leadership by continuing the war and deepening our involvement than by pursuing a carefully plotted course toward a compromise solution. In spite of the number of powers that have—in response to our pleading—given verbal support from feeling of loyalty and dependence, we cannot ignore the fact that the war is vastly unpopular and that our role in it is perceptively eroding the respect and confidence with which other nations regard us. We have not persuaded either our friends or allies that our further involvement is essential to the defense of freedom in the cold war. Moreover, the men we deploy in jungles of South Vietnam, the more we contribute to a growing world anxiety and mistrust.

[Words illegible] the short run, of course, we could expect some catcalls from the sidelines and some vindictive pleasure on the part of Europeans jealous of American power. But that would, in my view, be a transient phenomenon with which we could live without sustained anguish. Elsewhere around the world I would see few unhappy implications for the credibility of our commitments. No doubt the Communists will gain propaganda value in Africa, but I cannot seriously believe that the Africans care too much about what happens in South Asia, Australia and New Zealand are, of course, special cases since they feel lonely in the far reaches of the Pacific. Yet even their concern is far greater with Malaysia than with South Vietnam, and the degree of their anxiety would be conditioned largely by expressions of our support for Malaysia.

[Words illegible] Quite possibly President de Gaulle will make propaganda about perfidious Washington, yet even he will be inhibited by his much-heralded disapproval of our activities in South Vietnam.

South Korea—As for the rest of the Far East the only serious point of concern might be South Korea. But if we stop pressing the Koreans for more troops to Vietnam (the Vietnamese show no desire for additional Asian forces since it affronts their sense of pride) we may be able to cushion Korean reactions to a compromise in South Vietnam by the provision of greater military and economic assistance. In this regard, Japan can play a pivotal role now that it has achieved normal relations with South Korea.

NEW WARNINGS OF FAILURE

Before the opening of the air war in the spring warnings were sounded high in the Administration that it would not succeed. Now there were warnings that a ground war in the South might prove fruitless. The warnings came not only from Under Secretary of State George W. Ball, long known as a dissenter on Vietnam, but also from John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, who felt the actions planned were not strong enough.

On April 2 Mr. McCone circulated a memorandum within the National Security Council asserting that unless the United States was willing to bomb the North "with minimum restraint" to break Hanoi's will, it was unwise to commit ground troops to battle.

"In effect," he said, "we will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort that we cannot win and from which we will have extreme difficulty extracting ourselves." [See text, McCone memorandum, April 2, 1966.]

It is not clear from the documentary record whether President Johnson read this particular memorandum, but the Pentagon study says Mr. McCone expressed these same views in a personal memorandum to the President on April 28.

In a separate intelligence estimate for

the President on May 6, Vice Adm. William F. Raborn Jr., Mr. McCone's successor, indicated agreement with Mr. McCone.

Mr. Ball's dissent came from the opposite side. He believed that neither bombing the North nor fighting the guerrillas in the South nor any combination of the two offered a solution and said so in a memorandum circulated on June 28, the study reports.

"Convinced that the U.S. was pouring its resources down the drain in the wrong place," the account goes on, Mr. Ball proposed that the United States "cut its losses" and withdraw from South Vietnam.

"Ball was cold-blooded in his analysis," the study continues, describing the memorandum. "He recognized that the U.S. would not be able to avoid losing face before its Asian allies if it staged some form of conference leading to withdrawal of U.S. forces. The losses would be of short-term duration, however, and the U.S. could emerge from this period of travail as a wiser and more mature nation."

BALL OFFERS "A COMPROMISE"

On July 1, the analyst says, Mr. Ball reiterated his proposal for withdrawal in a memorandum to the President entitled "A Compromise Solution for South Vietnam." [See text, Ball memorandum, July 1, 1965.]

PRIME MINISTER WILSON'S WARNING TO JOHNSON ON PETROLEUM RAIDS

(Excerpts from cablegram to President Johnson from Prime Minister Harold Wilson of Britain, June 3, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon's study.)

I was most grateful to you for asking Bob McNamara to arrange the very full briefing about the two oil targets near Hanoi and Halphong that Col. Rogers gave me yesterday. . . .

I know you will not feel that I am either unsympathetic or uncomprehending of the dilemma that this problem presents for you. In particular, I wholly understand the deep concern you must feel at the need to do anything possible to reduce the losses of young Americans in and over Vietnam; and Col. Rogers made it clear to us what care has been taken to plan this operation so as to keep civilian casualties to the minimum.

However . . . I am bound to say that, as seen from here, the possible military benefits that may result from this bombing do not appear to outweigh the political disadvantages that would seem the inevitable consequence. If you and the South Vietnamese Government were conducting a declared war on the conventional pattern . . . this operation would clearly be necessary and right. But since you have made it abundantly clear—and you know how much we have welcomed and supported this—that your purpose is to achieve a negotiated settlement, and that you are not striving for total military victory in the field, I remain convinced that the bombing of these targets, without producing decisive military advantage, may only increase the difficulty of reaching an eventual settlement. . . .

The last thing I wish to add to your difficulties, but, as I warned you in my previous message, if this action is taken we shall have to dissociate ourselves from it, and in doing so I should have to say that you had given me advance warning and that I had made my position clear to you. . . .

Nevertheless I want to repeat . . . that our reservations about this operation will not affect our continuing support for your policy over Vietnam, as you and your people have made it clear from your Baltimore speech onwards. But, while this will remain the Government's position, I know that the effect on public opinion in this country—and I believe throughout Western Europe—is likely to be such as to reinforce the existing disquiet and criticism that we have to deal with.

MENAGHTON MEMO TO GOODPASTER ON "FORCES REQUIRED TO WIN"

(Excerpts from memorandum from Assistant Secretary McNaughton to Lieut. Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster, assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 2, 1965, "Forces Required to Win in South Vietnam," as provided in the body of the Pentagon study.)

Secretary McNamara this morning suggested that General Wheeler form a small group to address the question, "If we do everything we can, can we have assurance of winning in South Vietnam?" General Wheeler suggested that he would have you head up the group and that the group would be fairly small. Secretary McNamara indicated that he wanted your group to work with me and that I should send down a memorandum suggesting some of the questions that occurred to us. Here are our suggestions:

1. I do not think the question is whether the 44-battalion program (including 3d-country forces) is sufficient to do the job although the answer to that question should fall out of the study. Rather, I think we should think in terms of the 44-battalion build-up by the end of 1965, with added forces—as required and as our capabilities permit—in 1966. Furthermore, the study surely should look into the need for forces other than ground forces, such as air to be used one way or another in-country. I would hope that the study could produce a clear articulation of what our strategy is for winning the war in South Vietnam, tough as that articulation will be in view of the nature of the problem.

2. I would assume that the questions of calling up reserves and extending tours of duty are outside the scope of the study.

3. We must make some assumptions with respect to the number of VC. Also, we must make some assumptions with respect to what the infiltration of men and material will be especially if there is a build-up of US forces in South Vietnam. I am quite concerned about the increasing probability that there are regular PAVN forces either in the II Corps area or in Laos directly across the border from II Corps. Furthermore, I am fearful that especially with the kind of build-up here envisioned, infiltration of even greater numbers of regular forces may occur. As a part of this general problem of enemy build-up, we must of course ask how much assistance the USSR and China can be expected to give to the VC. I suspect that the increased strength levels of the VC and the more "conventional" nature of the operations implied by larger force levels may imply that the often-repeated ratio of "10 to 1" may no longer apply. I sense that this may be the case in the future, but I have no reason to be sure. For example, if the VC, even with larger forces engaged in more "conventional" type actions, are able to overrun towns and disappear into the jungles before we can bring the action troops to bear, we may still be faced with the old "ratio" problem.

4. I think we might avoid some spinning of wheels if we simply assumed that the GVN will not be able to increase its forces in the relevant time period. Indeed, from what Westy has reported about the battalions being chewed up and about their showing some signs of reluctance to engage in offensive operations, we might even have to ask the question whether we can expect them to maintain present levels of men—or more accurately, present levels of effectiveness.

5. With respect to 3d-country forces, Westy has equated the 9 ROK battalions with 9 US battalions, saying that, if he did not get the former, he must have the latter. I do not know enough about ROK forces to know whether they are in all respects "equal to" US forces (they may be better in some respects and not as good in others). For purposes of the study, it might save us time if

we assumed that we would get no meaningful forces from anyone other than the ROKs during the relative time frame. (If the Australians decide to send another battalion or two, this should not alter the conclusions of the study significantly.) . . .

9. At the moment, I do not see how the study can avoid addressing the question as to how long our forces will have to remain in order to achieve a "win" and the extent to which the presence of those forces over a long period of time might, by itself, nullify the "win." If it turns out that the study cannot go into this matter without first getting heavily into the political side of the question, I think the study at least should note the problem in some meaningful way.

10. I believe that the study should go into specifics—e.g., the numbers and effectiveness and uses of the South Vietnamese forces, exactly where we would deploy ours and exactly what we would expect their mission to be, how we would go about opening up the roads and providing security for the towns as well as protecting our own assets there, the time frames in which things would be done, command relationships, etc. Also, I think we should find a way to indicate how badly the conclusions might be thrown off if we are wrong with respect to key assumptions or judgments. . . .

McNAMARA'S MEMO ON JULY 20, 1965, ON INCREASING ALLIED GROUND FORCE

(Excerpts from memorandum from Secretary McNamara for President Johnson, drafted on July 1, 1965, and revised on July 20, as provided in the body of the Pentagon's study. Paragraphs in italics are the study's paraphrase or explanation.)

In a memorandum to the President drafted on July 1 and then revised on July 20, immediately following his return from a week-long visit to Vietnam, he recommended an immediate decision to increase the U.S.-Third Country presence from the current 16 maneuver battalions (15 U.S., one Australian), and a change in the mission of these forces from one of providing support and reinforcement for the ARVN to one which soon became known as "search and destroy"—as McNamara put it, they were "by aggressive exploitation of superior military forces . . . to gain and hold the initiative . . . pressing the fight against VC-DRV main force units in South Vietnam to run them to ground and destroy them." . . .

His specific recommendations, he noted, were concurred in by General Wheeler and Ambassador-designate Lodge, who accompanied him on his trip to Vietnam, and by Ambassador Taylor, Ambassador Johnson, Admiral Sharp and General Westmoreland, with whom he conferred there. The rationale for his decisions was supplied by the CIA, whose assessment he quoted with approval in concluding that 1 July version of his memorandum. It stated:

Over the longer term we doubt if the Communists are likely to change their basic strategy in Vietnam (i.e., aggressive and steadily mounting insurgency) unless and until two conditions prevail: (1) they are forced to accept a situation in the war in the South which offers them no prospect of an early victory and no grounds for hope that they can simply outlast the US and (2) North Vietnam itself is under continuing and increasingly damaging punitive attack. So long as the Communists think they scent the possibility of an early victory (which is probably now the case), we believe that they will persevere and accept extremely severe damage to the North. Conversely, if North Vietnam itself is not hurting, Hanoi's doctrinaire leaders will probably be ready to carry on the Southern struggle almost indefinitely. If, however, both of the conditions outlined above should be brought to pass, we believe Hanoi probably would, at least for a period of time, alter its basic

strategy and course of action in South Vietnam.

McNamara's memorandum of 20 July did not include this quotation, although many of these points were made elsewhere in the paper. Instead, it concluded with an optimistic forecast:

The overall evaluation is that the course of action recommended in this memorandum—if the military and political moves are properly integrated and executed with continuing vigor and visible determination—stands a good chance of achieving an acceptable outcome within a reasonable time in Vietnam.

Never again while he was Secretary of Defense would McNamara make so optimistic a statement about Vietnam—except in public.

This concluding paragraph of McNamara's memorandum spoke of political, as well as military, "vigor" and "determination." Earlier in the paper, under the heading "Expanded political moves," he had elaborated on this point, writing:

Together with the above military moves, we should take political initiatives in order to lay a groundwork for a favorable political settlement by clarifying our objectives and establishing channels of communications. At the same time as we are taking steps to turn the tide in South Vietnam, we would make quiet moves through diplomatic channels (a) to open a dialogue with Moscow and Hanoi, and perhaps the VC, looking first toward disabusing them of any misconceptions as to our goals and second toward laying the groundwork for a settlement when the time is ripe; (b) to keep the Soviet Union from deepening its military [sic] in the world until the time when settlement can be achieved; and (c) to cement support for US policy by the US public, allies and friends, and to keep international opposition at a manageable level. Our efforts may be unproductive until the tide begins to turn, but nevertheless they should be made.

Here was scarcely a program for drastic political action. McNamara's essentially procedural (as opposed to substantive) recommendations amounted to little more than saying that the United States should provide channels for the enemy's discreet and relatively face-saving surrender when he decided that the game had grown too costly. This was, in fact, what official Washington (again with the exception of Ball) meant in mid-1965 when it spoke of a "political settlement." (As McNamara noted in a footnote, even this went too far for Ambassador-designate Lodge, whose view was that "any further initiative by us now [before we are strong] would simply harden the Communist resolve not to stop fighting." In this view Ambassadors Taylor and Johnson concurred, except that they would maintain "discreet contacts with the Soviets.")

McNamara's concluding paragraph spoke of "an acceptable outcome." Previously in his paper he had listed "nine fundamental elements" of a favorable outcome. These were:

(a) VC stop attacks and drastically reduce incidents of terror and sabotage.

(b) DRV reduces infiltration to a trickle, with some reasonably reliable method of our obtaining confirmation of this fact.

(c) US/GVN stop bombing of North Vietnam.

(d) GVN stays independent (hopefully pro-US, but possibly genuinely neutral).

(e) GVN exercises governmental functions over substantially all of South Vietnam.

(f) Communists remain quiescent-in Laos and Thailand.

(g) DRV withdraws PAVN forces and other North Vietnamese infiltrators (not regroupes) from South Vietnam.

(h) VC/NLF transform from a military to a purely political organization.

(i) US combat forces (not advisors or AID) withdraw.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERIOD

"Within a month of the start of Operation Rolling Thunder, the Pentagon study says, the Johnson Administration had made the first of the decisions that were to lead, in the next months, to American assumption of the major burden of the ground war in South Vietnam.

Here, in chronological order, are the highlights of this period of debate and decision:

MARCH, 1965

First "Rolling Thunder" air strike at ammunition depot and naval base. The two Marine battalions deployed in Vietnam.

APRIL, 1965

President approves 18,000-20,000-man increase in "military support forces" and "a change of mission" for marines "to permit their more active use. . . ." Memo notes his desire for "all possible precautions" against "premature publicity" and to "minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy."

John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, urges deployment of 173d Airborne Brigade also.

Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor, calls this "hasty and ill-conceived."

Honolulu strategy meeting. Conferees agree to urge increase to 82,000 U.S. troops.

George W. Ball, Under Secretary of State, proposes United States "cut its losses" and withdraw instead, history says.

MAY, 1965

Vietcong "summer offensive" begins, history says. About 200 Marine casualties during April, May.

JUNE, 1965

Gen. William C. Westmoreland, commander in Vietnam, says United States must "reinforce our efforts . . . as rapidly as practical." Asks total of 44 battalions.

State Department announces that United States troops are "available for combat support."

First major ground action by United States forces northwest of Saigon.

Gen. Westmoreland, in reply to Joint Chiefs, makes "big pitch . . . for a free hand to maneuver the troops around . . ." analyst says.

Ambassador Taylor "confirms the seriousness of the military situation" and "very tenuous hold" of new Government, study goes on.

General Westmoreland given authority to use U.S. forces in battle when necessary "to strengthen" South Vietnam forces.

Mr. Ball, analyst writes, opposes ground-troop increase. Says it gives "absolutely no assurance" of success, risks "costly and indeterminate struggle." Urges "base defense and reserve" strategy "while the stage was being set for withdrawal."

William Bundy, history says, urges President avoid "ultimatum aspects" of either Ball or Westmoreland proposal. Says United States troops should be held to supporting "reserve reaction" role.

JULY, 1965

President at first approves deployment of 34 battalions, about 100,000 men; 44 battalions finally agreed on; total 193,887 troops.

History says this decision "perceived as a threshold—entrance into Asian land war . . ."

By year's end, history notes, United States forces in South Vietnam total 184,314.

CONFUSION AND SUSPICION

There was some confusion, suspicion and controversy about the President's approval of an 18,000-20,000 increase in support troops, which, he explained, was meant "to fill out existing units and supply needed logistic personnel."

On April 21, Secretary McNamara told the President that 11,000 of these new men would augment various existing forces, while

7,000 were logistic troops to support "previously approved forces."

"It isn't entirely clear from the documents exactly what the President did have in mind for the support troop add-ons," the study comments. "What is clear, however, . . . was that the J.C.S. were continuing to plan for the earliest possible introduction of two to three divisions into RVN." The analyst cites a memorandum from Mr. McNamara to General Wheeler on April 6 as evidence of this planning.

Later, on May 5, the study continues, Assistant Secretary of Defense, McNaughton would send a memorandum to Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance, saying that "the J.C.S. misconstrued the [support] add-ons to mean logistic build-up for coastal enclaves and the possible later introduction of two to three divisions." (These were the divisions the Joint Chiefs had requested on March 20.)

RELATIVELY LOW RISK

The enclave strategy had as its object the involvement of United States combat units at "relatively low risk." It proposed that U.S. troops occupy coastal enclaves, accept full responsibility for enclave security, and be prepared to go to the rescue of the RVN as far as 50 miles outside the enclave. . . . The intent was not to take the war to the enemy but rather to deny him certain critical areas," the study says.

To prove the viability of its reserve reaction," the analyst goes on, the enclave strategy required testing, but the rules for committing United States troops under it had not been worked out by the time it was overtaken by events—a series of major military victories by the Vietcong in May and June that led to the adoption of the search-and-destroy strategy.

Search and destroy, the analyst says, was "articulated by Westmoreland and the J.C.S. in keeping with sound military principles garnered by men accustomed to winning. The basic idea . . . was the desire to take the war to the enemy, denying him freedom of movement anywhere in the country . . . and deal him the heaviest possible blows." In the meantime, the South Vietnamese Army "would be free to concentrate their efforts in populated areas."

From April 11 through April 14, the additional two marine battalions were deployed at Hue-Phu Bai and at Danang, bringing the total maneuver battalions to four.

"The marines set about consolidating and developing their two coastal base areas, and, although they pushed their patrol perimeters out beyond their tactical wire and thereby conducted active rather than passive defense, they did not engage in any offensive operations in support of ARVN for the next few months," the study says.

At this point, the Defense Department, the Joint Chiefs and General Westmoreland collaborated—as it turned out, successfully—in what the study calls "a little cart-before-horsemanship." It involved the deployment to South Vietnam of the 173d Airborne Brigade, two battalions that were then situated on Okinawa in a reserve role.

General Westmoreland had had his eye on the 173d for some time. On March 26, in his "Commander's Estimate of the Situation," in which he requested the equivalent of two divisions, he also recommended that the 173d Airborne Brigade be deployed to the Bien Hoa-Vungtau areas "to secure vital U.S. installations." This recommendation, like that for two divisions, was not acted upon by the National Security Council in the April 1-2 meeting.

On April 11, General Westmoreland cabled Admiral Sharp, the Pacific commander, that he understood from the National Security Council's meetings and Ambassador Taylor's discussions in Washington at the beginning of the month that his requested divisions were not in prospect. But, he said, he still wanted the 173d Airborne Brigade.

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AHEAD IN TWO AREAS

This message, the study says, set in motion "a series of cables, proposals and false starts which indicated that Washington was well ahead of Saigon in its planning and in its anxiety."

The upshot of all this communication was that at a meeting in Honolulu of representatives of the Joint Chiefs and the Pacific command from April 10 to April 12, the deployment of the 173d Airborne Brigade was recommended. On April 14, the Joint Chiefs of Staff ordered the deployment to Bienhoa-Vungtau, and the replacement of the brigade by one from the United States.

"This decision to deploy the 173d apparently caught the Ambassador flatfooted," the study says, "for he had quite obviously not been privy to it."

On the day of the Joint Chiefs' decision, Ambassador Taylor cabled the State Department that "this [decision on the deploying the brigade] comes as a complete surprise in view of the understanding reached in Washington [during his visit] that we would experiment with the marines in a counterinsurgency role before bringing in other U.S. contingents." He asked that deployment of the brigade be held up until matters were sorted out.

However, the study notes, Ambassador Taylor "held the trump card" because the proposed action had to be cleared with Premier Qunt, and General Taylor told his superiors on April 17 that he did not intend to tell the Premier "without clearer guidance explaining Washington's intentions." [See text, Taylor cable, April 17, 1965.]

"That Washington was determined, with the President's sanction, to go beyond what had been agreed to and formalized in NSAM 328 was manifested unmistakably in a cable under joint Defense-State auspices by Mr. McNaughton to the Ambassador on 15 April," the Pentagon study says.

In the cablegram, Mr. McNaughton said: "Highest authority [the President] believes the situation in South Vietnam has been deteriorating and that, in addition to actions against the North, something new must be added in the South to achieve victory." He then listed seven recommended actions, including the introduction of military-civil affairs personnel into the air effort and the deployment of the 173d Airborne Brigade to Bienhoa-Vungtau "as a security force for our installations and also to participate in counterinsurgency combat operations" according to General Westmoreland's plans.

Reacting to that cable on April 17, Ambassador Taylor protested to McGeorge Bundy in the White House against the introduction of military-civilian affairs personnel into the aid effort. The Ambassador's cablegram continued by saying that the McNaughton message "shows a far greater willingness to get into the ground war than I had discerned in Washington during my recent trip."

"Mac, can't we be better protected from our friends?" the Ambassador asked. "I know that everyone wants to help, but there's such a thing as killing with kindness." [See text, Taylor cable, April 17.]

EXACT DATE IS UNCERTAIN

Discussing the contretemps between the Pentagon and General Taylor, the study says: "The documents do not reveal just exactly when Presidential sanction was obtained for the expanded scope of the above [McNaughton] proposals. It is possible that [on the approval for deploying the brigade] the Ambassador may have caught the Defense Department and the J.C.S. in a little cart-before-horsemanship."

In any event, on April 15, the day after it had ordered the deployment of the brigade, the J.C.S. sent a memorandum to Secretary McNamara dealing with the Ambassador's objections and still insisting that the brigade was needed.

"Whether or not the J.C.S. wrote that memorandum with red faces," the study remarks, "the Secretary of Defense dates approval for final deployment of the 173d as of the 30th of April."

PRESSURE FROM MILITARY

The strategy of base security having been ended by National Security Action Memorandum 328, a high-level meeting began in Honolulu on April 20 to "sanctify" and "structure", as the Pentagon analyst puts it "an expanded enclave strategy."

Present at the meeting were Secretary of Defense McNamara; William Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs; Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton; Ambassador Taylor; Admiral Sharp; Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and General Westmoreland.

"Some of these men had helped produce the current optimism in situation reports and cables," the Pentagon study says, "and yet the consensus of their meeting was that the then-present level of Vietcong activity was nothing but the lull before the storm."

The situation which presented itself to the Honolulu conferees was in many ways the whole Vietnam problem in microcosm. What was needed to galvanize everyone to action was some sort of dramatic event within South Vietnam itself. Unfortunately, the very nature of the war precluded the abrupt collapse of a front or the loss of large chunks of territory in lightning strokes by the enemy. The enemy in this war was spreading his control and influence slowly and inexorably but without drama. The political infrastructure from which he derived his strength took years to create, and in most areas the expansion of control was hardly felt until it was a fait accompli."

IN A REAR-GUARD ACTION

Of the conferees, the study says, "by far the most dogged protagonist of the enclave strategy was Ambassador Taylor." It had already become apparent, however, and was to become manifestly clear at Honolulu, that the Ambassador was fighting a rear-guard action against both civilian and military officials in the Pentagon and were bent on expansion of U.S. forces in South Vietnam and an enlargement of their combat mission.

On March 18, in a message to Washington, Ambassador Taylor had suggested that if a division were sent to South Vietnam as had been proposed by the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Harold K. Johnson, then consideration should be given to deploying it in either a highland or coastal enclave.

When he got no response, Ambassador Taylor sent another message on March 27, stating that if United States forces were to come, his preference was, as the study says, that they be used in a combination of defensive or offensive enclave plus reserve for an emergency, rather than in "territorial clear and hold" operations.

The Ambassador, the study notes, interpreted the pivotal National Security Action Memorandum as supporting his position, because in it the President seemed to make plain that he "wanted to experiment very carefully with a small amount of force before deciding whether or not to accept any kind of ground war commitment."

FOR GUERRILLAS, TANKS

Therefore, the study says, "the Ambassador was surprised to discover that the marines [the two additional battalions that landed April 11-14] had come ashore with tanks, self-propelled artillery, and various other items of weighty equipment not 'appropriate for counterinsurgency operations.'"

In his April 17 cable to McGeorge Bundy, Ambassador Taylor had also protested the "hasty and ill-conceived" proposals for the deployment of more forces with which he was being flooded.

"Thus was the Ambassador propelled into the conference of 20 April 1965, only one step ahead of the Washington juggernaut, which was itself fueled by encouragement from Westmoreland in Saigon," the study comments. "Taylor was not opposed to the U.S. build-up *per se*, but rather was concerned to move slowly with combat troop deployments . . . He was overtaken in Honolulu."

According to Mr. McNaughton's minutes, the conference in preliminary discussions on April 20 agreed that:

"(1) The D.R.V. was not likely to quite within the next six months; and in any case, they were more likely to give up because of VC failure in the South than because of bomb-induced 'pain' in the North. It could take up to two years to demonstrate VC failure.

"(2) The level of air activity through Rolling Thunder was about right. The U.S. did not, in Ambassador Taylor's words, want 'to kill the hostage.' Therefore, Hanoi and environs remained on the restricted list. It was recognized that air activity would not do the job alone.

"(3) Progress in the South would be slow, and great care should be taken to avoid dramatic defeat. The current lull in Vietcong activity was merely the quiet before a storm.

"(4) The victory strategy was to 'break the will of the D.R.V./VC by denying them victory.' Impotence would lead eventually to a political solution."

8,700 MEN BELOW STRENGTH

At the time of the Honolulu conference, the study notes, "the level of approved U.S. forces for Vietnam was 40,200," but 33,500 were actually in the country at that time.

"To accomplish the 'victory strategy' described above," the study continues, the conferees agreed that U.S. ground forces should be increased from 4 to 13 maneuver battalions and to 82,000 men. The United States, they agreed, should also seek to get additional troops from Australia and South Korea that would bring the so-called third-country strength to four maneuver battalions and 7,250 men.

Thus, the Honolulu conferees proposed raising the recommended United States-third country strength to 17 battalions.

The conferees also mentioned but did not recommend a possible later deployment of 11 U.S. and 6 South Korean battalions, which, when added to the approved totals, would bring the United States-third country combat capability to 34 battalions. In this later possible deployment was included an Army airborne division.

Secretary McNamara forwarded the Honolulu recommendations to the President on April 21, together with a notation on possible later deployment of the airborne division and the Third Marine Expeditionary Force.

DETAILED DEPLOYMENT PLAN

On April 30 the Joint Chiefs presented a detailed program for deployment of some 48,000 American and 5,250 third-country soldiers. "Included were all the units mentioned in the Honolulu recommendations plus a healthy support package," the study says.

The Joint Chiefs said that these additional forces were "to bolster GVN forces during their continued build-up, secure bases and installations, conduct counterinsurgency combat operations in coordination with the RVNAF, and prepare for the later introduction of an airborne division to the central plateau, the remainder of the third M.E.F. (the marine force) to the Danang area, and the remainder of a ROK (Republic of Korea) division to Quangnai."

From the thrust of this memorandum by the Joint Chiefs, the analyst comments, "it is apparent that the enclave strategy was

no stopping place as far as the Chiefs were concerned. They continued to push hard for the earliest possible input of three full divisions of troops. They were still well ahead of the pack in that regard."

THE ENEMY RESPONDS

The question of final Presidential approval of the 17-battalion recommendations now became academic as the enemy started attacks that provided the Pentagon and General Westmoreland with a battlefield rationale for their campaign to have American troops take over the major share of the ground war.

As the manpower debates continued in March and April, the study portrays the military situation: "The Vietcong were unusually inactive throughout March and April. There had been no major defeat of the enemy's forces and no signs of any major shift in strategy on his part. Hence it was assumed that he was merely pausing to regroup and to assess the effect of the changed American participation in the war embodied in air strikes and in the marines." The first two battalions deployed at Danang on March 8.

"There were, however, plenty of indications in the early spring of 1965 of what was to come," the study continues. . . . "From throughout the country came reports that Vietcong troops and cadres were moving into central Vietnam and into areas adjacent to the ring of provinces . . . around Saigon."

"A SOBERING HARBINGER"

"Finally and most ominous of all," the study says, a memorandum by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency on April 21, 1965, "reflected the acceptance into the enemy order of battle of one regiment of the 325th PAVN [People's Army of Vietnam] division said to be located in Kontum province. The presence of this regular North Vietnamese unit, which had been first reported as early as February, was a sobering harbinger. . . ."

On May 11, when the Vietcong attacked Songbe, the capital of Phuolong Province, using more than a regiment of troops, "the storm broke in earnest," the study says. The enemy overran the town and the American advisers' compound, causing heavy casualties. After holding the town for a day, the Vietcong withdrew, the study relates.

Later in May, in Quangngai Province in the northern part of South Vietnam, a battalion of Government troops—the Army of the Republic of Vietnam—was ambushed and overrun near Bagia, west of Quangngai. Reinforcements were also ambushed.

"The battle," the study says, "dragged on for several days and ended in total defeat for the ARVN. Two battalions were completely decimated. . . . From Bagia came a sense of urgency, at least among some of the senior U.S. officers who had been witness to the battle."

TWO REGIMENTS ATTACK

Then in June, two Vietcong regiments attacked an outpost at Dongxoa and when Government reinforcements were committed "piecemeal" they were "devoured by the enemy" the Pentagon study says.

"By mid-June, 1965," it asserts, "the Vietcong summer offensive was in full stride." By mid-July, the Vietcong were "systematically forcing the GVN to yield what little control it still exercised in rural areas outside the Mekong Delta."

On June 7, after the attack on Bagia, General Westmoreland sent a long message on the military situation and his needs to the Pacific Commander for relay to the Joint Chiefs.

"In pressing their campaign," the general said, "the Vietcong are capable of mounting regimental-size operations in all four ARVN corps areas, and at least battalion-sized attack in virtually all provinces.

"ARVN forces on the other hand are already experiencing difficulty in coping with

this increased VC capability. Desertion rates are inordinately high. Battle losses have been higher than expected; in fact, four ARVN battalions have been rendered ineffective by VC action in the I and II Corps zones. . . .

"Thus, the GVN/VO force ratios upon which we based our estimate of the situation in March have taken an adverse trend. You will recall that I recommended the deployment of a U.S. division in II Corps to cover the period of the RVNAF build-up and to weight the force ratios in that important area. We assumed at that time that the ARVN battalions would be brought to full strength by now and that the force build-up would proceed on schedule. Neither of these assumptions has materialized. . . .

"In order to cope with the situation outlined above, I see no course of action open to us except to reinforce our efforts in SVN with additional U.S. or third country forces as rapidly as is practical during the critical weeks ahead."

THE "44-BATTALION REQUEST"

What General Westmoreland asked for added up to a total force of 44 battalions and the June 7 message became known as the "44-battalion request."

Just as intense internal debate was beginning on the request, there was a "credibility" flare-up deriving from President Johnson's injunction of secrecy on the change of missions for the marines authorized on April 1 in National Security Action Memorandum 328.

"The long official silence between the sanction for U.S. offensive operations contained in NSAM 328 and the final approval [in negotiations with Saigon] of the conditions under which U.S. troops could be committed was not without cost," the study asserts. "The President had admonished each of the N.S.C. members not to allow release of provisions of the NSAM, but the unduly long interregnum inevitably led to leaks." In addition, the marines had 200 casualties, including 18 killed, as they went about "tidying up," as the study puts it, their newly assigned area in April and May.

"The Commandant of the Marine Corps," the study continues, "raised the tempo of speculation by saying to the press during an inspection trip to Vietnam in April that the marines were not in Vietnam to 'sit on their dittyboxes'—and they were there to 'kill Vietcong.'"

"An honest and superficially innocuous statement by Department of State Press Officer Robert McCloskey on 8 June to the effect that 'American forces would be available for combat support together with Vietnamese forces when and if necessary' produced an immediate response [in the press]."

"BY ITS OWN PETARD"

"The White House was hoisted by its own petard. In an attempt to quell the outcry, a statement was issued on the 9th of June which, because of its ambiguity, only served to exacerbate the situation and to widen what was being described as 'the credibility gap'."

The White House statement said: "There has been no change in the mission of United States ground combat units in Vietnam in recent days or weeks. The President has issued no order of any kind in this regard to General Westmoreland recently or at any other time. The primary mission of these troops is to secure and safeguard important military installations like the air base at Danang. They have the associated mission of . . . patrolling and securing actions in and near the areas thus safeguarded."

"If help is requested by the appropriate Vietnamese commander, General Westmoreland also has authority within the assigned mission to employ those troops in support of Vietnamese forces faced with aggressive attack when other effective reserves are not available and when, in his judgment, the

general military situation urgently requires it."

Discussing this statement, the Pentagon analyst says: "The documents do not reveal whether or not the ground rules for engagement of U.S. forces had actually been worked out to everyone's satisfaction at the time of the White House statement. There is good indication that they had not." The analyst also notes that during the battles of Bagia and Dongxoa, the Government forces "were desperately in need of assistance," but that United States forces were not committed although the marines were available for Bagia and the 173d Airborne Brigade for Dongxoa.

THE FIRST MAJOR ACTION

The study reports that the first major ground action by United States forces took place northwest of Saigon from June 27 to June 30, and involved the 173d Airborne Brigade, an Australian battalion and South Vietnamese forces.

"The operation could by no stretch of definition have been described as a reserve reaction," the study says. "It was a search and destroy operation into Vietcong base areas. . . . The excursion was a direct result of the sanction given to General Westmoreland . . . [as a result of National Security Action Memorandum 328 and the enemy offensive] to 'commit U.S. troops to combat, independent of or in conjunction with GVN forces in any situation in which the use of such troops is requested by an appropriate GVN commander and when in [General Westmoreland's] judgment, their use is necessary to strengthen the relative position of GVN forces.'"

However, as the study notes, "At that juncture the 44-battalion debate was in full swing and the enclave strategy, as a means to limit the amount and use of U.S. combat force in Vietnam, was certainly overcome by events," and by "a much more ambitious strategy sanctioned by the President."

Recapitulating the situation just before the debate, the study gives this picture of deployment: At the beginning of June, the enclave strategy was in its first stages with Marine Corps forces at Phubai, Danang and Chulal, and Army forces in Vungtau. Other enclaves were under consideration. Approved for deployment—but not all arrived in South Vietnam yet—were approximately 70,000 troops in 13 maneuver battalions; with third-country forces the total came to 77,250 men and 17 maneuver battalions.

This was the situation when, on June 7, General Westmoreland asked for reinforcements "as rapidly as possible."

General Westmoreland's message, the Pentagon study says, "stirred by a veritable hornet's nest in Washington," because his request for large reinforcements and his proposed strategy to go on the offensive "did not contain any of the comfortable restrictions and safeguards which had been part of every strategy debated to date."

"In such a move," the study continues "the specter of U.S. involvement in a major Asian ground war was there for all to see."

Just as Ambassador Taylor had consistently resisted involvement of United States forces, the study says, so General Westmoreland had been equally determined to get the troops into the war and have "a free hand" in using them.

At the time of his message, the general had available in Vietnam seven Marine and 2 Army maneuver battalions, plus an Australian battalion. Now, he was asking for a total of 33 battalions, and if the 173d Airborne Brigade's two battalions—which were on temporary assignment—were added, the total came to 35. But in a subparagraph, General Westmoreland also identified nine other United States battalions that he might request at a later date. Thus the total of 44 battalions, and hence the name given the request. In the total was included an airborne division of nine battalions to be formed later.

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Admiral Sharp favored the request in a message to the Joint Chiefs on June 7, saying, "We will lose by staying in enclaves defending coastal areas."

THE CHIEFS IN FAVOR

The Joint Chiefs, the Pentagon analyst says, favored bolstering the United States troop commitment. As far back as March 20, the Joint Chiefs had advocated sending three divisions—two American and one Korean—with the objective of "destroying the Vietcong."

Now, the study states, General Westmoreland's request "altered drastically the role of the J.C.S. in the buildup debate."

"Up to that time," the study continues, "the J.C.S. had, if anything, been ahead of General Westmoreland in advocating allied forces for Vietnam. The 27 battalions of their three-division plan were in themselves more than Westmoreland ever requested until 7 June. After that date, the big push came from Westmoreland in Saigon, and the J.C.S. were caught in the middle between the latter and the powerful and strident opposition his latest request for forces had surfaced in Washington."

On June 11, the Joint Chiefs cabled Admiral Sharp that something less than General Westmoreland's request was close to approval, but they wanted to know, the study says, "where Westmoreland intended to put this force in Vietnam."

He replied on June 13 in detail and the study comments: "This message was extremely important, for in it [he] spelled out the concept of keeping U.S. forces away from the people. The search and destroy strategy for U.S. and third country forces which continues to this day and the primary focus of RVNAF on pacification both stem from that concept. In addition, Westmoreland made a big pitch in this cable for a free hand to maneuver the troops around inside the country. . . ."

CONFIRMATION BY TAYLOR

Ambassador Taylor, in a report on June 17, "confirmed the seriousness of the military situation as reported by General Westmoreland and also pointed up the very tenuous hold the new government had on the country." This was the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu and Premier Nguyen Cao Ky.

"This report apparently helped to remove the last obstacles to consideration of all of the forces mentioned in Westmoreland's request of 7 June," the analyst says.

On June 22, General Wheeler cabled General Westmoreland and asked if the 44 battalions were enough to convince the enemy forces that they could not win. General Westmoreland replied, the study says, "that there was no evidence the VC/DRV would alter their plans regardless of what the U.S. did in the next six months."

"The 44-battalion force should, however, establish a favorable balance of power by the end of the year," the study quotes the general as having said. "If the U.S. was to seize the initiative from the enemy, then further forces would be required into 1966 and beyond. . . ."

On June 28, the general was given authority to commit U.S. forces to battle when he decided they were necessary "to strengthen the relative position of GVN forces."

"This was about as close to a free hand in managing the forces as General Westmoreland was likely to get," the analyst says. "The strategy was finished, and the debate from then on centered on how much force and to what end."

DIVERGENT VIEWS AT HOME

The opposition to General Westmoreland had "its day in court," late in June and early in July, the study says. The embassy in Saigon, "while recognizing the seriousness of the situation in South Vietnam, was less

than sanguine about the prospects for success if large numbers of foreign troops were brought in."

Another critic of General Westmoreland's recommendations, the account reports, was Under Secretary of State Ball who was "convinced that the U.S. was pouring its resources down the drain in the wrong place."

"In Ball's view," the account continues, "there was absolutely no assurance that the U.S. could with the provision of more ground forces achieve its political objectives in Vietnam. Instead, the U.S. risked involving itself in a costly and indeterminate struggle. To further complicate matters, it would be equally impossible to achieve political objectives by expanding the bombing of the North. . . ."

WILLIAM BUNDY IN THE MIDDLE

Assistant Secretary William P. Bundy, the study says, "like so many others found himself in between Westmoreland and Ball."

In a memorandum to the President on July 1, Mr. Bundy gave his position, as summarized in the Pentagon study:

"The U.S. needed to avoid the ultimate aspects of the 44 battalions and also the Ball withdrawal proposal. . . . The U.S. should adopt a policy which would allow it to hold on without risking disasters of scale if the war were lost despite deployment of the full 44 battalions. For the moment, according to Bundy, the U.S. should complete planned deployments to bring in-country forces to 18 maneuver battalions and 85,000 men. . . . The forces in Vietnam, which Bundy assumed would be enough to prevent collapse, would be restricted to reserve reaction in support of RVNAF. This would allow for some experimentation without taking over the war effort—a familiar theme." [See text, George Ball memo, July 1.]

As for Secretary McNamara's views, the study comments: "It is difficult to be precise about the position of the Secretary of Defense during the build-up debate because there is so little of him in the files."

"There are plenty of other indications in the files that the Secretary was very carefully and personally insuring that the Defense Establishment was ready to provide efficient and sufficient support to the fighting elements in Vietnam," the study continues. "From the records, the Secretary comes out much more clearly for good management than he does for any particular strategy."

The Secretary went to South Vietnam for a four-day inspection starting July 16. The study says that while he was in Saigon on July 17, he received a cable from Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance informing him that the President had decided to go ahead with the plan to deploy 34 battalions.

"The debate was over," the analyst says. "McNamara left Saigon bearing Westmoreland recommendations for an even greater increase in forces. . . ."

The study says 34 battalions. This is not entirely clear, because in his request General Westmoreland had asked for a total of 33, and if the battalions of the 173d Airborne Brigade were added, the total would be 35. The explanation apparently is that when the Airmobile Division was finally organized, it had eight rather than nine battalions. The 34 battalions were, of course, to be supplied immediately. The nine others were to be requested later if needed.

The Pentagon analyst apparently did not have access to White House memoranda, so he is able to give only a sketchy account of Mr. Johnson's role. But he says: "There is no question that the key figure in the early 1965 buildup was the President."

On May 4, the President asked Congress for a \$700-million supplemental appropriation "to meet mounting military requirements in Vietnam."

"Nor can I guarantee this will be the last

request," he said in a message. "If our need expands I will turn again to the Congress. For we will do whatever must be done to insure the safety of South Vietnam from aggression. This is the firm and irrevocable commitment of our people and nation."

On July 28, the President held a press conference in which he said, "The lesson of history dictated that the U.S. commit its strength to resist aggression in South Vietnam."

As for the troop increases, the President said:

"I have asked the commanding general, General Westmoreland, what more he needs to meet this mounting aggression. He has told me. We will meet his needs."

"I have today ordered to Vietnam the Airmobile Division and certain other forces which will raise our fighting strength from 75,000 to 125,000 men almost immediately. Additional forces will be needed later, and they will be sent as requested. . . ."

"I have concluded that it is not essential to order Reserve units into service now."

"IT DOES NOT IMPLY CHANGE"

During the questioning after the announcement, this exchange took place:

"Q. Mr. President, does the fact that you are sending additional forces to Vietnam imply any change in the existing policy of relying mainly on the South Vietnamese to carry out offensive operations and using American forces to guard installations and to act as emergency back-up?"

"A. It does not imply any change in policy whatever. It does not imply change of objective."

On July 30, the Joint Chiefs approved 44 maneuver battalions for deployment, involving a total of 193,887 United States troops. By the end of the year, United States forces in South Vietnam numbered 184,314.

"The major participants in the decision knew the choices and understood the consequences," the study says in summation. The decision taken in mid-July to commit 44 battalions of troops to battle in South Vietnam "was perceived as a threshold—entrance into an Asian land war. The conflict was seen to be long, with further U.S. deployments to follow. The choice at that time was not whether or not to negotiate, it was not whether to hold on for a while or let go—the choice was viewed as winning or losing South Vietnam."

Cancer: Crusade to conquer, E5446.

Accompanying this decision to give General Westmoreland enough troops to embark on the first phase of his search-and-destroy strategy "was a subtle change of emphasis," the study says.

"Instead of simply denying the enemy victory and convincing him that he could not win, the thrust became defeating the enemy in the South. This was sanctioned implicitly as the only way to achieve the U.S. objective of a non-Communist South Vietnam."

"The acceptance of the search-and-destroy strategy . . . left the U.S. commitment to Vietnam open-ended. The implications in terms of manpower and money are inescapable."

"Final acceptance of the desirability of inflicting defeat on the enemy rather than merely denying him victory opened the door to an indeterminate amount of additional force."

Precisely what President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara expected their decisions of July to bring within the near term "is not clear," the study says, "but there are manifold indications that they were prepared for a long war."

than the American government, who was responsible for the elections' not taking place. Diem flatly refused even to discuss the elections with the Communist regime in Hanoi.

These are among the facts emerging from sections of the Pentagon study on the origins of the Vietnam war, made available to *The Washington Post*.

The chief architect of the American policy of opposition to elections, as was well known at the time, was President Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. But it was Eisenhower who had insisted on allied support if he were to ask Congress for authority to use American military force to save the French army in Indochina in early 1954. The United States did not get that allied support.

The origin of the idea of holding an election in divided Vietnam, called for in the Geneva accords of 1954, remains obscure. But there is nothing obscure about Dulles' attitude.

In July of 1954, he sent a cable to various American diplomats then struggling with the problem. It said in part:

"... Thus since undoubtedly true that elections might eventually mean unification Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh this makes it all more important they should be only held as long after ceasefire agreement as possible and in conditions free from intimidation to give democratic elements best chance. We believe important that no date should be set now and especially that no conditions should be accepted by French which would have direct or indirect effect of preventing effective international supervision of agreement ensuring political as well as military guarantees."

Dulles went on to call attention to a joint statement by President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Churchill in June, especially that part which spoke of achieving "unity through free elections supervised by the UN."

Later in July, shortly before issuance in Geneva of the "final declaration" of the long conference, a declaration that included the statement that "general elections shall be held in July 1956," Dulles cabled his unhappiness at the impending outcome.

He sent Walter Bedell Smith, the Under Secretary of State who had returned to the Geneva Conference to limit as much as possible what Dulles foresaw as the disastrous outcome, a cable that said in part:

"While we don't want to take responsibility of imposing our views on the French, I feel particularly concerned about provisions of paragraph 6 which gives the Control Commission constituted as per SECTO 686 authority also to control the general elections. The ink is hardly dry on the Declaration of President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Churchill of June 29 to the effect that 'In the case of nations now divided against their will, we shall continue to seek unity through free elections supervised by the UN to insure that they are conducted fairly.' It is rather humiliating to see that Declaration now so quickly go down the drain with our apparent acquiescence."

About a week before the above cable, and after French Premier Pierre Mendes-France had asked that Dulles return to Geneva and before Dulles agreed to send Smith as his stand-in, Dulles cabled some of his unhappiness to Mendes-France via the American Embassy in Paris.

Dulles complained to Mendes-France of "a whittling-away process, each stroke of which may in itself seem unessential, but which cumulatively could produce a result quite different from that envisaged" in a seven-point minimum program, agreed upon by Britain and the United States, that he then was trying to sell France.

He included this paragraph as illustrative of that "whittling-away process."

"Allowing Communist forces to remain in Northern Laos; accepting a Vietnam line of

military demarcation considerable south of Donghol; neutralizing and (one word indistinct) demilitarizing, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam so as to impair their capacity to maintain stable, noncommunist regimes; accepting elections so early and so ill-prepared and ill-supervised as to risk the loss of the entire area to Communism; accepting international supervision by a body which cannot be effective because it includes a Communist state which has veto power."

In the end the election was called for, but not without considerable argument at Geneva, where the United States worked through the French. But others had the important say.

Chief among these important people were Chou En-lai, then as now Chinese Premier, and V. M. Molotov, the Soviet Union's redoubtable foreign minister.

In June of 1954, American Ambassador to France Douglas Dillon cabled Dulles to report conversations with Jean Chauvel, a key diplomat at the conference. Chauvel reported that Chou had "said that he recognized that there were now two governments in the territory of Vietnam, the Viet Minh Government and the Vietnamese Government. According to Chauvel, this was the first time that Chou had recognized the valid existence of the Vietnamese Government."

As to elections, Dillon reported:

"Regarding the final political settlement, Chou said this should be reached by direct negotiations between the two governments in Vietnam . . . Mendes at this point said that since the war had been going on for 8 years and passions were high, it would take a long time before elections could be held as the people must be given a full opportunity to cool off and calm down. Chou made no objection to this statement by Mendes and did not press for early elections."

On June 19, Smith called on Molotov at his Geneva villa. He filed a long report, with his comment, which included this:

"In private conversations with Mr. Eden and others, Communist delegates, in particular Chou En-lai, had taken an apparently reasonable view on Laos and Cambodia, but that here again, when we came to the point of trying to get open agreement on specific points we were unable to do so. I specifically mentioned Chou En-lai's statements to Eden in which he said that China would have no objections to recognizing the kingdoms of Laos and Cambodia or to these States having forces and arms sufficient to maintain security, or their remaining in French Union so long as they were not used as military bases by the United States. We could not disagree with any of this, although if we kept out the Chinese would have to keep out, and these small states would have to be allowed to join with their neighbors in whatever regional security arrangements would best protect their integrity without constituting a threat to any one else.

"Chou En-lai might be anxious about possibility of U.S. bases in Laos and Cambodia. We wanted on our part to be sure that these countries were not handed over to the Chinese. Molotov said that while he did not know about what attitude Chinese might have on other questions in future, he could assure me that Chinese attitude on this particular question was not at all unreasonable, and that there was nothing in it which would give rise to conflicts. He added, however, that if we continued to take a one-sided view and insist on one-sided solutions, he must 'in all frankness say that this would not succeed.'"

Smith told Molotov that "appearance of 'partition' was repugnant to U.S." and he reported that "in regard to U.S. aversion to partition, he [Molotov] said that this problem could easily be solved by holding elec-

[From the *Washington Post*, June 18, 1971]
DOCUMENTS REVEAL U.S. EFFORT IN 1954 TO
DELAY VIET ELECTION—I

(By Mr. Chalmers M. Roberts)

The Eisenhower administration, fearful that elections throughout North and South Vietnam would bring victory to Ho Chi Minh, fought hard but in vain at the 1954 Geneva Conference to reduce the possibility that the conference would call for such elections.

But the following year it was South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem, far more

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tious at once, which would decide 'one way or the other.'"

When Molotov indicated Smith might encourage the French to agree, "I replied," reported Smith "that U.S. was not one of principals to Indochinese dispute and did not cast deciding vote, to which Molotov remarked 'maybe so, but you have veto, that word I hear you use so often.'"

In his "comment," Smith cabled:

"It is probable that initial Soviet tactics were to forestall US intervention in the Delta by some kind of compromise formula involving Hanoi and Haiphong. If it appeared that such intervention were imminent. The recent raising of the ante in negotiations here by the Communist side probably reflects an estimate on their part that our intervention is improbable and that they are safe to go ahead there, keeping, of course, a sharp eye out for indications of change in our attitude."

Dulles had fought any partition of Vietnam but Chauvel reported in Geneva in June to U. Alexis Johnson of the American delegation that "there had been conversation between Vietnamese and Viet Minh in which Viet Minh had made it clear that only two alternatives were coalition government or partition."

The same day Dulles cabled that the suggestion then surfacing for a line dividing Vietnam at the "Thakhek-Donghoi line, coupled with rapid Delta deterioration, is leading us to reexamine possible defacto partition Vietnam."

Both Dulles and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had opposed partition and/or elections. In April of 1954 Dulles cabled Dillon in Paris and American Ambassador Winthrop Aldrich in London a summary of what he had told French Ambassador Henri Bonnet on the eve of the Geneva Conference.

In part, it said that "division of Indochina impractical. Quote Mixed Unquote government would be beginning of disaster." Both, he said would lead to a "face-saving formula to cover surrender of French Union forces."

A March memorandum from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Arthur Radford, to Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson on the JCS views about the then-impending negotiations said this about "establishment of a coalition government:"

"The acceptance of a settlement based upon the establishment of a coalition government in one or more of the Associated States [Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia] would open the way for the ultimate seizure of control by the Communists under conditions which might preclude timely and effective external assistance in the prevention of such seizure."

In a paragraph about "self-determination through free elections," the JCS said in part:

"The Communists, by virtue of their superior capability in the field of propaganda, could readily pervert the issue as being a choice between national independence and French colonial rule. Furthermore, it would be militarily infeasible to prevent widespread intimidation of voters by Communist partisans. While it is obviously impossible to make a dependable forecast as to the outcome of a free election, current intelligence leads the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the belief that a settlement based upon free elections would be attended by almost certain loss of the Associated States to Communist control."

"Longer term" results of such a loss, said the JCS, "involving the gravest threats to fundamental United States security interests in the Far East and even to the stability and security of Europe could be expected to ensue."

By the time the Geneva Conference opened, as has been known for many years, the United States had actively considered the idea of military intervention. The documents made available to The Washington Post reflect this consideration at many points.

For example, a January, 1954, meeting of the President's Special Committee on Indochina discussed sending various aircraft to the French as well as 200 military mechanics. Deputy Defense Secretary Roger Kyes "questioned" whether sending the men "would not so commit the U.S. to support the French that we must be prepared eventually for complete intervention, including use of U.S. combat forces." State's Undersecretary Smith disagreed, saying "we were sending maintenance forces not ground forces. He felt, however, that the importance of winning in Indochina was so great that if worst came to the worst he personally would favor intervention with U.S. air and naval forces—not ground forces."

Kyes said he "felt this consideration was so important that it should be put to the highest level. The President himself should decide. General Smith agreed."

But there were contrary voices as well. Late in January, Sen. John Stennis (D-Miss.), then a low-ranking member and now chairman of the Armed Services Committee, wrote Secretary Wilson to say that "I have been impressed for some time that we have been steadily moving closer and closer to participation in the war in Indo-China."

He said he did not object to policy thus far but that "it seems to me that we should certainly stop short of sending our troops or airmen to this area, either for participation in the conflict or as instructors. As always, when we send one group, we shall have to send another to protect the first and we shall thus be fully involved in a short time."

The available papers do not include a response from Wilson to the senator.

Earlier that month, President Eisenhower approved the policy statement set at the National Security Council table two days earlier on "United States objectives and courses of action with respect to Southeast Asia." It began with a sweeping statement of "general considerations," one foreshadowed in the Truman administration and to be continued in one form or another, as the documents show, into the Johnson administration.

"1. Communist domination, by whatever means, of all Southeast Asia would seriously endanger in the short term, and critically endanger in the longer term, United States security interests.

"a. In the conflict in Indochina, the Communist and non-Communist worlds clearly confront one another on the field of battle. The loss of the struggle in Indochina, in addition to its impact in Southeast Asia and in South Asia, would therefore have the most serious repercussions on U.S. and free world interests in Europe and elsewhere.

"b. Such is the interrelation of the countries of the area that effective contraction would be immediately necessary to prevent the loss of any single country from leading to submission to or an alignment with communism by the remaining countries of Southeast Asia and Indonesia. Furthermore, in the event all of Southeast Asia falls under communism, an alignment with communism of India, and in the longer term, of the Middle East (with the probable exceptions of at least Pakistan and Turkey) could follow progressively. Such widespread alignment would seriously endanger the stability and security of Europe.

"c. Communist control of all of Southeast Asia and Indonesia would threaten the U.S. position in the Pacific offshore island chain and would seriously jeopardize fundamental U.S. security interests in the Far East.

"d. The loss of Southeast Asia would have serious economic consequences for many nations of the free world and conversely would add significant resources to the Soviet bloc. Southeast Asia, especially Malaya and Indonesia, is the principal world source of natural rubber and tin, and a producer of

petroleum and other strategically important commodities. The rice exports of Burma, Indochina and Thailand are critically important to Malaya, Ceylon and Hong Kong and are of considerable significance to Japan and India, all important areas of free Asia. Furthermore, this area has an important potential as a market for the industrialized countries of the free world.

"e. The loss of Southeast Asia, especially of Malaya and Indonesia, could result in such economic and political pressures in Japan as to make it extremely difficult to prevent Japan's eventual accommodation to communism."

While the NSC study stated that "overt Chinese Communist attack on any part of Southeast Asia is less probable than continued Communist efforts to achieve domination through armed rebellion or subversion," the possibility of war with China was explored. It was stated that "in the event the United States participates in the fighting, there is a substantial risk that the Chinese Communists would intervene."

The immediate aim was to help the French by expediting, "and if necessary" increasing aid, to "assist them in:

"a. An aggressive military, political and psychological program, including covert operations, to eliminate organized Viet Minh forces by mid-1955.

"b. Developing indigenous armed forces, including logistical and administrative services, which will eventually be capable of maintaining internal security without assistance from French units."

In the event of Chinese intervention, the NSC concluded, the United Nations should be asked to call on member nations to "take whatever action may be necessary . . . to meet such an aggression." Whether or not the U.N. did act, it was proposed, the United States either under U.N. auspices or in concert with France, Britain and "other friendly governments" should take such steps as interdicting Chinese communication lines "including those in China," and, "if appropriate," also establish a joint "naval blockade of Communist China and "as desirable and feasible" utilize Chinese Nationalist forces "in military operations in Southeast Asia, Korea, or China proper."

The NSC paper noted that if such actions as those outlined indeed were taken "the United States should recognize that it may become involved in an all-out war with Communist China, and possibly with the USSR and the rest of the Soviet bloc, and should therefore proceed to take large-scale mobilization measures."

Military studies suggested that if the United States were to be involved on the ground "seven U.S. divisions or their equivalent, with appropriate naval and air support, would be required to win a victory in Indochina if the French withdrew and the Chinese Communists did not intervene." These were the words of the "Army position" on one NSC action memorandum.

But President Eisenhower, although he had approved the planning, wanted both Congressional approval and allied participation for any American intervention. An April telegram from Dulles to Dillon reported that "Congressional action would be required. After conference at highest level, I must confirm this position." He added: "US is doing everything possible" to "prepare public, Congressional and Constitutional basis for united action in Indochina. However, such action is impossible except on coalition basis with active British Commonwealth's participation. Meanwhile US prepared, as has been demonstrated, to do everything short of beligerency."

But Dulles had trouble rounding up allies, especially the British. Dulles reported to Smith on an April 27 talk with Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in London and found Eden worrying that military intervention

would be "a bigger affair than Korea," where hostilities had ended less than a year earlier.

A few days later Dulles summarized his findings, in part, this way:

"UK attitude is one of increasing weakness. British seem to feel that we are disposed to accept present risks of a Chinese war and this, coupled with their fear that we would start using atomic weapons, has badly frightened them."

Dulles confessed to uncertainty by adding that "I do not underestimate the immense difficulty of our finding the right course in this troubled situation. Nor do I mean to imply that this is the moment for a bold or war-like course. I lack here the US political and NSC judgments needed for overall evaluation."

Summary statements in the papers available to The Washington Post do not include any Eisenhower decision not to intervene at any of the several points during 1954 when that was under consideration. The closest thing to a clear definition of the chief executive's thinking is a May memorandum to the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs by Robert Cutler, the special assistant to the President who handled NSC affairs.

Cutler reported on a meeting in the President's office with only President Eisenhower, Dulles and Cutler present, at which the chief executive approved instructions for Smith, then in Geneva. It was essentially an expression of unhappiness over Eden's proposals, which fell far short of intervention.

Point 3, however, was expressive of the President's frame of mind. It said "The United States will not agree to a 'white man's party' to determine the problems of the Southeast Asian nations."

In the available papers there is no evidence of a post-Geneva American effort to prevent the elections throughout all of Vietnam from taking place.

The Soviets had "proposed June 1955" according to one report from Geneva but they and the Chinese and the North Vietnamese had finally agreed to only 1956. But South Vietnam, which the telegrams make clear had been told almost nothing about the secret Geneva talks although there was a Saigon delegation present, never accepted the Geneva accords, then or to this day.

A summary paper does as part of the Pentagon papers by an unnamed analyst put the outcome this way:

"As the deadline for consultations approached (20 July 1955) Diem was increasingly explicit that he did not consider free elections possible in North Vietnam, and had no intention of consulting with the DRV concerning them. The U.S. did not—as is often alleged—connive with Diem to ignore the elections. U.S. State Department records indicate that Diem's refusal to be bound by the Geneva Accords and his opposition to pre-election consultations were at his own initiative.

"However, the U.S. which had expected elections to be held, and up until May 1955, had fully supported them, shifted its position in the face of Diem's opposition, and of the evidence then accumulated about the oppressive nature of the regime in North Vietnam. 'In essence', a State Department historical study found, 'our position would be that the whole subject of consultation and elections in Vietnam should be let up to the Vietnamese themselves and not dictated by external arrangements which one of the parties never accepted and still rejects.'"

On Jan. 19, 1961, President Eisenhower met in the oval room of the White House with President-elect John F. Kennedy. The President said that "Laos is the key to the entire area of Southeast Asia." The President-elect asked "how long it would take to put a U.S. division into Laos."

There was no discussion of Vietnam. That would become the problem for President Kennedy—and President Johnson—and President Nixon.

[From the Washington Post, June 19, 1971]
VIET STUDY SAYS BOMBING LULL PRESSURE MOVE—II

(By Murrey Marder)

Johnson Administration strategists had almost no expectation that the many pauses in the bombing of North Vietnam between 1965 and 1968 would produce peace talks but believed they would help placate domestic and world opinion, according to the Defense Department's study of those war years.

The Pentagon study discloses that some strategists planned to use unproductive bombing pauses as a justification for escalating the war. This idea was first outlined privately by U.S. officials soon after the bombing of the North began in 1965. These planners regarded the lulls in bombing as a "ratchet" to reduce tension and then intensify it, to produce "one more turn of the screw" in order to "crack the enemy's resistance to negotiations," the report states.

Throughout these years American officials regarded their terms for peace as virtually irreconcilable with conditions offered by North Vietnam and the Vietcong. They recognized that the terms for peace talks would have to be eased before negotiations could even begin.

The United States eventually relaxed its terms on March 31, 1968. The occasion was President Johnson's dramatic television announcement that he would not run for reelection. At the same time he also announced an indefinite halt to some of the bombing and Hanoi, to the surprise of most U.S. experts, agreed to start preliminary talks.

Through the 1965-1968 period, the most uncompromising U.S. planners insisted that the enemy would interpret the pauses in the bombing as a sign of American softness, the report states. Consequently, the failure of the Communist side to make a conciliatory response to each bombing lull was used as an argument for escalating U.S. involvement either in the air over North Vietnam, or on the ground in South Vietnam, and usually both.

President Johnson was often caught in the crossfire between the hawks and doves over this issue, as he often protested in private.

The Pentagon review also throws significant new light on the public controversy of recent years about who was primarily responsible for urging the President to order the partial bombing halt of March 31, 1968, to halt U.S. escalation, and to start negotiations.

Former Defense Secretary Clark M. Clifford was lauded by his supporters as the adviser who led what came to be called the "struggle for the mind of the President." President Johnson on Feb. 6, 1970, publicly labeled that claim "totally inaccurate." President Johnson ridiculed the claim that there was any struggle for his mind and said that instead it was his most continually loyal lieutenant, Secretary of State Dean Rusk—and not Clifford—who first suggested the partial bomb halt on March 5 or 6, 1968 and that Mr. Johnson immediately instructed him to "get on your horses" and produce an operating proposal swiftly.

The newly disclosed Pentagon study—which is admittedly incomplete, especially on White House and State Department activities—presents information that shows a far more complex background for the President's critical March 31 decision than either party to the continuing public debate has offered so far.

The new documentation asserts, in part, that the idea of a bombing limitation was aired inside the Johnson Administration at least as early as 1966 by Robert S. McNamara, then Defense Secretary, and explored by Assistant Secretary John McNaughton. According to this account, it was Under Secretary of State Nicholas deB. Katzenbach in May, 1967, who first specifically proposed a "territorially limited bomb halt" which is what

finally was put into effect at the 20th Parallel of North Vietnam.

This study also confirms, however, that in early March, 1968, it was Rusk, as President Johnson said, rather than Clifford, who proposed the partial bombing halt to the President at that time.

But the new documentation also indicates that Rusk's objectives may have differed from Clifford's. Clifford, a "hawk" who suddenly turned "dove" soon after—but not immediately after—he replaced McNamara as Defense Secretary on March 1, 1968, became convinced, as he later wrote, "that the military course we were pursuing was not only endless, but hopeless."

Clifford's goal was to change the course of the war. Rusk's fundamental commitment to achieving the original goals of the war was unchanged.

U.S. intelligence had pointed out that the weather for bombing over the North was turning bad, and "It is not until May that more than four good bombing days per month can be anticipated." The prevailing view, therefore, was that the United States was risking only another limited bombing "pause."

A State Department advisory cable later in March to all U.S. embassies abroad, cited in the Pentagon study, in part said precisely that:

"... You should make clear that Hanoi is most likely to denounce the (partial bomb halt and the accompanying offer to Hanoi to 'not take advantage of it') project and thus free our hand after a short period . . .

"In view of weather limitations, bombing north of the 20th Parallel will in any event be limited at least for the next four weeks or so—which we tentatively envisage as a maximum testing period in any event. Hence, we are not giving up anything really serious in this time frame."

"Moreover," the message to U.S. ambassadors continued, "air power now being used north of 20th can probably be used in Laos (where no policy change planned) and in SVN." (South Vietnam).

"Insofar as our announcement foreshadows any possibility of a complete bombing stoppage, in the event Hanoi really exercises reciprocal restraints, we regard this as unlikely . . ."

According to the study, the initial paragraph of this previously unpublished cablegram emphasized what the United States had expressed with each previous bombing pause, a priority on continuing U.S. "resolve" to pursue the war if necessary:

"You should call attention," ambassadors were instructed initially, "to force increases that would be announced at the same time" (as the partial bomb halt) "and would make clear our continuing resolve. Also our top priority to re-equipping ARVN (South Vietnamese) forces."

The message clearly did not anticipate the President's startling announcement at the end of his March 31 speech, that he was taking himself out of the 1968 election race in order to try to bring the war to an end and unify the war-fractured nation.

Between 1965 and 1968, as optimistic forecasts about the war repeatedly collapsed, the U.S. strategists attempted every form of military pressure they could devise to crack the Communist will to pursue the war in South Vietnam—within limits President Johnson imposed to avoid open, big-power warfare.

As outlined in The Washington Post Friday, the Pentagon study reported that the risk of a major war was recognized as early as the Eisenhower Administration. A National Security Council paper of that period stated: "... The United States should recognize that it may become involved in an all-out war with Communist China, and possibly with the USSR . . ."

The study shows that from the earliest days of the Johnson Administration's massive expansion of the war, many U.S. planners had a more pessimistic assessment of

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the duration of the war, the cost, and the price of a settlement than was ever communicated to the public.

For example, a month before the partial U.S. halt in the bombing of North Vietnam, the Pentagon survey shows that the Central Intelligence Agency in February forecast the critical issues to be faced to reach any peace settlement:

If the United States stopped bombing North Vietnam (as it did on Nov. 1, 1968 by President Johnson's order after the first Paris peace talks paved the way for that decision), the CIA projected that North Vietnam would engage in "exploration of issues, but would not moderate its terms for a final settlement or stop fighting in the South."

There would be two key demands from the Communist side, the 1968 CIA analysis said: "the establishment of a new 'coalition' government, which would in fact if not in appearance be under the domination of the Communists. Secondly, they would insist on a guaranteed withdrawal of all U.S. forces within some precisely defined period."

It was presumably for these, or related reasons, that Dean Rusk and others who shared his viewpoint were convinced in 1966, it is known from sources other than the Pentagon review, that no negotiated peace settlement could come out of the Paris talks. Rusk was convinced that the United States would hold to its fundamental objectives in South Vietnam and that North Vietnam would do exactly the same for theirs.

According to the Pentagon documents, in a "memorandum" which Rusk wrote in July, 1965, which is not otherwise identified, "Rusk stated bluntly" that:

"The central objective of the United States in South Vietnam must be to insure that North Vietnam not succeed in taking over or determining the future of South Vietnam by force. We must accomplish this objective without a general war if possible."

The document then quotes Rusk on what he, and President Johnson and other officials often said publicly and privately:

"The integrity of the U.S. commitment is the principal pillar of peace throughout the world. If that commitment becomes unreliable, the Communist world would certainly draw conclusions that would lead to our ruin and almost certainly to a catastrophic war..."

From the time of the Tonkin Gulf incident of August, 1964 onward, the Pentagon review shows, private warnings against any "rush to the conference table" were repeated through the top layer of the U.S. government. In 1964, and more so in 1965, South Vietnam's troops were in real danger of outright Communist defeat, as American officials publicly admitted only long afterward when the introduction of large U.S. forces relieved the danger.

This admonition against the risk of peace talks at a time when Communist forces were threatening to take control in Saigon was shared equally by McNamara and his associates and many others throughout government who later became discouraged about the course of U.S. policy.

A July, 1965, McNamara memorandum quoted in the review advocates combining political and military initiatives, but with priority on the latter.

"At the same time as we are taking steps to turn the tide in South Vietnam," McNamara said, the United States should open a "dialogue" with the Soviet Union, North Vietnam and "perhaps even with the VC" (Vietcong) to make diplomatic overtures for "laying the groundwork for a settlement when the time is ripe..."

Although McNamara authorized this Pentagon historical review, the unidentified analyst's caustic comment about these and other political initiatives suggested by McNamara was: "McNamara's essentially procedural (as opposed to substantive) recom-

mendations amounted to little more than saying that the United States should provide channels for the enemy's discreet and relatively face-saving surrender when he decided that the game had grown too costly."

The reviewer's commentary adds: "This was, in fact, what official Washington (again with the exception of Ball) meant in mid-1965 when it spoke of a 'political settlement.'" Ball is Under Secretary of State George W. Ball, then the only "dove" in the top layer of the administration. A footnote adds that even McNamara's viewpoint "went too far" for Henry Cabot Lodge, then Ambassador-designate to Saigon, "whose view was that 'any further inductive by us now (before we are strong) would simply harden the Communist resolve not to stop fighting.'"

The Pentagon study credits McNamara and the late Assistant Secretary for Internal Security Affairs John McNaughton in July, 1965, with proposing a major 37-day bomb halt at the end of the year. The first pause in the air war was a five-day suspension, in May, 1965. The review, which is especially incomplete on White House actions, states that the five-day pause was "apparently inspired by the President himself in an effort to see if the North Vietnamese government—which had previously indicated that any progress towards a settlement would be impossible so long as its territory was being bombed—would respond with de-escalatory measures of its own."

The reviewer comments:

"To have expected a meaningful response in so short a time, given the complexity of the political relationships not only within the North Vietnamese government and party, but also between Hanoi and the NLF (National Liberation Front) in the South, and between Hanoi and its separate (and quarreling) supporters within the Communist world, was to expect the impossible."

In projecting his ideas for what came to be the 37-day bombing interregnum, a McNamara memorandum to the President of Nov. 30, 1965 stated:

"It is my belief that there should be a three- or four-week pause . . . in the program of bombing the North before we either greatly increase our troop deployments to Vietnam or intensify our strikes against the North."

"The reasons for this belief are, first, that we must lay a foundation in the mind of the American public and in world opinion for such an enlarged phase of the war and, second, we should give North Vietnam a face-saving chance to stop the aggression."

The Pentagon analyst adds:

"John McNaughton had perfectly encapsulated the Washington establishment's view of a bombing pause the previous July, when he had noted in pencil in the margin of a draft memorandum the words 'RT [i.e. Rolling Thunder] (incl. Pause), ratchet.' The image of a ratchet, such as the device which raises the net on a tennis court, backing off tension between each phase of increasing it, was precisely what McNaughton and McNamara, William Bundy and Alexis Johnson at State, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had in mind when they thought of a pause. The only danker was, as McNamara put it in his memorandum of 3 November, 'being trapped in a status quo cease-fire or in negotiations which, though unaccompanied by real concessions by the VC, made it politically costly for us to terminate the Pause.'"

"Rolling Thunder" referred to the bombing campaign against North Vietnam.

The study states that "McNamara and McNaughton were optimistic that, by skillful diplomacy," it would be possible to avoid getting "trapped" in such a way.

But the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the chronology continues, "who were professionally distrustful of the diplomatic art and of the ability of the political decision-makers in

Washington to resist the pressures from the 'peace movement' in the United States were not so sure.

"The Chiefs (echoing Gen. Westmoreland and Admiral Sharp) were also opposed to any measures which would, even momentarily, reduce the pressure on North Vietnam." Gen. William C. Westmoreland was then U.S. military commander in South Vietnam; Admiral U. S. G. Sharp was U.S. commander in chief in the Pacific.

At that point, according to the review, a State Department "paper—speaking for Secretary Rusk—came down against a bombing pause."

The Pentagon study said that after reviewing pro and con arguments, the State memorandum said: "On balance, the arguments against the pause are convincing to the Secretary of State, who recommends that it not be undertaken at the present time."

"The Secretary . . . believes that a pause should be undertaken only when and if the chances are significantly greater than they now appear that Hanoi would respond by reciprocal actions leading in the direction of a peaceful settlement."

"He further believes that, from the standpoint of international and domestic opinion, a pause might become an overriding requirement only if we were about to reach the advanced stages of an extrapolated Rolling Thunder program involving extensive air operations in the Hanoi/Haiphong area."

"Since the Secretary of State believes that such advanced stages are not in themselves desirable until the tide in the South is more favorable, he does not feel that, even accepting the point of view of the Secretary of Defense, there is now any international requirement to consider a 'Pause.'"

The review states that on the same day the State viewpoint was received McNaughton informed McNamara in a memorandum that Rusk's basic "assumption" was "that a bombing pause was a 'card' which could be 'played' only once."

"In fact, McNaughton wrote, 'It is more reasonable to think that it could be played any number of times, with the arguments against it, but not those for it, becoming less valid each time.'" The analysis said that one chief reason why the Defense Department wanted the "pause" was "that even if it were to produce no response from Hanoi, it might set the stage or another pause, perhaps late in 1966, which might be more 'productive.'"

According to the Pentagon review, President Johnson, for reasons not revealed in the documents "delayed positively committing himself either for or against a pause until very shortly before the actual pause began." The reviewer cites additional arguments for and against a pause, submitted by Assistant Secretary of State William P. Bundy on Dec. 1.

While the Bundy memorandum lacked any recommendations the unnamed analyst's assessment of it was that it "amounted . . . to the contention that just as the United States could not afford to initiate a bombing pause that might fail to produce negotiations and a deescalation, neither could it afford to initiate one that succeeded."

The interests of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to the survey, transcended arguments about pauses which they consistently resisted. The military chiefs, it was stated "pressed throughout the autumn and winter of 1965-66 for permission to expand the bombing virtually into a program of strategic bombing aimed at all industrial and economic resources as well as at all interdiction targets."

The review stated, "The Chiefs did so, it may be added, despite the steady stream of memorandum from the intelligence community consistently expressing skepticism that bombing of any conceivable sort (that is, any except bombing aimed primarily at the

destruction of North Vietnam's population) could either persuade Hanoi to negotiate a settlement on US/GVN terms or effectively limit Hanoi's ability to infiltrate men and supplies into the South."

This then was the tenor of much of the debate behind the scenes while U.S. Ambassador W. Averell Harriman, the President's chief searcher for peace, and other U.S. envoys, were circling the globe for 37 days in a spectacular search for negotiations.

The documents show that at the end of this pause period, with the Joint Chiefs pressing for more bombing, inside the Pentagon McNamara was examining the overall situation and suggesting some major changes in U.S. policy.

McNamara said in early 1966 that South Vietnam's forces were "tired, passive and accommodation prone," while North Vietnam and the Vietcong "are effectively matching our deployments." The effect of bombing on reinforcing infiltration into the South was uncertain. In addition, said McNamara, "pacification is stalled despite efforts and hopes." Saigon's "political infrastructure is moribund and weaker" than the Vietcong's in rural areas, and "South Vietnam is near the edge of serious inflation and economic chaos."

"The present U.S. objective in Vietnam," said McNamara, "is to avoid humiliation." McNamara's central point, according to the review, was that both the Communist side and the United States, in the reviewer's words, "should consider coming to terms," because, in part, "we are in an escalating military stalemate."

McNamara said that the U.S. objective of preventing a Communist takeover by force "does not necessarily rule out" a "coalition government including Communists."

In the reviewer's words, McNamara was maintaining that the U.S. commitment could be fulfilled "considerably short of victory."

"It takes time to make hard decisions," McNamara wrote. "It took us almost a year to take the decision to bomb North Vietnam; it took us weeks to decide on a pause; it could take us months (and could involve lopping some white as well as brown heads) to get us in position to go for a compromise. We should not expect the enemy's molasses to pour any faster than ours. And we should 'tip the pitchers' now, if we want them to 'pour' a year from now."

Yet while advocating a "lowering of sights from victory to compromise," McNamara acknowledged that this would "unhinge" the Saigon regime and give North Vietnam "the smell of blood." Therefore, he said that to follow this course "requires a willingness to escalate the war if the enemy miscalculates, misinterpreting our willingness to compromise as implying that we are on the run."

McNamara, who had recently visited South Vietnam, recommended increased air and ground measures in January, 1966, in a memorandum to the President. The review said, however, that McNamara in a November memorandum also said "we have but two options . . . one is to go now for a compromise solution. . . . The other is to stick with our stated objectives and with the war, and provide what it takes in men and material. . . ."

The report states that McNamara did not commit himself to a "compromise" solution and "The President, of course, decided against it."

But McNamara was to become disenchanted with the effectiveness of constantly increased bombing as Rolling Thunder soared into tremendous bombing tonnages which McNamara appeared to take pleasure in citing publicly.

"Disenthralled" by the inability of the bombing to alter the escalating pattern of the war, the review states, McNamara seized an idea for a "barrier" or "fence" extending across the northern border of South Viet-

nam in an attempt to cut infiltration. The idea, according to the survey, "was first proposed in January, 1966, by Roger Fisher of Harvard Law School in one of his periodic memos to McNamara."

The Joint Chiefs protested that to man the barrier would take seven to eight divisions on the ground, extensive air resources, and as much as three and a half to four years to complete the combined air and ground fence which Adm. Sharp at CINCPAC labeled "impractical." Instead, CINCPAC favored "the relentless application of force" to curtail "North Vietnam's war-making capacity."

McNamara asked a group of Cambridge, Mass., experts including Jerome Weisner of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and George Kistiakowsky and Karl Kayser of Harvard to study the idea.

President Johnson approved "the barrier concept. But the record reports a "running battle" over strategy continued through 1967.

Inside the administration, the review reports that during 1967 the tide began to turn inside the government. A consensus of civilians registered opposition "either in whole or in part" to the military calls for intensifying warfare.

But the military chiefs turned to a powerful ally, Sen. John C. Stennis (D-Miss.), chairman of the Senate's Preparedness Subcommittee. Stennis' committee agreed with the Joint Chiefs' claims that they were being unjustifiably restricted on bombing targets in North Vietnam. The report was recorded under a section heading, "Senator Stennis Forces an Escalation."

The pressure on the President was effective, since added brief bombing pauses during 1967 "produced, as expected, no major breakthrough to peace," the analysis says. Then came the jolting, still-disputed consequences of the massive Communist offensive at Tet, starting Jan. 31, 1968, smashing at South Vietnam's cities and assailing the optimism created in the United States about progress in the war.

The pressures to put a ceiling on the American share of the war became immense. President Johnson did so, and banked his hopes instead on the peace table.

[From the Washington Post, June 20, 1971]

LEJ SHOWN AS CRAFTY, BUT NO LIAR

(By Bernard D. Nossiter)

A comparison of the Johnson administration's public remarks with the material that has been published from the Pentagon's private study of the Vietnam war discloses a public record marked by half-truths, careful ambiguities, and misleading and deceptive statements rather than flatfooted untruths.

What appears at first glance to be the grossest misstatement in public frequently turns out, on close examination, to contain a phrase or word that saves it from the label "lie."

For example, on April 1, 1965, according to the published documents, Mr. Johnson secretly made a fateful decision, ordering the 3600 Marines in Vietnam to shift from a static defense of the base at Danang to offensive actions. This was the beginning of an offensive combat role for U.S. ground troops.

The first public hint of this change came on June 8 when a State Department spokesman said that "American forces would be available for combat support." The next day, the White House put out a statement asserting:

"There has been no change in the mission of United States ground combat units in Vietnam in recent days or weeks. The President has issued no order of any kind in this regard to Gen. Westmoreland recently or at any other time."

This appears to be the lie direct. But the statement continued:

"The primary mission of these troops is to

secure and safeguard important military installations like the airbase at Danang. They have the associated mission of actively patrolling and securing action in and near the area thus safeguarded."

"If help is requested by appropriate Vietnamese commanders, Gen. Westmoreland also has authority within the assigned mission to employ these troops in support of Vietnamese forces faced with aggressive attack. . . ."

Thus, the last two paragraphs, although still avoiding the full truth, soften the impact of the first and patently false paragraph.

Again in late November 1964 the Administration's topmost circle, according to published material, agreed to adopt a "determined action program" aimed at putting pressure on Hanoi and raising South Vietnamese morale. A draft position paper of Nov. 29 charts a two-phase bombing program as a key element in this plan—possible reprisal strikes against North Vietnam and a U.S. readiness to conduct sustained bombing against the North.

At a press conference on Nov. 28, a press reporter asked the President:

"Is expansion of the Vietnam war into Laos or North Vietnam a live possibility at this point?"

Mr. Johnson, in a lengthy reply, allowed that his top advisers were then meeting, but in the operative part of his response said:

"I anticipate that there will be no dramatic announcement (emphasis added) to come out of these meetings except in the form of your speculation."

This was literally true but substantively misleading. No dramatic announcement was made but the meetings all but sealed the dramatic decision to launch the two-phase bombing program that began in February.

Administration leaders rarely made outright misstatements about the crucial events in the 20 months up to July 1965 when, as the already published Pentagon documents say, the United States entered into an open-ended commitment and an Asian land war.

Perhaps Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara came as close as any to complete falsification in his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in February, 1968.

The Committee was exploring the origins of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, the authority on which the Johnson regime relied to enlarge the war. Sen. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), the chairman, was attempting to discover whether the administration had decided well in advance of the August incidents in the Tonkin Gulf to ask Congress for a broad grant of authority. The dialogue went like this:

The Chairman: Mr. Secretary did you see the contingency draft of what became the Southeast Asia resolution before it was ready?

Secretary McNamara: Mr. Chairman, I read in the newspaper a few weeks ago there had been such a contingency draft. I don't believe I ever saw it . . . But I can't testify absolutely that I didn't. My memory is not clear on that.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In fact, the Executive Committee of the National Security Council—which included McNamara—had decided after its meetings on May 24 and 25, 1964 to seek a Congressional resolution (authorizing "all measures" to assist South Vietnam. Thus, McNamara and the others had approved a draft of the Tonkin Gulf resolution nearly ten weeks before the attack on the American destroyers in those waters.

Even here, McNamara's choice of words to the Senate Committee is artful. He says he didn't believe he saw the draft and it is conceivable that he approved the substance without reading all the language. Moreover, he tells the committee that his memory isn't

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clear on the crucial point and he won't "absolutely" deny having seen it.

At the same hearing, Gen. Earle Wheeler, chairman to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, skirted perilously close to untruth. Whether he avoided it is an exercise in higher semantics. Chairman Fulbright asked Wheeler whether in the period around July 1964 the military had recommended extending the war to the north by bombing or other means.

Gen. Wheeler replied: "I don't believe so, Mr. Chairman. I think that the proper answer would be that there were certain intelligence activities (deleted) but to the best of my knowledge and belief during that period there was no thought of extending the war into the North in the sense of our participation in such actions, activities."

Then, for the record, the Pentagon supplied an insertion:

"We have identified no such recommendation. A check of the records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is continuing."

In fact, published records show, as early as Jan. 22, 1964—six months before the period about which Fulbright was inquiring—the top brass sent McNamara a lengthy memo saying:

"Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the United States must make ready to conduct increasingly bolder actions in Southeast Asia to:

"... h. Conduct aerial bombing of key North Vietnam targets, using U.S. resources under Vietnamese cover, and with the Vietnamese openly assuming responsibility for the actions.

"j. Commit U.S. forces as necessary in direct actions against North Vietnam . . ."

Wheeler was stretching the truth to say the Chiefs harbored "no thought" of extending the war North. On the other hand, he could argue that a proposal "to make ready" northward actions is less than a recommendation and that he equates "thought" with an unqualified proposal.

The gap between public oratory and private belief is strikingly illustrated by Mr. Johnson's State of the Union address on Jan. 4, 1965.

Why are we in Vietnam, The President asked rhetorically.

He answered himself: "We are there, first, because a friendly nation has asked us for help against the Communist aggression."

But behind closed doors, the American objectives were described quite differently as a memo of Mar. 24, 1965 from John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, illustrates. Writing less than three months after Mr. Johnson spoke, McNaughton begins:

1. U.S. Aims
- 70 percent—To avoid a humiliating U.S. defeat (to our reputation as guarantor)
- 20 percent—To keep SVN (and the adjacent) territory from Chinese hands.
- 10 percent—To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.

Also—To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used.

Not—To "help a friend," although it would be hard to stay in if asked out.

What follows is a further comparison of differences between public statement and private discussion as disclosed by the Pentagon's secret study of the war's origins in some key areas during the crucial 20 months from December, 1963 through July, 1965. Single parentheses surround language in the documents or supplied by the unidentified Pentagon historian. The brackets embrace language supplied by The Washington Post.

PROGRESS OF THE WAR

In private, these estimates were made: "The situation is very disturbing . . . the situation has in fact been deteriorating in the countryside since July to a far greater

extent than we realized . . ."—McNamara memo to the President, Dec. 21, 1963.

"The situation has unquestionably been growing worse, at least since September . . ."—McNamara memo to the President, Mar. 10, 1964.

"In terms of equipment and training, the VC are better armed and led today than ever in the past . . . No indication that the VC are experiencing any difficulty in replacing their losses in men and equipment . . ."—Ambassador Maxwell Taylor's report to the Joint Chiefs, Aug. 10, 1964.

" . . . the counter-insurgency program country-wide is bogged down . . . the evidence shows we are playing a losing game in South Vietnam . . ."—Ambassador Taylor's briefing to senior officials, Nov. 27, 1964.

"Highest authority [identified as the President] believes the situation in South Vietnam has been deteriorating . . ."—McNaughton cable to Taylor, Apr. 15, 1965.

But the public was being told these things: "I am leaving [Saigon] optimistic as to the progress that can be made during the coming year . . ."—McNamara to press, Dec. 20, 1963, one day before he privately wrote the President of a "deteriorating" situation.

"I do not think that the speculation . . . that we are losing the fight in that area, or that things have gone to pot there, are at all justified . . ."—President to press, Feb. 29, 1964.

"Some progress has been made recently" and "compared to a month or two ago, we can look ahead with greater confidence . . ."—McNamara to press at Austin, Nov. 10, 1964.

ATTITUDE ON NEGOTIATIONS

In private, these judgments have been reported as follows:

"There would be the problem of marshaling the case to justify such action (bombing the North), the problem of Communist escalation, and the problem of dealing with the pressures for premature or 'stacked' negotiations . . ."—McNamara to President, March 16, 1964.

"Stall off any 'conference' (Laos or) Vietnam until D-Day [bombing strikes against the North] . . . (D-Day) Call for conference on Vietnam (and go to U.N.) . . . Essential that it be made clear that attacks on the North will continue (i.e. no cease-fire) until (a) terrorism, armed attacks and armed resistance to pacification efforts in the South stop, and (b) communications on the networks out of the North are conducted entirely in uncoded form."—Unused scenario of William Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State, May 23, 1964, as quoted by the Pentagon historian in the already published Pentagon documents.

"We must continue to oppose any Vietnam conference, and must play the prospect of a Laos conference very carefully . . ." William Bundy memo, Aug. 11, 1964.

"Should pressure for negotiations become too formidable to resist and discussion begin before a Communist agreement to comply, it was stressed that the United States should define its negotiating position "in a way which makes Communist acceptance unlikely." In this manner it would be "very likely that the conference would break up rather rapidly," thus enabling our military pressure to be resumed."—Unidentified Pentagon historian, summarizing options presented to an inner group of the National Security Council, Nov. 24, 1964.

"Moreover, it would be folly to assume that (Premier) Khanh, who is now in a fairly euphoric state as a result of our Gulf of Tonkin action, would do anything other than slump into deepest funk if we sought to persuade him to send GVN (Government of Vietnam) del (delegate) to conf (conference)."

"Intensified pressure for Geneva-type conf . . . would appear to us to be coming almost entirely from those who are opposed

to U.S. policy objectives in (Southeast Asia) . . . Under circumstances, we see very little hope that results of such conference would be advantageous to U.S. . . ."—Ambassador Taylor cable to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Aug. 9, 1964.

The spring, 1965 public statements of the President and his aides "were not 'compromise' terms, but more akin to a 'cease and desist' order than, (North Vietnam/Viet Cong) point of view were tantamount to a demand for their surrender."—Unidentified Pentagon historian.

"And I pledge you here today I will go to any remote corner of the world to meet anyone, any time, to promote freedom and to promote peace."—President Johnson at El Paso, Sept. 26, 1964.

"The United States will never be second in seeking a settlement in Vietnam that is based on an end of Communist aggression. As I have said in every part of the Union, I am ready to go anywhere at any time, and meet with anyone whenever there is promise of progress towards an honorable peace . . ."—President's statement on Vietnam, March 25, 1965.

"The window to peace is still open. We are still ready for unconditional discussion. We will impose no conditions of any kind on any government willing to talk, nor will we accept any. On this basis, we are ready to begin discussion next week, tomorrow or tonight . . . To those governments who doubt our willingness to talk, the answer is simple: Agree to discussion. Come to the meeting room. We will be there."—President's statement, April 17, 1965.

"The bombing is not an end in itself, as we all know. Its purpose is to bring us closer to the final day of peace, and whenever it will serve the interests of peace to do so, we will immediately end it . . . There are those who frequently talk of negotiation and political settlement and that they believe this is the course we should pursue, and so do I. When they talk that way I say, welcome to the club. I want to negotiate. I would much rather talk than fight and I think everyone would. Bring in who you want us to negotiate with. I have searched high and wide and I am a reasonably good cowboy and I can't even rope anybody and bring him in that is willing to talk and reason and settle this thing by negotiation . . ."—President to Congressional committee members on the need for more funds for military purposes in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965.

"As I indicated the day after I took over as President, I'd be glad to go anywhere, do anything, see anybody, anytime that offered an hope of peace . . . We will welcome any attempt, as we told them about the Cambodian conference . . ."—President to press, June 17, 1965.

"I have spoken many times of our objectives in Vietnam. So has the Government of South Vietnam. Hanoi has set forth its own proposals. We are ready to discuss their proposals and our proposals and any proposals of any government whose people may be affected, for we fear the meeting room no more than we fear the battlefield."—President announcing an "almost" immediate increase in U.S. combat forces in Vietnam from 75,000 to 125,000, July 29, 1965.

AMERICAN ROLE IN LAOS

In private, these things were happening and were discussed, according to already published Pentagon documents.

During 1964, American-supplied T-28 fighter-bombers were bombing and strafing Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese troops and targets in Laos near the North Vietnamese border. Some of the T-28s were manned by pilots from a CIA-controlled airline and some by pilots from Thailand. Their operations were controlled by Ambassador to Laos Leonard Unger.

In addition, Navy jets were flying recon-

naissance missions over Laos. After two were shot down in June, the Administration provided armed escorts for these flights and, beginning June 9, they struck and continued to strike at Pathet Lao positions.

A State Department memo of Nov. 7, 1964 for Assistant Secretary Bundy describes the operations:

"There are now 27 T-28 . . . aircraft in Laos . . .

(The Pacific Commander in Chief) has taken action in response to Ambassador Unger's request to build this inventory back up to 40 aircraft for which a pilot capability, including Thai, is present, in Laos."

"The T-28's are conducting the following operations:

"1. General harassing operations against Pathet Lao military installations . . . efforts to interdict Routes 7 . . . Tactical support missions . . . Strikes on targets of opportunity . . . Corridor interdiction program . . . plans are underway to hit four additional targets . . . Ambassador Unger has submitted for approval under this program 6 additional targets. . ."

"(North Vietnam) claims T-28's have violated North Vietnamese airspace and bombed/strafed NVN villages in August 1 and 2 . . . The charges are probably accurate with respect to the first two dates. . ."

The public relations strategy governing the Laos operation was spelled out by the unidentified Pentagon historian's summary of a decision at the Nation Security Council meeting, Dec. 12, 1964.

It was "agreed that there would be no public operations statement about armed reconnaissance in Laos unless a plane was lost. In such an event, the principals stated, the Government should continue to insist that we were merely escorting reconnaissance flights as requested by the Laotian government."

In public, the President has already been saying what the National Security Council suggested as a cover for the American bombing and strafing in Laos.

"Where the International Control Commission has been kept out, our airmen have been sent to look—and where they are fired on, they are ready to defend themselves. This armed reconnaissance can be ended tomorrow if those who are breaking the peace of Laos will simply keep their agreements. We specifically support full compliance by everyone with the Geneva accords of 1962 (which barred foreign forces in Laos)."—Mr. Johnson to press, June 23, 1964.

"In May, following new acts of Communist aggression in Laos, the United States undertook reconnaissance flights over Laotian territory, at the request of the Government of Laos . . . When the Communists attacked these aircraft, I responded by furnishing escort fighters with instructions to fire when fired upon . . ."—Mr. Johnson to Congress, Aug. 5, 1964.

CARRYING WAR TO NORTH

In one sense, the public discussion during 1964 and early 1965 over whether the United States would strike in some form directly against North Vietnam was academic. As the already published parts of the Pentagon study report, the United States had been mounting small scale, clandestine operations in North Vietnam since Feb. 1, 1964.

These attacks—commando raids from the sea, shelling of North Vietnamese coastal installations, parachuting sabotage and psychological warfare teams into North Vietnam—were conducted by South Vietnamese and Chinese Nationalists. But they were directed by the chief of the United States Military Assistance Command in Saigon, first Gen. Paul D. Harkins and then Gen. William Westmoreland.

In his memo to the President of Mar. 16, 1964, McNamara refers to it as "a very modest 'covert' program." The Joint Chiefs of Staff supplied the Defense and State Depart-

ments with a monthly schedule of specific, proposed targets for the secret groups.

Several of these operations preceded the attack on the American destroyers, Maddox and Turner Joy, that provided the occasion for Mr. Johnson's Tonkin Gulf resolution. On the night of July 30-Aug. 1, Vietnamese commandos under Gen. Westmoreland's direction struck two North Vietnamese islands. The Maddox was first attacked on Aug. 2. Two more covert assaults against North Vietnam were launched on Aug. 3, and, according to already published documents the Pentagon study, both the American destroyers were warned they were coming. The two U.S. ships were attacked on Aug. 4 and Mr. Johnson then asked Congress for his resolution.

On Aug. 6, McNamara held a press conference that sharply illustrated how public statements differed from private decisions. He was asked:

"Have there been any incidents that you know involving the South Vietnamese vessels and the North Vietnamese."

He answered:

"No. None that I know of, although I think that I should mention to you the South Vietnamese patrol activities that are carried on to prevent in the infiltration of men and material from the North into the South."

McNamara then went into a lengthy description of a South Vietnamese junk patrol, set up with American aid, to guard against infiltration. He acknowledged that these junks might have strayed above the 17th parallel, the boundary between North and South, and, in response to another question, said, "They operate on their own. They are part of the South Vietnamese Navy."

This was the literal truth. The junk patrol, according to knowledgeable former Naval officers, was part of the South Vietnamese Navy, not under American control and McNamara would not likely have any knowledge of its detailed operations.

But in context the original question, inadvertently or otherwise, referred to the covert operations that preceded the attacks on the destroyers. These clandestine raids were under American control and the Defense Department was told of them in advance. Thus, the Secretary answered factually something he was not asked—to avoid a direct answer or misstatement about the crucial matter on which he was asked.

Perhaps the trickiest question in this survey is the extent to which Johnson did or did not mislead the people about his intentions to bomb North Vietnam. The answer depends on a judgment as to precisely when Mr. Johnson and his advisors decided to carry out continuous air strikes against the North.

According to the already published materials, the unidentified Pentagon historian made a determination. He concludes that a consensus of key advisors was reached to bomb North Vietnam as early as September 1964. The historian finds documentary support for his position in the final paragraph of a National Security action memorandum from McGeorge Bundy, Presidential advisor on national security, to Secretaries McNamara and Rusk.

The already published memorandum reviews several Presidential decisions, including one to resume the covert operations temporarily halted by the Tonkin Gulf incidents, and concludes:

"These decisions are governed by a prevailing judgment that the first order of business at present is to take actions which will help to strengthen the fabric of the Government of South Vietnam; to the extent that the situation permits, such action should precede larger decisions. If such larger decisions are required at any time by a change in the situation, they will be taken." (emphasis added).

THE PENTAGON HISTORIAN

The Pentagon historian has equated "larger decisions" with the plans to bomb, something the text does not say. The cru-

cial word is the conditional "if." The historian apparently reads the sentence to mean that the "larger decisions" might be taken even before "the first order of business," strengthening the Saigon government, is completed. But, in any event, the "larger decisions" will be taken.

This, too, is a plausible reading.

But it could be argued with equal plausibility that the "if" is controlling, that the "larger decisions" have not been made but will be should a change in the situation require them.

Again, the unidentified Pentagon historian concludes that the "decision" to bomb was refined on Nov. 28 with the adoption of a plan for a two-phase approach—30 days of infrequent "reprisal" strikes followed by two to six months of sustained bombing.

But the already published "Draft Position Paper on Southeast Asia" of Nov. 29, summarizing the crucial meetings, uses conditional language. It talks of agreeing on a "determined action program" aimed at North Vietnamese activities in both South Vietnam and Laos. Under things to be done in the next 30 days, it speaks flatly of "US armed reconnaissance strikes in Laos" and South Vietnamese "and possible U.S. air strikes against the DRV [North Vietnam], as reprisals against any major or spectacular Viet Cong action in the South . . ." [emphasis added]

The "Draft Position Paper" continues:

"Thereafter . . . the U.S. is prepared—at a time to be determined—to enter into a second phase program . . . of graduated military pressures directed systematically against the DRV. Such a program would consist of progressively more serious air strikes . . ." [emphasis added].

Once again, it could be argued that this paper does not set forth firm conclusions but speaks to possibilities in a subjunctive mode.

Perhaps a close reading of the texts overlooks their context and ignores a bureaucratic affinity for fuzzy language. But the literal reading does raise some questions about the historian's conclusions.

THE DECISION TO BOMB

If the historian is right and the decision to bomb was taken, for all practical purposes, in early September, the President's campaign rhetoric was grossly misleading. Some samples follow:

"There are those who say you ought to go North and drop bombs, to try to wipe out the supply lines, and they think that would escalate the war. We don't want our American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. We don't want to get involved in a nation with 700 million people and get tied down in a land war in Asia."—Mr. Johnson at the Eufaula, Dam, Oklahoma, Sept. 25, 1964.

"Some of our people—Mr. Nixon, Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Scranton and Mr. Goldwater—have all, at some time or other, suggested the possible wisdom of going North in Vietnam. Well now, before you start attacking someone and you launch a big offensive, you better give some consideration to how you are going to protect what you have . . . As far as I am concerned, I want to be very cautious and careful, and use it only as a last resort when I start dropping bombs around that are likely to involve American boys in a war in Asia with 700 million Chinese.

"So just for the moment I have not thought we were ready for American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. What I have been trying to do, with the situation that I found, was to get the boys in Vietnam to do their own fighting with our advice and with our equipment. That is the course we are following. So we are not going North and drop bombs at this stage of the game . . ."—Mr. Johnson in Manchester, N.H., Sept. 28."

In any event, American bombing of North Vietnam began in February and reached its sustained tempo in March of 1965.

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The already published portions of the Pentagon study reveal comparatively little about the series of decisions that put American combat forces into a land war on the Asian mainland. As already noted, the Joint Chiefs, as far back as Jan., 1964, were recommending that the United States "make ready" to "commit additional US forces, as necessary, in support of the combat action within South Vietnam" and even "commit US forces as necessary in direct actions against North Vietnam."

By June, McNamara was ordering the Army to ready supplies in Thailand for possible combat operations by an American brigade.

The Marines didn't land until March, 1965, but their change in mission, to go on the offensive, was ordered within four weeks. The already published National Security Action memorandum of April 6 ordering the new mission, contains this language:

"The President desires that with respect to the actions in paragraphs 5 through 7 (dealing with the new Marine offensive mission and an increase in men), premature publicity be avoided by all possible precautions. The actions themselves should be taken as rapidly as practicable, but in ways that should minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy . . . The President's desire is that these movements and changes should be understood as being gradual and wholly consistent with existing policy.

This explains why the White House, on June 9, tried to blur the revelation made the day before at the State Department, a disclosure that all but gave the Marines' new show away.

THE SPRING OF 1965

In view of the fact that the decision to commit ground combat troops was not made until the spring of 1965, after the initial bombing assaults proved futile, Mr. Johnson's campaign rhetoric might fall under the heading of "bad prophecy" rather than "untruth."

On Oct. 2 in Akron, for example, he said:

"But we are not about to send American boys 9 or 10,000 miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves."

This was a line he repeated with minor variations throughout the campaign and the record indicates he believed what he said at the time.

By late July, 1965, the President was publicly announcing that the number of troops in Vietnam would be raised to 125,000 and Gen. Westmoreland had been given authority to embark on his "search and destroy" strategy. The Pentagon historian concludes that this "left the U.S. commitment to Vietnam open ended . . . Final acceptance of the desirability of inflicting defeat on the enemy rather than merely denying him victory opened the door to an indeterminate amount of additional force."

Mr. Johnson was asked about the big troop increases at his July 28 press conference. The dialogue went like this:

Question: Mr. President, does the fact that you are sending additional forces to Vietnam imply any change in the existing policy of relying mainly on the South Vietnamese operations and using American forces to guard American installations and to act as an emergency backup?

The President: It does not imply any change in policy whatever. It does not imply any change of objective.

Source: Boston Globe,
June 22, 1971.

**SECRET PENTAGON DOCUMENTS BARE JFK ROLE
IN VIETNAM WAR—KENNEDY OK'D COVERT
ACTION**

(By Robert Healy)

Gen. Maxwell Taylor in October of 1961 advised President Kennedy in an "eyes only for the President" cable to send 8000 man US military task force into South Vietnam but he warned that the introduction of such a force "may increase tensions and risk escalation into a major war in Asia."

Gen. Taylor was special adviser to President Kennedy on Vietnam.

At the time of the Taylor mission, which took him and Walt Rostow, later to be President Johnson's chief adviser on national security affairs, and a group of state and defense department officials to South Vietnam, the United States had about 1000 soldiers in South Vietnam. They served as advisers to the South Vietnamese Army.

President Kennedy stepped up covert actions against North Vietnam and increased the number of advisers to 10,000 men before he was assassinated in November of 1963. He never committed a United States ground unit as Taylor recommended.

These disclosures were made in a portion of a secret Pentagon study on the origins of the war in Vietnam started in 1967 by then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. They were made available to the Boston Globe yesterday.

For the first time the Globe was making public the role of the Kennedy administration in the escalation of the war. Three earlier reports dealing with other phases of the war were published by the New York Times and two by the Washington Post before publication was halted by court injunctions.

As early as May 11, 1961, President Kennedy, according to the secret report, had approved programs for covert action which had been recommended by a Vietnam Task Force. Among these actions were:

- (1) Dispatch of agents into North Vietnam.
- (2) Aerial resupply of agents in North Vietnam through the use of civilian mercenary air crews.
- (3) Infiltration of special South Vietnam forces into Southeast Laos to locate and attack Communist bases and lines of communication.
- (4) Formulation of "networks of resistance, covert bases and teams for sabotage and light harassment" inside North Vietnam.
- (5) Conduct of overflights of North Vietnam for the purpose of dropping leaflets.

These covert actions which were approved by President Kennedy were contained, according to the Pentagon study, in a National Security Action Memorandum number 52.

About the time that the cable was received by President Kennedy, the President, according to the Pentagon study, directed (among other measures that we "initiate guerrilla

ground action, including the use of US advisers if necessary" against Communist aerial resupply missions in the vicinity of Tchepone (Sepone, Laos).

"He also directed the Department of State to prepare to publish its White Paper on DRV (North Vietnam) responsibility for aggression in SVN (South Vietnam)," the study showed.

In the Pentagon study's evaluation of the two cables sent to President Kennedy by Taylor, it said that the impression Taylor's choice of language leaves is that the support forces "were essentially already agreed to by the President before Taylor left Washington, and consequently his detailed justification went only to the kind of forces on which a decision was yet to be made—that is, ground forces liable—to become involved in direct engagements with the Viet Cong."

In his first cable of the mission (Oct. 15 to Nov. 2, 1961) sent from Saigon, Taylor wrote the President and the top officials at State and Defense: "My view is that we should put in a task force consisting largely of logistical troops for the purpose of participating in flood relief and at the same time of providing a U.S. military presence in VN capable of assuring Diem (President Ngo Dinh Diem) of our readiness to join him in a military showdown with the Viet Cong or Viet Minh. To relate the introduction of these troops to the needs of flood relief seems to me to offer considerable advantages in VN and abroad. It gives a specific humanitarian task as the prime reason for the coming of our troops. . . ."

Despite the Taylor recommendations for a U.S. task force, there was no hint publicly at that time out of the White House that the President would go along.

Upon his return from Vietnam Taylor said to newsmen that President Diem had assets available "to prevail against the Communist threat."

President Kennedy on the subject of Vietnam and the Taylor mission at a press conference on Feb. 14, 1962, said that President Diem had asked for additional assistance. The administration, he said, had detailed the support which the Viet Minh in the North were giving to this Communist insurgent movement and we have increased our assistance there. And we are supplying logistical assistance, transportation assistance, training, and we have a number of Americans who are taking part in that effort."

Kennedy did not mention the Taylor recommendations for a U.S. task force or whether the United States was considering one.

TERROR AND CRISIS

Taylor in his cable to the President said that Viet Cong forces one tenth the size of the South Vietnamese Army regulars could create conditions of frustration and terror which was certain to lead to a political crisis.

In his list of specifics Taylor said that the US government should support the effort to stop the Viet Cong "with equipment and with military units and personnel to do those tasks which the Armed Forces of Vietnam cannot perform in time."

Taylor recommended the troop commitment despite full recognition of what he listed as disadvantages. Among these:

"A. The strategic reserve of US forces is presently so weak that we can ill afford any detachment of forces to a peripheral area of the Communist bloc where they will be pinned down for an uncertain duration.

"B. Although US prestige is already engaged in SVN, it will become more so by the sending of troops.

"C. If the first contingent is not enough to accomplish the necessary results, it will be difficult to resist the pressure to reinforce. If the ultimate result sought is the closing of the frontiers and the clean-up of the insurgents within SVN, there is no limit to our

possible commitment (unless we attack the source in Hanoi).

"D. The introduction of US forces may increase tensions and risk escalation into a major war in Asia."

But despite these disadvantages, Taylor said in the cable, the introduction of a military task force offers more advantages than it creates risks and difficulties.

"In fact," wrote Taylor, "I do not believe that our program to save Vietnam will succeed without it."

Gen. Taylor just last week opposed the publication of the Pentagon study. He called the New York Times disclosures "a practice of betrayal of government secrets."

Asked on a CBS news program how his position squared with the people's right to know, Gen. Taylor responded.

"I don't believe in that as a general principle. You have to talk about cases. What is a citizen going to do after reading these documents that he wouldn't have done otherwise? A citizen should know those things he needs to know to be a good citizen and discharge his functions, but not to get into secrets that damage his government and indirectly damage the citizen himself."

Sen. Edward Kennedy, President Kennedy's brother, said he was not certain what the Pentagon study contained with regard to his brother, but that he favored its publication.

TET OFFENSIVE TURNED JOHNSON TOWARD VIETNAMIZATION POLICY
(By Crocker Snow, Jr.)

When President Johnson in March 1968 announced publicly that he would not run for re-election, he was also deciding privately that a policy of Vietnamization was the best one for the nation to follow in the war.

The President's speech was also a denial of Gen. William C. Westmoreland's request for an increase of 206,000 American troops.

This change in the President's thinking toward the kind of policy President Nixon has since adopted is evidenced in the concluding portions of the secret Pentagon study viewing the decision-making of American military involvement in Vietnam.

It was March 31, 1968 that President Johnson made his famous peace initiative, in which he announced a limited bombing halt and only a small build-up of 24,500 American troops following the shock of the Tet Offensive two months earlier, and called for Britain and the Soviet Union to take the lead in achieving a peaceful settlement.

In this same speech, the President made an urgent plea for national unity, and took himself out of the 1968 presidential race with the words, "I shall not seek, and I will not accept..."

The focus of public attention centered on these latter two aspects of the speech.

But the day before, in a cable marked "Literally Eyes Only for the Ambassador or Charge" to the U.S. embassies in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Laos, the Philippines and South Korea, previewing the President's upcoming speech, the principal point, according to the Defense Department study, was:

"Major stress on importance of GVN (Government of Vietnam) and ARVN (Army of Republic of Vietnam) increased effectiveness, with our equipment and other support as first priority in our own actions."

This cable about which the ambassadors were directed to "see their respective heads of government," previewed what the President himself was to say publicly the next day.

Mr. Johnson led off by stating: "We shall accelerate the re-equipment of South Vietnam's armed forces in order to meet the enemy's increased firepower. This will enable them progressively to undertake a larger share of the combat operations against the Communist invaders."

The significance of this policy—largely unrecognized by the press or public at that time—was pointed out in the narrative written by a team of Pentagon writers to go along with their exhaustive study.

The very last sentences in the material made available to The Globe and known to be in the study itself in the section entitled "Epilogue", which concerns the effect of the Tet Offensive on US policies, reads:

"The possibility of military victory had seemingly become remote and the cost had become too high both in political and economic terms. Only then were our ultimate objectives brought out and reexamined. Only then was it realized that a clear-cut military victory was probably not possible or necessary, and that the road to peace would be at least as dependent upon South Vietnamese political developments as it would be on American arms.

"This realization, then, made it possible to limit the American military commitment to South Vietnam to achieve the objectives for which this force had originally been deployed. American forces would remain in South Vietnam to prevent defeat of the Government by Communist forces and to provide a shield behind which that Government could rally, become effective, and win the support of its people."

These concluding words of the Pentagon study, describing the final phase of Mr. Johnson's thinking on the war, have a sound similar to President Nixon's in his "Silent Majority" speech on Nov. 3, 1969, in which he said: "The primary mission of our troops is to enable the South Vietnamese forces to assume the full responsibility for the security of South Vietnam."

The two months between the Tet Offensive and President Johnson's notable speech to the nation are described in the Pentagon study as a time of conflicting counsel coming to the White House and revolving around a request from General William Westmoreland, then the US commander in Saigon, for 206,000 additional troops over the 525,000 ceiling that had previously been placed on American forces there.

The fireworks of the Tet Offensive had, it is clear from the Pentagon studies, shaken Washington's confidence in the eventual outcome of the war and kicked off what the writers describe as a "reassessment from A to Z".

The attacks had begun with the bombing of the United States Embassy on January 31, 1968, and, according to the analyst, "although it had been predicted, took the US Command and the US public by surprise, and its strength, length and intensity prolonged this shock."

One of the first official reassessments following Tet was undertaken by the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the direction of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

The Pentagon study describes the Joint Chiefs recommendations and concludes that "for perhaps the first time in the history of American involvement in Vietnam, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended against deploying the additional forces requested by the field commander, in the absence of other steps to reconstitute the strategic reserve."

"At long last," reads the report, the resources were beginning to be drawn too thin, the assets became unavailable, the support base too small."

In considering the different possible contingencies surrounding calls for new troops in Vietnam, the Joint Chiefs had, according to the writer, considered "the possibility of widespread civil disorder in the United States" and concluded that "sufficient forces would still be available for civil disorder control."

The Joint Chiefs' consideration of possible civil disorder indicates as well as anything in the documents the growing disaffection of major portions of the popula-

tion with government policies in Vietnam by early 1968.

On March 12 and 13, Secretary of State Dean Rusk appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was questioned about the war.

The Pentagon document points out that Rusk "even came under criticism from one of the few Administration supporters on the Committee, Sen. Karl E. Mundt (R-S.D.)."

"You are as aware as we are that the shift of opinion in this country is in the wrong direction," Sen. Mundt is quoted as telling the Secretary of State. "Something more convincing has to come from the Administration as to what this is all about 'to match' the sacrifices we are making."

What is not specifically mentioned in the documents, but what must have had an effect too on President Johnson's sense of the mood of the country was the big showing for Sen. Eugene McCarthy (D-Minn.) running as a peace candidate in the Democratic presidential primary in New Hampshire.

Just two weeks earlier, on March 1, the President had sworn in Clark Clifford as secretary of defense.

Clifford, according to the Pentagon study, was under mandate from the President to conduct "a complete and searching reassessment of the entire US strategy and commitment in South Vietnam."

Even before he officially took office, Clifford set up a special group to help with this reassessment, consisting of Secretary McNamara; Gen. Maxwell Taylor; Paul Nitze, special adviser to McNamara; Henry Fowler of the Treasury; Nicholas Katzenbach, No. 3 man in the State Department; Walt W. Rostow, presidential adviser; Richard Helms of the CIA; William Bundy, assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs; Paul Warnke of the Defense Dept.; and Philip Habib of the State Dept.

Gen. Earle Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, had in addition been sent to Saigon on Feb. 23 and reported directly to the President four days later.

An intense period of discussion, debate and memo-writing among these individuals and various agencies of the government was carried out through the last week of February and the early days of March.

Memoranda were submitted by the ISA (International Security Affairs division of the Defense Department) and CIA on various military and political projections of the war under different circumstances.

An assistant secretary of defense for public affairs Phil Goulding prepared a paper entitled "Possible Public Reactions to Various Alternatives." In this, he considered five options with the first, and in his terms worst, one being "increased mobilization and deployment moves without other new actions."

Such an option, he wrote, "will make the doves unhappy because we become more and more enmeshed in the war. They will make the hawks unhappy, because we still will be withholding our military strength, particularly in the North. And the middle-of-the-roads who basically support the President out of conviction or patriotism will be unhappy because they will see the ante going up in many ways and still will not be given a victory date, a progress report they can believe or an argument they can accept that all of this is in the national interest."

Goulding ran through other options from a public affairs standpoint and recommended one which he describes as "denial of Gen. Westmoreland's request and a change in strategy in South Vietnam."

"While this does not necessarily show progress," he writes, "it does show change. It does show the search for new approaches. . . . It would prevent the middle-of-the-roads from joining the doves."

The Pentagon writer who compiled the narrative of this concluding part of the study acknowledges that "there is of course no way

of knowing how much consideration and weight were given to each of these papers by the small group of action officers in the Pentagon. . . ."

The net result of this governmental "reassessment from A to Z in the spring of 1968 is described in the narrative part of the Pentagon study as "similar to all previous requests for reinforcement in Vietnam."

"The litany was familiar," wrote the analyst. "We will furnish what we can presently furnish without disrupting the normal political and economic life of the nation, while we study the situation as it develops."

But the Pentagon study documents how the new defense secretary, Clifford, took this familiar litany a step further.

In a draft memorandum for the President dated March 4, 1968, Clifford recommends new deployments of 22,000 of the 206,000 men which Gen. Westmoreland had requested by the end of the year.

His second paragraph of recommendations called for: "Either through Ambassador Bunker or through an early visit by Secretary Clifford, a highly forceful approach to the GVN (Thieu and Ky) to get certain key commitments for improvement, tied to our own increased effort and to increased US support for the ARVN. . . ."

Clifford is described as recommending early approval of a call-up of reserves, a wait-and-see attitude about Gen. Westmoreland's full request, no new peace initiative but a restatement of the old, "a general decision on bombing policy not excluding future change," and an in-depth study of "possible new political and strategic guidance for the conduct of US operations in South Vietnam. . . ."

The Pentagon analyst writes that "from the 4th of March (when Clifford's recommendations were submitted) until the final presidential decision was announced, the written record becomes sparse. The debate within the Administration was argued and carried forward on a personal basis by the officials involved, primarily, the secretary of Defense and the secretary of State."

One further important input was to influence the President at this critical juncture, according to the documents.

On March 18, Mr. Johnson summoned what is described as "a group of his friends and confidants" to Washington to hear the options and help advise him. Those present were former undersecretary of state George Ball; Arthur Dean, a Republican New York lawyer who was a Korean war negotiator during the Eisenhower Administration; Dean Acheson, former President Truman's secretary of state; Gen. Matthew B. Ridgeway, the retired commander of the UN troops in Korea; Gen. Maxwell Taylor, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Cyrus Vance, former deputy defense secretary; McGeorge Bundy, Ford Foundation president who had been special assistant for national security affairs to Mr. Johnson, and former President Kennedy; former Treasury Secretary C. Douglas Dillon and Gen. Omar Bradley.

The group met over dinner with Secretary of State Rusk; Defense Secretary Clifford; Ambassador Harriman; Walt W. Rostow, the President's special assistant for national security affairs; Richard Helms, director of the Central Intelligence Agency; Paul Nitze, deputy defense secretary; Nicholas Katzenbach, undersecretary of state; and William P. Bundy, assistant secretary of state for Far East.

As described in the Pentagon study, both groups were briefed separately by three men, Habib, Maj. Gen. William E. DePuy, a special assistant to the Joint Chiefs for counterinsurgency, and George Carver, a CIA analyst.

The following day, the group from outside the government joined President Johnson for lunch and, according to the writer, surprised the President with a Recommendation to "forget about seeking a battlefield

solution to the problem and instead intensify efforts to seek a political solution at the negotiating table."

As a result of the difference between these conclusions and those of his government aides, both drawn from essentially the same briefings, the President is reported to have had midnight evening sessions with the same three men in order to draw his own conclusions.

The reports from this are drawn by the Pentagon study and directly credited by the Pentagon writer to a news report by diplomatic writer Stuart Loory of the Los Angeles Times.

Earlier in the narration of this period, the documents credit an article written by Neil Sheehan and Hedrick Smith and published on March 10 in the New York Times as being a "Startling accurate account of the big issues and intra-governmental debate which the President was listening to."

Throughout the month of March, the writer describes the President as "troubled . . . in public he continued to indicate firmness and resoluteness, but press leaks and public criticism continued to compound his problem."

Thus was the stage set for Mr. Johnson's famous speech which comprises a separate chapter in the Pentagon narrative entitled "I Shall Not Seek, and I Will Not Accept."

In the narrative's brief epilogue to this period, the writer concluded with the mention of a response from Hanoi on April 3, 1968 in which, as President Johnson publicly described it, "The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam declares its readiness to appoint its representatives to contact the US representative with a view to determining with the American side the unconditional cessation of the US bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam so that talks may start."

President Johnson then repeated his statement of three days earlier, "Now, as in the past, the United States is ready to send its representatives to any forum, at any time, to discuss the means of bringing this war to an end."

Concluding this aspect of the 47-volume Defense Department study tracing American involvement in Vietnam from 1954, the Pentagon writer states: "For a policy from which so little was expected a great deal was initiated. The North Vietnamese and Americans sat down at the conference table in Paris to begin to travel the long road to peace; the issue of Vietnam was largely removed from American political discord; a limit to the commitment of US forces was established, and the South Vietnamese were put on notice that, with our help, they would be expected to do more in their own defense."

ADMIRAL SOUGHT NUCLEAR OPTION

(By Matthew V. Storin)

Unpublished portions of the 47 * * * Vietnam war were made available yesterday to the Boston Globe.

The Globe is the third US newspaper to report on the 7000 page analysis tracing America's growing involvement in Indochina from World War II through mid-1968.

According to the documents made available to the Globe:

—Gen. Maxwell Taylor advised President Kennedy in 1961 to send 8000 American combat troops into Vietnam but warned the move could lead to increased world tensions and a wider war. There were 1000 US troops in Vietnam at that time.

—As soon as President Johnson announced a partial end to the bombing of North Vietnam on March 31, 1968, he elected to proceed with a policy of Vietnamization similar to that later followed by President Nixon.

—On June 2, 1964, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in a meeting of top

Administration officials in Honolulu discussed the possible use of nuclear weapons in Vietnam. Adm. Harry D. Felt, commander of US forces in the Pacific, openly advocated that American commanders be given this option.

—The Soviet Union, fearing reaction from Communist China, rejected a plea by the United States in May, 1965, that Hanoi be informed that a bombing pause was being undertaken in hopes of prompting negotiations to end the war.

The massive Pentagon study, initiated by Secretary McNamara in June, 1967, was the work of more than 30 authors both inside and outside of government. The first report of the study was published June 13 by the New York Times. The Washington Post began printing reports on June 18.

Yesterday Federal appeals courts in New York and Washington continued their respective temporary bans against publication of further reports by the Times and the Post.

Both courts scheduled further hearings today. Lower Federal courts in both cities had previously ruled in favor of the newspapers but the decisions were appealed by the Justice Department.

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New York ruled that its eight-member bench would hear the case today. Chief Judge Henry Friendly summoned colleagues from Vermont and Connecticut.

The Times, which had printed three articles on the Pentagon history, was enjoined from printing further reports until after the hearing set for 2 p.m. It was expected that a ruling from the court could not come before tomorrow.

In Washington, the Circuit Court of Appeals overruled Federal District Court Judge Gerhard Gesell for a second time after he said the Post could resume its reports.

Gesell, who was first overruled on Friday, said yesterday the government had made an earnest and responsible plea to stop publication on the basis of national security but had not proved its case.

"The government has failed to meet its burden, and without that burden being met, the first Amendment remains supreme," Gesell said.

Gesell, who heard most of yesterday's arguments by the Post and the government behind closed doors, said the only case that could be made against publication would be to show that it would possibly bring on war, threaten foreign relations or create other situations of major importance to national security.

The Justice Department immediately went to the appeals court to protest Gesell's ruling. The higher court then ruled the Post could not publish until the government's arguments were heard this afternoon.

The ruling was made by the entire nine-judge court headed by David L. Bazelon.

In both the Times and Post cases, the next step would be appeals to the Supreme Court. These are expected regardless of which side wins in the appeals courts.

Lawyers in both cases are expected to rush proceedings in order to put the issue before the Supreme Court by Friday. The high court is scheduled to begin its summer recess this weekend.

Meanwhile the FBI was reported to have found two locations in Cambridge where copies of the Pentagon study had been reproduced.

In Washington, Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield said the documents printed by the Times and Post raised grave questions about the manner in which US foreign policy is carried out.

He told the Senate that the study confirms the complaints of war critics that the US policy in Vietnam was made without participation by the Congress.

"In short," he said, "We have arrived at where we are in Vietnam not by party

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processes but by government processes."

Mansfield urged, however, that the issue of the Pentagon documents now be kept out of partisan politics. It would only "compound the tragedy," he said.

In a brief filed in the Times case yesterday, the American Civil Liberties Union, acting for itself and 27 congressmen, argued: "It is utterly disrespectful to the First Amendment to censor a publication solely on the basis of generalized allegations that were proffered in this case."

GENERAL TAYLOR'S VIETNAM CABLES TO KENNEDY

TERMS USED IN PENTAGON TEXTS

ARVN—Army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam.
 CHICOM—Chinese Communists.
 CINCPAC—Commander-in-chief, Pacific.
 DRV—Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam.
 GVN—Government of (South) Vietnam.
 JCS—Joint Chiefs of Staff.
 MAAC—Military Assistance Advisory Command.
 MACV—Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.
 RD—Revolutionary Development Program.
 RVNAF—Republic of (South) Vietnam Air Force.
 SEA—Southeast Asia.
 SVN—South Vietnam.
 USC—United States Government.
 VC—Viet Cong.

Cablegram from General Maxwell D. Taylor in Saigon in late October, 1961, to President Kennedy, on the question of introducing US military forces into Vietnam.

My view is that we should put in a task force consisting largely of logistical troops for the purpose of participating in flood relief and at the same time of providing a US military presence in VN capable of assuring Diem of our readiness to join him in a military showdown with the Viet Cong or Viet Minh. To relate the introduction of these troops to the needs of flood relief seems to me to offer considerable advantages in VN and abroad. It gives a specific humanitarian task as the prime reason for the coming of our troops and avoids any suggestion that we are taking over responsibility for the security of the country. As the task is a specific one, we can extricate our troops when it is done if we so desire. Alternatively, we can phase them into other activities if we wish to remain longer.

The strength of the force I have in mind on the order of 6-8000 troops. Its initial composition should be worked out here after study of the possible requirements and conditions for its use and subsequent modifications made with experience.

In addition to the logistical component, it will be necessary to include some combat troops for the protection of logistical operations and the defense of the area occupied by US forces. Any troops coming to VN may expect to take casualties.

Needless to say, this kind of task force will exercise little direct influence on the campaign against the VC. It will, however, give a much needed shot in the arm to national morale, particularly if combined with other actions showing that a more effective working relationship in the common cause has been established between the GVN and the U.S.

A second cablegram from General Taylor to President Kennedy in October, 1961, sent from the Philippines.

1. Transmitted herewith are a summary of the fundamental conclusions of my group and my personal recommendations in response to the letter of the President to me dated 13 October 1961.

2. It is concluded that:

(a) Communist strategy aims to gain control of Southeast Asia by methods of sub-

version and guerrilla war which by-pass conventional U.S. and indigenous strength on the ground. The interim Communist goal—en route to total take-over—appears to be a neutral Southeast Asia, detached from U.S. protection. This strategy is well on the way to success in Vietnam.

(b) In Vietnam (and Southeast Asia) there is a double crisis in confidence: doubt that U.S. is determined to save Southeast Asia; doubt that Diem's methods can frustrate and defeat Communist purposes and methods. The Vietnamese (and Southeast Asians) will undoubtedly draw—rightly or wrongly—definitive conclusions in coming weeks and months concerning the probable outcome and will adjust their behavior accordingly. What the U.S. does or fails to do will be decisive to the end result.

(c) Aside from the morale factor, the Vietnamese Government is caught in interlocking circles of bad tactics and bad administrative arrangements which pin their forces on the defensive in ways which permit a relatively small Viet-Cong force (about one-tenth the size of the GVN regulars) to create conditions of frustration and terror certain to lead to a political crisis, if a positive turning point is not soon achieved. The following recommendations are designed to achieve that favorable turn, to avoid a further deterioration in the situation in South Vietnam, and eventually to contain and eliminate the threat to its independence.

3. It is recommended:

GENERAL

(a) That upon request from the Government of Vietnam (GVN) to come to its aid in resisting the increasing aggressions of the Viet-Cong and in repairing the ravages of the Delta flood which, in combination, threaten the lives of its citizens and the security of the country, the US Government offer to join the GVN in a massive joint effort as a part of a total mobilization of GVN resources to cope with both the Viet-Cong (VC) and the ravages of the flood. The US representatives will participate actively in this effort, particularly in the fields of government administration, military plans and operations, intelligence, and flood relief, going beyond the advisory role which they have observed in the past.

SPECIFIC

(b) That in support of the foregoing broad commitment to a joint effort with Diem, the following specific measures be undertaken:

(1) The US Government will be prepared to provide individual administrators for insertion into the governmental machinery of South Vietnam in types and numbers to be worked out with President Diem.

(2) A joint effort will be made to improve the military-political intelligence system beginning at the provincial level and extending upward through the government and armed forces to the Central Intelligence Organization.

(3) The US Government will engage in a joint survey of the conditions in the provinces to assess the social, political, intelligence, and military factors bearing on the prosecution of the counter-insurgency in order to reach a common estimate of these factors and a common determination of how to deal with them. As this survey will consume time, it should not hold back the immediate actions which are clearly needed regardless of its outcome.

(4) A joint effort will be made to free the Army for mobile, offensive operations. This effort will be based upon improving the training and equipping of the Civil Guard and the Self-Defense Corps, relieving the regular Army of static missions, raising the level of the mobility of Army Forces by the provision of considerably more helicopters and light aviation, and organizing a Border Ranger Force for a long-term campaign on

the Laotian border against the Viet-Cong infiltrators. The US Government will support this effort with equipment and with military units and personnel to do those tasks which the Armed Forces of Vietnam cannot perform in time. Such tasks include air reconnaissance and photography, airlift (beyond the present capacity of SVN forces), special intelligence, and air-ground support techniques.

(5) The US Government will assist the GVN in effecting surveillance and control over the coastal waters and inland waterways, furnishing such advisors, operating personnel and small craft as may be necessary for quick and effective operations.

(6) The MAAG, Vietnam, will be reorganized and increased in size as may be necessary by the implementation of these recommendations.

(7) The US government will offer to introduce into South Vietnam a military task force to operate under US control for the following purposes:

(a) Provide a US military presence capable of raising national morale and of showing to Southeast Asia the seriousness of the US intent to resist a Communist takeover.

(b) Conduct logistical operations in support of military and flood relief operations.

(c) Conduct such combat operations as are necessary for self-defense and for the security of the area in which they are stationed.

(d) Provide an emergency reserve to back up the armed forces of the GVN in the case of a heightened military crisis.

(e) Act as an advance party of such additional forces as may be introduced if CINCPAC or SEATO contingency plans are invoked.

(8) The US government will review its economic aid program to take into account the needs of flood relief and to give priority to those projects in support of the expanded counter-insurgency program.

A third cablegram from General Taylor to President Kennedy in October, 1961, also sent from the Philippines.

This message is for the purpose of presenting my reasons for recommending the introduction of a US military force into South Vietnam (SVN). I have reached the conclusion that this is an essential action if we are to reverse the present downward trend of events in spite of a full recognition of the following disadvantages:

(a) The strategic reserve of US forces is presently so weak that we can ill afford any detachment of forces to a peripheral area of the Communist bloc where they will be pinned down for an uncertain duration.

(b) Although US prestige is already engaged in SVN, it will become more so by the sending of troops.

(c) If the first contingent is not enough to accomplish the necessary results, it will be difficult to resist the pressure to reinforce. If the ultimate result sought is the closing of the frontiers and the clean-up of the insurgents within SVN, there is no limit to our possible commitment (unless we attack the source in Hanoi).

(d) The introduction of US forces may increase tensions and risk escalation into a major war in Asia. On the other side of the argument, there can be no action so convincing of US seriousness of purpose and hence so reassuring to the people and Government of SVN and to our other friends and allies in SEA as the introduction of US forces into SVN. The views of indigenous and US officials consulted on our trip were unanimous on this point. The size of the US force introduced need not be great to provide the military presence necessary to produce the desired effect on national morale in SVN and on international opinion. A bare token, however, will not suffice; it must have a significant value. The kinds of tasks which it might undertake which would have a significant value are:

(a) Provide a US military presence capable of raising national morale and of showing to Southeast Asia the seriousness of the US intent to resist a Communist takeover.

(b) Conduct logistical operations in support of military and flood relief operations.

(c) Conduct such combat operations as are necessary for self-defense and for the security of the area in which they are stationed.

(d) Provide an emergency reserve to back up the Armed Forces of the GVN in the case of a heightened military crisis.

(e) Act as an advance party of such additional forces as may be introduced if CINCPAC or SEATO contingency plans are invoked.

It is noteworthy that this force is not proposed to clear the jungles and forests of Viet Cong guerrillas. That should be the primary task of the Armed Forces of Vietnam for which they should be specifically organized, trained, and stiffened with ample US advisors down to combat battalion levels. However, the U.S. troops may be called upon to engage in combat to protect themselves, their working parties, and the area in which they live. As a general reserve, they might be thrown into action (with US agreement) against large, formed guerrilla bands which have abandoned the forests for attacks on major targets. But in general, our forces should not engage in small-scale guerrilla operations in the jungle.

As an area for the operations of US troops, SVN is not an excessively difficult or unpleasant place to operate. While the border areas are rugged and heavily forested, the terrain is comparable to parts of Korea where US troops learned to live and work without too much effort. However, these border areas, for reasons stated above, are not the places to engage our forces. In the High Plateau and in the coastal plain where US troops would probably be stationed, these jungle-forest conditions do not exist to any great extent. The most unpleasant feature in the coastal areas would be the heat and, in the Delta, the mud left behind by the flood. The High Plateau offers no particular obstacle to the stationing of US troops.

The extent to which the Task Force would engage in flood relief activities in the Delta will depend upon further study of the problem there. As reported in Saigon 537, I see considerable advantages in playing up this aspect of the Task Force mission. I am presently inclined to favor a dual mission, initially help to the flood area and subsequently use in any other area of SVN where its resources can be used effectively to give tangible support in the struggle against the Viet Cong. However, the possibility of emphasizing the humanitarian mission will wane if we wait long in moving in our forces or in linking our stated purpose with the emergency conditions created by the flood.

The risks of backing into a major Asian war by way of SVN are present but are not impressive. NVN is extremely vulnerable to conventional bombing, a weakness which should be exploited diplomatically in convincing Hanoi to lay off SVN. Both the DRV and the Chicomos would face severe logistical difficulties in trying to maintain strong forces in the field in SEA, difficulties which we share but by no means to the same degree. There is no case for fearing a mass onslaught of Communist manpower into SVN and its neighboring states, particularly if our airpower is allowed a free hand against logistical targets. Finally, the starvation conditions in . . . leaders there from being militarily venturesome for some time to come.

By the foregoing line of reasoning, I have reached the conclusion that the introduction of a US military task force without delay offers definitely more advantage than it creates risks and difficulties. In fact, I do not believe that our program to save SVN will

succeed without it. If the concept is approved, the exact size and composition of the force should be determined by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the JCS, the chief MAAG and CINCPAC. My own feel . . . ponderant number would be in logical-type units. After acquiring experience in operating in SVN, this initial force will require reorganization and adjustment to the local scene.

As CINCPAC will point out, any forces committed to SVN will need to be replaced by additional forces to his area from the strategic reserve in the US. Also, any troops to SVN are in addition to those which may be required to execute SEATO Plan 5 in Laos. Both facts should be taken into account in current considerations of the FY 1963 budget which bear upon the permanent increase which should be made in the US military establishment to maintain our strategic position for the long pull.

REPORT ON TET OFFENSIVE

(NOTE.—Excerpts from a report by General Earle G. Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, summarizing his findings after a visit to South Vietnam immediately following the Tet Offensive in 1968. The report is dated February 27, 1968.)

SUMMARY

The current situation in Vietnam is still developing and fraught with opportunities as well as dangers.

There is no question in the mind of MACV that the enemy went all out for a general offensive and general uprising and apparently believed that he would succeed in bringing the war to an early, successful conclusion.

The enemy failed to achieve his initial objective but is continuing his effort. Although many of his units were badly hurt, the judgment is that he has the will and the capability to continue.

Enemy losses have been heavy; he has failed to achieve his prime objectives of mass uprisings and capture of a large number of the capital cities and towns. Morale in enemy units which were badly mauled or where the men were oversold the idea of a decisive victory at TET probably has suffered severely. However, with replacements, his indoctrination system would seem capable of maintaining morale at a generally adequate level. His determination appears to be unshaken.

The enemy is operating with relative freedom in the countryside, probably recruiting heavily and no doubt infiltrating NVA units and personnel. His recovery is likely to be rapid; his supplies are adequate; and he is trying to maintain the momentum of his winter-spring offensive.

The structure of the GVN held up, but its effectiveness has suffered.

The RVNAF held up against the initial assault with gratifying, and in a way surprising strength and fortitude. However, ARVN is now in a defensive posture around towns and cities and there is concern about how well they will bear up under sustained pressure.

The initial attack nearly succeeded in a dozen places, and defeat in those places was only averted by the timely reaction of US forces. In short, it was a very near thing.

There is no doubt that RD Program has suffered a severe set back.

US forces have lost none of their pre-TET capability. . . .

The Situation as It Stands Today: Enemy Capabilities

The enemy has been hurt badly in the populated lowlands, but is practically intact elsewhere. He committed over 67,000 combat maneuver forces plus perhaps 25% or 17,000 more impressed men and boys, for a total of about 84,000. He lost 40,000 killed, at least 3000 captured, and perhaps 6000 disabled or died of wounds. He had peaked his force total to about 240,000 just before TET, by hard

recruiting, infiltration, civilian impressment, and drawdowns on service and guerrilla personnel. So he has lost about one fifth of his total strength. About two-thirds of his trained, organized unit strength can continue offensive action. He is probably infiltrating and recruiting heavily in the countryside while allied forces are securing the urban areas.

The enemy has adequate munitions, stockpiled in-country and available through the DMZ, Laos, and Cambodia, to support major attacks and countryside pressure; food procurement may be a problem. Besides strength losses, the enemy now has morale and training problems which currently limit combat effectiveness of VC guerrilla, main and local forces. . . .

GVN STRENGTH AND EFFECTIVENESS

(1) Psychological—The people in South Vietnam were handed a psychological blow, particularly in the urban areas where the feeling of security had been strong. There is a fear of further attacks.

(2) The structure of the Government was not shattered and continues to function but at greatly reduced effectiveness.

(3) In many places, the RD program has been set back badly. In other places the program was untouched in the initial stage of the offensive. MACV reports that of the 555 RD cadre groups, 278 remain in hamlets, 245 are in district and province towns on security duty, while 32 are unaccounted for. It is not clear as to when, or even whether, it will be possible to return to the RD program in its earlier form. As long as the VC prowl the countryside, it will be impossible. In many places, even to tell exactly what has happened to the program.

(4) Refugees—An additional 470,000 refugees were generated during the offensive. The problem of caring for refugees is part of the larger problem of reconstruction in the cities and towns. It is anticipated that the care and reestablishment of the 250,000 persons or 50,000 family units who have lost their homes will require from GVN sources the expenditure of 500 million piasters for their temporary care and resettlement plus an estimated 30,000 metric tons of rice. . . .

U.S. STRATEGY

MACV believes that the central thrust of our strategy now must be to defeat the enemy offensive and that if this is done well, the situation overall will be greatly improved over the pre-TET condition.

MACV accepts the fact that its first priority must be the security of Government of Vietnam in Saigon and provincial capitals. MACV describes its objectives as . . .

(1) Security of Cities and Government. MACV recognizes that US forces will be required to reinforce and support RVNAF in the security of cities, towns and government structure. At this time, 10 US battalions are operating in the environs of Saigon. It is clear that this task will absorb a substantial portion of US forces.

(2) Security in the Countryside. To a large extent the VC now control the countryside. Most of the 54 battalions formerly providing security for pacification are now defending district or province towns. MACV estimates that US forces will be required in a number of places to assist and encourage the Vietnamese Army to leave the cities and towns and reenter the country. This is especially true in the Delta.

(3) Defense of the borders, the DMZ and the northern provinces. MACV considers that it must meet the enemy threat in I Corps and has already deployed there slightly over 50% of all US maneuver battalions. US forces have been thinned out in the highlands, notwithstanding an expected enemy offensive in the early future.

(4) Offensive Operations. Coupling the increased requirement for the defense of the

cities and subsequent reentry into the rural areas, and the heavy requirement for defense of the I Corps. MACV does not have adequate forces at this time to resume the offensive in the remainder of the country, not does it have adequate reserves against the contingency of simultaneous large-scale enemy offensive action throughout the country.

(5) Force Requirements. Forces currently assigned to MACV . . . are inadequate in numbers and balance to carry out the strategy and to accomplish the tasks described above in the proper priority. To contend with, and defeat, the new enemy threat, MACV has stated requirements for forces over the 625,000 ceiling imposed by program Five. The add-on requested totals 206,758 spaces for a new proposed ceiling of 731,758, with all forces being deployed into country by the end of CY 68.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

We see the enemy pursuing a reinforced offensive to enlarge his control throughout the country and keep pressures on the government and allies. We expect him to maintain strong threats in the DMZ area, at Khe Sanh, in the highlands, and at Saigon, and to attack in force when conditions seem favorable. He is likely to try to gain control of the country's northern provinces. He will continue efforts to encircle cities and province capitals to isolate and disrupt normal activities, and infiltrate them to create chaos. He will seek maximum attrition of RVNAF elements. Against US forces, he will emphasize attacks by fire on airfields and installations, using assaults and ambushes selectively. His central objective continues to be the destruction of the Government of SVN and its armed forces. As a minimum he hopes to seize sufficient territory and gain control of enough people to support establishment of the groups and committees he proposes for participation in an NLF dominated government.

SOVIETS REFUSED TO CARRY PEACE FEELER TO HANOI

(By Darius S. Jhabvala)

The Soviet Union, evidently concerned about adverse reactions from Communist China, refused to assist the United States in getting across a message to Hanoi in 1965. The message, first mentioned by Secretary of State Dean Rusk to Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, was sent to Foy Kohler, the US ambassador in Moscow, for transmission to the North Vietnamese Embassy and to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. It informed the Communist side that "for a period beginning at noon, Washington time, Wednesday, May 12, and running into the next week," there were to be no air attacks on North Vietnam.

This decision was reached after there were "repeated suggestions from various quarters . . . that there could be no progress towards peace while there were air attacks."

However, the message clearly pointed out that the United States "will be very watchful to see whether in this period of pause there are any significant reductions in such armed actions by such (North Vietnamese—Viet Cong) forces." The North Vietnamese Embassy formally refused to accept the message which was delivered by a special messenger. But when Kohler sought the cooperation of the Russians at a face-to-face meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Nikolai P. Firyubin, he was told: "I am not a postman." According to a message from Kohler to the State Department, Firyubin added that the United States "could find our own ways of transmitting messages."

An extensive and detailed report of the American effort to involve the Russians in what then appeared as a peacemaking mission is part of the Defense Department's history of the Vietnam war that is now available to *The Boston Globe*.

The report reveals the details of the message Washington wished to get across to Hanoi via Moscow, instructions for Kohler, the gist of Rusk's conversation with Dobrynin and a somewhat lengthy appraisal by Kohler of the Soviet attitude.

Despite the refusal to accept the American message, Kohler seemed confident that Hanoi had received word but refused to respond as Washington had desired.

According to the Defense Department's documents, Kohler was instructed to emphasize that the bombing pause should not be misunderstood "as an indication of weakness" and "it would be necessary to demonstrate more clearly than ever, after the pause ended, that the US is determined not to accept aggression without reply in Vietnam."

"Moreover, the United States must point out that the decision to end air attacks for this limited trial period is one which it must be free to reverse if at any time in the coming days there should be actions by the other side in Vietnam which required immediate reply," the message to Kohler added.

When Rusk explained the substance of the message to Dobrynin, the latter "noted we were merely informing the Soviets." Accordingly, Rusk's report points out, he "was clearly relieved we are not asking them to act as intermediary."

"Dobrynin said he thought we could get some answer but could not predict what," Rusk informed Kohler. Kohler, upon receiving the secretary's instructions, directed an aide to phone the North Vietnamese embassy to request an urgent appointment, but he was turned down because of the lack of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Kohler asked Washington for further instructions. He was told to approach the Soviet Foreign Ministry and to transmit the message by letter to Hanoi's embassy, but the letter was returned the following morning (May 13) "in a plain envelope addressed simply Embassy of USA."

At his meeting with Firyubin, Kohler was told that the Russians viewed the communication "as based on an erroneous conception on which the US has proceeded."

"Firyubin could only view the communication as repetition of the threat against the DRV (Democratic Republic of Vietnam—North Vietnam)—now a threat of renewed and expanded aggression. This was the only way he could interpret the reference to the risk that a suspension of the attacks involved. Obviously we are suffering from a gross misunderstanding if we think that such aggression will go unpunished, without response," Kohler reported Firyubin had implied.

After the oral exchange, Firyubin said flatly, according to the Kohler advisory, "the Soviet government will not transmit the US government's message to the DRV, that the DRV had not requested the service and that it was the US responsibility to find a convenient way of passing the message."

After further reflection on his meeting with Firyubin, Kohler sent a follow-up message to Washington in which he sought to present the Soviet position "with some sympathy and to promote an understanding of the Soviet rebuff."

"On the one hand, I was annoyed at the apparent Soviet rebuff of an effort to take heat out of admittedly dangerous situation in Southeast Asia and impatient with the flimsy rationale for Soviet refusal offered by Firyubin. On the other hand, I could understand, if not sympathize with, Soviet sensitivity, given Chicom (Chinese Communist) eagerness to adduce proof of their charges of collusion against Soviets and, frankly, given rather strenuous nature of the document they were being asked to transmit to DRV," Kohler messaged Washington. He went on to add his hope that "we would not regard Firyubin's reaction . . . as evidence of conscious hardening of Soviet attitude."

"It may be a reflection of the blind the Soviets find themselves in at the moment," he added.

Kohler, aware that the State Department was then trying to send the same message via the British consul in Hanoi, proposed "a shorter and revised wording."

"If cast in present form, I think we are simply inviting rebuff and Exercise-Hanoi would prove as fruitless as our effort in Moscow," he argued. Kohler was overruled and the second delivery was returned, ostensibly unopened.

CIA PLAYED DOWN U.S. DOMINO THEORY AT HONOLULU PARLEY (By Darius S. Jhabvala)

A key Johnson administration military advisor had proposed in 1964 that tactical nuclear weapons would have to be deployed if Communist Chinese forces entered the ground war in Vietnam. Admiral Harry D. Felt, then the commander in chief of the Pacific forces, emphatically demanded also that commanders be given the freedom to use such weapons "as had been assumed under various plans."

This question, among others, was discussed among his top advisers at the Honolulu conference, June 1-2, 1964.

Following the meeting, President Johnson asked his advisers the basic question: "Would the rest of Southeast Asia necessarily fall if Laos and South Vietnam came under North Vietnamese control?"

On June 9, the Board of National Estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency, provided a response, stating:

"With the possible exception of Cambodia, it is likely that no nation in the area would quickly succumb to Communism as a result of the fall of Laos and South Vietnam. Furthermore, a continuation of the spread of Communism in the area would not be inexorable and any spread which did occur would take time—time in which the total situation might change in any number of ways unfavorable to the Communist cause."

These and other details are part of the on Vietnam study that was made for Defense Department.

The State Department approached the Honolulu conference "with a basic assumption," namely "our point of departure is and must be that we cannot accept the overrunning of southeast Asia by Hanoi and Peking."

Beyond this, the discussions "were intended to help clarify issues with respect to exerting pressures against North Vietnam." The joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that "the US should seek through military actions to accomplish destruction of the North Vietnamese will and capabilities as necessary to compel the Democratic Government of Vietnam to cease providing support to the insurgencies in South Vietnam and Laos."

LIMITED ACTION

However, the JCS went on to note that "some current thinking appears to dismiss the objective in favor of a lesser objective, one visualizing limited military action which, hopefully, would cause the North Vietnamese to decide to terminate their subversive support."

During discussions of the extent of new military action, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge "argued in favor of attacks on north." He is reported to have stated "his conviction that most support for the Viet Cong would fade as soon as some 'counter-terrorism measures' were begun against DRV."

Discussions then turned to the desirability of obtaining a congressional resolution prior to wider US action. Lodge felt that it would not be necessary. But Defense Secretary McNamara, Rusk and CIA Director John McCone all argued in favor of the resolution.

Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, then raised "the final possi-

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bility" of Chinese involvement. Were that to occur, the allies would require "seven ground divisions."

"Secretary McNamara then went on to say that the possibility of major ground action also led to a serious question of having to use nuclear weapons at some point," the report points out. "Admiral Felt responded emphatically that there was no possible way to hold off the Communists on the ground without the use of tactical nuclear weapons and that it was essential that the commanders be given freedom to use these as had been assumed under various plans," it added.

Gen. Taylor was "more doubtful as to the existence or at least to the degree of the nuclear weapon requirement."

"The point," the report concluded, "was not really followed up."

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[From the Chicago Sun Times, June 23, 1971]
HOW JFK AND AIDES HELPED TOPPLE DIEM
(By Morton Kondracke and Thomas B. Ross)

WASHINGTON.—The late President John F. Kennedy and his leading advisers were intimately involved in the maneuvering that led to the downfall of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963, top-secret State Department and Pentagon documents revealed Tuesday.

The documents show that Kennedy decided at a National Security Council meeting on Sept. 17, 1963, to put "escalatory pressure" on Diem to get rid of his brother-in-law Ngo Dinh Nhu, chief of the secret police.

The documents also recommended action against any Diem moves to counter his generals or negotiate with North Vietnam.

The NSC also decided to send Defense Sec. Robert S. McNamara and Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor on a fact-finding mission to Vietnam.

They reported back on Oct. 2 and from that point, the documents indicate, there was a growing consensus at the top of the administration that it would not be possible to get rid of Nhu without also getting rid of Diem.

The coup came on Nov. 1, and Diem, who had been installed in power by the United States in 1954, was assassinated. The President and his leading advisers disavowed any connection with his bloody end. But two months earlier, Roger Hilsman, assistant secretary of state for the Far East, had recommended in an Aug. 30 memo to Sec. of State Dean Rusk:

"Unconditional surrender should be the terms for the Ngo family. . . . Diem should be treated as the generals wish."

The Aug. 30 memo and another by Hilsman dated Sept. 16—both declassified by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1968 but until now tightly held—were turned over to The Sun-Times by the Citizens Commission of Inquiry into U.S. War Crimes in Vietnam.

The other documents are included in the top-secret Pentagon history of the war. They reveal a battle over Diem's fate, with the State Department urging his ouster and the Pentagon insisting that the United States stick with him.

RFK FOR DISENGAGEMENT

One important voice raised for possible disengagement was that of the President's brother, the late Robert F. Kennedy.

Hilsman's first memo, prepared for an Aug. 31 NSC meeting, warned that Diem might move to open "neutralization negotiations" with North Vietnam.

If North Vietnam threatened to intervene on Diem's side, Hilsman recommended, the United States should "let it be known unequivocally that we shall hit the DRV (North Vietnam) with all that is necessary to force it to desist."

If Diem chose to make a last stand—a "Got-

terdammerung" (Twilight of the Gods)—Hillsman urged his superiors to "encourage the coup group to fight the battle to the end and to destroy the Palace if necessary to gain victory."

The Hillsman memos and the Pentagon documents illuminate a period of increasing U.S. dissatisfaction with Diem and his brother-in-law that began May 8 and ended with the Nov. 1 coup.

On May 8, government forces fired on Buddhist celebrators in Hue, and there ensued what became known as the Buddhist crisis, in which several priests and nuns burned themselves to death in the streets of major Vietnamese cities.

The self-immolations were reported throughout the world, bringing down increasing criticism on the Diem regime—and on U.S. government for supporting it. The Buddhists became the rallying point for all non-Communist opposition to Diem and Nhu.

Nhu's wife made matters worse by referring to the priests' self-sacrifice as "Buddhist barbecues."

On Aug. 21, nine days before Hillsman's first memo, government forces under the direction of Nhu and Diem attacked major Buddhist pagodas in Hue and Saigon, killing any monks who resisted.

The government crisis intensified because the attack at first was blamed on the Vietnamese military—which stoutly denied it had any part in the anti-Buddhist moves.

MILITARY FEARED PURGE

Leading generals reported to U.S. officials that they feared Diem and Nhu might institute a purge within the military—and perhaps seek an accommodation with North Vietnam.

Hillsman wrote the Aug. 30 memo at a time when U.S. officials believed a military coup or action by Diem against the military was imminent. This proved mistaken.

From the end of August until early October, the secret Pentagon study and Hillsman's second memo reveal, the U.S. struggled to decide how to keep Diem as president but get rid of Nhu.

A conclusion of the Sept. 17 NSC meeting, for example, was that the best of all possible worlds would be for Diem to stay in power with Nhu out of the picture.

In fact, after it was determined that Nhu's special forces and not the army had been responsible for the attacks on the pagodas, the documents make it clear that there was unanimous agreement among Mr. Kennedy and his advisers that pressure should be applied on Diem to purge Nhu.

ALTERNATIVE LEADERSHIP SOUGHT

The documents indicate that it was also decided at the NSC meeting to identify and begin cultivating alternative leadership—believed to mean the generals.

The decision was made formal after two alternatives were debated at the Sept. 17 NSC meeting—"escalator pressure" and reconciliation," the latter representing acquiescence in the status quo under Diem and Nhu.

The alternatives had been laid out the day before in Hillsman's second memo, which used the terms "reconciliation track" and "pressures and persuasion track."

NHU "ADVENTURE" FEARED

"My own judgment," Hillsman declared, "is that the 'reconciliation track' will not work. I think Nhu has already decided on an adventure. I think he feels that the progress already made in the war and the U.S. material on hand gives him freedom to launch on a course that has a minimum and a maximum goal.

"The minimum goal would be sharply to reduce the American presence into those key positions which have political significance in the provinces and the strategic hamlet pro-

gram and to avoid any meaningful concessions that would go against his Mandarin, 'personalist' vision of the future of Vietnam.

"The maximum goal, I would think, would be a deal with North Vietnam for a truce in the war, a complete removal of the U.S. presence, and a 'neutralist' or 'Titoist' but still separate South Vietnam."

The "escalatory pressure" track, as it was explained at the Sept. 17 NSC meeting, called for the withdrawal of AID support for the Diem regime, the removal of support for Nhu's CIA-backed special forces, and an order to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge to remain aloof from Diem, i.e., out of contact.

McNamara and Taylor reported on their mission to Vietnam at an Oct. 2 NBC meeting. Afterward, the White House put out a press release.

It said, in part:

"Sec. McNamara and Gen. Taylor reported that the major part of the U.S. military task can be completed by the end of 1965 . . .

"They reported that by the end of this year the U.S. program for training the Vietnamese should have progressed to the point where 1,000 U.S. military personnel could be withdrawn.

"The political situation in South Vietnam remains deeply serious. The U.S. has made clear its continuing opposition to any repressive actions in South Vietnam. While such actions have not yet significantly affected the military effort, they could do so in the future."

Hillsman's Aug. 30 memo recommended that, if Diem chose to leave the country with his family, the United States provide him with a plane but only if he agreed to go to France or another European country.

"Under no circumstances," he wrote, "should the Nhus be permitted to remain in Southeast Asia in close proximity to Vietnam because of the plots they will try to mount to regain power."

Hillsman warned that Diem might appeal to French President Charles de Gaulle "for political support for neutralization of Vietnam."

Hillsman urged Rusk to resist any such arrangement, adding: "We should point out publicly that Vietnam cannot be effectively neutralized unless the Communists are removed from control of North Vietnam. . . .

"Once an anti-Diem coup is started in South Vietnam, we can point to the obvious refusal of South Vietnam to accept a Diem-Communist coalition."

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, June 23, 1971]

TEXT OF THE MEMO

Following is the text of an Aug. 30, 1963, memorandum from Asst. Sec. of State Roger Hillsman to Sec. of State Dean Rusk recommending the United States encourage and assist a coup against South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother-in-law, Ngo Dinh Nhu:

The courses of action which Diem and Nhu could take to maintain themselves in power and the United States responses thereto are as follows:

1. Diem-Nhu move: Pre-emptive arrest and assassination of opposition military officers and/or Vice President Nguyen Ngoc Tho.
U.S. response:

(a) We should continue to pass warnings to these officials about their danger.

(b) CAS (code label for the Central Intelligence Agency) should explore the feasibility of prompt supply of a warning system to these officials.

(c) If several general officers are arrested, we should invoke aid sanctions to obtain their release on the ground that they are essential to successful prosecution of the war against the Viet Cong.

(d) Encouragement of prompt initiation of the coup is the best way of avoiding arrests and assassinations of generals.

2. Diem-Nhu move: Sudden switch in as-

signments of opposition generals or their dispatch on special missions outside of Saigon.

U.S. response: We should recommend that the opposition generals delay in carrying out any such orders and move promptly to execution of the coup.

3. Diem-Nhu move: Declaration of Ambassador Lodge and/or other important American officials in Vietnam as *personae non gratae*.

U.S. response:

(a) We should stall on the removal of our officials until the efforts to mount a coup have borne fruit. This situation again shows the importance of speed on the part of both the U.S. and Vietnamese sides. We should also suspend aid.

(b) Should the GVN (South Vietnam) begin to bring physical pressure on our personnel, we should introduce U.S. forces to safeguard their security.

4. Diem-Nhu move: Blackmail pressure on U.S. dependents in Vietnam, such as arrests, a few mysterious deaths or—more likely—disguised threats (like Nhu's recent threat to raze Saigon in case of a coup).

U.S. response:

(a) We should maintain our sang-froid with respect to threats.

(b) We should urge American personnel to take such precautions as avoidance of unnecessary movement and concentration of families. We should also issue arms to selected American personnel.

(c) We should demand the release of any Americans arrested and should insist for the record on proper protection of Americans by the GVN. (GVN failure to furnish this protection could serve as one of the justifications for open U.S. intervention.)

(d) We should evacuate dependents and other nonofficial personnel at the earliest possible moment that Ambassador Lodge considers it consistent with the over-all operation.

(e) We should intervene with U.S. forces if necessary to protect Americans during evacuation and to obtain the release of those arrested.

5. Diem-Nhu move: Severance of all aid ties with the U.S., ouster of all U.S. personnel (except for a limited diplomatic staff), and demand for removal of all U.S.-controlled military equipment in Vietnam.

U.S. response:

(A) We should stall in removing U.S. personnel and equipment from Viet Nam. This move by the GVN would again, however, underscore the necessity for speed in our counteraction.

(B) If Diem-Nhu move to seize U.S.-controlled equipment, we should resist by all necessary force.

6. Diem-Nhu move: Political move toward the DRV (North Vietnam) such as opening of neutralization negotiations, or rumors and indirect threats of such a move.

U.S. response:

(A) Ambassador Lodge should give Diem a clear warning of the dangers of such a course, and point out its continued pursuit will lead to cessation of U.S. aid.

(B) Encourage the generals to move promptly with a coup.

(C) We should publicize to the world at an appropriate moment any threats or move by Diem or Nhu toward the DRV in order to show the two-edged game they are playing and help justify publicly our counteractions.

(D) If the DRV threatens to respond to an anti-Diem coup by sending troops openly to South Vietnam, we should let it know unequivocally that we shall hit the DRV with all that is necessary to force it to desist.

(E) We should be prepared to take such military action.

7. Diem-Nhu move: Appeal to De Gaulle for political support for neutralization of Vietnam.

U.S. response:

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(A) We should point out publicly that Vietnam cannot be effectively neutralized unless the Communists are removed from control of North Vietnam. If a coalition between Diem and the Communists is suggested, we should reply that this would be the avenue to a Communist takeover in view of the relative strength of the two principals in the coalition. Once an anti-Diem coup is started in South Vietnam, we can point to the obvious refusal of South Vietnam to accept a Diem-Communist coalition.

8. Diem-Nhu move: If hostilities start between the GVN and a coup group, Diem and Nhu will seek to negotiate in order to play for time (as during the November, 1960, coup attempt) and rally loyal forces to Saigon.

U.S. response:
(A) The U.S. must define its objective with crystal clearness. If we try to save Diem by encouraging negotiations between him and a coup group, while a coup is in progress we shall greatly increase the risk of an unsuccessful outcome of the coup attempt. Our objective should, therefore, clearly be to bring the whole Ngo family under the control of the coup group.

(B) We should warn the coup group to press any military advantage it gains to its logical conclusion without stopping to negotiate.

(C) We should use all possible means to influence pro-Diem generals like Cao to move to the coup side. For example, Gen. Harkins could send a direct message to Cao pointing to the consequences of a continued stand in support of the Ngo family and the advantage of shifting over to the coup group.

(D) We should use, or encourage the coup group to use, military measures to prevent any loyal forces outside Saigon from rallying to Diem's support. For example, we can jam radio communications between Diem and these forces and we can encourage interdiction of transportation by blowing up bridges.

(E) We should encourage the coup group to capture and remove promptly from Vietnam any members of the Ngo family outside Saigon, including Can and Thuc who are normally in Hue. We should assist in this operation to any extent necessary.

9. Diem-Nhu move: Continuation of hostilities in Saigon as long as possible in the hope that the U.S. will weaken because of the bloodbath which may involve U.S. personnel.

U.S. response:
(A) We should maintain our sang-froid and encourage the coup forces to continue the fight to the extent necessary.

(B) We should seek to bring officers loyal to Diem over to our side by direct approaches by MACV (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) or CAS inducements.

(C) We should encourage the coup group to take necessary action to deprive the loyal forces of access to supplies.

(D) We should make full use of any U.S. equipment available in Vietnam to assist the coup group.

If necessary, we should bring in U.S. combat forces to assist the coup group to achieve victory.

10. Diem-Nhu move: A Gotterdammerung in the Palace.

U.S. response:
(a) We should encourage the coup group to fight the battle to the end and to destroy the Palace if necessary to gain victory.

(b) Unconditional surrender should be the terms for the Ngo family since it will otherwise seek to outmaneuver both the coup forces and the United States. If the family is taken alive, the Nhus should be banished to France or any other European country willing to receive them. Diem should be treated as the generals wish.

11. Diem-Nhu move: Flight out of the

country (this is unlikely as it would not be in keeping with the past conduct of the Ngo family).

U.S. response:
We should be prepared, with the knowledge of the coup group, to furnish a plane to take the Ngo family to France or other European country which will receive it. Under no circumstances should the Nhus be permitted to remain in Southeast Asia in close proximity to Vietnam because of the plots they will try to mount to regain power. If the generals decide to exile Diem, he should also be sent outside Southeast Asia.

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, June 23, 1971]
PARTIAL TEXT OF OUSI-NHU MEMO

Following is a partial text of a Sept. 16, 1963, memorandum from Asst. Sec. of State Roger Hillsman to Sec. of State Dean Rusk. Other documents, from the Pentagon study, indicate Hillsman was recommending here that the United States pressure South Vietnamese President Ngo-Dinh Diem to remove from power his brother-in-law, Ngo Nhu:

Attached are two cables—one on the "Reconciliation Track" and one on the "Pressures and Persuasion Track."

I think it is important to note that these are true alternatives—i.e., the "Reconciliation Track" is not the same as Phase I of the "Pressures and Persuasion Track." The difference is in public posture. Phase I of the "Pressures and Persuasion Track" continues to maintain a public posture of disapproval of the GVN's (South Vietnamese) policies of repression. The "Reconciliation Track" requires a public posture of acquiescence in what the GVN has recently done, and even some effort by the U.S. to put these recent actions in as good a light as we possibly can.

If this distinction, which is a real one, is preserved, then it seems to me clear that it will NOT be possible to switch from the "Reconciliation Track" to a "Pressures and Persuasion Track" if the former does not work—except in the event that Diem and Nhu provide us with another dramatic act of repression as an excuse. On the other hand, it WILL be possible to switch from a "Pressures and Persuasion Track" to a "Reconciliation Track" at any time during Phases I and II of the "Pressures and Persuasion Track," although probably not after we had entered Phases III and IV.

My own judgment is that the "Reconciliation Track" will not work. I think that Nhu has already decided on an adventure. I think he feels that the progress already made in the war and the U.S. materiel on hand gives him freedom to launch on a course that has a minimum and a maximum goal. The minimum goal would be sharply to reduce the American presence in those key positions which have political significance in the provinces and the strategic hamlet program and to avoid any meaningful concessions that would go against his Mandarin, "personalist" vision of the future of Vietnam. The maximum goal, I would think, would be a deal with North Vietnam for a truce in the war, a complete removal of the U.S. presence, and a "neutralist" or "Titotist" but still separate South Vietnam . . .

I would recommend adopting as our initial course Phases I and II of the "Pressures and Persuasion Track," testing and probing as we go along and being ready to switch to "Reconciliation" at any moment that it becomes necessary, using the decision to switch as a means of getting at least nominal concessions in order to save as much of our face as possible.

I make this recommendation with the caveat that we do not have sufficient information to make a final and complete judgment on either of the two key issues—where Nhu will lead Vietnam if he remains in power and whether or not enough people will continue to fight the Viet Cong to bring victory.

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, June 24, 1971]
MORE VIET SECRETS—HOW KENNEDY SENT LBJ TO PROD DIEM TO ASK GI'S

(By Morton Kondracke and Thomas B. Ross)

WASHINGTON.—The late President John F. Kennedy sent Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson to Saigon in May, 1961, with orders to "encourage" South Vietnam President Ngo Dinh Diem to request U.S. ground troops. Diem originally opposed the request, government documents revealed Wednesday.

It was on that trip that Mr. Johnson publicly referred to Diem as the "Winston Churchill" of the Far East.

Diem responded to the unpublicized request that he did not want foreign troops on Vietnamese soil except in the case of direct aggression by North Vietnam. Diem pointed out that U.S. troops would violate the 1954 Geneva accords that ended the French war in Indochina.

Later, the documents show, Diem wrote a letter to Kennedy arguing that the United States should provide material support, not troops, since the presence of U.S. soldiers would tend to give credence to the Communist charge that he was a front for the colonialists.

Diem successfully balked at the Kennedy-Johnson proposal for five months, but with the military situation rapidly deteriorating, he yielded in October and made the solicited request for U.S. troops.

Two years later, the documents reveal, the situation was even worse. So much so that Kennedy's principal Vietnam expert on the working level, Paul H. Kattenburg, Chairman of the State Department's Vietnam working group, told an Aug. 31, 1963 National Security Council Meeting:

"At this juncture, it would be better for us to make the decision to get out honorably."

STEADILY DOWNHILL

He warned that Diem would get less and less support from the military and the "country will go steadily down hill."

Kennedy's advisers reacted with shock. Sec. of State Dean Rusk dismissed Kattenburg's remarks as "largely speculative." Defense Sec. Robert S. McNamara agreed with Rusk.

Rusk said:
"It would be far better for us to start on the firm basis of two things—that we will not pull out of Vietnam until the war is won, and that we will not run a coup."

And Mr. Johnson argued: "It would be a disaster to pull out . . . We should stop playing cops and robbers and get back to talking straight to the GVN (government of South Vietnam) . . . We should once again go about winning the war."

The report on the session, held at the State Department and led by Rusk in President Kennedy's absence, is contained in a memorandum written by Marine Maj. Gen. Victor C. Krulak, then the Pentagon's top expert on counterinsurgency.

Three months later Kennedy was dead and the conduct of the war passed to Johnson.

The documents, disclosed to The Sun-Times by a number of reliable sources, provide this chronology of how the U.S. involvement deepened during the Kennedy administration.

Upon taking office in January of 1961, Kennedy was confronted by reports from the U.S. Embassy in Saigon that President Diem was in danger of being overthrown because of his repressive policies and the toleration of corruption at the tip of his government.

A message from Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow had urged consideration of "alternative actions and leaders" to salvage the late President Dwight D. Eisenhower's policy of creating a non-Communist South Vietnam.

In March of 1961, the Central Intelligence Agency in a National Intelligence Estimate warned that the Viet Cong were gaining "control and influence over increasing areas

of the countryside." The CIA said Diem was growing progressively weaker and was vulnerable to a coup by "non-Communist elements."

Kennedy sought to bolster the regime by authorizing funds to increase the South Vietnamese army by 20,000 men and the Civil Guard by 32,000.

MILITARY'S HAND STRENGTHENED

In March, Kennedy also approved a plan by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the military command to by-pass the ambassador, to be in a better position to handle a "hot-war situation."

In May, Johnson was sent to Vietnam with orders to "encourage" Diem to request U.S. ground troops. At first, Diem balked, arguing that he did not want foreign troops on Vietnamese soil unless he was threatened with outside attack.

By October, however, after a summer of deterioration, Diem changed his mind and made the solicited request.

Kennedy had then decided to send Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor and Walt W. Rostow on a fact-finding mission to Saigon. In advance, he requested a Pentagon assessment.

The Pentagon concluded that the "vast majority" of the Viet Cong troops were of local origin and that there was little evidence that they were receiving major supplies from outside. It recommended the dispatch of 22,800 troops—11,000 combat and 11,800 support—to be in a position to seal the border against possible infiltration.

MANPOWER NEEDS ESTIMATED

The Joint Chiefs of Staff calculated that three divisions, about 100,000 men, would be needed if North Vietnam invaded, and six divisions and possibly tactical nuclear weapons if Communist China intervened.

On the way to Vietnam, Taylor and Rostow stopped in Hawaii, where Adm. Harry D. Felt, the Pacific commander, told him that his plans were drawn on the "assumption" that tactical nuclear weapons would be used if necessary following a North Vietnamese or Chinese invasion.

Upon his return, Taylor urged Kennedy to deploy 8,000 U.S. troops but administration officials put out the word that he had recommended only advisers. Taylor conceded that commitment of the troops ran the risk of the U.S. commitment "escalating into a major war in Asia."

STRATEGIC RESERVE WEAK

He also acknowledged that the Army's strategic reserve was so weak that the United States could "ill afford any detachment of forces." Nevertheless, Taylor insisted Kennedy should deploy the 8,000 troops, because he did not believe "our program to save South Vietnam will succeed without it."

In an early foreshadowing of things to come Taylor noted that North Vietnam was "extremely vulnerable to conventional bombing" and recommended that the weakness be "exploited diplomatically" in Hanoi.

Taylor posed three options for Kennedy: (1) to remove Diem in favor of a "military dictatorship" that would give dominance to the army's needs; (2) to remove Diem for a "figure of more dilute power" who would delegate more authority to the military; (3) to use a U.S. presence to "force the Vietnamese to get their house in order."

After noting that it would be "dangerous for us to engineer a coup under present tense circumstances," Taylor recommended the third option.

RUSK RESPONDS WITH WARNING

Sec. of State Dean Rusk responded to Taylor's report with caution, warning against "committing American prestige to a losing horse."

Defense Sec. Robert S. McNamara, on the other hand, viewed the proposed force of

8,000 troops as a move that could get the United States "mired down in an inconclusive struggle." He recommended a "firm initial position," saying the American people would respond better to bold action. He suggested as many as 205,000 U.S. troops might be necessary if the enemy counterattacked against the U.S. military intervention.

Kennedy's decision was to reject Taylor's proposal for an open commitment and to send U.S. troops to Vietnam slowly and quietly as "advisers."

In National Security Memorandum 111, however, Kennedy made it clear that the troops were available for "operational duties" and for "performing crucial missions" to help the South Vietnamese army "win their war against the Viet Cong."

Kennedy deepened his commitment to a non-Communist South Vietnam despite a report by Charles Maechling Jr., chairman of the committee of deputies on the special group, that: "If free elections were to be held in South Vietnam in 1962, Ho (North Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh) would get 70 per cent of the popular vote."

Maechling estimated that the Viet Cong were getting only a trickle of supplies from North Vietnam and noted that no one had ever found a Chinese rifle or Soviet weapon used by the guerrillas.

He concluded that the "massive aggression theory was completely phony."

Kennedy got essentially the same word from a White House aide, Michael Forrestal, upon his return from Vietnam in early 1963. Forrestal estimated that "the vast bulk of both recruits and supplies come from inside South Vietnam itself."

SECRET RAIDS ON NORTH

Other matters, related in the documents and previously reported on, show that

President Kennedy ordered an extensive program of secret raids on North Vietnam in March of 1961, three years before the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

The documents show that the raids included airlifting South Vietnamese sabotage teams into North Vietnam, PT-boat attacks on the North Vietnamese coast, and U.S. destroyer patrols to trigger and locate North Vietnamese and Communist Chinese radar.

The documents, disclose to the Sun-Times by several reliable sources, reveal that the raids were carried out under the direction of two super-secret agencies in Washington—the 303 Committee and Special Group Counter-Insurgency, co-chaired by the President's brother, Robert F. Kennedy.

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, June 24, 1971]

ANTI-DIEM PLOTTER TOLD U.S. AIDES IN ADVANCE

(By Morton Kondracke and Thomas B. Ross)

WASHINGTON.—Top-secret Pentagon documents disclose that a key plotter against South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem informed the U.S. Embassy 26 days before the successful coup that assassination of Diem was one of three courses of action being contemplated.

The coup, by military officers, took place Nov. 1, 1963, and Diem and his brother, Secret Police Chief Ngo Dinh Nhu, were captured and murdered the next day.

Sources, which involved the Pentagon study, indicate that the administration of President John F. Kennedy did not order or engineer the coup, although it gave many signals that the coup would not be unwelcome. The Sun-Times learned Wednesday.

LODGE, GENERAL AT ODDS

Before the coup, documents reveal, there was an intense dispute over it within the U.S. mission in Saigon between Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, who favored it; and Gen. Paul Harkins, U.S. military commander, who opposed it.

When the coup was actually under way, Diem called Lodge at the U.S. Embassy, asking whether the United States supported it. Documents disclose that Lodge's reply was that the United States did not have a position.

Although Lodge expressed concern for Diem's safety in that phone call on Nov. 1, the president and his brother, Nhu, were captured and killed the next day.

The coup followed months of tension between the Roman Catholic Nhu family and Buddhists in the country and increasing U.S. feeling that no successful effort could be waged against Vietnamese Communists under their authoritarian regime.

DEBATE AT TOP LEVELS

Until Oct. 2, 1963 there was debate within the highest councils of the administration over proposals that Diem be pressured into firing his brother in order to save himself.

On Oct. 2, Defense Sec. Robert S. McNamara and Gen. Maxwell Taylor returned from a fact-finding mission, and from that point forward a consensus developed that Diem and Nhu could not be separated.

In Saigon, on the same day, an agent of the U.S. Embassy met with Vietnamese Maj. Gen. Tran Van Don at Ton Son Nhut Airport.

The embassy had approved the meeting, according to Pentagon documents and other sources.

Don told the embassy agent that a plot was under way for a coup, and that the key to whether it would take place was the II Corps commander, Maj. Gen. Ton That Dinh.

CONTACTS WITH PLOTTERS OK'D

On Oct. 5, President Kennedy approved of continuing contacts with the plotters, documents reveal.

The President's order was: "No initiative should be taken to give any active covert encouragement to the coup, but urgent efforts should be made to build contact with alternative leadership" should it occur.

On the afternoon of Oct. 5, with Lodge's approval, the embassy's agent met with another plot leader, Gen. Duong Van Minh, who said he had to know what the U.S. position would be if a coup took place.

Minh told the embassy agent that one of three plans being contemplated by the plotters was the assassination of Diem.

UNITED STATES "WOULD NOT THWART"

The embassy agent was noncommittal, documents reveal, but later on the same day Lodge recommended to Washington that when the plotters again contacted the embassy agent, he should be authorized to say that the United States "would not thwart" a coup and that the United States would review its plans and support a successor regime.

On Oct. 6, Washington confirmed that the U.S. position would be that it would not thwart a coup if it offered the prospect of a more efficient fight against the Viet Cong.

"Security and deniability," Washington decided, were paramount considerations in all contacts with the plotters.

The disagreement between Harkins and Lodge emerged in actions from Oct. 22 to the date of the coup Nov. 1.

CAUTIONED BY HARKINS

On Oct. 22, Harkins met with Gen. Don and told Don that U.S. officers were not to be approached about a coup because it distracted them from their foremost purpose, which was thwarting the Communists.

Don apparently took this as a sign of U.S. discouragement, and on Oct. 23 renewed his contact with the embassy's agent, asking for clarification. Don was reassured of the U.S. attitude, documents indicate.

On Oct. 24, Diem invited Lodge to his villa in Dalat. The same day, another contact took place between Don and the embassy agent. The agent assured Don that Harkins had been corrected.

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Don advised that the coup was scheduled for Nov. 2 and that another meeting would be scheduled for reviewing plans.

That evening, Don told the agent that the coup committee was committed not to reveal plans but that special memos would be filed for Lodge's eyes only.

TIME FOR ACTION SEEN

On Oct. 25, Lodge argued within embassy circles that the time had come to go ahead with a coup. He took exception to Harkins' reservations.

Harkins reportedly believed that the generals would not be capable of mounting a successful coup.

On Oct. 28, Don informed the embassy that it would receive four hours' notice before the coup.

On Oct. 29—not Nov. 1, as the United States announced to the press—the Navy was ordered to have ships standing by, prepared to rescue U.S. dependents and civilians.

NO U.S. VIEW, DIEM TOLD

In another discussion Oct. 29, Harkins repeated his disagreement with Lodge's attitude toward the coup, and reiterated that the generals were incapable of accomplishing their mission. Lodge said he disagreed.

On Nov. 1, Gen. Don called Harkins to advise him that the coup was under way.

Diem, according to documents, called Lodge and asked where the United States stood. Lodge "expressed concern for Diem's safety" and said the United States "did not have a view yet."

The plotters, gathered at the Vietnamese joint general staff headquarters in Saigon earlier had called Diem and told him to surrender, but he refused.

FLEE TO SAIGON SUBURBS

At 5 p.m., the generals again called Diem and this time ordered Col. Le Quang Tung to take the phone and inform Diem and Nhu that even the special forces, which Tung commanded, had surrendered.

After the phone call, Tung was taken out of the headquarters and shot.

At 6:50 a.m. on Nov. 2, Diem and his brother escaped from the presidential palace, which had been surrounded, to a hideout in the Saigon suburbs.

When that was surrounded, they escaped again to a Roman Catholic church, where they were finally caught. They were killed en route to Vietnamese military headquarters.

The following day, Nov. 3, Gen. Don called on Lodge, who promised immediate restoration of U.S. aid programs—cut back to place pressure on the Diem regime—and assured the generals of immediate U.S. support. The United States announced its recognition of the new regime on Nov. 7, the day after it asked to be recognized.

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, June 25, 1971]

IKE'S TWO-VIET PLAN IS REVEALED

(By Morton Kondracke and Thomas B. Ross)

WASHINGTON.—The late President Dwight D. Eisenhower secretly established in 1958 a national policy to eliminate Communist control in Hanoi and reunite North and South Vietnam under a pro-U.S. government, official documents revealed Thursday.

In a National Security Council paper, NSC 5809, dated April 2, 1958, Eisenhower directed the government to "work toward the weakening of the Communists of North and South Vietnam in order to bring about the eventual peaceful reunification of a free and independent Vietnam under anti-Communist leadership."

Eisenhower took the decision, the documents show, at the high point of his confidence in Ngo Dinh Diem's ability to emerge as a truly national, anti-Communist leader.

Diem, who has been installed as prime minister by the United States in 1954, impressed Eisenhower and Sec. of State John

Foster Dulles with his unexpected efficiency in putting down a number of dissident sects in 1955.

Just before the crackdown, Gen. J. Lawton Collins, Eisenhower's envoy in Saigon, recommended that Diem be removed. Dulles concurred and the State Department sent a cable to the U.S. Embassy directing that Diem be kicked upstairs into the presidency, then a figurehead position.

Surprised at Diem's forceful performance against the sects, Washington revoked the cable and ordered it burned.

Eisenhower and Dulles were also encouraged by the seemingly mild reaction to Diem's decision to cancel the 1956 national elections, which had been agreed upon in the 1954 Geneva (Switzerland) accords.

RED VICTORY AT POLLS SEEN

Eisenhower acquiesced in Diem's move on the basis of a Central Intelligence Agency assessment that the Saigon government "almost certainly would not be able to defeat the Communists in countrywide elections."

The documents indicate a growing sense of optimism between 1955 and 1958 in Diem's possibilities as a leader of both halves of Vietnam. But just as NSC 5809 was being promulgated, the Viet Cong launched their insurgency. And although the paper remained national policy, the documents indicate the Eisenhower administration was subsequently forced to concentrate on salvaging Diem's regime.

The documents, disclosed to The Sun-Times by a number of reliable sources, also revealed these previously unpublished facts about the U.S. involvement in Vietnam:

(1) All contingency planning for the bombing of North Vietnam was completed by mid-June, 1964, but the White House passed the order to mark time "during the next six months," that is, until December, the month after the Presidential election.

(2) Former President Lyndon B. Johnson was advised by a top-level panel in early 1964 that bombing North Vietnam would not win the war. Soon after the bombing began it was evident that it was not working and this was confirmed by an exhaustive study in 1967, a full year before it was stopped in November, 1968.

(3) A few days after taking office, Mr. Johnson issued a National Security Memo, NSAM 273, on Nov. 26, 1963 ordering plans for "possible increased activity" in secret raids on North Vietnam.

(4) From the beginning of the direct U.S. military involvement, high-ranking officials had difficulty estimating how many civilians were included in casualty figures. White House adviser Michael Forrestal observed after a visit to Vietnam in 1963: "No one really knows how many of the 20,000 'Viet Cong' killed last year were only innocent, or at least persuadable, villagers."

(5) William Jordan, a key Vietnam specialist, was sent to South Vietnam in 1963 to draw up evidence to support the administration's contention of massive infiltration by North Vietnam. He reported back: "We are unable to document and develop any hard evidence of infiltration."

(7) Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor was the principal exponent of the domino theory inside the Johnson administration. As chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Taylor warned on Jan. 22, 1964, that the fall of South Vietnam would result in the immediate loss of Laos, Thailand and Cambodia. He also warned that there could be a dangerous reaction in Burma, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Taiwan, Korea and the Philippines and possibly similar "unfavorable effects" in Africa and in Latin America.

The CIA, on the other hand, consistently argued that it was unlikely that any other country would go Communist.

CIA ESTIMATE DISREGARDED

The documents show that the CIA was largely disregarded by the policy-makers

from the start of the U.S. involvement. The thrust of the CIA's estimates in the early years was that Ho represented an almost irresistible nationalist force and Diem showed no promise of establishing a solid non-Communist government.

In a National Intelligence Estimate of August, 1954, the CIA said it did "not believe there will be the dramatic transformation in French policy necessary to win the active loyalty and support of the local population for a South Vietnam government. . . ."

"Although it is possible that the French and the Vietnamese, even with support from the U.S. and other powers, may be able to establish a strong regime in South Vietnam, we believe that the chances for this development are poor and, moreover, that the situation is more likely to continue to deteriorate progressively over the next year."

FIND HIGH REGARD FOR HO

The CIA concluded in another document at the time that "the most significant particular political sentiment of the bulk of the population was an antipathy for the French combined with a personal regard for Ho Chi Minh as the symbol of Vietnamese nationalism."

The CIA predicted that the Communists would remain in a state of "relative quiescence" if Diem held the 1956 national elections as required by the 1954 Geneva accords that ended the war with the French. In effect, the CIA argued that Diem provoked the Communist uprising by renegeing on the elections.

The documents show that Eisenhower was warned in advance by the CIA that Diem would balk at the elections but did nothing to see that they were held.

BRANDED A DICTATORSHIP

Eisenhower and Sec. of State John Foster Dulles decided to commit the United States to the regime, despite a 1957 estimate by the CIA that:

"A facade of representative government is maintained, but the government is in fact essentially authoritarian. The legislative powers of the National Assembly are strictly circumscribed; the judiciary is undeveloped and subordinate to the executive; and the members of the executive branch are little more than the personal agents of Diem.

"No organized opposition, loyal or otherwise, is tolerated, and critics of the regime are often repressed. . . . The exercise of power and responsibility is limited to Diem and a very small circle mainly composed of his relatives."

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, June 25, 1971]

BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM DESCRIBED AS A FAILURE

(By Morton Kondracke and Thomas B. Ross)

WASHINGTON.—Secret Pentagon "war games" indicated early in 1964 that strategic bombing of North Vietnam might be a failure, and other high-level studies in 1967 concluded that the policy had indeed failed.

Despite the warnings of 1964, which emerged from computerized "Sigma games" reminiscent of the movie "Dr. Strangelove"—the administration of former President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered the bombing to begin in March, 1965, under the code name "Rolling Thunder."

And despite the analyses of 1967—which include photos of war materiel leaving Yugoslavia and arriving in North Vietnam—the bombing was not finally halted until late 1968.

The early war games predicted—correctly—that North Vietnam could station civilians on airstrips to deter U.S. bombing and, if they were hit anyway, could use the fact to propeganda advantage.

After the bombing had been under way for 2½ years, the 1967 study showed that exaggerated claims for the success of the bomb-

ing had been fabricated in Vietnam and were believed by high-ranking officials in Washington.

Top-secret Pentagon documents and other sources also indicate a set of significant switches in U.S. aims in bombing North Vietnam. At first, the Johnson administration thought bombing stationary targets would break the will of North Vietnam and its leaders. Within a month, however, U.S. officials concluded that bombing would not accomplish that purpose, and the United States began trying to interdict supplies heading from North Vietnam to South Vietnam.

By April 20, 1965, the U.S. command concluded that bombing the north would not win the war, and that victory could come only by defeating the Viet Cong on the ground in South Vietnam.

Nevertheless, the bombing continued until it was stopped totally on the eve of the 1968 presidential elections.

In 1967, a study panel headed by Defense Undersecretary Paul Nitze concluded that the results of the bombing had been largely negative. The study concluded that there was no way to stop the flow of materiel into North Vietnam and no way to interdict it on its way to the south.

Ninety-five per cent of North Vietnam's war supplies entered through Haiphong Harbor—a forbidden target under President Johnson's rules. Had the harbor been attacked, however, supplies could have been shipped in by railroad from Port Blurd in China.

In 2½ years of bombing, the study concluded, North Vietnam had the same number of trucks—11,000—as it had when the bombing began, only they were new trucks in 1967, replacing the old ones of 1965.

The United States had knocked out 70 per cent of North Vietnam's electrical plants, yet the north had more generating capacity than it had before the war started. Diesel generators had been shipped in.

BOMBS DUMPED AT SEA

Further, evidence indicated that U.S. policy encouraged U.S. pilots to dump their bombs at sea or avoid their primary targets.

Military budgets depended on flying the maximum number of sorties authorized by Washington, meaning that pilots had to make two bombing runs a day. To do that, they would have had to fly the shortest route to target, which were known as "milk runs," that were saturated with enemy antiaircraft defenses.

A pattern developed: Pilots would fly part of the milk run only, drop their bombs short of target or in the sea, fly back to their bases—getting credit for one sortie—refuel, then fly out and bomb secondary targets outside North Vietnam, either along the Ho Chi Minh Trail or elsewhere in Laos.

Documents indicate that the North Vietnamese became accustomed to the pattern and scheduled truck traffic along the Ho Chi Minh trail to coincide with the arrival of second sorties.

Documents indicate that 15 minutes before the planes arrived at their secondary target, the trucks moved off the trail, waited in the bush, watched the bombs drop, then continued on their way.

STATISTICS REPORTED DOCTORED

There was a high sortie rate and a large consumption of bombs but, indications were that statistics were doctored to make it appear to Washington that the planes were dropping their ordnance on primary targets in North Vietnam.

The Nitze study reached conclusions, after 2½ years of bombing, that were similar to the predictions laid down by top-secret study groups in 1963 and early 1964. One of these was an interagency task force, the Vietnam Working Group, headed by William H. Sul-

Ivan, currently deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian Affairs.

Simultaneously, high-level officials were meeting periodically in the Pentagon's war game rooms to play "Sigma games," the devising of possible U.S. bombing strategies, likely North Vietnamese counterstrategies, and U.S. counter-counterstrategies.

The officials were split into a "Red Team," headed by Marshall Green, assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, matched against a "blue team" that consisted of McGeorge Bundy, then President Johnson's national security adviser; his brother, William, from the State Department, and Generals Earle Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Curtis E. LeMay, Air Force chief of staff.

THEY PLAN HANOI ROLES

It was Green's team, playing the roles of Hanoi's leaders, which suggested putting civilians on the airfield runways.

Separately, the Sullivan task force and the Sigma players reached similar conclusions in the spring of 1964: North Vietnam would be able to withstand aerial punishment and expand its aid to guerrillas in the south. Bombing the north would improve the morale of the people there, not break their will, and the United States would inherit the image in the world of "bully."

While documenting a case against strategic bombing, the Sullivan committee recommended Rolling Thunder on other grounds. Its report said: "We must prove to the world U.S. determination to oppose Communist expansion."

The Johnson administration debated through much of election year 1964 whether to institute bombing raids on North Vietnam—but by November the question had become one of how much bombing to do.

REPRISAL RAIDS DECIDED UPON

On Dec. 1, the Pentagon documents reveal, Mr. Johnson decided to begin with reprisal raids on North Vietnam in retaliation for Communist action in the south, and then to gradually escalate the attacks.

The United States, in February, launched two large-scale reprisal raids against the north, responding to a Viet Cong assault on the U.S. military advisers' compound at Pleiku.

On Feb. 13—following more than a year of planning, but appearing to respond to immediate Communist attacks—Mr. Johnson formally approved the start of continuous Rolling Thunder raids. Those raids actually began on March 2.

It became clear early that North Vietnam was not suffering severely under the raids, government documents reveal. Even before Rolling Thunder started, Defense Sec. Robert S. McNamara complained that the previous retaliatory strikes "left the targets relatively unimpaired."

As the war in South Vietnam continued to deteriorate, a debate broke out about what should be done. The U.S. commander in South Vietnam, Gen. William C. Westmoreland, requested permission to allow U.S. troops to fight offensively. U.S. Ambassador Maxwell Taylor wanted the President to end the limitation that no bombing could take place north of the 19th Parallel.

On March 19, 1965, President Johnson compromised—he rejected proposals for a U.S. ground combat role, but agreed to expand the air war.

He shifted the purpose of the bombing on that date—from the bombing of fixed targets to the interdiction of supplies. This signaled the end of purely psychological bombing and the beginning of bombing supplies heading south.

A MESSAGE OF DETERMINATION

Westmoreland told the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the new bombing program "by interrupting the flow of consumer goods to (North

Vietnam) would carry to the (North Vietnamese) man in the street, with minimum loss of life, the message of U.S. determination."

The Air Force, according to Pentagon documents, urged raids on Hanoi, but Mr. Johnson ruled that out. McNamara and the President retained tight control over target selection, although the Nitze study later showed that the targets were not always being hit.

With pressures on him from Assistant Defense Sec. John McNaughton to commit ground troops to South Vietnam and contrary pressures from CIA director John McCone and Ambassador Taylor to escalate air strikes, Mr. Johnson ordered his key advisers to an April 20 conference at Honolulu.

Secret documents reveal that the conferees agreed—less than two months after the onset of the Rolling Thunder raids—that the Communists were "not going to capitulate or come to a point acceptable to us in less than six months."

McNamara and McNaughton, in a memo of their own prepared at the time, said "this is because settlement will come as much or more from VC failure in the south as from (North Vietnamese) pain in the north, and that it will take . . . perhaps a year or two, to demonstrate VC failure in the south."

Despite the admission that the war could not be won through air power in the north, the conferees agreed that bombing should continue, but decided it was necessary to increase U.S. troop strength by 82,000 men.

[From the Los Angeles Times, June 24, 1971]
DIEM'S POIGNANT LAST CALL TO LODGE REVEALED

(By David Kraslow)

WASHINGTON.—The transcript of the last conversation President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam had with any American is the poignant centerpiece of the Pentagon's secret reconstruction of the coup against Diem on Nov. 1, 1963, and his assassination the following day.

At 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 1, several hours after some generals and the units they commanded launched the rebellion in Saigon, Diem telephoned U.S. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. from the presidential palace.

Diem was under siege. Coup forces and the palace guard were fighting. The rebel generals had demanded the surrender of Diem and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, head of the secret police, and had promised them safe conduct out of the country.

The United States was implicated in the coup at least to the extent that the Kennedy administration had pledged noninterference to the rebels.

"Apparently," the Pentagon study reports, "we had put full confidence in the coup committee's offers of safe conduct to the brothers."

ROLE TO CONCEAL

It was against this background that a desperate Diem telephoned Lodge to determine where the United States, which had virtually guaranteed the Diem regime's survival for nine years, stood in the coup.

Lodge's role was to conceal that American officials had been in close contact with the coup plotters for some time and to conceal the U.S. government's position that the coup was desirable if it could succeed.

The following conversation ensued:

Diem: "Some units have made a rebellion and I want to know what is the attitude of the U.S.?"

NOTES TIME DIFFERENCE

Lodge: "I do not feel well enough informed to be able to tell you. I have heard the shooting, but am not acquainted with all the facts. Also it is 4:30 a.m. in Washington and the U.S. government cannot possibly have a view."

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Diem: "But you must have some general ideas. After all, I am a chief of state. I have tried to do my duty. I want to do now what duty and good senses require. I believe in duty above all."

Lodge: "You have certainly done your duty. As I told you only this morning, I admire your courage and your great contributions to your country. No one can take away from you the credit for all you have done. Now I am worried about your physical safety. I have a report that those in charge of the current activity offer you and your brother safe conduct out of the country if you resign. Had you heard this?"

URGED TO CALL

Diem: "No. (and then after a pause) You have my telephone number."

Lodge: "Yes. If I can do anything for your physical safety, please call me."

Diem: "I am trying to reestablish order."

That was the last Lodge or any other American heard from Diem, according to the Pentagon study.

During the night Diem and his brother escaped from the palace through one of the secret underground exits connected to the sewer system, the study says. They were met by a Chinese friend who took them to his home in Cholon, a section of Saigon. There the brothers spent their last night.

At 6:50 a.m. Nov. 2, after twice receiving assurances of safe departure from South Vietnam in telephone conversations with the joint general staff headquarters of the South Vietnamese army, Diem and Nhu surrendered unconditionally at a Catholic church.

Shortly thereafter, while en route in the back of an armored personnel carrier to the general staff headquarters, they were assassinated.

"The news of the brutal and seemingly pointless murder of Diem and Nhu . . . was received in Washington with shock and dismay," the Pentagon study noted. "President Kennedy was reportedly personally stunned . . . particularly in view of the heavy U.S. involvement in encouraging the coup leaders . . ."

"Thus, the nine-year rule of Ngo Dinh Diem came to a sudden bloody and permanent end, and U.S. policy in Vietnam plunged into the unknown, our complicity in the coup only heightening our responsibilities and our commitment in this struggling leaderless land . . ."

[From the Los Angeles Times, June 24, 1971] U.S. REJECTED FIRST VIET-PULLOUT ADVICE; KEY RUSK AIDE SPURNED BY TOP KENNEDY COUNCIL

(By Stuart H. Loory)

WASHINGTON.—Advised for the first time that the United States faced a can't-win situation in the Vietnam war, President John F. Kennedy's National Security Council in August, 1963, rejected the recommendation of a State Department expert on Vietnam to pull out honorably, the Pentagon's top-secret history of the war shows.

Instead, Secretary of State Dean Rusk put down such talk from one of his subordinates as "speculative," saying:

"It would be far better for us to start on the firm basis of two things—that we will not pull out of Vietnam until the war is won, and that we will not run a coup."

RUSK OVERRULED ASSISTANT

The expert overruled by Rusk was Paul M. Kattenburg, then head of the State Department's Vietnam Working Group, who had dealt with President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam for 10 years. Then-Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, among other important officials, backed Rusk's view, the account says.

The report on the session, held at the State Department and chaired by Rusk in Mr. Kennedy's absence, is contained in a memo-

randum written by Marine Maj. Gen. Victor C. Krulak, then the Pentagon's top expert on counterinsurgency.

Krulak's memorandum is included in previously unpublished sections of the report that The Times has obtained. The sections are from the same Pentagon study that was the subject of previous stories in the New York Times, Washington Post and Boston Globe. It was prepared by a team of Pentagon analysts under a directive from McNamara in 1968. The analysts had access to documents only on file in the Defense Department. The analysts did not have access to the complete files at the White House or State Department.

The meeting Krulak describes was called as a "where-do-we-go-from-here" session after a group of Saigon generals failed to bring off a coup against the increasingly unpopular regime headed by Diem.

The meeting was a key session in the period from May to November, 1963, during which non-Communist opposition to the Diem regime grew rapidly and eventually boiled over into the overthrow of Diem and the assassination of him and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu on Nov. 2.

During the National Security Council session, Kattenburg advanced the suggestion that, in Krulak's words, "At this juncture it would be better for us to make the decision to get out honorably."

The complete text of Krulak's report on Kattenburg's presentation said:

"Mr. Kattenburg stated that as recently as last Thursday it was the belief of Ambassador (Henry Cabot) Lodge (Jr.) that, if we undertake to live with this repressive regime, with its bayonets at every street corner and its transparent negotiations with puppet bonzes (Buddhist monks), we are going to be thrown out of the country in six months.

WOULD NOT SEPARATE

"He stated that at this juncture it would be better for us to make the decision to get out honorably. He went on to say that, having been acquainted with Diem for 10 years, he was deeply disappointed in him, saying that he will not separate from his brother. It was Kattenburg's view that Diem will get little support from the military and, as time goes on, he will get less and less support and the country will go steadily downhill.

"Gen. (Maxwell D.) Taylor (then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) asked what Kattenburg meant when he said that we would be forced out of Vietnam within six months. Kattenburg replied that in from six months to a year, as people see we are losing the war, they will gradually go to the other side and we will be obliged to leave.

NOLTING DISAGREES

"Ambassador (Frederick) Nolting (who had just left his post in Saigon to be replaced by Lodge) expressed general disagreement with Mr. Kattenburg. He said that the unfavorable activity which motivated Kattenburg's remarks was confined to the city and, while city support of Diem is doubtless low now, it is not greatly so. He said that it is improper to overlook the fact that we have done a tremendous job toward winning the Vietnam war, working with the same imperfect, annoying government."

Rusk dismissed the view and McNamara agreed. Rusk then went on to say there was "good proof," in Krulak's term, that the war was being won. Lyndon Johnson agreed, saying that "from both a practical and a political viewpoint, it would be a disaster to pull out; that we should stop playing cops and robbers and get back to talking straight to the GVN (Saigon government) and that we should once again go about winning the war."

SHARPLY CRITICAL

The Pentagon report on the meeting was sharply critical of the deliberations. It spoke

of the officials' "rambling inability to focus the problem, indeed to reach common agreement on the nature of the problem."

The report continues:

"More importantly, however, the meeting is the first recorded occasion in which someone followed to its logical conclusion the negative analysis of the situation—i.e., that the war could not be won with the Diem regime, yet its removal would leave such political instability as to foreclose success in the war; for the first time it was recognized that the U.S. should be considering methods of honorably disengaging itself from an irretrievable situation.

"The other alternative, not fully appreciated until the year following, was a much greater U.S. involvement in and assumption of responsibility for the war. At this point, however, the negative analysis of the impact of the political situation on war effort was not shared by McNamara, Taylor, Krulak nor seemingly by Rusk.

The documents accompanying the account of the precoup period show that Kattenburg's gloomy assessment of the situation dovetailed with the views expressed by South Vietnamese Gen. Duong Van Minh, known as Big Minh, in secret contacts with Lodge.

In mid-September, 1963, when the American high-level military assessment of the war against the Viet Cong was rosy, Lodge cabled President Kennedy:

"I doubt that a public relations package will meet needs of situation which seems particularly grave to me, notably in light of Gen. Big Minh's opinion expressed very privately yesterday that the Viet Cong are steadily gaining in strength; have more of the population on their side than has the GVN; that arrests are continuing and that the prisons are full; that more and more students are going over to the Viet Cong; that there is great graft and corruption in the Vietnamese administration of our aid; and that the 'Heart of the Army is not in the war.' All this by Vietnamese No. 1, general is now echoed by Secretary of Defense Thuan, who wants to leave the country."

CONFLICTS PERVADE

Conflicts and huge gaps in the information reaching Washington pervade the report of the May-November, 1963, period. Not only had the Kennedy administration, the report indicates, failed to see the deterioration in the war efforts; it did not recognize the growing signs in the spring of 1963 that the Diem regime was losing the support of the people.

Nhu, the head of the secret police and important strategic hamlet program, was growing more and more dominant over his brother, the president, the report notes.

POWER OBSESSION

Nhu's wife, the report says, was developing a power obsession of her own.

The regime was growing more isolated from the people.

These facts were not comprehended by U.S. officials at the time. Instead, the line was typically expressed in a briefing for McNamara at a strategy conference in Honolulu in May. The paper read:

"The overall situation in Vietnam is improving. And the military sector of the counterinsurgency, we are winning. Evidences of improvement are clearly visible, as the combined impact of the programs which involve a long lead time begins to have effect on the Viet Cong."

Meanwhile, relations between Washington and Saigon were beginning to deteriorate to the point where those matters, rather than the war, began to preoccupy both capitals.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

The train of events leading to the Diem regime's downfall and the following escalation of the American involvement in the

Vietnam war began on May 8, 1963, at a celebration of Buddha's birthday in the ancient city of Hue, where the Buddhists were defying a government ban on the flying of religious flags.

The ban had been put into effect by the government after such flags were similarly flown in Hue a month earlier at a ceremony commemorating the 25th anniversary of Ngo Dinh Thuc, the Roman Catholic primate in Vietnam. Thuc was Diem's brother and a close adviser to the South Vietnamese president.

The Roman Catholic Diem family took the Buddhist flag-flying as an affront. A Catholic deputy province chief ordered his troops to fire to disperse the crowd. Nine were killed, including some children. Armored vehicles allegedly crushed some in the crowd.

The Diem government released a statement that the disorder was started by a Viet Cong grenade and that victims had been crushed in a stampede.

The next day, more than 10,000 Buddhists in Hue took part in a protest, beginning the long series of Buddhist protests that included the now-famous self-immolations of Buddhist monks in South Vietnam's cities.

At first Diem refused to negotiate with the Buddhists and then, on June 16, he reached an agreement that he subsequently refused to carry out. In this reversal, he was prodded by Nhu and his wife, who referred to a suicide at one point as a "barbecue."

By July, an American national intelligence estimate—the combined best judgment of all American fact-finding agencies—foresaw a summer of demonstrations and possible non-Communist coup attempt against Diem if he made no effort to conciliate the Buddhists.

But the U.S. mission in Saigon, the study says, failed to see the realities of the situation. It says:

"The explanation of how the U.S. mission became detached from the realities of the political situation in Saigon in August, 1963, is among the most ironic and tragic of our entire involvement in Vietnam."

Despite tough talks from Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow in the late 1950s and up to 1961, Diem had learned, the study says, "that the U.S. was committed to him as the only Vietnamese leader capable of rallying his country to defeat the Communists."

He began to ignore Durbrow "with relative impunity," the study says. "He became adept at playing the role of offended lover."

Durbrow grew increasingly cut off from the presidential palace. Mr. Kennedy appointed Nolting to replace him in 1961 and Nolting, trying a different approach, appeased Diem.

"Both tactics failed," the study says, "because of the American commitment. No amount of pressure or duress was likely to be effective in getting Diem to adopt ideas or policies which he did not find to his liking since we had communicated our unwillingness to consider the ultimate sanction—withdrawal of support for his regime. We had ensnared ourselves in a powerless, no-alternatives policy."

"The denouncement of this policy, the ultimate failure of all our efforts to coerce, cajole and coax Diem to be something other than the mandarin he was, came in the midnight attack on the pagodas."

Unable to coax Diem into reforms, neither could the United States withdraw support from him because of the "political instability and erosion of the war effort," the study says.

At a White House meeting in early July, President Kennedy discussed the possibility of a coup with Undersecretary of State George Ball; W. Averell Harriman, undersecretary for political affairs; McGeorge Bundy, White House national security affairs adviser; Roger Hillsman, assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, and Michael Forrestal, a member of Bundy's staff.

The group agreed, according to a Hillsman memorandum, "that it would not be possible" to get rid of the Nhus. Hillsman said a coup would "most likely" result in a civil war in Vietnam—a civil war that would take place alongside the fight against the Viet Cong insurgency.

The White House session appears to be the first time that a coup was considered that a coup was considered at the highest level in Washington.

Meanwhile, optimistic reports continued to flow from the field. Gen. Krulak reported that the political strife had not hurt the war effort. But American correspondents in Saigon were reporting the situation differently and the Pentagon study says those newspaper accounts were. "In retrospect, nearer the reality."

It cites, as typical, a dispatch by David Halberstam to the New York Times on Aug. 15 "presenting a very negative appraisal of the war in the Delta." The study's retrospective view of Halberstam's work is ironic, since Mr. Kennedy in October, 1963, suggested to the New York Times' management that Halberstam be assigned elsewhere. The N.Y. Times refused to do so.

NOLTING REPLACED

During the summer President Kennedy replaced Nolting with Lodge, who had had long experience in Southeast Asia. While the new ambassador was preparing to go to his post, Nhu arranged the famous Aug. 21 raids on the pagodas in Saigon, Hue and all the other major cities. The buildings were ransacked. More than 1,400 monks were arrested; 30 were injured or wounded in Saigon's Xa Loi pagoda alone.

The raids were carried out by Special Forces troops, trained by the United States government, and Nhu's combat police, although Nhu contrived in a number of ways to make it appear as if the army had conducted them.

KEPT IN DARK

The American Embassy was kept in the dark, though the American correspondents learned of the impending action.

"It was several days before the U.S. Mission in Saigon and officials in Washington could piece together what had happened," the Pentagon study notes.

Not only were the raids a major challenge to the Buddhists by the Catholic Diem regime, they also were an affront to Lodge. He went immediately to Saigon to take up his new post, arriving the day after the raids.

That same day, the study notes, South Vietnamese generals made their first inquiries about U.S. reaction to a possible coup against Diem, at the same time expressing puzzlement over why the Americans were blaming the Army for the raids.

CABLES WASHINGTON

Lodge cabled Washington implicating Nhu as the organizer of the raids, noting the inquiries from the generals and asking for instructions on Aug. 24, which was a Saturday.

Hillsman, Harriman, Ball and Forrestal moved quickly and decisively, giving approval for American support of a coup. As it happened, most of the top-level members of the government were out of town.

The Hillsman group's cable to Lodge said: "It is now clear that whether military proposed martial law or whether Nhu tricked them into it, Nhu took advantage of its imposition to smash pagodas with police and . . . special forces loyal to him, thus placing onus on military in eyes of world and Vietnamese people. Also clear that Nhu has maneuvered himself into commanding position."

"U.S. government cannot tolerate situation in which power lies in Nhu's hands. Diem must be given chance to rid himself

of Nhu and his circle and replace them with best military and political personalities available.

REPLACEMENT SUGGESTED

"If in spite of all your efforts, Diem remains obdurate and refuses, then we must face possibility that Diem himself cannot be preserved."

" . . . You may also tell appropriate military commanders we will give them direct support in any interim period of breakdown central government mechanism . . ."

"Concurrently with above, ambassador and country team should urgently examine all possible alternative leadership and make detailed plans as to how we might bring Diem's replacement if this should become necessary . . ."

Lodge quickly endorsed the strong position, proposing even not to bother with a final approach to Diem. He cabled Washington:

"Believe the chances of Diem meeting our demands are virtually nil. At the same time by making them we give Nhu chance to forestall or block action by military. Risk, we believe, is not worth taking, with Nhu in control combat forces Saigon. Therefore, we propose to go straight to generals with our demands, without informing Diem. Would tell them we preferred have Diem without Nhu but it is, in effect, up to them whether to keep him."

FAVORABLE PROSPECTS

Meanwhile, according to the study, CIA station chief John Richardson was reporting that prospects of a coup succeeding were favorable with Big Minh emerging as the most likely postcoup government head.

Meanwhile, two CIA agents—a Lt. Col. Concin and a Mr. Spera, neither of whom are further identified in the study—made contact with the generals.

By Monday, Hillsman reports, McNamara, Gen. Taylor and McCone began to have second thoughts about supporting a coup. By the next day, Gen. Paul Harkins, the American military commander in Saigon, registered his reservations, cabling Taylor:

"In my opinion as things stand now I don't believe there is sufficient reason for a crash approval on our part at this time."

The clash in views between Harkins and Lodge was to grow to the point that, by late October, Harkins was complaining to higher military authorities that Lodge was not showing him important cable traffic. And Lodge would be complaining that in his absence, Harkins should not be left in charge of the American team.

INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT

The debate within the National Security Council grew "testy," in the study's word, and concerned President Kennedy so much that he cabled Harkins and Lodge to each submit to him their "independent judgment," Lodge replied.

"We are launched on a course from which there is no respectable turning back: the overthrow of the Diem government. There is no turning back in part because U.S. prestige is already publicly committed to this end in large measure and will become more so as the facts leak out."

"In a more fundamental sense, there is no turning back because there is no possibility, in my view, that the war can be won under a Diem administration, still less than Diem or any member of the family can govern the country in a way to gain the support of the people who count, i.e., the educated class in and out of government service and military—not to mention the American people."

Harkins replied that Diem should be given an ultimatum to remove Nhu and that after that, there would be time to back the generals. The study does not quote Harkins as it does Lodge.

At a National Security Council meeting, McNamara backed Harkins, the study says,

"but the issue was not decided." Rusk cabled Lodge about presenting the ultimatum. Lodge opposed the idea, not wanting to make any approach to Diem.

Meanwhile, the abortive coup died quietly. An obscure colonel sought out a CIA officer on Aug. 30 and reported, according to the study, "that for the moment the plans of his group had stopped because the risk of failure was too great."

WITHOUT POLICY

Poignantly, the Pentagon analysts described the situation at that point:

"Having at long last decided to seek an alternative to the Diem regime by sanctioning a coup, only to have the attempt fail, the U.S. found itself at the end of August, 1963, without a policy and with most of its bridges burned."

Not part of the Pentagon study was a memorandum from Hilsman to Rusk, declassified on authority of President Johnson in 1968. In it, Hilsman offered several scenarios for dealing with Diem and Nhu, including what he called "a Gotterdammerung in the Palace" with U.S. support of leaders of the anti-Diem coup and destruction of the palace "is necessary to gain victory."

NEVER PRESENTED

This memorandum was prepared for the NSC meeting in which Kattenburg presented his idea for honorable withdrawal, but Rusk never presented the Hilsman memo to the NSC for consideration.

In September, the Kennedy administration fell into a long period of soul-searching and fact-finding. The month began, however, with a statement by Mr. Kennedy on a television news show reaffirming the American commitment to help the Diem regime if Diem would change personnel and develop policies bringing it into closer contact with the South Vietnamese people.

OPPOSES WITHDRAWAL

The President went on to say, however, "I don't agree with those who say we should withdraw. That would be a great mistake."

In Saigon, Lodge met with Nhu and extracted from him a promise to resign. Madame Nhu would go abroad, he promised, and Archbishop Thuc, the other presidential brother, would leave the country. In addition, he promised gestures would be made to ease Buddhist tensions and a prime minister would be named in the government as a public relations gesture. Days passed with nothing happening.

GROWS IMPATIENT

Lodge grew impatient, the study says, and his cables to Washington reflected fears that Nhu was secretly dealing with Hanoi and/or the Viet Cong through the French and Polish ambassadors in Saigon.

Madame Nhu did leave on her trip and Archbishop Thuc did go to Rome but arrests of students by the regime continued, the study says, and "stories of torture and atrocities began to circulate."

Lodge continued to remain aloof from Diem despite an order from Washington to make contact with the South Vietnamese president.

BACKS KATTENBURG

On Sept. 6, the National Security Council met in Washington. The study notes that Hilsman, in his book, reported that Robert F. Kennedy, the attorney general, picked up the Kattenburg line. According to Hilsman:

"As he (Kennedy) understood it, we were there to help the people resisting a Communist takeover. The first question was whether a Communist takeover could be successfully resisted with any government. If it could not, now was the time to get out of Vietnam entirely rather than waiting.

"The answer was that it could, but not with a Diem-Nhu government as it was now constituted; we owed it to the people resist-

ing Communism in Vietnam to give Lodge enough sanctions to bring changes that would permit successful resistance. But the basic question of whether a Communist takeover could be successfully resisted with any government had not been answered, and he was not sure that anyone had enough information to answer it."

KRULAK DISPATCHED

The study says: "(Robert) Kennedy's trenchant analysis, however, did not guarantee a . . . reappraisal of U.S. policy. It did stimulate further efforts to get more information on the situation."

President Kennedy sent Krulak and Joseph Mendenhall, a foreign service officer with long experience in Vietnam, to South Vietnam to study the situation. The CIA sent its own top-ranking but unidentified man to make an independent assessment.

Krulak, the report says, made a whirlwind tour of all four corps areas, talking to Harkins, Lodge, 87 U.S. advisers and 22 Vietnamese officers. Mendenhall went to Saigon, Hue, Da Nang and other cities talking to all Vietnamese friends.

Back in Washington, both reported to President Kennedy and the Security Council. Krulak optimistically, Mendenhall with pessimism. Krulak said the war was being won impressively; Mendenhall said it could not be won with the present regime. Krulak said the South Vietnamese military viewed the Buddhist crisis with detachment; Mendenhall said a religious war threatened. Krulak said news of Nhu's ouster would solve problems; Mendenhall said a breakdown of civil government could occur.

President Kennedy said: "You two did visit the same country, didn't you?"

Meanwhile, a similar split in opinions developed in the American Embassy in Saigon, the study notes. Harkins, Richardson and the director of the aid mission argued that the war effort had not been affected by the Buddhist crisis and Diem's loss of popular support. Lodge, Mendenhall and John Mecklin, United States Information Agency director in Saigon, argued that it did.

By mid-September, the Kennedy administration decided not to fan the flames of the coup. After a National Security Council meeting, the White House cabled Lodge:

ALSO OPTIMISTIC

"We see no good opportunity for action to remove present government in immediate future; therefore, as your most recent message suggests, we must, for the present, apply such pressures as are available to secure whatever modest improvements on the scene as may be possible . . . such a course, moreover, is consistent with more drastic effort as and when means become available."

At the same National Security Council meeting, President Kennedy decided to escalate the level of fact-finders going to Vietnam. He ordered McNamara and Taylor to make a trip. Like Krulak, they returned with an optimistic view of progress against the Viet Cong. They noted that the "serious political tensions in Saigon" (the study's phrase) could "erode the favorable military trend."

In Saigon, McNamara and Lodge called on Diem. Although authorized by Mr. Kennedy, McNamara did not ask for Nhu's removal. Neither did he and Lodge deliver, as they were authorized if they felt wise, a tough letter from Mr. Kennedy to Diem.

McNamara and Taylor reported that continued American pressures on Diem would only harden the regime's attitudes, the study says. But, noting the American dilemma, they reported that without such pressure "past patterns of behavior" would continue.

RECOMMENDS REVIEW

Militarily, the McNamara-Taylor report recommended that Gen. Harkins should review the war effort with Diem with a view to-

ward winning the war throughout the country except the Mekong Delta area by the end of 1964, and in the Delta by the end of 1965.

The two further proposed withdrawing 1,000 American troops by the end of 1963. Mr. Kennedy approved that, authorized announcement of the withdrawal but ordered that implementation of the withdrawal not be announced.

In the wake of the McNamara-Taylor report, the Kennedy administration, the study noted, settled on the course of applying pressure on its ally in Saigon to make reforms.

Though McNamara and Taylor had found no evidence of a coup in the making, such a move was forming. And on Oct. 2, three days after they left, the generals once again sought out American officials to determine the U.S. attitude toward the prospective overthrow of Diem.

Conelin, the CIA man, began a long series of contacts with the generals that were reported in detail by Lodge to Washington. Washington instructed Lodge to react this way:

" . . . President today approved recommendations that no initiative should now be taken to give any active covert encouragement to a coup. There should, however, be urgent covert effort with closest security under broad guidance of ambassador to identify and build contacts with possible alternative leadership as and when it appears.

"Essential that this effort be totally secure and fully deniable and separated entirely from normal political analysis and reporting and other activities of country team. We repeat that this effort is not to be aimed at active promotion of coup but only at surveillance and readiness . . ."

As the planning progressed, with Lodge giving no discouragement, a hitch developed when Harkins approached one of the generals involved and tried to discourage the coup.

Asked by Lodge about this, Harkins replied, according to the Pentagon study, that he had misunderstood the instructions from Washington; that he was only trying to discourage activities by South Vietnamese soldiers that would hinder the effort against the Viet Cong.

A South Vietnamese general later complained to Conelin that Harkins' discouragement had forced cancellation of plans to stage the coup on Oct. 26, a Vietnamese national holiday.

The incident, the study says, "once again highlighted the differing outlooks of the ambassador and MACV (American Military Command) and underscored lack of close coordination between them."

The South Vietnamese generals distrusted Harkins, Lodge, responsive to their fears, kept information to himself, the study says.

As planning progressed, Washington began to worry more and more about its success and ordered Lodge to urge a go-slow attitude on the generals, the study says. Lodge replied that the United States was committed.

Harkins, belatedly learning of all the planning, cabled his superiors:

"I would suggest we not try to change horses too quickly. That we continue to take persuasive actions that will make the horses change their course and methods of action. That we win the military effort as quickly as possible, then let them make any and all changes they want.

"After all, rightly or wrongly, we have backed Diem for eight long hard years. To me it seems incongruous now to get him down, kick him around, and get rid of him. The U.S. has been his mother superior and father confessor since he's been in office and he has leaned on us heavily."

By Oct. 30, Harkins was disagreeing with Lodge to such a great extent that Lodge was reporting the fact in his cables. Lodge was reporting he did not have "the power to delay or discourage a coup."

TELLS U.S. INTEREST

On Oct. 30, still nervous about the possible failure of a coup, McGeorge Bundy cabled Lodge, saying:

"Once a coup under responsible leadership has begun, and within these restrictions, it is in the interest of the U.S. government that it should succeed."

The rest of the cable outlined instructions on how to act during the coup; reject all appeals for intervention on both sides; perform acts agreeable to both sides "in event of indecisive contest." If coup fails, give asylum, on Lodge's discretion, to those taking part. But they should seek asylum first in another embassy.

NO INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE

By not taking steps to thwart the coup, the United States had acted in complicity with the generals. But nonetheless, neither Lodge nor anyone else on the embassy staff, according to the study and the documents, had intimate knowledge of when the coup would take place.

A day after Bundy's cable to Lodge, preliminary movements by the plotters to secure their forces against counterattack were put into effect. On Nov. 1 the coup was consummated. On Nov. 2, Diem and Nhu were assassinated.

In the coup aftermath, Viet Cong activity heightened. But more worrisome, according to the study, there were indications that under Diem, the real military situation had been distorted by "regular and substantial classification in the military reporting system." The situation had been made to appear less serious than it was. But "as time wore on, the accumulating evidence of the gravity of this military situation displaced the sanguine prognoses."

ANOTHER SESSION

Another Honolulu strategy session was planned for Nov. 20. At Honolulu, the conferees drafted a national security action memorandum stating the purpose of the United States as one "to assist the people and government of that country (South Vietnam) to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy."

It called for the withdrawal of troops, directing a withdrawal of 300 by Dec. 3. It ordered maintenance of military and economic aid to the new regime and, in the study's words, "plans were requested for clandestine operations by the GVN against the north and also for operations up to 50 kilometers inside Laos; and as a justification for such measures. State was directed to develop a strong documented case to demonstrate to the world the degree with which the Viet Cong is controlled sustained and supplied from Hanoi, through Laos and other channels."

PICKS UP BURDEN

It was a harbinger of the future escalation, drafted on the eve of President Kennedy's assassination.

After the conference—and the assassination—Lodge flew to Washington to confer with President Johnson, who had picked up the burden. The national security action memo, the study says, "was to be extremely short-lived. In the jargon of the bureaucracy, it was simply overtaken by events. The gravity of the military situation in South Vietnam was only hinted at . . . in Honolulu. Its full dimensions would rapidly come to light in the remaining weeks of 1963 and force high-level reappraisals by year's end."

"But probably more important, the deterioration of the Vietnamese position in the countryside and the rapid collapse of the strategic hamlet program were to confront the fragile new political structure in South Vietnam with difficulties it could not surmount and to set off rivalries that would fulfill all the dire predictions of political instability made by men . . . before Diem's fall."

[From the Los Angeles Times, June 26, 1971]

A SMALL STEP LED TO ASIAN LAND WAR—PENTAGON STUDY TELLS DECISION TO DEPLOY MARINES

(By Stuart H. Loory)

WASHINGTON.—The Johnson Administration, without extensive consideration, made a watershed decision without recognizing it, that ultimately involved the United States in a land war in Asia, according to the secret Pentagon study.

Gen. William C. Westmoreland and Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor each recognized the significance of what appeared to be a small step—the deployment of 3,500 marines in March, 1965, to protect the growing air base at Da Nang.

The American press corps in Saigon agreed that the move was pivotal, but Washington saw it only as a step limited to the defense of the air base.

Westmoreland urged the decision for deployment on Washington. Taylor had strong reservations about it and went along reluctantly.

MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENT

"The landing of the marines at Da Nang was a watershed event in the history of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam," the study says. "It represented a major decision made without much fanfare—and without much planning."

"Whereas the decision to begin bombing North Vietnam was the product of a year's discussion, debate and a lot of paper, and whereas the consideration of pacification policies reached Talmudic proportions over the years, this decision created less than a ripple."

"A mighty commandment of U.S. foreign policy—thou shalt not engage in an Asian land war—had been breached. Besides Cincpac (the military commander-in-chief in the Pacific) and Gen. Westmoreland who favored the deployment, Ambassador Taylor who concurred with deep reservation, and (John) McNaughton (assistant defense secretary for international security affairs), who apparently tried to add a monkey wrench, this is a decision without faces."

"The seeming ease with which the marines were introduced and the mild reaction from Hanoi served to facilitate what was to come. It also weakened the position of those who were, a few scant months later, to oppose the landing of further U.S. ground combat forces."

When the 3,500 marines were sent into Da Nang there was little thought that they would presage a troop buildup that would eventually grow to more than 540,000 men. They were intended by President Lyndon B. Johnson and his advisers only to protect the air base at Da Nang against mortar and rocket attacks by the Viet Cong.

At that time, Da Nang, in the northern part of South Vietnam, was a base from which the first of the bombing raids against North Vietnam were being flown.

The air war against the north was begun at a time when the outlook for the survival of the United States-supported Saigon regime was gloomy from almost every point of view. Indeed, the bombing of the north was begun, according to the study, not only to raise the price of North Vietnamese participation in the war but to boost the morale of the South Vietnamese, the study shows.

Portions of the study which the Los Angeles Times has obtained and which were previously unpublished, show that Taylor, a general who had served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff before taking over as ambassador in Saigon, sought to warn the Johnson administration of the dangers of deploying the marines.

REVERSING POLICY

"I develop grave reservations as to wisdom and necessity of so doing," he cabled Washington. "Such action would be a step in reversing long standing policy of avoiding

commitment of ground combat forces in SVN (South Vietnam). Once this policy is breached, it will be very difficult to hold line. . . .

"Once it becomes evident that we are willing assume such new responsibilities, one may be sure that GVN (government of South Vietnam) will seek to unload other ground force tasks upon us."

"Increased number of ground forces in SVN will increase points of friction with local population and create conflicts with RVNAF (Republic of Vietnam armed forces) over command relationships. These disadvantages can be accepted only if there is clear and unchallenged need which can be satisfied only by U.S. ground forces. . . .

"The use of marines in mobile counter-VC (Viet Cong) operations has the attraction of giving them an offensive mission and one of far greater appeal than that of mere static defense. However, it would raise many serious problems which in past have appeared sufficiently formidable to lead to rejection of use of U.S. ground troops in a counter-guerrilla role."

UNSUITABLE SOLDIERS

"White-faced soldier armed, equipped and trained as he is (is) not suitable guerrilla fighter for Asian forests and jungles. French tried to adapt their forces to this mission and failed."

"I doubt that U.S. forces could do much better. . . . There would be ever present question of how foreign soldier would distinguish between a VC and friendly Vietnamese farmer. When I view this array of difficulties, I am convinced that we should adhere to our past policy of keeping our ground forces out of direct counter-insurgency role."

Virtually everything Taylor prophesied in Vietnam came true. But when the dire prediction was made, it fell on the deaf ears of policy-makers in Washington.

Taylor's view, according to the study, represented a change in his attitude from the previous August. At that time, in the wake of the Gulf of Tonkin affair, he recommended to Washington the landing of marines at Da Nang to beef up the American support base and defend the airfield.

At that time, the study notes in a footnote. "There is no agonizing over 'white faces.'"

ONLY A BEGINNING

Westmoreland and his staff, according to the study, "saw in the deployment of the marines the beginning of greater things to come. . . . The rapidity with which the staff followed on the marine(s) . . . with more proposals would tend to back up such a conclusion."

"It seems hardly a coincidence that Gen. (Harold K.) Johnson (then Army chief of staff) immediately following his briefings by MACV, (American Military Command, Vietnam) returned to Washington and recommended, among other things, that a U.S. division be deployed to SVN," the study says.

However, insignificant in terms of grand strategy the move seemed in Washington, the American press corps in Saigon viewed it as of major significance.

As an example, the study quotes a dispatch from Los Angeles Times Saigon correspondent Ted Sell, which said, on March 10, 1965: "The landing of the two infantry battalions is in its own way a far more significant act than were earlier attacks of U.S. airplanes, even though those attacks were directed against a country—North Vietnam—ostensibly not taking part in the direct war."

CALLED UNDESIRABLE

Sell, the study notes, went on to quote a high official as saying that the deployment was undesirable "but that doesn't mean we won't do it."

The Pentagon analysts who wrote the study could not determine from the record whether those who actually planned the Marine move

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(as opposed to those at the top of the Johnson administration who approved it) really meant it as a one-shot proposition to protect the base or as the wedge in the doorway through which more troops would follow.

"In light of subsequent events, it would be facile to conclude that the modest input of some 3,500 marines at this juncture pre-empted the massive buildup of U.S. fighting power in Vietnam which brought American military strength in the country to over 180,000 by the end of 1965.

"Except for COMUSMACV (Westmoreland) who did see it as a first step and welcomed it and Ambassador Taylor who saw it as an unwelcome first step, official Washington regarded the deployment as a one-shot affair to meet a specific situation."

But before the year was half over, the door was open all the way and American combat troops were pouring into the Asian land war in ever-increasing numbers, a trend that was to continue for the next four years.

[From St. Louis Post-Dispatch, June 25, 1971]

McNAMARA: PACIFICATION A FAILURE—DESPAIRED IN 1966 OF QUICK VICTORY. PAPERS SHOW

WASHINGTON, June 25.—Secret Pentagon documents obtained by the Post-Dispatch show that Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara was calling the pacification program "a bad disappointment" a year and a half after the massive U.S. build-up in Vietnam began.

"Pacification has if anything gone backward," he said in a memorandum to President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Faint signs of development of national political institutions and a legitimate civil government had not filtered down to province level or below, he wrote.

"As compared with two, or four, years ago, enemy full-time regional forces and part-time guerrilla forces are larger; attacks, terrorism and sabotage have increased in scope and intensity; more railroads are closed and highways cut; the rice crop expected to come to market is smaller; we control little, if any, more of the population; the VC (Viet Cong) infrastructure thrives in most of the country, continuing to give the enemy his enormous intelligence advantage; full security exists nowhere (not even behind the U.S. marines' lines and in Saigon); in the countryside, the enemy almost completely controls the night," he went on.

McNamara gave his bleak judgment in private at a time when he and President Johnson were speaking confidently in public of progress being made in the American military escalation that had begun in the spring of 1965.

"I see no reasonable way to bring the war to an end soon," McNamara wrote.

He told Johnson also that the first year and a half of the bombing of North Vietnam had failed to stem infiltration or to crack Hanoi's morale.

He proposed leveling off the troop buildup at 470,000 and holding the bombing of the north at its current level. The Joint Chiefs of Staff disagreed strongly on both points, the documents showed.

"In essence, we find ourselves—from the point of view of the important war (for the complicity of the people)—no better, and if anything, worse off," McNamara said, comparing the situation with that of 18 months earlier.

"This important war must be fought and won by the Vietnamese themselves. We have known this from the beginning. But the discouraging truth is that, as was the case in 1961 and 1963 and 1965, we have not found the formula, the catalyst, for training and inspiring them into effective action."

The memorandum was quoted in full in parts of a Pentagon history of the United

States involvement in Vietnam obtained by the Post-Dispatch. Although other parts quoted by other newspapers in the last two weeks have been described as top secret, the several hundred Xeroxed pages obtained by the Post-Dispatch bore no security classification.

Each Xeroxed page had a blank space at the bottom, however, where a strip of paper had been laid over the place where a security label usually is stamped.

Elaborating on his somber appraisal, McNamara told President Johnson that enemy morale had not been broken.

"He (the enemy) apparently has adjusted to our stopping his drive for military victory and has adopted a strategy of keeping us busy and waiting us out (a strategy of attriting our national will)," McNamara wrote.

He said that the one thing clearly going for the United States in Vietnam over the previous year was the large number of enemy killed in action in the big military operations. He estimated enemy battle deaths at more than 60,000 a year.

"The infiltration routes would seem to be one-way trails to death for the North Vietnamese," he wrote. "Yet there is no sign of an impending break in enemy morale and it appears that he can more than replace his losses by infiltration from North Vietnam and recruitment in South Vietnam."

The narrative history by unnamed Pentagon analysts commented that McNamara's memorandum was a clear no to Gen. William C. Westmoreland, then the U.S. commander in Saigon; Adm. U.S. Grant Sharp, then commander of the Pacific Fleet, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in their proposals for expanded bombing and major ground force increases.

"But it was a negative with a difference," the historian said.

Among the options it offered was installation of a counterinfiltration barrier across northern South Vietnam, the device later known as the McNamara Line. Another was an intensified pacification program with increased attention paid to physical security, to be provided by having military forces remain in an area after clearing it of enemy troops.

At the proper time, McNamara said, "I believe we should consider terminating bombing in all of North Vietnam, or at least in the northeast zones, for an indefinite period in connection with covert moves toward peace."

On a bombing halt, McNamara proposed that "without fanfare, conditions or avowals" the United States stop bombing all of North Vietnam and then "see what develops, retaining freedom to resume the bombing if nothing useful was forthcoming."

As an alternative, he suggested shifting the bombing largely away from Hanoi and Halphong to provide the North Vietnamese a face-saving device and "reduce the international heat on the U.N."

He said that the bombing of northeastern North Vietnam could be resumed at any time or spot attacks could be made there from time to time "to keep North Vietnam off balance and to require her to pay almost the full cost by maintaining her repair crews in place."

Actually the bombing of North Vietnam was halted for the first time in 1965 when Mr. Johnson suspended it from May 13 to 19. On Dec. 24, 1965, the bombing was halted again, this time for 37 days.

On March 31, 1968, the air war was halted in the northern part of the country, freeing about 90 per cent of the population of North Vietnam from attack. That was announced in the speech in which Johnson announced he would not seek re-election.

Seven months later, on Nov. 1, 1968, four days before the election of Richard M. Nixon as president, Johnson halted the bombing al-

together. President Nixon has resumed the bombing on an intermittent basis.

Other parts of the McNamara package were to try to split the Viet Cong from Hanoi, press contacts with North Vietnam and other parties that might contribute to a settlement, and development of a plan to give the Viet Cong a role in negotiations and in post-war life.

McNamara told Mr. Johnson that the prognosis was bad for a satisfactory end of the war within the next two years. He predicted that neither large-unit operations nor negotiations would accomplish that result, but he said both should continue to be tried.

"The solution lies in girding, openly, for a longer war and in taking action immediately which will in 12 or 18 months give clear evidence that the continuing costs and risks to the American people are acceptably limited, that the formula for success has been found, and that the end of the war is merely a matter of time," he wrote.

McNamara supported his dim view of the so-called Rolling Thunder program of bombing North Vietnam by appending extracts from appraisals by the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Institute for Defense Analyses.

A CIA-DIA report on the bombing through Sept. 12, 1966, said there was no evidence of any shortage of petroleum products or any serious transport problem in North Vietnam, nor any evidence that the air strikes had significantly weakened popular morale. It said that they had curtailed economic growth, but not essential economic activities.

A March 18, 1966, CIA report said that, despite the bombing, Hanoi was as firm as ever in its determination to continue supporting the insurgency in the South. It concluded that air attacks almost certainly could not cut back the infiltration rate significantly.

The Summer Study Group of the Institute for Defense Analyses reported that many intelligence observers agreed that Rolling Thunder did not restrict the flow of supplies into South Vietnam "because North Vietnam is neither the source of supplies nor the choke-point on the supply routes from China and USSR."

Not even closing Halphong harbor, eliminating electric power plants and destroying the railroads would change the situation, the report said, because the North Vietnamese could improvise alternative transportation.

A month later, however, in a draft memorandum for the President, dated Nov. 17, McNamara took a more optimistic view of the results of both the American military build-up and the bombing of North Vietnam.

He wrote that the introduction of large-scale U.S. combat forces "almost completely neutralized" the large units of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese. As for the air war, he noted, "the B-52 and tactical air efforts have hurt enemy morale, produced casualties and disrupted his (the enemy's) operations and logistics operations."

The Pentagon analysts observed that the reaction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to McNamara's October memorandum was "predictively rapid—and violent." They agreed that the war would be long, but they thought he was too restrained in his report of some military progress.

The Joint Chiefs contended, the narrative said, that the memorandum did not take into account the "adverse impact over time of continued bloody defeats on the morale of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army forces and the determination of their political military leaders."

They said they wanted to reserve judgment on the proposed 470,000-troop deployment ceiling in Vietnam.

On the bombing, the Joint Chiefs were quoted as saying:

"The Joint Chiefs of Staff do not concur in your recommendation that there should be no increase in the level of bombing efforts and no modification in areas and targets subject to air attack. They believe our air campaign against North Vietnam to be an integral and indispensable part of our over-all war effort. To be effective, the air campaign should be conducted with only those minimum constraints necessary to avoid indiscriminate killing of population."

There was no indication of the source from which the Joint Chiefs' statement had quoted that last sentence.

On pacification, the Joint Chiefs continued to press for transfer of the program to Gen. Westmoreland's military command, warning of costly delays if a civilian agency was created. Later, a civilian agency was established, but a military command eventually took it over.

They explained their disagreement with McNamara over the way to induce negotiations by contending that the bombing was one trump card held by the President.

It should not be surrendered without a quid pro quo, such as "an end to the North Vietnamese aggression in South Vietnam," the Joint Chiefs said, according to the Pentagon analyst.

The unnamed historian said that the heads of the service branches observed that the conflict had reached a stage where decisions taken over the next 60 days could determine the outcome of the war. They wanted, therefore, to provide the President with their unequivocal views on the search for peace and military pressures on North Vietnam, they said.

"The frequent, broadly based public offers made by the President to settle the war by peaceful means on a generous basis, which would take from North Vietnam nothing it now had, have been admirable," the Joint Chiefs said.

"Certainly, no one—American or foreigner—except those who are determined not to be convinced, can doubt the sincerity, the generosity, the altruism of U.S. actions and objectives.

"In the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the time has come when further overt actions and offers on our part are not only nonproductive, they are counterproductive. A logical case can be made that the American people, our allies, and our enemies alike are increasingly uncertain as to our resolution to pursue the war to a successful conclusion."

The analysts said they recommended a "sharp knock" against North Vietnamese installations rather than the current campaign of slowly increasing pressures.

"Whatever the political merits of the latter course," the Joint Chiefs wrote, according to the analyst, we deprived ourselves of the military effects of early weight of effort and shock and gave to the enemy time to adjust to our slow, quantitative and qualitative increase of pressure.

"This is not to say that is now too late to derive military benefits from more effective and extensive use of our air and naval superiority."

They went on to recommend an increased Rolling Thunder program, authorizing attacks against North Vietnam's single steel plant, the Hanoi rail yards, the thermal power plants, selected areas within Haiphong ports and other ports, selected locks and dams controlling waterways, surface-to-air missile support facilities inside Hanoi and Haiphong, and petroleum installations at Haiphong and other places.

They wanted also to use naval surface forces against North Vietnamese coastal shipping and land routes and against radar and anti-aircraft artillery sites along the coast.

McNamara's Oct. 14 memorandum was dated two days before President Johnson left on a 17-day trip that included a meeting with

Premier Nguyen Cao Ky at Manila and a military planning conference at Honolulu.

The Johnson Administration was being pressed by the military services to increase the bombing and the troop level and by anti-war groups to reverse the U.S. escalation in Vietnam.

In memorandum that he drafted for President Johnson on Nov. 17, 1966, McNamara spoke again in gloomy terms on the pacification program that was aimed at securing the South Vietnamese countryside from Communist domination.

"The pacification program has been stalled for years," he said. "It is stalled today. The situation in this regard is no better—possibly worse—than it was in 1965, 1963, and 1961."

In the 14 months between July 31, 1965, and Sept. 30, 1966, McNamara said, the government of South Vietnam reportedly gained control of areas containing 1,600,000 more persons, increasing its control from 47 to 55 per cent of the total population, "the highest level to date."

He said that Viet Cong and North Vietnamese control decreased by 6 percent in the same period, a loss of areas containing 800,000 persons. The South Vietnamese government's control of the rural population rose to 35 per cent from 23 in this period, McNamara said, and the Viet Cong's control of rural areas dropped to 28 per cent from 35.

After reciting these figures, however, the Defense Secretary said they were based on available reports of questionable validity.

"It is highly likely that these figures are grossly optimistic," he said. "It should be noted that about 30 percent of the reported gains by the South Vietnamese government probably resulted from movement of refugees into cities and towns."

"Another report indicates that GVN (the government of South Vietnam) increased its control of area only from 8 to 12 per cent" in the first nine months of 1966.

"Since 1965, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army have claimed control of 80 per cent of the South Vietnamese territory and 75 percent of the population.

"At the end of September 1966, GVN controlled about 25 per cent of the vital roads in South Vietnam. It controlled about 20 per cent of the total roads, down from 35 per cent in 1965 and 40 per cent in 1964. The rest were marginal or closed and could be traveled only with adequate security cautions."

By 1966, the pessimistic evaluation of the pacification program was not being concealed by the Administration to the extent that it covered up other aspects of the Vietnam situation.

Earlier in the war, Administration officials had claimed successes in the pacification effort that were disputed by American reporters covering the war.

But on Oct. 14, 1966, the date of the first McNamara memorandum obtained by the Post-Dispatch and a month before the second memorandum, President Johnson said at a press conference that the pacification program "can stand a great deal of improvement."

The President told reporters also, however, that "our military effort, we think, is going very well."

Later that month, Johnson made a dramatic trip to Southeast Asia and South Vietnam. In a radio broadcast from South Vietnam, he painted a glowing picture of the military situation.

"We received an eloquent and encouraging report from Gen. Westmoreland," the President said. "We saw that our military shield is now strong enough to prevent the aggressor from succeeding."

McNamara's dry factual discussion of the military situation in South Vietnam, in his Nov. 17 memorandum, was not so optimistic as Mr. Johnson's public statements.

"Despite the wide variation in estimates of infiltration, recruitment, and losses, the data indicate that current enemy recruitment, infiltration rates and tactics have more than offset the increased (Allied) deployments, enabling the enemy to increase his forces in the past and in the foreseeable future," McNamara said.

"If we assume that the estimates of enemy strength are accurate, the ratio of total (Allied) to total enemy strength has only increased from 3.5 to 4 to 1 since the end of 1965.

"Under those circumstances, it does not appear that we have favorable leverage required to achieve decisive attrition by introducing more forces."

The Defense Secretary was sharply critical of the performance of the South Vietnamese army in combat.

"The increasingly unsatisfactory performance of the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) in combat operations is reflected in U.S. Army advisory reports and in ARVN and U.S. operational statistics," he said.

"During the January-September (1966) period for which data are available, U.S. field advisers rated combat effectiveness as unsatisfactory or marginal in up to 32 per cent of all ARVN combat positions.

"Over 115,700 South Vietnamese military personnel (19 per cent of the total ARVN) deserted in 1965, and desertions in 1966 through October were at the annual rate of 130,000, 21 per cent (of the total).

"The poor ARVN performance also shows in the operational statistics. ARVN made contact (with the enemy) in only 46 per cent of its large-scale operations, against a U.S. contact rate of 90 per cent."

In the memorandum, McNamara said the Administration would have to choose between two approaches in 1967: another rapid substantial increase in U.S. combat forces in South Vietnam or a more modest increase.

In the first instance, the additional big build-up would be used for large-scale search-and-destroy operations to destroy large Communist troop concentrations, he said.

If a smaller build-up was decided on, it would be only large enough to utilize, not destroy, the main Communist units "and prevent them from interfering with the pacification program," McNamara said.

"I believe it is time to adopt the second approach, for three reasons," he wrote. "One, if MACV (The U.S. military command in South Vietnam) estimates of enemy strength are correct, we have not been able to attrite the enemy forces fast enough to break their morale and more U.S. forces are unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future.

"Two, we cannot deploy more than about 470,000 personnel by the end of 1967 without a high probability of generating a self-defeating runaway inflation in South Vietnam, and.

"Three, an endless escalation of U.S. deployments is not likely to be acceptable in the U.S. or to induce the enemy to believe that the U.S. is prepared to stay as long as is required to produce a secure non-Communist South Vietnam."

The contrast between McNamara's private assessments of the war and his public statements in 1966 is marked in the extreme.

For example, on May 11, 1966, McNamara told the Senate Foreign Relations committee that captive Viet Cong soldiers said they no longer expected to win the war.

"There seems to be considerable doubt among the ordinary soldiers that even in a protracted war the Viet Cong will win," he said.

A month later he told reporters at a Pentagon press-conference that U.S. military successes in South Vietnam had "exceeded our expectations" in the first quarter of 1966. Communist losses were reported to be three times as great as combined U.S., South Vietnamese and Allied losses.

Another month later, on July 31, 1966, he told a press conference in Washington that "we are gaining militarily" in South Vietnam. While expressing cautious optimism, he added carefully, "We do not look for a short war."

Perhaps the strongest disparity between McNamara's public remarks and his private reports to Mr. Johnson shows up in a press conference on Nov. 5, just three days before the congressional elections of 1966.

After meeting with President Johnson at the LBJ Ranch in Texas, McNamara told reporters that the Communists could not win a military victory in South Vietnam in 1967.

As a result, he said, draft calls would be cut and so would the planned production of bombs and other air ordnance. The increase in U.S. forces in South Vietnam would be "nothing on the order of" the 200,000-man build-up in 1966 and no sharp increases would take place in the level of bombing attacks, he stated.

McNamara said he told Mr. Johnson that the military situation in South Vietnam was dramatically brighter than it had been 15 months before. However, he said, he expected the Viet Cong to "continue to fight on stubbornly."

The pessimistic view that McNamara took of the war in his memoranda of October and November 1966 continued a frame of mind that the Secretary of Defense had exhibited privately the preceding year. The earlier attitude is spelled out in the Pentagon papers obtained by the Post-Dispatch in a section titled "Evolution of the War, U.S./GVN: 1963-1967."

The analyst writing in this section recounts that on July 1, 1965, McNamara submitted a memorandum to President Johnson reviewing all aspects of Vietnam policy. The analyst said that McNamara concentrated on deployment of American fighting forces to Vietnam and "had little to say on GVN's problems."

The Pentagon study said in a section of the memorandum titled "Initiatives Inside Vietnam," McNamara's "only significant recommendations were that we should increase our aid to GVN and that Chieu Hoi program should be improved." The latter program was the so-called "open arms" effort aimed at attracting defectors from enemy forces.

In a second memorandum to the President, written July 20, 1965, after a trip to Saigon, McNamara suggested that the U.S. should lay down some terms for the assistance it provided.

With South Vietnamese leaders "again pressing for more U.S. forces than were available," the study related, McNamara mentioned the possibility of an American veto on bellicose statements by South Vietnamese military commanders suggesting an invasion of North Vietnam and other possible restraints.

The Pentagon historian reported that in this memorandum "McNamara's over-all evaluation was deeply pessimistic, making clear why he recommended increased U.S. forces at that time." The study then quoted from the memorandum:

"Estimate of the situation: 'The situation in South Vietnam is worse than a year ago (when it was worse than a year before that). After a few months of stalemate, the tempo of the war has quickened.'

"A hard VC (Viet Cong) push is now on to dismember the nation and to maul the army. The VC main and local forces, reinforced by militia and guerrillas, have the initiative and, with large attacks (some in regimental strength), are hurting ARVN (South Vietnamese Army) forces badly.

"The main VC efforts have been in southern First Corps, northern and central Second Corps and north of Saigon. The central highlands could well be lost to the National Liberation Front during this monsoon season.

"Since June 1, the GVN has been forced to abandon six district capitals; only one has been retaken. U.S. combat troops deployment and U.S.-VNAF (Vietnamese air force) air strikes in-country have probably shaken VC morale somewhat.

"Yet the government is able to provide security to fewer and fewer people and less and less territory as terrorism increases. Cities and towns are being isolated as fewer and fewer roads and railroads are usable and power and communication lines are cut.

"The economy is deteriorating. The war is disrupting rubber production, rice distribution, datat vegetable production and the coastal fishing industry, causing the loss of jobs and income, displacement of people, and frequent breakdown or suspension of vital means of transportation and communication; foreign exchange earnings have fallen; and severe inflation is threatened."

Although McNamara's private appraisals of the war in both 1965 and 1966 were dour, he and President Johnson, along with other administration officials, were speaking confidently in public of progress being made in the American build-up in Vietnam.

At a press conference on Oct. 8, 1966, Johnson discussed his forthcoming trip later that month to six Asian countries in connection with the Manila conference on the war. He said the conference would consider the rehabilitation and redevelopment work needed in Vietnam "once aggression has been defeated."

One week later at another press conference, again referring to the approaching Manila meetings, Johnson noted that at the Honolulu conference of February 1966, it had been agreed that American and South Vietnamese leaders would get together again in about six months.

In the interim, the President told reporters, "Much has happened." He referred particularly to the fact that "the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong monsoon offensive, that gave us concern, failed." He said also that "foundations have been laid and progress begun in the field" for the so-called revolutionary program in Vietnam.

On Oct. 14, the very date of the memorandum disclosed in the Pentagon documents obtained by the Post-Dispatch, the Secretary of Defense, meeting reporters with the President, offered no discouraging words.

To the contrary, he noted that one of the purposes of his just-concluded trip to South Vietnam had been to examine American troop deployment there. He saw no need, he said, for any "substantial increase in the rate of deployment."

He denounced "wild speculation" that he said had been appearing in the press about a possible increase in the pace of American troop assignments to Vietnam and termed such reports "absolutely without foundation."

Throughout his 17-day trip in Asia in October 1966, Johnson struck a firm and confident note about the eventual outcome in Vietnam. In Melbourne, Australia, for example, he likened the Vietnamese conflict to the onset of World War II, remarking:

"As the aggressor marched in the Low Countries in the late 1930s and ultimately wound up in World War II, there are aggressors prowling tonight on the march again. Their aggression shall not succeed."

The Allied forces fighting in Vietnam, the President declared, "are going to stay there until this aggression is checked before it blooms into World War III."

Much of the same theme prevailed near the end of the trip at the Manila summit conference itself. At the opening session on Oct. 24, 1966, Johnson said the most important function of the meeting would be to let the world know "that the nations directly assisting the people of South Vietnam are resolute."

He said there was a general determina-

tion of those present "that aggression must fail."

The final declaration of the conference, joined in by Johnson and the leaders of six other nations, including President Nguyen Van Thieu and Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky, both representing South Vietnam, set a note of firm determination. The statement, issued Oct. 25, said:

"We shall continue our military and all other efforts, as firmly and as long as may be necessary, in close consultation among ourselves until the aggression is ended."

The statement recounted that "the government of Vietnam described the significant military progress being made against aggression."

This was less than two weeks after McNamara's memorandum to Mr. Johnson had painted such a bleak picture of the 18-month-old American build-up in South Vietnam and the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam.

After the Manila conference, Johnson paid a secret visit to South Vietnam. In a radio report a few hours later to the American people, he spoke glowingly of the accomplishments being made in Vietnam.

He said then that U.S. fighting men were in Vietnam "because somewhere and at some place the free nations of the world must say again to the militant disciples of Asian communism: This far and no further."

"The time is now, and the place is Vietnam."

[From St. Louis Post-Dispatch, June 25, 1971]

PARTIAL TEXTS OF WAR DATA

WASHINGTON.—Following are excerpts from secret Pentagon papers on United States involvement in the Vietnam War that have been obtained by the Post-Dispatch:

Text of a memorandum to President Lyndon B. Johnson from Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara on Oct. 14, 1966:

1. A Memorandum for the President

1. Evaluation of the situation. In the report of my last trip to Vietnam almost a year ago, I stated that the odds were about even that, even with the then-recommended deployments, we would be faced in early 1967 with a military stand-off at a much higher level of conflict and with "pacification" still stalled. I am a little less pessimistic now in one respect. We have done somewhat better militarily than I anticipated. We have by and large blunted the Communist military initiative—any military victory in South Vietnam the Viet Cong may have had in mind 18 months ago has been thwarted by our emergency deployments and actions. And our program of bombing the North has exacted a price.

My concern continues, however, in other respects. This is because I see no reasonable way to bring the war to an end soon. Enemy morale has not broken—he apparently has adjusted to our stopping his drive for military victory and has adopted a strategy of keeping us busy and waiting us out (a strategy of attriting our national will). He knows that we have not been, and he believes we probably will not be, able to translate our military successes into the "end products"—broken enemy morale and political achievements by the GVN (government of South Vietnam).

The one thing demonstrably going for us in Vietnam over the past year has been the large number of enemy killed-in-action resulting from the big military operations. Allowing for possible exaggeration in reports, the enemy must be taking losses—deaths in and after battle—at the rate of more than 60,000 a year. The infiltration routes would seem to be one-way trails to death for the North Vietnamese. Yet there is no sign of an impending break in enemy morale and it appears that he can more than replace his losses by infiltration from North Vietnam and recruitment in South Vietnam.

Pacification is a bad disappointment. We have good grounds to be pleased by the recent elections, by Ky's 16 months in power, and by the faint signs of development of national political institutions and of a legitimate civil government. But none of this has translated itself into political achievements at province level or below. Pacification has if anything gone backward. As compared with two, or four, years ago, enemy full-time regional forces and part-time guerrilla forces are larger; attacks, terrorism and sabotage have increased in scope and intensity; more railroads are closed and highway cut; the rice crop expected to come to market is smaller; we control little, if any, more of the population; the VC political infrastructure thrives in most of the country, continuing to give the enemy his enormous intelligence advantage; full security exists nowhere (not even behind the US Marines' lines and in Saigon); in the countryside, the enemy almost completely controls the night.

Nor has the Rolling Thunder program of bombing the North either significantly affected infiltration or cracked the morale of Hanoi. There is agreement in the intelligence community on these facts (see the attached Appendix).

In essence, we find ourselves—from the point of view of the important war (for the complicity of the people)—no better, and if anything, worse off. This important war must be fought and won by the Vietnamese themselves. We have known this from the beginning. But the discouraging truth is that, as was the case in 1961 and 1963 and 1965, we have not found the formula, the catalyst, for training and inspiring them into effective action.

2. Recommended actions. In such an unpromising state of affairs, what should we do? We must continue to press the enemy militarily; we must make demonstrable progress in pacification; at the same time, we must add a new ingredient forced on us by the facts. Specifically, we must improve our position by getting ourselves into a military posture that we credibly would maintain indefinitely—a posture that makes trying to "wait us out" less attractive. I recommend a five-prong course of action to achieve those ends.

a. Stabilize U.S. force levels in Vietnam. It is my judgment that, barring a dramatic change in the war, we should limit the increase in U.S. forces in SVN in 1967 to 70,000 men and we should level off at the total of 470,000 which such an increase would provide. It is my view that this is enough to punish the enemy at the large-unit operations level and to keep the enemy's main forces from interrupting pacification. I believe also that even many more than 470,000 would not kill the enemy off in such numbers as to break their morale so long as they think they can wait us out. It is possible that such a 40 per cent increase over our present level of 325,000 will break the enemy's morale in the short term; but if it does not, we must, I believe, be prepared for and have under way a long-term program premised on more than breaking the morale of main force units. A stabilized U.S. force level would be part of such a long-term program. It would put us in a position where negotiations would be more likely to be productive, but if they were not we could pursue the all-important pacification task with proper attention and resources and without the spectre of apparently endless escalation of U.S. deployments.

b. Install a barrier. A portion of the 470,000 troops—perhaps 10,000 to 20,000—should be devoted to the construction and maintenance of an infiltration barrier. Such a barrier would lie near the 17th parallel—would run from the sea, across the neck of South Vietnam (choking off the new infiltration routes through the DMZ) and across the trails in Laos. This interdiction system (at an approximate cost of \$1 billion) would comprise to

the east a ground barrier of fences, wire sensors, artillery, aircraft and mobile troops; and to the west—mainly in Laos—an interdiction zone covered by air-laid mines and bombing attacks pin-pointed by air-laid acoustic sensors.

The barrier may not be fully effective at first, but I believe that it can be made effective in time and that even the threat of its becoming effective can substantially change to our advantage the character of the war. It would hinder enemy efforts, would permit more efficient use of the limited number of friendly troops, and would be persuasive evidence both that our sole aim is to protect the South from the North and that we intend to see the job through.

c. Stabilize the Rolling Thunder program against the North. Attack sorties in North Vietnam have risen from about 4000 per month at the end of last year to 6000 per month in the first quarter of this year and 12,000 per month at present. Most of our 50 per cent increase of deployed attack-capable aircraft has been absorbed in the attacks on North Vietnam. In North Vietnam, almost 84,000 attack sorties have been flown (about 25 percent against fixed targets), 45 percent during the past seven months.

Despite these efforts, it now appears that the North Vietnamese-Laotian road network will remain adequate to meet the requirements of the Communist forces in South Vietnam—this is so even if its capacity could be reduced by one-third and if combat activities were to be doubled. North Vietnam's serious need for trucks, spare parts and petroleum probably can, despite air attacks, be met by imports. The petroleum requirement for trucks involved in the infiltration movement, for example, has not been enough to present significant supply problems, and the effects of the attacks on the petroleum distribution system, while they have not yet been fully assessed, are not expected to cripple the flow of essential supplies. Furthermore, it is clear that, to bomb the North sufficiently to make a radical impact upon Hanoi's political, economic and social structure, would require an effort which we could make but which would not be stomachable either by our own people or by world opinion; and it would involve a serious risk of drawing us into open war with China.

The North Vietnamese are paying a price. They have been forced to assign some 300,000 personnel to the lines of communication in order to maintain the critical flow of personnel and materiel to the South. Now that the lines of communication have been manned, however, it is doubtful that either a large increase or decrease in our interdiction sorties would substantially change the cost to the enemy of maintaining the roads, railroads, and waterways or affect whether they are operational. It follows that the marginal sorties—probably the marginal 1000 or even 5000 sorties—per month against the lines of communication no longer have a significant impact on the war. (See the attached excerpts from intelligence estimates.)

When this marginal inutility of added sorties against North Vietnam and Laos is compared with the crew and aircraft losses implicit in the activity (four men and aircraft and \$20 million per 1000 sorties), I recommend, as a minimum, against increasing the level of bombing of North Vietnam and against increasing the intensity of operations by changing the areas or kinds of targets struck.

Under those conditions, the bombing program would continue the pressure and would remain available as a bargaining counter to get talks started (or to trade off in talks). But, as in the case of a stabilized level of U.S. ground forces, the stabilization of Rolling Thunder would remove the prospect of ever-escalating bombing as a factor complicating our political posture and distracting from the main job of pacification in South Vietnam.

At the proper time, as discussed on pages 6-7 below, I believe we should consider terminating bombing in all of North Vietnam, or at least in the Northeast zones, for an indefinite period in connection with covert moves toward peace.

d. Pursue a vigorous pacification program. As mentioned above, the pacification (Revolutionary Development) program has been and is thoroughly stalled. The large unit operations war, which we know best how to fight and where we have had our successes, is largely irrelevant to pacification as long as we do not lose it. By and large, the people in rural areas believe that the GVN when it comes will not stay but that the VC will; that co-operation with the GVN will be punished by the VC; that the GVN is really indifferent to the people's welfare; that the low-level GVN are tools of the local rich; and that the GVN is ridden with corruption.

Success in pacification depends on the interrelated functions of providing physical security, destroying the VA apparatus, motivating the people to co-operate and establishing responsive local government. An obviously necessary but not sufficient requirement for success of the Revolutionary Development cadre and police is vigorously conducted and adequately prolonged clearing operations by military troops, who will "stay" in the area, who behave themselves decently and who show some respect for the people.

This elemental requirement of pacification has been missing.

In almost no contested area designated for pacification in recent years have ARVN forces actually "cleared and stayed" to a point where cadre teams, if available, could have stayed overnight in hamlets and survived, let alone accomplish their mission. VC units of company and even battalion size remain in operation, and they are more than large enough to overrun anything the local security forces can put up.

Now that the threat of a Communist main force military victory has been thwarted by our emergency efforts, we must allocate far more attention and a portion of the regular military forces (at least half of the ARVN and perhaps a portion of the U.S. forces) to the task of providing an active and permanent security screen behind which the Revolutionary Development teams and police can operate and behind which the political struggle with the VC infrastructure can take place.

The U.S. cannot do this pacification security job for the Vietnamese. All we can do is "massage the heart." For one reason, it is known that we do not intend to stay; if our efforts worked at all, it would merely postpone the eventual confrontation of the VC and GVN infrastructures. The GVN must do the job; and I am convinced that drastic reform is needed if the GVN is going to be able to do it.

The first essential reform is in the attitude and GVN officials. They are generally apathetic, and there is corruption high and low. Often appointments, promotions, and draft deferments must be bought; and kickbacks on salaries are common. Cadre at the bottom can be no better than the system above them.

The second needed reform is in the attitude and conduct of the ARVN. The image of the government cannot improve unless and until the ARVN improves markedly. They do not understand the importance (or respectability) of pacification nor the importance to pacification of proper, disciplined conduct. Promotions, assignments and awards are often not made on merit, but rather on the basis of having a diploma, friends or relatives, or because of bribery. The ARVN is weak in dedication, direction and discipline.

Not enough ARVN are devoted to area and population security, and when the ARVN

does attempt to support pacification, their actions do not last long enough; their tactics are bad despite U.S. prodding (no aggressive small-unit saturation patrolling, hamlet searches, quick-reaction contact, or offensive night ambushes) they do not make good use of intelligence; and their leadership and discipline are bad.

Furthermore, it is my conviction that a part of the problem undoubtedly lies in bad management on the American as well as the GVN side. Here split responsibility—or "no responsibility"—has resulted in too little hard pressure on the GVN to do its job and no really solid or realistic planning with respect to the whole effort. We must deal with this management problem now and deal with it effectively.

One solution would be to consolidate all U.S. activities which are primarily part of the civilian pacification program and all persons engaged in such activities, providing a clear assignment of responsibility and a unified command under a civilian relieved of all other duties. Under this approach, there would be a carefully delineated division of responsibility between the civilian-in-charge and an element of COMUSMACV under a senior officer, who would give the subject of planning for and providing hamlet security the highest priority in attention and resources. Success will depend on the men selected for the jobs on both sides (they must be among the highest rank and most competent administrators in the U.S. Government), on complete co-operation among the U.S. elements, and on the extent to which the South Vietnamese can be shocked out of their present pattern of behavior. The first work of this reorganized U.S. pacification organization should be to produce within 60 days a realistic and detailed plan for the coming year.

From the political and public-relations viewpoint, this solution is preferable—if it works. But we cannot tolerate continued failure. If it fails after a fair trial, the only alternative in my view is to place the entire pacification program—civilian and military—under General Westmoreland. This alternative would result in the establishment of a Deputy COMUSMACV for Pacification who would be in command of all pacification staffs in Saigon and of all pacification staffs and activities in the field; one person in each corps, province and district would be responsible for the U.S. effort.

e. Press for negotiations. I am not optimistic that Hanoi or the VC will respond to peace overtures now (explaining my recommendations above that we get into a level-off posture for the long pull). The ends sought by the two sides appear to be irreconcilable and the relative power balance is not in their view unfavorable to them. But three things can be done. I believe, to increase the prospects:

(1) Take steps to increase the credibility of our peace gestures in the minds of the enemy. There is considerable evidence both in private statements by the Communists and in the reports of competent Western officials who have talked with them that charges of U.S. bad faith are not solely propagandistic, but reflect deeply held beliefs. Analysis of Communists' statements and actions indicate that they firmly believe that American leadership really does not want the fighting to stop, and that we are intent on winning a military victory in Vietnam and on maintaining our presence there through a puppet regime supported by U.S. military bases.

As a way of projective U.S. bona fides, I believe that we should consider two possibilities with respect to our bombing program against the North, to be undertaken, if at all, at a time very carefully selected with a view to maximizing the chances of influencing the enemy and world opinion and to minimizing the chances that failure would

strengthen the hand of the "hawks" at home: First, without fanfare, conditions, or avowal, whether the stand-down was permanent or temporary, stop bombing all of North Vietnam. It is generally thought that Hanoi will not agree to negotiations until they can claim that the bombing has stopped unconditionally. We should see what develops, retaining freedom to resume the bombing if nothing useful was forthcoming.

Alternatively, we could shift the weight-of-effort away from "Zones 6A and 6B"—zones including Hanoi and Halphong and areas north of those two cities to the Chinese border. This alternative has some attraction in that it provides the North Vietnamese a "face saver" if only problems of "face" are holding up Hanoi peace gestures: it would narrow the bombing down directly to the objectionable infiltration (supporting the logic of a stop-infiltration/full-pause deal); and it would reduce the international heat on the U.S. Here, too, bombing of the North-east could be resumed at any time, or "spot" attacks could be made there from time to time to keep North Vietnam off balance and to require her to pay almost the full cost by maintaining her repair crews in place. The sorties diverted from Zones 6A and 6B could be concentrated on the infiltration routes in Zones 1 and 2 (the southern end of North Vietnam, including the Mu Gia Pass), in Laos and in South Vietnam.

To the same end of improving our credibility, we should seek ways—through words and deeds—to make believable our intention to withdraw our forces once the North Vietnamese aggression against the South stops. In particular, we should avoid any implication that we will stay in South Vietnam with bases or to guarantee any particular outcome to a solely South Vietnamese struggle.

(2) Try to split the VC off from Hanoi. The intelligence estimate is that evidence is overwhelming that the North Vietnamese dominate and control the National Front and the Viet Cong. Nevertheless, I think we should continue and enlarge efforts to contact the VC/NFL and to probe ways to split members or sections off the VC/NFL organization.

(3) Press contacts with North Vietnam, the Soviet Union and other parties who might contribute toward a settlement.

(4) Develop a realistic plan providing a role for the VC in negotiations, post-war life, and government of the nation. An amnesty offer and proposals for national reconciliation would be steps in the right direction and should be parts of the plan. It is important that this plan be one which will appear reasonable, if not at first to Hanoi and the VC, at least to world opinion.

3. The prognosis. The prognosis is bad that the war can be brought to a satisfactory conclusion within the next two years. The large-unit operations probably will not do it; negotiations probably will not do it. While we should continue to pursue both of these routes in trying for a solution in the short run, we should recognize that success from them is a mere possibility, not a probability.

The solution lies in grinding, openly, for a longer war and in taking actions immediately which will in 12 to 18 months give clear evidence that the continuing costs and risks to the American people are acceptably limited, that the formula for success has been found, and that the end of the war is merely a matter of time. All of my recommendations will contribute to this strategy, but the one most difficult to implement is perhaps the most important one—enlivening the pacification program. The odds are less than even for this task, if only because we have failed consistently since 1961 to make a dent in the problem. But, because the 1967 trend of pacification will, I believe, be the main talisman of ultimate U.S. success or failure in Vietnam, extraordinary imagination and effort should go into changing the stripes of that problem.

President Thieu and Prime Minister Ky are thinking along similar lines. They told me that they do not expect the enemy to negotiate or to modify his program in less than two years. Rather, they expect the enemy continue to expand and to increase his activity. They expressed agreement with us that the key to success is pacification and that so far pacification has failed. They agree that we need clarification of GVN and U.S. roles and that the bulk of the ARVN should be shifted to pacification. Ky will, between January and July 1967, shift all ARVN infantry divisions to that role. And he is giving Thang, a good Revolutionary Development director, added powers. Thieu and Ky see this as part of a two-year (1967-68) schedule, in which offensive operations against enemy main force units are continued, carried on primarily by the U.S. and other Free World forces. At the end of the two-year period, they believe the enemy may be willing to negotiate or to retreat from his current course of action.

Note: Neither the Secretary of State nor the JCS have yet had an opportunity to express their views on this report. Mr. Katzenbach and I have discussed many of its main conclusions and recommendations—in general, but not in all particulars, it expresses his views as well as my own.

Excerpts from reports by the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Summer Study Group of the Institute for Defense Analysis:

Extracts from CIA-DIA Report "An Appraisal of the Bombing of North Vietnam through 12 September 1966."

1. There is no evidence yet of any shortage of POL (ed. note: petroleum products) in North Vietnam, and stocks on hand, with recent imports, have been adequate to sustain necessary operations.

2. Air strikes against all modes of transportation in North Vietnam increased during the past month, but there is no evidence of serious transport problems in the movement of supplies to or within North Vietnam.

3. There is no evidence yet that the air strikes have significantly weakened popular morale.

4. Air strikes continue to depress economic growth and have been responsible for the abandonment of some plans for economic development, but essential economic activities continue.

Extracts from a March 16, 1966, CIA report "An Analysis of the Rolling Thunder Air Offensive against North Vietnam":

1. Although the movement of men and supplies in North Vietnam has been hampered and made somewhat more costly (by our bombing), the Communists have been able to increase the flow of supplies and manpower to South Vietnam.

2. Hanoi's determination (despite our bombing) to continue its policy of supporting the insurgency in the South appears as firm as ever.

3. Air attacks almost certainly cannot bring about a meaningful reduction in the current level at which essential supplies and men flow into South Vietnam.

Bomb Damage Assessment in the North by the Institute for Defense Analysis: "Summer Study Group."

What surprised us (in our assessment of the effect of bombing North Vietnam) was the extent of agreement among various intelligence agencies on the effects of past operations and probable effects of continued and expanded Rolling Thunder. The conclusions of our group, to which we all subscribe, are therefore merely sharpened conclusions of numerous intelligence summaries. They are that Rolling Thunder does not limit the present logistic flow into SVN because NVN is neither the source of supplies nor the choke-point on the supply routes from China and USSR. Although an expansion of Rolling

Thunder by closing Haiphong harbor, eliminating electric power plants and totally destroying railroads, will at least indirectly impose further privations on the populace of NVN and make the logistic support of VC costlier to maintain, such expansion will not really change the basic assessment. This follows because NVN has demonstrated excellent ability to improvise transportation, and because the primitive nature of their economy is such that Rolling Thunder can affect directly only a small fraction of the population. There is very little hope that the Ho Chi Minh Government will lose control of population because of Rolling Thunder. The lessons of the Korean War are very relevant to the damage we inflict, and growing. Probably the government of NVN has assurances that the USSR and/or China will assist the rebuilding of its economy after the war, and hence its concern that the damage being inflicted may be moderated by long-range favorable expectations. Specifically:

1. As of July 1966 the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam had had no measurable direct effect on Hanoi's ability to mount and support military operations in the South at the current level.

2. Since the initiation of the Rolling Thunder program the damage to facilities and equipment in North Vietnam has been more than offset by the increased flow of military and economic aid, largely from the USSR and Communist China.

3. The aspects of the basic situation that have enabled Hanoi to continue its support of military operations in the South and to neutralize the impact of U.S. bombing by passing the economic costs to other Communist countries are not likely to be altered by reducing the present geographic constraints, mining Haiphong and the principal harbors in North Vietnam, increasing the number of armed reconnaissance sorties and otherwise expanding the U.S. air offensive along the lines now contemplated in military recommendations and planning studies.

4. While conceptually it is reasonable to assume that some limit may be imposed on the scale of military activity that Hanoi can maintain in the South by continuing the Rolling Thunder program at the present, or some higher level of effort, there appears to be no basis for defining that limit in concrete terms, or, for concluding that the present scale of VC-NVN activities in the field have approached that limit.

5. The indirect effects of the bombing on the will of the North Vietnamese to continue fighting and on their leaders' appraisal of the prospective gains and costs of maintaining the present policy have not shown themselves in any tangible way. Furthermore, we have not discovered any basis for concluding that the indirect punitive effects of bombing will prove decisive in these respects.

Partial text of a memorandum drafted by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara for President Lyndon B. Johnson, Nov. 17, 1966:

The war in Vietnam has two highly interdependent parts: (1) the "regular" war against the main force VC/NVA battalions and regiments, and the interdiction of their men and supplies flowing down from North Vietnam, and (2) the "pacification" or revolutionary development war to neutralize the local VC guerrillas and gain the permanent support of the SVN population.

The infiltrated men and supplies serve to bolster the regular units whose function is to support the local VC guerrillas and infrastructure by defeating the GVN forces in the area and generally exposing the GVN's inability to protect the rural populace. The local guerrillas and infrastructure maintain a constant VC presence in their area and support the offensive efforts of the regular units by providing intelligence, terrain guidance, supplies, and recruits. In addition, the guerrillas conduct many of the thousands of incidents of terror, harassment, and sabotage

reported each month. The principal task of U.S. military forces in SVN must be to eliminate the offensive capability of the regular units in order to allow the GVN to counter the guerrilla forces and extend permanent control over areas from which regular units have been cleared.

We now face a choice of two approaches to the threat of the regular VC/NVA forces. The first approach would be to continue in 1967 to increase friendly forces as rapidly as possible, and without limit, and employ them primarily in large-scale "seek out and destroy" operations to destroy the main force VC/NVA units.

This approach appears to have some distinct disadvantages. First, we are finding very strongly diminishing marginal returns in the destruction of VC/NVA forces. If our estimates of enemy losses (killed, captured and defected) are correct, VC/NVA losses increased by only 115 per week (less than 15 per cent) during a period in which we increased friendly strength by 160,000 including 140,000 U.S. military personnel and 42 U.S. and Third Country maneuver battalions. At this rate, an additional 100,000 friendly personnel deployed would increase VC/NVA losses by some 70 per week. Second, expanding U.S. deployments have contributed to a very serious inflation in South Vietnam. Prices increased 75-90 per cent in FY66. An extra 100,000 U.S. forces would add at least P9 billion to our plaster expenditures, doubling the 1967 inflationary gap in SVN. Third, the high and increasing cost of the war to the United States is likely to encourage the Communists to doubt our staying power and to try to "wait us out."

The second approach is to follow a similarly aggressive strategy of "seek out and destroy," but to build friendly forces only to that level required to neutralize the large enemy units and prevent them from interfering with the pacification program. It is essential to this approach that such a level be consistent with a stable economy in SVN, and consistent with a military posture that the United States credibly would maintain indefinitely, thus making a Communist attempt to "wait us out" less attractive.

I believe that this level is about 470,000 U.S. and 52,000 Free World personnel and less than half of the ARVN. The remainder of the ARVN, plus a portion of the U.S. force, would give priority to improving the pacification effort. The enemy regular units would cease to perform what I believe to be their primary function of diverting our effort to give security to the population. This, plus the effects of a successful interdiction campaign to cut off their other support, would effectively neutralize them, possibly at the cost of far fewer casualties to both sides than the first approach would allow.

I believe it is time to adopt the second approach for three reasons: (1) if MACV estimates of enemy strength are correct, we have not been able to attrite the enemy forces fast enough to break their morale and more U.S. forces are unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future; (2) we cannot deploy more than about 470,000 personnel by the end of 1967 without a high probability of generating a self-defeating runaway inflation in SVN, and (3) an endless escalation of U.S. deployments is not likely to be acceptable in the U.S. or to induce the enemy to believe that the U.S. is prepared to stay as long as is required to produce a secure non-Communist SVN. Obviously a greatly improved pacification campaign must be waged to take advantage of the protection offered by the major friendly forces. Alternatively, if enemy strength is greatly overstated and our "seek out and destroy" operations have been more effective than our strength and loss estimates would imply—a possibility discussed below—more than 470,000 U.S. personnel should not be required to neutralize the VC/NVA main force.

Attriting Enemy Forces. All of our estimates of enemy strength and variations in it contain very great uncertainties. Thus, any conclusions drawn from them must be considered to be highly tentative and conjectural. Nevertheless, the data suggest that we have no prospects of attriting the enemy force at a rate equal to or greater than his capability to infiltrate and recruit, and this will be true at either the 470,000 U.S. personnel level or 570,000. The table on the following page shows our estimates of the average enemy loss rate per month since April 1965. By 4th quarter 1965, estimated military losses (killed, captured, military defectors) reached 2215 per week. The weekly average for CY66 has remained about the same, although enemy losses increased to 2330 per week in the 3rd quarter and to 2830 in October.

Enemy losses from wounds are included above based on the U.S. Intelligence Board estimate that there are 1.5 enemy wounded for each one killed, with one-third of the wounded put out of action, resulting in a loss of .5 for each VC/NVA recorded killed, or 620 additional average losses per week. (MACV estimates .28 additional losses for each VC/NVA killed, or an average loss of 300 per week.) Also included are defectors not turning themselves into the GVN centers, based on the Board estimate that there is one unrecorded military deserter for each military defector, resulting in another 235 average losses per week.

The enemy loss rate was apparently not affected significantly by the greatly increased friendly activity during 1966, which included: 44 per cent increase in battalion days of operation; 25 per cent increase in battalion sized operations contacting the enemy; and 28 per cent increase in small unit actions accompanied by a 12 per cent increase in contacts. Moreover, armed helicopter sorties doubled from 14,000 to 29,000 per month and attack sorties in SVN rose from 12,800 to 14,000 per month.

The failure of enemy losses to increase during the first half of 1966 was primarily due to the January Vietnamese New Year lull, the political turmoil during the Spring, the apparent decrease in ARVN efficiency, and an increasing enemy reluctance to fight large battles.

Despite improvements during the past four months, it is impossible to predict the point at which we can expect to attrite enemy forces at the rate he introduces new ones. As the table above indicates, an average enemy total loss rate of 2230 per week has prevailed for the past 13 months, compared to the calculated enemy personnel input rate of 2915 per week for the same period. The input rate is that required to provide the average increase of 685 per week reflected in the VC/NVA order of battle strength figures estimated by MACV. It is not estimated independently. Assuming that the weekly infiltration rate from NVN for the past 13 months averaged 1075 as estimated (MACV indicates that the 1966 figure may be as high as 1638 per week), VC recruitment (input minus infiltration) must have been about 1840 per week. This recruitment rate lies well within the current U.S. Intelligence Board estimate that the VC can recruit and train 1635 to 2335 men per week, and can replace current losses solely from within South Vietnam if necessary. But it lies far above the current MACV recruitment estimate of 815 VC personnel per week.

As indicated in the VC/NVA losses table, enemy losses increased by 115 per week during a period in which friendly strength increased by 166,000; an increase of about 70 losses per 100,000 of friendly strength. There are far too many uncertain variables in the situation to permit a simple extrapolation of these results to the effect of introduction of the next 100,000, or a subsequent 100,000 troops. However, we have no evidence that

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more troops than the 470,000 I am recommending would substantially change the situation. For example, if it were assumed that new forces would produce enemy losses of a rate equal to the average of all forces deployed by the end of October 1966, each deployment of 100,000 additional friendly troops would produce only 230 more total enemy losses per week compared to the 2915 current enemy input rate. A U.S. force of 470,000 would result in enemy losses of 2450 per week; an extra 100,000 U.S. personnel would increase average weekly enemy losses to about 2680, still less than the 3500 per week that the enemy is supposed to be able to infiltrate/recruit. Moreover, it is possible that our attrition estimates substantially overstate actual VC/NVA losses. For example, the VC/NVA apparently lose only about one-sixth as many weapons as people, suggesting the possibility that many of the killed are unarmed porters or bystanders.

In summary, despite the wide variations in estimates of infiltration, recruitment and losses, the data indicate that current enemy recruitment, infiltration rates and tactics have more than offset the increased friendly deployments, enabling the enemy to increase his forces in the past and in the foreseeable future. If we assume that the estimates of enemy strength are accurate, the ratio of total friendly to total enemy strength has only increased from 3.5 to 4.0 to 1 since the end of 1965. Under these circumstances, it does not appear that we have the favorable leverage required to achieve decisive attrition by introducing more forces. It may be possible to reduce enemy strength substantially through improved tactics or other means such as an effective amnesty/defection program or effective pacification to dry up VC sources of recruitment, but further large increases in U.S. forces do not appear to be the answer.

Enemy Offensive Capability. These estimates of enemy strength, losses and replacement rates raise some important questions. They assume that the enemy has all the battalions carried in the MACV Enemy Order of Battle (OB), and that most of these battalions have retained their offensive capability. Neither assumption can be supported by available data.

In the last 7 months (February-August) for which data are available, friendly forces averaged 35 contacts per month with VC/NVA battalions. If each contact represented a different battalion the contact rate would equal 20% of average reported total enemy VC/NVA battalions; at best, we would contact each battalion once in 5 months. However, analyzing the August OB of 175 battalions, only 112 battalions had been positively identified as contacted during the 7 month period and 59 battalions were unrecorded as to last contact. (The remaining battalions were contacted prior to period.) Other battalions in addition to the 112 positively identified were undoubtedly active during the period. Nevertheless, it appears that the actual existence, or ability to operate, of some of the 59 units with no records of contact with friendly forces is open to question. Moreover, enemy activity rates reflected in the number of battalion contacts initiated by themselves or by us do not show increases that we might expect as the result of the 49 battalion increase reflected in the Order of Battle reports.

Furthermore, the enemy is undertaking fewer large-scale offensive operations in recent months and concentrating his small-scale attacks, ambushes, and harassments against easier targets (troops in the field and isolated military posts). This indicates a possible regression to activities characteristic of earlier stages of guerrilla warfare, is inconsistent with large numbers of battalions and even divisions, and many reflect an increasing inability to conduct large scale operations without incurring unacceptably high casual-

ties. The VC/NVA have not won a significant large-scale military victory in several months. There is every reason to be on guard, as General Westmoreland is, but there is no reason to believe that we need to increase our planned deployment of large units to prevent such victories in the future.

The Interdiction Campaign. The VC force has reportedly increased by 20 battalions (from 74 to 94) since last December, NVA by 43 (from 43 to 86) during the same period. The NVA represented only 25,000 of 249,700 (10%) last December, increasing to 45,600 of 277,000 (16%) in October. The weekly rate of accepted infiltration has been about 1115 in 1966 compared to 945 in 4th quarter 1965 and 510 for all of 1965. MACV has recently reported that infiltration may have been as high as 1630 per week in 1966. The NVA units, equipped almost exclusively with Chinese and Russian weapons, have a much greater requirement for infiltrated ammunition and supplies, thus increasing their dependence on the logistics network flowing from NVN to SVN.

Air Interdiction. The use of air power to interdict enemy infiltration and supply has been very great by any standard. Attack sorties in Laos and NVN have risen from 4750 per month at the end of last year to 9100 in 1st quarter of this year and to 10,600 and 12,900 in subsequent quarters. The interdiction campaign has absorbed most of the increase in deployed attack-capable aircraft in the past years.

A substantial air interdiction campaign is clearly necessary and worthwhile. In addition to putting a ceiling on the size of the force that can be supported, it yields three significant military effects. First, it effectively harasses and delays truck movements down through the southern panhandles of NVN and Laos, though it has no effect on troops infiltrating on foot over trails that are virtually invisible from the air. Our experience shows that daytime armed reconnaissance above some minimum sortie rate makes it prohibitively expensive to the enemy to attempt daylight movement of vehicles, and so forces him to night movement. Second, destruction of bridges and cratering of roads forces the enemy to deploy repair crews, equipment, and porters to repair or bypass the damage. Third, attacks on vehicles, parks, and rest camps destroy some vehicles with their cargoes and inflict casualties. Moreover, our bombing campaign may produce a beneficial effect on U.S. and SVN morale by making NVN pay a price for its aggression and by showing that we are doing what we can to interdict the enemy. But at the scale we are now operating, I believe our bombing is yielding very small marginal returns, not worth the cost in pilot lives and aircraft.

II. Consolidation and extension of GVN control.

Pacification. Based on available reports of questionable validity, the table on the following page [not printed in the Record] indicates the various degrees of GVN and VC-NVA population and hamlet control. In the 14 months between July 31, 1965 and September 30, 1966, the GVN reportedly gained control of an additional 1,500,000 people, raising its control of the total SVN population from 47 per cent to 55 per cent—the highest level to date. During the same period VC-NVA control of the total population decreased 6 per cent, a loss of 800,000 people. GVN control of the rural population rose from 23 per cent to 35 per cent, while VC-NVA rural control fell from 35 per cent to 28 per cent during the same period.

It is highly likely that these figures are grossly optimistic. It should be noted that about 30 per cent of the reported gains probably came from movement of refugees into cities and towns. Another report indicates that GVN increased its control of area only from 8 per cent to 12 per cent in 1966 through

September. Since 1965 the VC/NVA have claimed control of 80 per cent of the SVN territory and 75 per cent of the population. At the end of September 1966, the GVN controlled about 25 per cent of the vital roads in SVN. It controlled about 20 per cent of the total roads, down from 35 per cent in 1965 and 40 per cent in 1964. The rest were marginal or closed and could be traveled only with adequate security precautions.

The pacification program has been stalled for years; it is stalled today. The situation in this regard is no better—possibly—than it was in 1965, 1963, and 1961. The large unit war, at which we are succeeding fairly well, is largely irrelevant to pacification as long as we keep the regular VC/NVA units from interfering and do not lose the major battles.

The most important problems are reflected in the belief of the rural Vietnamese that the GVN will not stay long when it comes into an area but the VC will; the VC will punish cooperation with the GVN; the GVN is indifferent to the people's welfare; the low-level GVN officials are tools of the local rich; and the GVN is excessively corrupt from top to bottom.

Success in changing these beliefs, and in pacification, depends on the interrelated functions of providing physical security, destroying the VC organization and presence, motivating the villager to cooperate, and establishing responsive local government.

Physical security must come first and is the essential prerequisite to a successful revolutionary development effort. The security must be permanent or it is meaningless to the villager, and it must be established by a well organized "clear and hold" operation continued long enough to really clear the area and conducted by competent military forces who have been trained to show respect for the villager and his problems. So far this prerequisite has been absent. In almost no area designated for pacification in recent years have ARVN forces actually "cleared and held" to a point where cadre teams could have stayed overnight in hamlets and survived, let alone accomplished their missions. VC units of company and even battalion size, too large for local defenses, have remained in operation.

Now that the threat of a Communist large-unit military victory has been eliminated, we must allocate far more attention and a significant portion of the regular military forces (at least half of the ARVN) to providing permanently secure areas in which Revolutionary Development (RD) teams, police, and civilian administrators can root out the VC infrastructure and establish the GVN presence. This has been our task all along. It is still our task. The war cannot come to a successful end until we have found a way to succeed in this task.

Assignment of ARVN to Revolutionary Development Role. The increasingly unsatisfactory performance of ARVN in combat operations is reflected in U.S. Army advisory reports and in ARVN and U.S. operational statistics. During the January-September period for which data are available, U.S. field advisors rated combat effectiveness as unsatisfactory or marginal in up to 32% of all ARVN combat battalions. Over 115,000 SVN military personnel (19%) deserted in 1965, and desertions in 1966 through October were at the annual rate of 130,000, 21% of forces. The poor ARVN performance also shows in the operational statistics. ARVN made contact in only 46% of its large-scale operations against a U.S. contact rate of 90%. Similar actions for small unit actions are not readily available.

ARVN effectiveness against the enemy has declined markedly during the January-September 1966 period. ARVN kills of VC-NVA dropped from a weekly average of 355 to 238, while the U.S. average rose from 476 to 557 per week. VC-NVA killed per ARVN killed per ARVN battalion per week averaged 1.8 com-

pared to 8.6 for U.S. battalions. Conversely, the friendly killed rates were .6 per ARVN battalion and 1.7 per U.S. battalion per week. The enemy-friendly killed ratios for ARVN and U.S. were 3.2 and 5.4 to 1 respectively.

In view of the ARVN's low efficiency in major combat operations and the increasing difficulties that SVN forces have had in recruiting and retaining the planned forces in an overtaxed economy, I believe that we should not increase the SVN forces (ARVN, Regional and Popular Forces) above the present strength of 158 battalions with 610,000 men. It is likely that GVN control can be extended most rapidly by using SVN forces mainly for revolutionary development, and using additional recruitable personnel for non-military and para-military revolutionary development duty. The ARVN must be retrained and assigned to RD duty, and General Westmoreland plans to do so. The performance of the ARVN and other SVN forces as an instrument for winning popular support for the GVN has been decidedly unsatisfactory. Apparently ARVN personnel have not appreciated the decisive importance of revolutionary development and popular support; the importance of these items will be heavily emphasized in the retraining programs.

The Problem of Inflation. To unite the population behind the Government—indeed, to avoid disintegration of SVN society—a sound economy is essential. Runaway inflation can undo what our military operations accomplish. For this reason, I have directed that a "piaster budget" be established for U.S. military funded activities. The intent of this program is to hold military and contractor piaster spending to the minimum level which can be accomplished without serious impact on military operations.

Ambassador Lodge has asked that U.S. military spending be held to P42 billion (piasters) in CY 67. The ambassador's proposed program of tightly constrained U.S. and GVN civilian and military spending will not bring complete stability to SVN; there will still be, at best, a P10 billion (piasters) inflationary gap. It should, however, hold price rises in CY 67 to 10 per cent to 25 per cent as opposed to 75 per cent to 90 per cent in the current year. Unless we rigidly control inflation, the ARVN desertion rate will further increase and effectiveness will decline thus partially canceling the effects of increased U.S. deployments. Further, government employees will leave their jobs and civil strife will occur, possibly collapsing the GVN and, in any event, seriously hindering both the military and the pacification efforts.

The success of our efforts to hold U.S. military expenditures to P42 billion (piasters) depends, among other things, on U.S. force levels. The impact of three differing deployment plans on piaster spending at constant prices is shown in the table below. The actual level of piaster spending associated with each deployment program is, of course, determined by what policies are pursued in saving piasters. The planning factors used in the table are based on little actual experience and may be either too high or too low to serve as a reliable basis for projection. They do, however, reflect first quarter FY 67 experience, MACV planning factors, and expected anti-inflationary programs.

The table clearly illustrated that with the deployment of 463,000 troops the CY 67 goal of P42 billion (piasters) is feasible. The planning factors used, however, entail a "pushing down" of O&M and personal spending from the MACV planning factors (\$360 per man year for personal spending, \$600 for O&M) in light of past performance and likely future savings; application of the MACV planning factors result in P46 billion piaster spending. If these later planning factors hold, the P46 spending rate would increase the inflationary gap by 40% and would be a severe blow to the stabilization program. If infla-

tion occurs and U.S. expenditures are maintained in constant dollar terms, piaster expenditures will increase and the problem will be worsened. If the CINCPAC construction program were approved, similar problems would result. It appears imperative to adopt a plan, such as the one exemplified in the table above, which will call for a strong effort to reduce spending below the levels embodied in the MACV planning factors.

In addition to U.S. military spending, stabilization of the SVN economy requires strict limitation of RVNAF spending. We must plan to support the RVNAF at no higher than the ambassador's requested level of P50 billion during CY 67.

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, June 27, 1971]

BACK IN 1966, L.B.J. RESISTED PRESSURE TO SEND TROOPS INTO LAOS, CAMBODIA

(By Loye Miller, Jr.)

WASHINGTON.—U.S. military leaders were constantly pressuring President Lyndon B. Johnson to expand the ground war from South Vietnam into Laos and Cambodia during 1966 and 1967, the secret Pentagon papers show.

There was even some serious discussion about using U.S. troops to invade North Vietnam in force.

But Mr. Johnson, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and other top civilians in the government steadily resisted these requests from the generals, the Pentagon archive indicates.

Mr. Johnson did allow bombing and covert use of Special Forces troops in Laos and bombing in Cambodia.

But it remained for Mr. Johnson's successor, President Nixon, to approve partially the much larger military plans by expanding the ground war into Cambodia and launching a major foray into Laos years later.

Mr. Nixon sent U.S. and South Vietnamese ground troops into Cambodia on April 30, 1970, setting off a political uproar that swept the campuses in this country and led to the killing of four students by the Ohio National Guard at Kent State University.

The American troops were withdrawn by June 30, but South Vietnamese units are still fighting in Cambodia.

BADLY BATTERED

And earlier this year, at Nixon's urging, South Vietnamese troops, with heavy U.S. air cover and logistic support, attempted to cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail during a six-week foray into Laos. Some returned badly battered.

The pressure on Mr. Johnson and McNamara to approve far wider incursions into these "sanctuaries" adjacent to South Vietnam began building during 1966.

Massive infusions of U.S. ground troops were resulting in heavy losses to North Vietnamese and Vietcong units in South Vietnam at that time.

But even as these successes unfolded, William Westmoreland, U.S. Vietnam commander, was complaining that "sanctuaries" of Laos and Cambodia and the jungle infiltration routes from them posed a major peril to the security of South Vietnam.

During this period, the limited and secret use of small numbers of U.S. troops in the jungles along the Laotian border was conducted under the code name Operation Shining Brass.

The Pentagon analyst writes that on Feb. 21, 1967, the Joint Chiefs of Staff petitioned President Johnson for a series of new military moves, including expansion of Shining Brass.

SUGGESTION DENIED

The study shows that Johnson approved extension of the operations up to 20 kilometers (about 13 miles) into Laos, but denied the general's suggestion that "battalion-size forces" be moved across the border.

Later in the spring, McNamara submitted to Mr. Johnson a summary of U.S. activities against Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam. It noted:

"At the present time, no actions—except air strikes and artillery fire necessary to quiet hostile batteries across the borders—are allowed against Cambodian territory.

"In Laos, we average 5000 (air) sorties a month against the infiltration routes and base areas, we fire artillery from South Vietnam against targets in Laos and we will be providing three-man leadership for each of twenty 12-man U.S.-Vietnamese Special Forces teams that operate to a depth of 20 kilometers into Laos.

8,000 ATTACK SORTIES

"Against North Vietnam, we average 8000 or more attack sorties a month against all worthwhile fixed and LOC (lines of communication) target ground targets across the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone); we fire from naval vessels afloat . . . we mine their inland waterways."

With U.S. efforts in South Vietnam becoming bogged down, Westmoreland returned to Washington in April 1967 to urge another major escalation in troop levels.

The Pentagon study discloses that in meeting with the President at the White House in April, Westmoreland laid out plans to move South Vietnamese troops into Laos and Cambodia.

UNDER U.S. COVER

The study says the general "believed we should confront the DRV (North Vietnamese) with SVN (South Vietnamese) forces in Laos.

"He reviewed his operational plan for Laos, called High Port, which envisioned an elite SVN division conducting ground operations in Laos against DRV bases and infiltration routes under cover of U.S. artillery and air."

Westmoreland, the study continues, believed that eventually Laos would become "a major battlefield, a development which would take some of the military pressure off the south."

The general also proposed the same type of High Port operation into Cambodia near the town of Chu Pong, "again using SVN forces but this time accompanied by U.S. advisers."

WHEELER HAWKISH

At this same meeting, the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, was even more hawkish.

Wheeler told the President that "U.S. troops may be forced to move" against North Vietnamese troops in Laos and Cambodia, the study says.

Beyond that, Wheeler said, "we may wish to take offensive action against the DRV" by invading North Vietnam with U.S. ground forces.

"The President remained skeptical, to say the least," writes the Pentagon analyst.

Later in the spring, the Joint Chiefs suggested expansion of Laos operations with a new project to be dubbed Prairie Fire and a Cambodian escalation to be named Daniel Boone.

INTERNAL RESISTANCE

They also wanted to mount an Operation Footboy to build up internal guerrilla resistance to the enemy government within North Vietnam, although all such previous efforts had failed badly.

But the Pentagon study indicates these ideas brought a shower of opposing memos from civilian leaders within the State Department and Pentagon, and were disapproved by the President.

The paper that most effectively summed up these objections was written by Assistant Defense Secretary John McNaughton, who argued that any ground movement into North Vietnam would bring China to the enemy's aid with "both ground and air

forces' and cause the Soviet Union to provoke "a serious confrontation" with the United States elsewhere in the world.

NEW FRONTS FEARED

McNaughton also argued against any serious troop movement into Laos or Cambodia, warning that this would simply add new battle fronts closer to the North Vietnamese supply lines.

Discussing the idea of a troop commitment to Laos, he predicted "a brigade will beget a division and a division A corps, each calling down matching forces from the Dry (North Vietnamese) into territory to their liking and suggesting to Hanoi that they take action in northern Laos to suck us further in."

"We would simply have a wier bar, with . . . world opinion against us. And no solution either to the wider war or the one we already had in Vietnam."

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, June 27, 1971]

DOMINO THEORY HAS LED U.S. POLICY SINCE 1950, PAPERS SHOW (By Saul Friedman)

WASHINGTON.—On March 27, 1950, President Harry S. Truman gave his approval to "NSC 64," the first National Security Council memorandum to deal solely with Indochina.

That spring, echoes of World War II could still be heard. The cold war had set in. Mainland China had fallen to Mao, and the Korean War would soon begin.

Against that background, according to the opening chapters of the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam War, "NSC 64" gave birth to the "Domino Principle"—the theory that if one country falls, its neighbors in succession will follow.

SET THE PATTERN

As the history of the Vietnam conflict and the Pentagon Papers available to Knight Newspapers make clear, the Domino principle spawned its own set of dominoes, which fell successively on the administrations of Mr. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Dr. Daniel Ellsberg—who is said to have been a source of the Pentagon documents—has called that early period one of the most important chapters because it set the pattern for much of what was to come.

Adopted by the Truman Administration, NSC 64 warned that "the threat of Communist aggression against Indochina is only one phase of anticipated Communist plans to seize all of Southeast Asia."

SERIES SPELLED OUT

"It is important to U.S. security interests," the still-secret memo said, "that all practicable measures be taken to prevent further Communist expansion in Southeast Asia. . . ."

"The neighboring countries of Thailand and Burma could be expected to fall under Communist domination if Indochina were controlled by a Communist-dominated government. The balance of Southeast Asia would then be in grave hazard."

France granted limited independence in February 1950 to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

ACHESON'S REASONS

On Feb. 2, then Secretary of State Dean Acheson, in a memo to the President, recommended recognition of the three new states.

Acheson gave these reasons: "Encouragement to national aspirations under non-Communist governments in areas adjacent to Communist China . . . and . . . a demonstration of displeasure with Communist tactics which are obviously aimed at eventual domination of Asia, working under the guise of indigenous nationalism."

Two weeks after Acheson's memo France requested U.S. assistance to fight the Communist-dominated Viet Minh.

BEGAN IN MARCH 1950

Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson backed the request, in language that would be heard many times in the next two decades:

"The choice confronting the U.S. is to support the legal governments in Indochina or to face the extension of Communism over the remainder of the continental area of Southeast Asia and possibly westward."

Thus in March 1950, this country sent to Southeast Asia the first of countless missions. On May 1, Mr. Truman approved the first military assistance funds for Indochina—\$10 million.

The French installed as head of government the Emperor Bao Dai, something of a playboy, who had spent the war and the Japanese occupation of his country exiled in Europe.

SLAP AT BAO DAI

On the emperor's return to Vietnam from exile, the Pentagon study shows, Acheson sent him a sharp cable, telling Bao Dai that "many people, including great number Americans, have been unable to understand reasons for emperor's 'prolonged holiday' on Riviera and have misinterpreted it as an indication of lack of patriotic attachment to his role of chief of state." Acheson suggested the emperor shape up.

The Truman Administration was also deep in the Korean war and under criticism as "soft on Communism."

The Pentagon analyst writes, "The 'domino principle' in its purest form was written into the 'general considerations' section of NSC 124-2," adopted in June 1952. It said:

"Communist domination, by whatever means, of all Southeast Asia would seriously endanger in the short term, and critically endanger in the longer term, U.S. security interests."

SOMEBODY IMPRESSED

"The loss of any of the countries of Southeast Asia to Communist aggression would have critical psychological, political, and economic consequences."

" . . . The loss of any single country would probably lead to relatively swift submission to or an alignment with Communism by the remaining countries of this group . . . an alignment with Communism of the rest of Southeast Asia and India, and in the longer term, of the Middle East . . . would in all probability progressively follow. Such widespread alignment would endanger the stability and security of Europe."

(At this point, some anonymous reader of the Pentagon documents penned in the margin the word: "Wod.")

IKE HEADED JUDD

The National Security Council memo went on to warn that Communist control of Southeast Asia "would" seriously endanger the American position in the Far East and the Pacific and could force "Japan's eventual accommodation to Communism."

"Southeast Asia, especially Malaya and Indonesia, is the principal world source of natural rubber and tin, and a producer of petroleum and other strategically important commodities. . . ." NSC 124-2 concluded.

DULLES' WARNING

A few months after later, Dwight D. Eisenhower became President, with John Foster Dulles as Secretary of State. In spring of 1953 they sent a special study commission to Indochina headed by Rep. Walter Judd (R., Minn.).

His report set the tone of the Eisenhower Administration policy. It said: "The area of Indochina is immensely wealthy in rice, rubber, coal, and iron ore. Its position makes it a strategic key to the rest of Southeast Asia."

"If Indochina should fall . . . Communism would then be in an exceptional position to complete its perversion of the political and social revolution that is spreading through Asia . . . the Communists must be

prevented from achieving their objectives in Indochina."

Dulles said in September: "A single Communist aggressive front extends from Korea on the north to Indochina in the south."

FRANCE BOWED OUT

Then in a new NSC paper quoted the domino principle as explicitly as Mr. Truman had, and in much the same language.

Washington repeatedly urged the French, after their defeat by Ho Chi Minh at Dien Bien Phu, to refuse to negotiate or even accept a cease-fire. But France agreed at Geneva on elections, which probably would have brought Ho to power throughout the country.

SUBVERTED ELECTIONS

Dulles who declined even to shake hands with China's Chou En Lai at Geneva—would have none of that, the Pentagon analyst reports.

After trying to get U.S. military aid to the French at Dien Bien Phu, he backed a new strong man for South Vietnam—Ngo Dinh Diem.

Dulles sought "united action" with France and England, preaching the domino principle to them.

Failing in that, the documents say, Dulles told Diem to do nothing that would "insult life" into the Geneva accords. Consequently, the elections were never held.

On Nov. 22, 1961—after several more U.S. missions to Vietnam—President Kennedy approved National Security Memorandum 111. This incorporated much of a memo to him from Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.

KENNEDY COURSE

That memo was reproduced in full by the Pentagon analyst because it set the Kennedy Administration's course towards Vietnam. It began: "The loss of South Vietnam would make pointless any further discussion about the importance of Southeast Asia to the free world; we would have to face the near certainty that the remainder of Southeast Asia and Indonesia would move to a complete accommodation with Communism . . . (and) would determine the credibility of American commitments elsewhere. . . ."

JOINT CHIEFS SWAYED

Mr. Kennedy increased military aid to Vietnam and sent helicopter pilots, more advisers and logistical personnel.

According to the Pentagon documents, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, from 1950 to about 1962 (when Maxwell Taylor became chairman), were generally opposed to becoming bogged down in an Asian war. But once U.S. forces were committed, they pressed for more and more. The specter of military humiliation had become an important ingredient in the domino principle.

In Spring 1964, the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson, ordered a full-scale review of the war, and asked whether it was necessarily true that loss of Vietnam lead to the fall of Southeast Asia.

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, June 27, 1971]

RUSK FEARED WORLD OPINION ON SABOTAGE OF PEACE TALKS (By Robert S. Boyd)

WASHINGTON.—Secretary of State Dean Rusk, in a private message to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, warned of "general international revulsion" if U.S. bombers raided Hanoi during a Canadian peace feeler, the Pentagon papers disclosed.

In early June 1966, Canadian Ambassador Chester Ronning was about to leave for Hanoi to try to find a basis for peace talks between the U.S. and North Vietnam.

On June 7, Rusk, traveling in Europe, learned that the Pentagon was planning to hit petroleum supplies in Hanoi for the first time.

URGENT CABLE

Rusk flashed an urgent cable to President Johnson from Brussels.

"Regarding special operation in Vietnam we had under consideration, I sincerely hope that timing can be postponed until my return. A major question in my mind is . . ."

The next day, the Pentagon papers disclose, Rusk cabled McNamara:

"I am deeply disturbed by general international revision, and perhaps a great deal at home, if it becomes known that we took an action which sabotaged the Ronning mission to which we had given agreement."

Rusk argued that if Ronning failed to find Hanoi ready to talk, "as we expect, that provides a firmer base for the action we contemplate and would make a difference to people like (British Prime Minister Harold) Wilson and (Canadian Premier Lester) Pearson.

"If, on the other hand, he learns that there is a serious breakthrough toward peace, the President would surely want to know of that before an action which would knock such a possibility off the track. I strongly recommend, therefore, against (Bombing on) the 9th or 10th."

That exchange is one of the fascinating glimpses into the world of secret diplomacy that emerges from the Pentagon papers on the history of the war.

The portion of the papers made available to Knight Newspapers does not include an especially sensitive volume devoted entirely to international diplomacy. Government officials contend that publication of this volume could harm the national security even at this time.

The diplomatic maneuvers referred to in the available documents reveal no previously undisclosed secret negotiating channels. But fresh light is shed on the attitude of Johnson Administration figures toward peace talks and toward third parties who were trying to get talks started.

The documents show:

That U.S. officials were not really interested in peace talks in the early years of the war. While publicly professing their desire for peace, they privately maneuvered to avoid talks—except on very favorable terms—until South Vietnam was stronger.

That periodic bombing halts were designed less to bring about negotiations than to prepare U.S. and foreign opinion for further escalation.

That as late as March 1968, less than a month before Hanoi agreed to come to the Paris peace table, senior U.S. officials were arguing that U.S. should stiffen its peace terms and predicting that Hanoi would not accept them.

Discussing the five-day bombing pause in May 1965, for example, the Pentagon analyst who wrote this section of the report said Johnson wanted to see if Hanoi would respond by de-escalating the war. But he added:

"Yet the President also saw a pause as a means of clearing the way for an increase in the tempo of the air war in the absence of a satisfactory response from Hanoi."

In November 1965, discussing plans for the 37-day bombing pause and sensational "peace offensive" of that winter, McNamara argued for what he called a "hard-line pause."

"Under a hard-line pause we would be firmly resolved to resume bombing unless the Communists were clearly moving toward meeting our declared terms," McNamara said. Under a "soft-line pause," in contrast, "we would be willing to feel our way with less insistence on concrete concessions by the Communists."

DOUBLE PURPOSE

McNamara said the purpose of the pause would be twofold: "First we must lay a foundation in the mind of the American public and in world opinion for such an enlarged phase of the war, and second, we should give

North Vietnam a face-saving chance to stop the aggression."

The Pentagon analyst noted that these were "not very attractive options," for Hanoi.

After the 37-day pause failed, there was a flurry of peace-making activity by third parties. The Pentagon papers mentioned maneuvers by President Nkrumah of Ghana, President Abdul Gamal Nasser of Egypt, President Charles de Gaulle of France, Prime Minister Wilson, Soviet Premier Alexli Kosygin, Indian President Radharrishnon, Canada's Pearson and Ronning; UN Secretary-General U Thant, Dutch Foreign Minister Luns and various Algerians, Rumanians and Guineans:

HALT RECOMMENDED

None of these got anywhere, and McNamara, who was rapidly becoming disillusioned with the war effort, recommended in October 1966, that the U.S. halt the bombing and began "covert moves toward peace."

One such move, code-named "Operation Marigold" involved a Polish effort to open talks in Warsaw. It collapsed when the U.S. raided Hanoi in December.

[From Newday, June 25, 1971]

SECRET ESCALATION PLANS IN 1964 DESCRIBED IN JOHNSON MEMOIRS—BOOK SUPPORTS PENTAGON DATA

(By Brian Donovan)

Lyndon Johnson's still-unpublished White House memoirs acknowledge that his administration was privately preparing in early 1964 for large-scale American military involvement in Vietnam, long before the depth of the U.S. commitment was known to the public.

The memoirs, to be published in November, support many of the findings of the classified Pentagon study of the war's origins, which the government has been fighting to keep secret. The former President's book, now largely in galley form at the New York publishing house of Holt, Rinehart & Winston, is entitled "The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency." Newsday obtained information about the material from a publishing industry source.

Johnson depicts himself in the book as having been hesitant for several months over approving military advisers' recommendations for bombing raids against North Vietnam. But in February of 1965, he writes, he told his aides that he was approving the bombing. "We have kept our gun over the mantel and our shells in the cupboard for a long time now," I said. "And what was the result? They are killing our men while they sleep in the night. I can't ask American soldiers out there to continue to fight with one hand tied behind their backs."

Johnson says in the book that he first decided to pursue President Kennedy's policy of defending South Vietnam's sovereignty while flying back to Washington only a few hours after Kennedy was assassinated in November, 1963.

In the highlights of his chapters on Vietnam, portraying more than five years of growing U.S. involvement, Johnson says:

On March 17, 1964, he approved a recommendation by Defense Secretary McNamara that U.S. forces should be prepared for a "program of graduated military pressure against the North."

During the 1964 presidential campaign, Robert Kennedy volunteered to go to South Vietnam as the U.S. ambassador.

During the same campaign, all that he meant by his often-quoted statement that he would not send U.S. troops "to do the fighting that Asian boys should do for themselves" was that America should not "take charge" of the war or provoke a conflict with China. "I did not mean that we were not going to do any fighting, for we had already lost many good men in Vietnam."

In September, 1964, Johnson approved a

contingency plan for bombing, recommended by the military, to be implemented if Communist forces made a "spectacular" attack in the South. But he then waited until Feb. 7, 1965, to start bombing, twice rejecting military advice to begin earlier.

On Feb. 17, 1965, Johnson met with former President Eisenhower and was urged to mount a "campaign of pressure" against the North.

About three weeks after the first major battle involving American ground troops in a campaign in June, 1965, Johnson authorized a 25,000-man troop increase to 75,000. He writes, "I was convinced that our retreat from this challenge would open the path to World War III."

At the 1967 Glassboro summit conference, Soviet Premier Kosygin told Johnson that if the U.S. stopped bombing, peace negotiations would start, but no mutually agreeable terms for pursuing that peace feeler could be reached.

Johnson prefaces his chronology of his Vietnam decisions by saying, "I have not written these chapters to say, 'This is how it was,' but to say, 'This is how I saw it from my vantage point.'"

In 1964, while taking the steps that led to an extensive U.S. military effort in Vietnam, Johnson writes, "I had moments of deep discouragement, times when I felt that the South Vietnamese were their own worst enemies. The South Vietnamese seemed to have a strong impulse toward political suicide."

Johnson's portrait of his early policy-making stance coincides to a certain extent with the picture drawn in the embattled Pentagon study, indicating a President considering plans for major military operations while hesitating at several points to put those plans into effect. The picture becomes particularly clear in Johnson's account of the steps leading to the U.S. bombing raids.

Although no "formal" bombing proposal had been advanced by his advisers during his first year in the White House, Johnson writes, "the idea of hitting North Vietnam with air power, either on a reprisal basis or a sustained campaign, had been discussed inside the government, in Saigon and in the American press for some time . . ."

According to the classified Pentagon study that has surfaced in recent days, the President, in June of 1964, considered "the political conventions just around the corner and the election issues regarding Vietnam clearly drawn." So he held back, the study said, from seeking any major escalation and from seeking any congressional approval for it.

Then, on Sept. 9, 1964, a little more than a month after the Tonkin Gulf incidents, Johnson received recommendations, from the State and Defense Departments, he writes, supporting the idea of bombing the North. Johnson says he ordered that contingency plans for such raids be prepared. "Acting on [that] order, the military force made plans to retaliate by air against the North if the North Vietnamese or Viet Cong hit U.S. forces or carried out some kind of 'spectacular' attack in South Vietnam," he writes. "Twice before the year was out, I was asked to put those contingency plans into effect."

The first time, he writes, was after an attack on the air base at Bien Hoa; the second, after the bombing of an American officers' billet in Saigon. It was not until February of 1965, when an attack on a U.S. base at Pleiku killed eight Americans, however, that the strikes finally were authorized, he writes.

Despite the decision to prepare to begin bombing came in September of 1964, Johnson was presenting a far different impression to the public at that time. During a campaign appearance before a gathering of steelworkers in Atlantic City on Sept. 28, Johnson, in a slap at his Republican opponent, Sen.

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Barry Goldwater, said: "You know it takes a man who loves his country to build a house instead of a raving, ranting demagogue who wants to tear one down." At another campaign appearance, he described the contest between Goldwater and himself as one "between the center and the fringe, between the responsible mainstream of American experience and the reckless and rejected extremes..."

And in another statement that month, Johnson said: "There are those who say, 'You ought to go north and drop bombs to try to wipe out the supply lines,' and they think that would escalate the war. We don't want our American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. We don't want to... get tied down in a land war in Asia."

Johnson comments on that statement, and several similar ones he made during the same period, with these words in his book: "I was answering those who proposed, or implied, that we should take charge of the war or carry out actions that would risk a war with Communist China. I did not mean that we were not going to do any fighting, for we had already lost many good men in Vietnam."

According to the Pentagon study, Johnson also ordered, in private meetings with advisers during that same month, several more military steps in addition to the bombing contingency plans. They included the resumption of destroyer patrols off North Vietnam and covert South Vietnamese commando raids in North Vietnam with American support, the study said. Those raids, under the code name of 34A, originally ordered by Johnson to increase pressure against North Vietnam, grew in scope during the summer of 1964, according to the Pentagon papers. During some of the raids, U.S. ships, including destroyers, were standing by in international waters off North Vietnam, the study said. Two of the destroyers, the Maddox and the Turner Joy, figured in a key international incident.

According to Johnson's account, he received a report from a Pentagon duty officer on Aug. 2 that the Maddox had been attacked by three North Vietnamese torpedo boats. Johnson writes that he decided that day against any immediate retaliation. Two days later, Johnson writes, the Turner Joy was attacked. But Johnson's book goes along with other accounts in reporting some confusion at the scene over what actually happened. "The destroyer Maddox questioned whether the many reports of enemy torpedo firings were all valid," he writes.

Nonetheless, the Pentagon study said, Johnson then ordered limited retaliatory strikes against the North, using contingency plans already prepared. "The Tonkin Gulf reprisal constituted an important firebreak, and the Tonkin Gulf resolution set U.S. public support for virtually any action," it said.

Johnson writes that in early 1965, with the full-scale bombing of the North finally underway, he received more advice supporting a further widening of the war. On the night of Feb. 7, the day that Johnson ordered the air strikes, special presidential adviser McGeorge Bundy came back from Saigon with a recommendation that the war policy be one of "gradual and continuing reprisal."

Ten days later, Johnson writes, he met with Eisenhower and was urged to continue a "campaign of pressure." Johnson says Eisenhower told him that during the Korean war, Eisenhower had told the enemy that if a settlement was not reached, the U.S. would remove "the limits we were observing as to the area of combat and the weapons employed."

It was against the background of such advice, Johnson writes, that his administration began in that period to move into a ground war. "In March, I agreed to Gen. [William] Westmoreland's request that we

land two Marine battalions to provide security for the Da Nang air base."

According to the Pentagon study, Hanoi's failure to respond to the initial air strikes with an offer of negotiations surprised and discouraged the Johnson administration. After a month, the study said, Johnson decided that the only alternative was to step up the war on the ground as well.

Johnson writes that during the first two days of April, he approved an increase of 18,000 to 20,000 men in American support forces, the deployment of two more Marine battalions and a Marine air squadron, and a change in the previously defensive Marine mission.

That change, the book says, permitted "their more active use" subject to approval from the State and Defense Departments. By the end of April, the total ground troop level had exceeded 50,000, and the U.S. was well on its way to a deeper involvement.

But nearly three months later, on July 28, Johnson was still saying publicly that the troop deployments did not signal any change in the nation's Vietnam policy. At a news conference that day, he said: "It does not imply any change in policy whatever. It does not imply any change of objective."

During the bombings, Johnson writes, the U.S. crews "made fantastic efforts" to avoid killing civilians. But he adds: "They could not be totally successful, it is true, and that was a constant source of sorrow to me."

Johnson's Vietnam chapters also touch on some of the diplomatic maneuvers accompanying the escalation of the war. At one point, his account seems to confirm previously published reports that in February, 1967, Harold Wilson, who was then the British prime minister, received a peace feeler from Hanoi through Alexei Kosygin, then the Soviet premier. Kosygin, in London at the time, said that stopping the bombing and reducing U.S. troop strength would lead to peace talks, Johnson writes.

Johnson responded with his own set of proposals, according to the book, and asked for an answer from Hanoi within 24 hours. Wilson then complained, Johnson writes, that 24 hours was not enough time. In the end, the book says, there was no response from Hanoi. When Kosygin returned to Moscow, the U.S. resumed bombing.

At the Glassboro conference in June of 1967, Johnson writes, Kosygin again said that a bombing halt would lead to peace negotiations. Johnson reiterated his insistence, he writes, that Hanoi not take advantage of a bombing cessation. Kosygin relayed that position to Hanoi, Johnson writes, but the U.S. never received an answer.

At one point in this account, Johnson writes that the concept of turning the war over to the South Vietnamese was a major goal of his administration in 1968. Somewhat pointedly, he writes that that policy was later adopted by President Nixon and called Vietnamization.

At another point, the Johnson book says that two French intermediaries returned to Paris after a visit to Hanoi and told Henry Kissinger, then a Harvard professor and now a key Nixon foreign policy adviser, that Hanoi would begin talks if the bombing stopped. The intermediaries said that the halt need not be billed as permanent step, according to the book.

Johnson writes that the U.S. relayed to Hanoi a message that it would accept those terms if the North Vietnamese pledged not to take advantage of the move by infiltrating troops. Hanoi refused to give such a guarantee, Johnson writes.

Summing up his thoughts on his Vietnam years, Johnson's narrative says, "Looking back as I left the presidency, I knew not everything I did about Vietnam, every decision I made about it, had been correct."

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EXHIBIT 1

TEXT OF GURFEIN OPINION UPHOLDING THE
TIMES AND KAUFMAN ORDER EXTENDING
BAN

On June 12, June 13 and June 14, 1971, the New York Times published summaries and portions of the text of two documents - certain volumes from a 1968 Pentagon study relating to Vietnam and a summary of a 1965 Defense Department study relating to the Tonkin Gulf incident. The United States asks to enjoin the Times from "further dissemination, disclosure or divulgence" of materials contained in the 1968 study of the decision-making process with respect to Vietnam and the summary of the 1965 Tonkin Gulf study. In its application for a temporary restraining order the United States also asked the Court to order The Times to furnish the Court all the documents involved so that they could be impounded pending a determination. On June 15 upon the argument of the order to show cause the Court entered a temporary restraining order against The New York Times in substance preventing the further publication until a determination by the Court upon the merits of the Government's application for a preliminary injunction. The Court at that time, in the absence of any evidence, refused to require the documents to be impounded.

The Government contends that the documents still unpublished and the information in the possession of The Times involves a serious breach of the security of the United States and that the further publication will cause "irreparable injury to the national defense."

The articles involved material that has been classified as Top-Secret and Secret, although the Government concedes that these classifications are related to volumes rather than individual documents and that included within the volumes may be documents which should not be classified in such high categories. The documents involved are a 47 volume study entitled "History of United States Decision-Making Process on Vietnam Policy" and a document entitled "The Command and Control Study of the Tonkin Gulf Incident Done by the Defense Department's Weapons System Evaluation Group in 1965." There is no question that the documents are in the possession of The Times.

The issue of fact with respect to national security was resolved in the following manner. In view of the claim of the Government that testimony in support of its claim that publication of the documents would involve a serious security danger would in itself be dangerous the Court determined that under the "Secrets of State" doctrine an in camera proceeding should be held at which only the attorneys for each side, witnesses for the Government and two designated representatives of The New York Times would be present. It was believed that this would enable the Government to present its case forcefully and without restraint so that the accommodation of the national security interest with the rights of a free press could be determined with no holds barred. It was with reluctance that the Court granted a hearing from which the public was excluded, but it seemed that there was no other way to serve the needs of justice. My finding with respect

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to the testimony on security will be averted to below.

1. This case is one of first impression. In the researches of both counsel and of the Court nobody has been able to find a case remotely resembling this one where a claim is made that national security permits a prior restraint on the publication of a newspaper. The Times in affidavits has indicated a number of situations in which classified information has been "leaked" to the press without adverse governmental or judicial action. It cites news stories and the memoirs of public officials who have used (shortly after the events) classified material in explaining their versions of the decision making process. They point out that no action has ever been taken against any such publication of "leaks." The Government on the other hand points out that there has never been an attempt to publish such a massive compilation of documents which is probably unique in the history of "leaks." The Vietnam study had been authorized by Secretary of Defense McNamara, continued under Secretary Clifford and finally delivered to the present Secretary of Defense Laird. The White House was not given a copy. The work was done by a group of historians, including certain persons on contract with the Government. It is actually called a "history." The documents in the Vietnam study relate to the period from 1945 to early 1968. There is no reference to any material subsequent to that date. The Tonkin Gulf incident analysis was prepared in 1965, six years ago. The Times contends that the material is historical and that the circumstance that it involves the decision making procedures of the Government is no different from the descriptions that have emerged in the writings of diarists and memoirists. The Government on the other hand contends that by reference to the totality of the studies an enemy might learn something about United States methods which he does not know, that references to past relationships with foreign governments might affect the conduct of our relations in the future and that the duty of public officials to advise their superiors frankly and freely in the decision-making process would be impeded if it was believed that newspapers could with impunity publish such private information. These are indeed troublesome questions.

This case, in the judgment of the Court, was brought by the Government in absolute good faith to protect its security and not as a means of suppressing dissident or contrary political opinion. The issue is narrower—as to whether and to what degree the alleged "chill" the right of newspapers to publish. That the attempt by the Government to restrain The Times is not an act of attempted precensorship as such is also made clear by the historic nature of the documents themselves. It has been publicly stated that the present Administration had adopted a new policy with respect to Vietnam. Prior policy must, therefore, be considered as history rather than as an assertion of present policy the implementation of which could be seriously damaged by the publication of these documents.

2. The Times contends that the Government has no inherent power to seek injunction against publication and that power of the Court to grant such an injunction can be derived only from a statute. The Government has asserted a statutory authority for the injunction, namely, the Act of June 25, 1948, c. 645, 62 Stat. 738; Sept. 23, 1950, c. 1024, Tit. I, Sec. 18, 64 Stat. 1003 (18 U.S.C. 793). The Government contends moreover, that it has an inherent right to protect itself in its vital functions and that hence an injunction will lie even in the absence of a specific statute.

There seems little doubt that the Government may ask a Federal District Court for

injunctive relief even in the absence of a specific statute authorizing such relief.

The Supreme Court has held that "(o)ur decisions have established the general rule that the United States may sue to protect its interests. . . . This rule is not necessarily inapplicable when the particular governmental interest sought to be protected is expressed in a statute carrying criminal penalties for its violation." *Wyandotte Co. vs. U.S.*, 389 U.S. 191, 201-2 (1967).

In recent times the United States has obtained an injunction against the State of Alabama from enforcing the miscegenation laws of that State, *U.S. vs. Brittain*, 319 F. Supp. 1058, 1061. The United States has been held entitled to restrain a collection of a tax because "the interest of the national government in the proper implementation of its policies and programs involving the national defense such as to vest in it the "non-statutory right to maintain this action." *U.S. vs. Arlington County*, 328 F. 2d, 929, 932-33 (4th Cir. 1964). Recently in *U.S. vs. Brand Jewelers, Inc.*, 318 F. Supp. 1293, 1299, a decision by Judge Frankel of this Court collects the authorities illustrating the various situations in which the classic case of *In re Debs*, 158 U.S. 564 (1895) has been cited. Accordingly, even in the absence of statute the Government's inherent right to protect itself from breaches of security is clear.

That however, is only the threshold question. Assuming the right of the United States and, indeed, its duty in this case to attempt to restrain the further publication of these documents, the Government claims and the Times denies that there is any statute which proscribes such publication. The argument requires an analysis of the various sections (792-799) contained in Chapter 37 of Title 18 of the U.S. Criminal Code entitled "Espionage and Censorship." The statute seems to be divided into two parts. The first, which for lack of a better term may be considered simple espionage, and the second, the publication of information. The Government relies upon Section 793. There are two subsections concerning which the question of interpretation has arisen. Subsection (d) deals with persons with lawful possession. . . . "whoever lawfully having possession of any document, writing, code book, etc. . . . relating to the national defense or information relating to the national defense which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation . . ." It seems clear that neither The Times nor the Government now claim that subsection (d) applies, since it is fairly obvious that "lawful" possession means the possession of Government officials or others who have authorized possession of the documents. The Government, however, relies on subsection (e) which reads as follows:

"(e) Whoever having unauthorized possession of, access to, or control over any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blueprint, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note relating to the national defense, or information relating to the national defense which information to the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation, willfully communicates, delivers, transmits or causes to be communicated, delivered, or transmitted, or attempts to communicate, deliver, transmit or cause to be communicated, delivered, or transmitted the same to any person not entitled to receive it, or willfully retains the same and fails to deliver it to the officer or employee of the United States entitled to receive it; or"

"PUBLICATION" IS NOT MENTIONED

It will be noted that the word "publication" does not appear in this section. The

Government contends that the word "communicates" covers the publication by a newspaper of the material interdicted by the subsection. A careful reading of the section would indicate that this is truly an espionage section where what is prohibited is the secret or clandestine communication to a person not entitled to receive it where the possessor has reason to believe that it may be used to the injury of the United States or the advantage of any foreign nation. This conclusion is fortified by the circumstance that in other sections of Chapter 37 there is specific reference to publication. The distinction is sharply made in Section 794 entitled "Gathering or Delivering Defense Information to Aid Foreign Government." Subsection (a) deals with peace-time communication of documents, writings, code books, etc. relating to national defense. It does not use the word "publication." Subsection (b) on the other hand which deals with "in time of war" does punish anyone who "publishes" specific information "with respect to the movement, numbers, description, condition or disposition of any of the Armed Forces, ships, aircraft or war materials of the United States or with respect to the plans or conduct, or supposed plans or conduct of any naval or military operations, or with respect to any works or measures undertaken for or connected with, or intended for the fortification or defense of any place, or any other information relating to the public defense, which might be useful to the enemy. . . ."

Similarly, in Section 797, one who publishes photographs, sketches, etc. of vital military and naval installations or equipment is subject to punishment. And finally, in Section 798 which deals with "Disclosure of Classified Information" there is a specific prohibition against one who "publishes" any classified information. This classified information is limited to the nature, preparation, or use of any code, cipher, or cryptographic system of the United States or any foreign government; or the design, construction, use, maintenance, or repair of any device, apparatus, or appliance used or prepared or planned for use by the United States or any foreign government for cryptographic or communication intelligence purposes; or the communication intelligence activities of the United States or any foreign government; or obtained by the processes of communications of any foreign government, knowing the same to have been obtained by such processes.

The Government does not contend, nor do the facts indicate, that the publication of the documents in question would disclose the types of classified information specially prohibited by the Congress. Aside from the internal evidence of the language in the various sections as indicating that newspapers were not intended by Congress to come within the purview of Section 793, there is Congressional history to support the conclusion. Section 793 derives from the original espionage act of 1917 (Act of June 15, 1917, Chap. 30, Title I, Sections 1, 2, 4, 6, 40 Stat. 217, 218, 219). At that time there was proposed in H.R. 291 a provision that ["during any national emergency resulting from a war to which the United States is a party or from threat of such a war, the President may, by proclamation, prohibit the publishing or communicating of, or the attempting to publish or communicate any information relating to the national defense, which in his judgment is of such character that it is or might be useful to the enemy."] This provision for prior restraint on publication for security reasons limited to wartime or threat of war was voted down by the Congress. In the debate Senator Ashhurst in a scholarly speech stated the problem as follows:

"Freedom of the press means simply, solely, and only the right to be free from a precensorship, the right to be free from the restraints of a censor. In other words,

under the Constitution as amended by Amendment No. 1, 'freedom of the press' means nothing except that the citizen is guaranteed that he may publish whatever he sees fit and not be subjected to pains and penalties because he did not consult the censor before doing so."

NOTES CONGRESSIONAL REFUSAL

It would appear, therefore, that Congress recognizing the Constitutional problems of the First Amendment with respect to free press, refused to include a form of precensorship even in wartime.

In 1957 the report of the United States Commission on Government Security, in urging further safeguards against publication of matters affecting national security, recognized that "any statute designed to correct this difficulty must necessarily minimize constitutional objections by maintaining the proper balance between the guarantee of the First Amendment, on one hand, and required measures to establish a needed safeguard against any real danger to our national security." Report of the United States Commission on Government Security 619-20 (1957).

Senator Cotton, a sponsor of the bill, recognized in debate that "it should be made crystal clear that at the present time penalties for disclosure of secret information can only be applied against those employed by the Government. The recommendation extended such control over those outside the Government." The bill proposed was never passed. The significance lies, however, in the awareness by the Congress of the problems of prior restraint and its determination to reject them except in the limited cases involved in Section 794 and Section 798 involving codes, communication intelligence, and the like.

The injunction sought by the Government must, therefore, rest upon the premise that in the absence of statutory authority there is inherent power in the Executive to protect the national security. It was conceded at the argument that there is Constitutional power to restrain serious security breaches vitally affecting the interests of the Nation. This Court does not doubt the right of the Government to injunctive relief against a newspaper that is about to publish information or documents absolutely vital to current national security. But it does not find that to be the case here. Nor does this Court have to pass on the delicate question of the power of the President in the absence of legislation to protect the functioning of his prerogatives—the conduct of foreign relations, the right to impartial advice and military security, for the responsibility of which the Executive is charged against private citizens who are not government officials. For I am constrained to find as a fact that the in camera proceedings at which representatives of the Department of State, Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff testified, did not convince this Court that the publication of these historical documents would seriously breach the national security. It is true, of course, that any breach of security will cause the jitters in the security agencies themselves and indeed in foreign governments who deal with us. But to sustain a preliminary injunction the Government would have to establish not only irreparable injury, but also the probability of success in the litigation itself. It is true that the Court has not been able to read through the many volumes of documents in the his-

tory of Vietnam, but it did give the Government an opportunity to pinpoint what it believed to be vital breaches to our national security of sufficient impact to contravert the right of a free press. Without revealing the content of the testimony, suffice it to say that no cogent reasons were advanced as to why these documents except in the general framework of embarrassment previously mentioned, would vitally affect the security of the Nation. In the light of such a finding the inquiry must end. If the statute (18 U.S.C. 793) were applicable (which I must assume as an alternative so that this decision may be reviewed by an appellate court) it is doubtful that it could be applied to the activities of The New York Times. For it would be necessary to find as an element of the violation a willful belief that the information to be published "could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation." That this is an essential element of the offense is clear. *Gorin v. U.S.*, 312 U.S. 19 (1941).

I find that there is no reasonable likelihood of the Government successfully proving that the action of the Times were not in good faith, here irreparable injury to the Government. This has been an effort on the part of The Times to vindicate the right of the public to know. It is not a case involving an intent to communicate vital secrets for the benefit of a foreign government or to the detriment of the United States.

3. As a general matter we start with the proposition that prior restraint on publication is unconstitutional. *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. (1931). As the Supreme Court observed in *Grosjean v. American Press Co. Inc.*, 297 U.S. 233:

"The predominant purpose of the . . . (First Amendment) was to preserve an untrammelled press a vital source of public information. The newspapers, magazines and other journals of the country, it is safe to say, have shed, and continue to shed, more light on the public and business affairs of the nation than any other instrumentality of publicity; and since informed public opinion is the most potent of all restraints upon misgovernment, the suppression or abridgement of the publicity afforded by a free press cannot be regarded otherwise than with grave concern."

Yet the free press provision of the First Amendment is not absolute. *Near v. Minnesota*, supra. In the *Near* case the Court said that "no one would question but that a government might prevent actual obstruction to its recruiting service or the publication of the sailing of transports or the number or location of troops. The illustration accent how limited is the field of security protection in the context of the compelling force of First Amendment right. The First Amendment concept of a "free press" must be read in the light of the struggle of free men against prior restraint of publication. From the time of Blackstone it was a tenet of the founding fathers that precensorship was the primary evil to be dealt with in the First Amendment. Fortunately upon the facts adduced in this case there is no sharp clash such as might have appeared between the vital security interest of the Nation and the compelling Constitutional doctrine against prior restraint. If there is some embarrassment to the Government in security aspects as remote as the general embarrassment that flow from any security breach we must learn to live with it. The security of the Nation is not at the ramparts alone. Security also lies in the value of our free institutions. A cantankerous press, an obtinate press, a ubiquitous press must be suffered by those in authority in order to preserve the even greater values of freedom of expression and the right of the people to know. In this case there has been no attempt by the Government at political suppression. There has been no attempt to stifle criticism. Yet in the last

analysis it is not merely the opinion of the editorial writer, or of the columnist which is protected by the First Amendment. It is the free flow of information so that the public will be informed about the Government and its actions.

These are troubled times. There is no greater safety valve for discontent and cynicism about the affairs of Government than freedom of expression in any form. This has been the genius of our institutions through our history. It has been the credo of all our Presidents. It is one of the marked traits of our national life that distinguish us from other nations under different forms of government.

For the reasons given the Court will not continue the restraining order which expires today and will deny the application of the Government for a preliminary injunction. The temporary restraining order will continue, however, until such time during the day as the Government may seek a stay from a Judge of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

The foregoing shall constitute the Court's findings of fact and conclusions of law under Rule 52(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

So ordered.

(s) M. I. GURFEIN,
S. S. D. J.

Dated: June 19, 1971.

Appearances

Whitney North Seymour, Jr., United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Attorney for Plaintiff United States of America.

By: Michael D. Hess, Joseph D. Danas, Daniel Riesel, Michael I. Saltzman, Milton Sherman, Howard S. Sussman, Assistant United States Attorneys, United States Courthouse, New York, N.Y. 10007.

Cahill, Gordon, Sonnett, Reindel & Obl, attorneys for defendant, New York Company.

By: Alexander M. Bickel, Floyd Abrams, William E. Hegart, of counsel, 80 Pine Street, New York, N.Y. 10005.

Amici Curiae: American Civil Liberties Union, New York Civil Liberties Union.

By: Norman Dorson, Melvin L. Wulf, Osmond K. Fraenkel, Burt Neuberger.

National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee.

By: Victor Rabinowitz, Kristin Booth Glen.

JUDGE KAUFMAN'S ORDER

The Government has moved for a stay pending appeal from an order of the District Court denying a preliminary injunction and I have heard brief oral argument.

A serious question has been presented concerning that right of the Government to restrain prior to publication certain information and reproductions of specific documents relating to the past conduct of hostilities in Vietnam. It is apparent that Judge Gurfein has been and this could will be presented with factual, statutory, and constitutional questions of immediate practical moment and involving fundamental rights guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

It appears likely that unless the status quo is maintained for a further brief period, the jurisdiction of this court over this proceeding will, in practical effect, be defeated.

The ultimate disposition of this appeal must be made by a panel of at least three judges. For the purpose of preserving the jurisdiction of this court in this matter, it is necessary that I, sitting as a single judge of this multi-judge court, do not by my sole action permit this case to become moot before other members of this court have had an opportunity to pass on this application or to consider the issues raised. Institutional considerations compel my action.

Therefore, and emphatically intending to intimate no views as to the merits of the Government's appeal nor as to whether I would have granted a temporary restraining

*The First Amendment reads:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress or grievances."

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order in the first instance, I am required to extend the temporary restraining order issued by Judge Gurfein dated June 15, 1971, until a full panel of this court can meet to consider this application. A panel will convene in regular session on Monday morning.

Accordingly, I extend the temporary restraining order until this application is presented to and passed upon by a full panel of this court. In any event, this extension will expire on June 21 at 12 noon. So ordered.

(S) IRVING R. KAUFMAN,
U.S.C.J.



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their functions as voters and citizens. More than any other officials of government, Members of Congress have relations with the public that gives them a crucial concern with the public's right to know.

We agree with the position of the defendants *New York Times* and *Washington Post* that the courts have no inherent authority, absent a statute, to prevent publication of the documents involved here, and that no such statutory authority exists. We confine our argument, however, to the broader constitutional issues and urge upon the Court three fundamental propositions: (1) that information which comes to light other than by strictly lawful process is nevertheless entitled to the full protection of the First Amendment; (2) that the attempt by the Government to suppress publication of these documents violates both the legislative and the public right to know; and (3) that the doctrine of prior restraint forbids advance censorship of material published by the press.

I. INFORMATION WHICH COMES TO LIGHT OTHER THAN BY STRICTLY LEGAL PROCESS IS NEVERTHELESS ENTITLED TO THE FULL PROTECTION OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT

The general approach which ought to govern solution of the problem now before the Court has been well expressed by James Madison in his Report on the Virginia Resolutions:

"In every State, probably, in the Union, the press has exerted a freedom in canvassing the merits and measures of public men of every description which has not been confined to the strict limits of the common law. On this footing the freedom of the press has stood; on this footing it yet stands. . . . Some degree of abuse is inseparable from the proper use of everything, and in no instance is this more true than in that of the press. It has accordingly been decided by the practice of the States, that it is better to leave a few of its noxious branches to their luxuriant growth than, by pruning them away, to injure the vigour of those yielding the proper fruits."¹

The Government's approach has been quite different. The Government conceives of the problem as if the only issue were one of stolen goods. It bases its claim upon a proprietary interest in the information involved, urges that it is entitled to recover its stolen property, and contends that neither Members of Congress nor the general public can have any right to the purloined information.²

The Government's position might be valid if all that was involved were a stolen automobile. It might even be sound as applied to the physical documents themselves, or to a copyrighted manuscript of a private author. But this approach has no valid application to information about public events. Such information, whether or not it comes to light within "the strict limits of the common law," is part of the common fund of knowledge available to the general public in its role as ultimate decision-maker. This information, therefore, comes within the ambit of the First Amendment and the issue moves to a higher, constitutional level.

It is well known to observers of public affairs that vast amounts of information become available to Congress and the public in a manner which does not conform to the Executive's national security classification scheme. The affidavits of Max Frankel, Benjamin Bradlee, and other newsmen on file in the present proceedings make this entirely clear. Indeed, one of the principal functions

of a free press in this country is to ferret out information which the Executive wishes to conceal. Executive officials themselves consistently disclose classified information, or engineer leaks, for the purpose of influencing public decision-making. Much other classified material emerges in memoirs, government documents taken when the official leaves office, and similar sources. The existence of such a communications system in fact marks the difference between a free press and a controlled press, between a democratic system of free expression and a totalitarian system of controlled expression.

The Executive regulations on classification can govern the internal operation of the Executive agencies. They cannot, under the First Amendment, control communication of information outside the government. To put it colloquially, a cat in the bag cannot be treated the same way as a cat outside the bag. Once the information gets outside the Executive—once the Executive loses its control for any reason—the information becomes part of the public domain.³

The results that flow from this state of affairs are twofold. First, once having lost control of the information the Government can, as a practical matter, rarely get the information back. The events of the past few weeks fully demonstrate the truth of this proposition. Second, whatever the rights of the Executive may be with respect to the person who first obtained the information in breach of the classification rules, the Executive should not be allowed to try to regain control of the information through muzzling the press. Such an effort, involving suppression of information at whatever point it crops up in the communications system, under the guise of fact or opinion or even art or literature, could only be accomplished by the kind of controls that are characteristic of a police state.

II. THE ATTEMPT BY THE EXECUTIVE TO SUPPRESS PUBLICATION OF THESE DOCUMENTS VIOLATES BOTH THE LEGISLATIVE AND THE PUBLIC RIGHT TO KNOW

The defendants in these proceedings have, quite naturally, stressed the protection which the First Amendment extends to the speaker, the writer and the publisher of information. This case also presents, in a way no other case in our history has before, the other side of the First Amendment coin,—the right to listen, to hear, and to obtain information. Two aspects of this right to know are involved here. We discuss first the right of Members of Congress and second the right of the general public.

A. The legislative right to know

The legislative right to know derives from the position and function of the legislative branch in the general structure of our government. It has been recognized many times in the decisions of this Court. See, e.g., *Watkins v. United States*, 354 U.S. 178 (1957). The legislative right to know also derives from the First Amendment. That constitutional mandate was designed to maintain an effective system of freedom of expression and members of the legislature are entitled, as are private citizens, to share its benefits and protections.

It would be hard to overestimate the importance to our form of government of the legislative right to know. That right is indispensable to the performance of every function of the legislative branch. Clearly legislative access to information ought to be at least on a par with that of the Executive. For the legislative function is not only to initiate the basic policies which the Execu-

tive branch must follow, but to review the administration of those policies by the Executive and revise them in the light of that knowledge.

The legislative right to know is of particular importance at this period of development in our national affairs. The constant growth of the executive power has been a major characteristic of our age. More and more the people of our country have been concerned that the expansion of executive power has upset the original balance contemplated by the framers of our Constitution, that monopoly of power in the Executive has resulted in the government losing touch with the needs and desires of its own citizens, and that enhanced power in our elected representatives is imperative to restore a healthy division of authority in government.

There are a number of reasons for this unparalleled and dangerous growth of Executive power in the United States. There can be no doubt, however, that one of the principal reasons is the far greater access of the Executive to information, and its unwillingness to share that knowledge with Congress and the public. In today's world, control of the information process is the key to power.

It is crucial to note, also, that the legislature cannot adequately perform its function upon the basis of "official" information submitted to it by the Executive branch. Every observer of government knows that "official" information, in most situations, tells only half the story. Any bureaucracy, by the nature of the institution, tends to reveal only what it believes will support its own position and advance its own policies. A realistic fund of information must depend upon materials which lie far below the surface. The system of checks and balances cannot rest upon such bland sources of information as Executive hand-outs.

In this process of obtaining fuller, richer and more realistic information the press plays a vital role. It is not too much to say that this is perhaps the most important function of a free press. Obviously it is not a function that can be performed by a press under governmental constraint.

There is no need to stress here that the documents involved in these proceedings could not be more relevant to the issues now pending in Congress. Termination of the war in Vietnam, extension of Selective Service, appropriations for the conduct of the war, and numerous other questions are before the House and the Senate at this very moment. In addition, broader problems going to the respective powers of Congress and the President in connection with the making of war and the conduct of foreign relations are pressing for attention. It thwarts common sense that the information here in question should be withheld from Members of Congress.

In sum, to close off access to the kind of material the Government is now attempting to suppress would cripple the legislature in the performance of its constitutional functions. It would go far to relegate the legislative branch to second rate status in relation to the Executive, to jeopardize the balance of power between the branches of governments and to alter the whole constitutional structure.

B. The public right to know

The public right to know has been repeatedly recognized by this Court as a vital aspect of our system of freedom of expression. As Mr. Justice Brennan said in his concurring opinion in *Lamont v. Postmaster General*:

"It is true that the First Amendment contains no specific guarantee of access to publications. However, the protection of the Bill of Rights goes beyond the specific guarantees to protect from congressional abridgment those equally fundamental personal rights necessary to make the express guarantees fully meaningful. . . . I think the

¹ Report on the Virginia Resolutions, Madison's Works, vol. IV, 544.

² After commencement of the proceedings the President, as a matter of grace, made the materials available to members of Congress. *N.Y. Times*, June 24, 1971.

³ We are not discussing here the right of Congress, one of its members, or the general public to force the Executive to disclose information under powers inherent in the legislature, the First Amendment, or statutes such as the Freedom of Information Act.

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right to receive publications is such a fundamental right. The dissemination of ideas can accomplish nothing if otherwise willing addressees are not free to receive and consider them. It would be a barren marketplace of ideas that had only sellers and no buyers." 301 U.S. 301, 308 (1965).

The public right to know was the basis of the decision upholding the fairness doctrine in *Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. F.C.C.*, 395 U.S. 367 (1969), and the right to read what one pleases in *Stanley v. Georgia*, 394 U.S. 557 (1969). Lower Federal courts have likewise applied the principle to uphold the interests of the public as recipients of information in an untrammeled system of freedom of expression. See, e.g., *Office of Communications of United Church of Christ v. F.C.C.*, 359 F. 2d 894 (D.C. Cir. 1966); *Mandel v. Mitchell*, 39 L.W. 2530 (1971).

Members of Congress, of course, have the same interests as other citizens in protection of the right to know. They also have a particular interest as members of the legislative branch. Effective performance of their duties as elected representatives depends upon a knowledgeable constituency. Members of Congress and the people they represent must operate on a shared basis of understanding, upon a common wavelength. It is vital to the functioning of a democratic system that the electors have enough information to grasp the issues upon which their representatives are voting. It is likewise essential to the Member of Congress that he relate to the ideas and responses of his constituents. This reciprocal relation depends upon the fullest access possible to a common store of information. The public right to know, therefore, takes on a special importance when it concerns matters pending before the legislature.

Once again, it is difficult to imagine any information more relevant to the public right to know than the documents which the Government is here trying to keep the public from seeing.

The precise degree of protection afforded by the doctrine of the right to know, as embodied in the First Amendment, has not yet been fully developed. It may be some years before the specific rules can be worked out. Yet the starting point is clear. It is that members of the public have, as a general proposition, the right to know all information upon which decisions that affect their lives and property are based. This is the fundamental premise of a democratic system. Exceptions to the general rule must be narrow and specific. They would be recognized only in such special areas as military weapons and operations, current negotiations with a foreign country, or damage to individual reputation by premature disclosure of investigative data.

Wherever the line of exceptions may be drawn it has not, been reached in these cases. Judge Gurfein and Judge Gesell have both found, after a full hearing, that no substantial breach of national security is involved. The withholding of the information here in question has a maximum impact upon the constitutional right to know and the function it is designed to perform. There is no sound ground for not giving full effect to the constitutional principle in these cases.

A genuine and whole hearted insistence upon maintaining the right to know is vital to the welfare of the nation and its ability to cope with the many problems that now confront it. Much of the frustration, mistrust and misunderstanding that prevails in many quarters of the land today is due to our failure to keep the decision-making process on a more open and observable basis. Vigorous enforcement of the constitutional right to know would go far to restore confidence in our institutions and evoke support from the people who are most affected by their operation.

III. THE DOCTRINE OF PRIOR RESTRAINT FORBIDS ADVANCE CENSORSHIP OF THE MATERIAL HERE INVOLVED

The doctrine of prior restraint, growing out of revulsion to the English censorship laws, holds that governmental restrictions cannot be imposed upon expression in advance of publication. Even though the expression may be subject to subsequent punishment or can otherwise be restricted at a later point, it cannot be proscribed prior to publication. The doctrine was made part of our constitutional law in *Near v. Minnesota*, 293 U.S. 697 (1931). It has since been repeatedly confirmed. See e.g., *Lovell v. Griffin*, 303 U.S. 444 (1938); *Kunz v. N.Y.*, 340 U.S. 290 (1951); *Carroll v. President and Commissioners of Princess Anne*, 303 U.S. 175 (1968).

The theory of the prior restraint doctrine is that a system which requires a publisher to submit his material in advance to a government censor is so repressive by its very nature as to be inevitably destructive of free expression. The reasons for this have been stated as follows:

"A system of prior restraint is in many ways more inhibiting than a system of subsequent punishment: It is likely to bring under government scrutiny a far wider range of expression; it shuts off communication before it takes place; suppression by a stroke of the pen is more likely to be applied than suppression through a criminal process; the system allows less opportunity for public appraisal and criticism; the dynamics of the system drive toward excesses, as the history of all censorship shows."⁴

So oppressive is a scheme of prior restraint that it is not an exaggeration to say that it smacks of totalitarianism rather than democratic methods of control.

All the parties to these cases, and all the courts that have passed on the various aspects of them, recognize the critical importance of the doctrine of prior restraint. The issue here has turned, not on the validity of the doctrine, but upon whether an exception should be made to it in the case of national security. In a dictum in *Near v. Minnesota* the Court stated that there might be exceptional cases where the doctrine would not be applied, mentioning "actual obstruction to [the] recruiting service or the publication of the sailing dates of transports or the number and location of troops;" "obscene publications;" and "incitements to acts of violence and the overthrow by force of orderly government." 283 U.S. at 716. An actual exception has been made in the case of motion picture censorship boards to the extent of upholding laws which require advance screening of films against possible illegal obscenity. *Times Film Corp. v. City of Chicago*, 365 U.S. 43 (1961); *Freeman v. Maryland*, 380 U.S. 51 (1965). No other exceptions have been permitted. It has never been suggested by any court that the press could be subject to any form of advance censorship.

In the cases at bar, for the first time in the history of this country, various formulations have been proposed for an exception applying broadly to national security matters. The Government, if we understand its position correctly, urges that an exception be made for any classified document would per se constitute such a breach. Judge Gurfein would allow an exception for "information or documents absolutely vital to current national security." The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit approved censorship of items which "pose such grave and immediate danger to the security of the United States as to warrant their publication being enjoined."

We submit that any of the above formulations would effectively nullify the prior re-

⁴T. I. Emerson, *The System of Freedom of Expression* (1970), p. 506.

straint doctrine in the area of national security matters and would gravely jeopardize the whole system of freedom of expression. The Government's proposal would permit an injunction against the publication of any classified material unless the publisher could show that the classification was arbitrary and capricious. If this Court sanctions such a rule the press will be at the mercy of the Department of Justice. The Government will be in a position to leak any classified information that serves its own purposes and shut off countervailing information. The Executive would be arrogating to itself dictatorial power over the dissemination of large quantities of information bearing upon national defense, foreign policy, and most of the other important issues of the day.

The formulations of Judge Gurfein and the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, although more stringent on their face, would be almost equally destructive of a free press in America. We do not make this statement lightly. We ask the Court to consider carefully how the doctrines put forward in these courts below would operate in practice. Under any of these formulations the Executive can hold up publication simply by alleging that a serious breach of national security would occur. The Court would then issue a restraining order, allow the Government to present its case, and then decide whether there was sufficient danger to warrant issuance of an injunction against publication. This process in itself is a system of prior restraint. It involves an examination of the material by Executive officials, an order to withhold publication, and a governmental decision as to whether the material could be published or not. The exception has swallowed up the rule.

Moreover, most of the proceeding—certainly the critical parts—would take place in camera. Both the New York Times and the Washington Post cases followed this procedure, on the ground that otherwise the injury to national security would occur in the course of hearing the case. Only the defendants and their counsel were permitted to attend the in camera session. More than that, no one was allowed to be present unless he was first given security clearance by the Government. Hence the plaintiff in the case was able to dictate what individual defendants, and what counsel, were entitled to participate in determination of the issue. Such a procedure can hardly be recommended in a democratic society.

In any event, we submit that any rule for allowing exceptions which would create a system of prior restraint in the very process of applying the rule cannot be reconciled with the First Amendment. We do not say that under no circumstances can an exception to the prior restraint doctrine be justified. But it seems clear that a rule based, as are the rules suggested above, upon the gravity of the breach of security can only operate to install a full, not exceptional, system of prior restraint in the whole "national security" area.

The task of formulating a workable rule for exceptions is a complex one. Any such rule would probably have to be couched in terms of allowing the exception only for certain very specific kinds of information. As the Court suggested in *Near*, information on troop movements in times of war might fall within the excepted category. Perhaps details concerning the design of military weapons would be another category. Beyond the immediate area of military operations there should be few, if any, classes of information subject to advance restraint. Very little consideration has been given to the problem and no one is in a position to give a satisfactory answer at this time.

Even Judge Gesell's formulation in his opinion refusing a preliminary injunction would raise troubling questions unless considered in the context of his rulings taken as a whole. Judge Gesell, after considering

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these matters in the preliminary injunction stages, gave a stricter formulation than did Judge Gurfein, requiring a "showing of an immediate, grave threat to the national security . . . in close and narrowly defined circumstances." Applying this test Judge Gesell correctly refused to apply any restraint.

The Government's complaint contained no allegation of any concrete facts which would suggest a breach of national security in any specific area that might conceivably be subject to an exception to the prior restraint rule. Under such circumstances no temporary restraining order should have been issued and the complaint should have been dismissed. Therefore, the decision of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia should be further elucidated. "Closely and narrowly defined circumstances" must be shown to be as narrow as those exceptional circumstances alluded to in *Near v. Minnesota*.

We urge the Court to follow this course. Especially we urge the Court not to accept any formulation of exceptions to the prior restraint rule which will undermine the force and vitality of that traditional doctrine.

CONCLUSION

The issues involved in these cases go to the heart of the decision-making process in this country. The tendency of government in recent years has been toward ever more secrecy in its operations, and toward a consequent monopoly of power in the hands of a few high Executive officials. We suggest that this direction of events is fraught with danger. Secrecy in government is fundamentally anti-democratic. It perpetuates bureaucratic errors and leads ultimately to disaster. It is time our constitutional doctrines were called into play in opposition to those forces and invoked to promote conditions under which an open, representative and balanced government will be assured.

We respectfully submit that the complaints in these proceedings should be dismissed.

BOB ECKHARDT,
New Haven, Conn.
THOMAS I. EMERSON,
Washington, D.C.

Attorneys for Amici.
June 25, 1971.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1885, October Term, 1970]

NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER, v. UNITED STATES

On writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES PETITIONER, 1885 v. THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Per Curiam.

We granted certiorari in these cases in which the United States seeks to enjoin the New York Times and the Washington Post from publishing the contents of a classified study entitled "History of U.S. Decision-Making Process on Viet Nam Policy."—U.S.—(1971).

"Any system of prior restraints of expression comes to this Court bearing a heavy presumption against its constitutional validity." *Bantam Books, Inc. v. Sullivan*, 372 U.S. 58, 70 (1963); see also *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697 (1931). The Government "thus carries a heavy burden of showing justification for the enforcement of such a restraint." *Organization for a Better Austin v. Keefe*, —U.S.—(1971). The District Court for the Southern District of New York in the *New York Times* case and the District Court for the District of Columbia and the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in the *Washington Post* case held that the Government had not met that burden. We agree.

The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit is therefore affirmed. The order of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit is reversed and the case is remanded with directions to enter a judgment affirming the judgment of the District Court for the Southern District of New York. The stays entered June 25, 1971, by the Court are vacated. The mandates shall issue forthwith.

So ordered.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1885, October Term, 1970]

NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER, v. UNITED STATES

On writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, v. THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Mr. Justice Marshall, concurring.

The Government contends that the only

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issue in this case is whether in a suit by the United States, "the First Amendment bars a court from prohibiting a newspaper from publishing material whose disclosure would pose a grave and immediate danger to the security of the United States." Brief of the Government, at 6. With all due respect, I believe the ultimate issue in this case is even more basic than the one posed by the Solicitor General. The issue is whether this Court or the Congress has the power to make law.

In this case there is no problem concerning the President's power to classify information a "secret" or "top secret." Congress has specifically recognized Presidential authority, which has been formally exercised in Executive Order 10501, to classify documents and information. See, e.g., 18 U.S.C. § 798; 50 U.S.C. § 783. Nor is there any issue here regarding the President's power as Chief Executive and Commander-in-Chief to protect national security by disciplining employees who disclose information and by taking precautions to prevent leaks.

The problem here is whether in this particular case the Executive Branch has authority to invoke the equity jurisdiction of the courts to protect what it believes to be the national interest. See *In re Debs*, 158 U.S. 564, 584 (1895). The Government argues that in addition to the inherent power of any government to protect itself, the President's power to conduct foreign affairs and his position as Commander-in-Chief give him authority to impose censorship on the press to protect his ability to deal effectively with foreign nations and to conduct the military affairs of the country. Of course, it is beyond cavil that the President has broad powers by virtue of his primary responsibility for the conduct of our foreign affairs and his position as Commander-in-Chief. *Chicago & Southern Air Lines, Inc. v. Waterman Corp.*, 333 U.S. 103 (1948); *Hirabayashi v. United States*, 320 U.S. 81, 93 (1943); *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Co.*, 299 U.S. 304 (1936). And in some situations it may be that under whatever inherent powers the Government may have, as well as the implicit authority derived from the President's mandate to conduct foreign affairs and to act as Commander-in-Chief there is a basis for the invocation of the equity jurisdiction of this Court as an aid to prevent the publication of material damaging to "national security," however that term may be defined.

It would, however, be utterly inconsistent with the concept of separation of power for this Court to use its power of contempt to prevent behavior that Congress has specifically declined to prohibit. There would be a similar damage to the basic concept of these coequal branches of Government if when the Executive has adequate authority granted by Congress to protect "national security" it can choose instead to invoke the contempt power of a court to enjoin the threatened conduct. The Constitution provides that Congress shall make laws, the President execute laws, and courts interpret law. *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579 (1952). It did not provide for government by injunction in which the courts and the Executive can "make law" without regard to the action of Congress. It may be more convenient for the Executive if it need only convince a judge to prohibit conduct rather than to ask the Congress to pass a law and it may be more convenient to enforce a contempt order than seek a criminal conviction in a jury trial. Moreover, it may be considered politically wise to get a court to share the responsibility for arresting those who the Executive has probable cause to believe are violating the law. But convenience and political considerations of the moment do not justify a basic departure from the principles of our system of government.

Footnotes at end of article.

In this case we are not faced with a situation where Congress has failed to provide the Executive with broad power to protect the Nation from disclosure of damaging state secrets. Congress has on several occasions given extensive consideration to the problem of protecting the military and strategic secrets of the United States. This consideration has resulted in the enactment of statutes making it a crime to receive, disclose, communicate, withhold, and publish certain documents, photographs, instruments, appliances, and information. The bulk of these statutes are found to chapter 37 of U.S.C., Title 18, entitled Espionage and Censorship. In that chapter, Congress has provided penalties ranging from a \$10,000 fine to death for violating the various statutes.

Thus it would seem that in order for this Court to issue an injunction it would require a showing that such an injunction would enhance the already existing power of the Government to act. See *Bennett v. Laman*, 277 N. Y. 368, 14 N. E. 2d 439 (1938). It is a traditional axiom of equity that a court of equity will not do a useless thing just as it is a traditional axiom that equity will not enjoin the commission of a crime. See *Z. Chaffe & E. Re, Equity* 935-954 (5th ed. 1967); *I. H. Joyce, Injunctions* §§ 58-60a (1909). Here there has been no attempt to make such a showing. The Solicitor General does not even mention in his brief whether the Government considers there to be probable cause to believe a crime has been committed or whether there is a conspiracy to commit future crimes.

If the Government had attempted to show that there was no effective remedy under traditional criminal law, it would have had to show that there is no arguably applicable statute. Of course, at this stage this Court could not and cannot determine whether there has been a violation of a particular statute nor decide the constitutionality of any statute. Whether a good-faith prosecution could have been instituted under any statute could, however, be determined.

At least one of the many statutes in this area seems relevant to this case. Congress has provided in 18 U.S.C. § 793(e) that whoever "having unauthorized possession of, access to, or control over any document, writing, code book, signal book . . . or note relating to the national defense, or information relating to the national defense which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation, willfully communicates, delivers, transmits . . . the same to any person not entitled to receive it, or willfully retains the same and fails to deliver it to the officer or employee of the United States entitled to receive it . . . shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both." 18 U.S.C. § 793(e). Congress has also made it a crime to conspire to commit any of the offenses listed in 18 U.S.C. § 793(e).

It is true that Judge Gurfein found that Congress had not made it a crime to publish the items and material specified in § 793(e): He found that the words "communicates, delivers, transmits . . ." did not refer to publication of newspaper stories. And that view has some support in the legislative history and conforms with the past practice of using the statute only to prosecute those charged with ordinary espionage. But see 103 Cong. Rec. 10449 (remarks of Sen. Humphrey). Judge Gurfein's view of the statute is not, however, the only plausible construction that could be given. See my Brother WHITE's concurring opinion.

Even if it is determined that the Government could not in good faith bring criminal prosecutions against the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, it is clear that Congress has specifically rejected passing legislation that would have clearly given the President the power he seeks here and made

the current activity of the newspapers unlawful. When Congress specifically declines to make conduct unlawful it is not for this Court to redecide those issues—to overrule Congress. See *Youngstown Sheet & Tube v. Sawyer*, 345 U.S. 579 (1952).

On at least two occasions Congress has refused to enact legislation that would have made the conduct engaged in here unlawful and given the President the power that he seeks in this case. In 1917 during the debate over the original Espionage Act, still the basic provisions of § 793, Congress rejected a proposal to give the President in time of war or threat of war authority to directly prohibit by proclamation the publication of information relating to national defense that might be useful to the enemy. The proposal provided that:

"During any national emergency resulting from a war to which the United States is a party, or from threat of such a war, the President may, by proclamation, prohibit the publishing or communicating of, or the attempting to publish or communicate any information relating to the national defense which, in his judgment, is of such character that it is or might be useful to the enemy. Whoever violates any such prohibition shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or by imprisonment for not more than 10 years, or both: Provided, That nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or restrict any discussion, comment, or criticism of the acts or policies of the Government or its representatives or the publication of the same." 55 Cong. Rec. 1763.

Congress rejected this proposal after war against Germany had been declared even though many believed that there was a grave national emergency and that the threat of security leaks and espionage were serious. The Executive has not gone to Congress and requested that the decision to provide such power be reconsidered. Instead, the Executive comes to this Court and asks that it be granted the power Congress refused to give.

In 1957 the United States Commission on Government Security found that "[a]irplane journals, scientific periodicals, and even the daily newspaper have featured articles containing information and other data which should have been deleted in whole or in part for security reasons." In response to this problem the Commission, which was chaired by Senator Cotton, proposed that "Congress enact legislation making it a crime for any person willfully to disclose without proper authorization, for any purpose whatever, information classified 'secret' or 'top secret,' knowing, or having reasonable grounds to believe, such information to have been so classified." Report of Commission on Government Security 819-820 (1957). After substantial floor discussion on the proposal, it was rejected. See 103 Cong. Rec. 10447-10450. If the proposal that Senator Cotton championed on the floor had been enacted, the publication of the documents involved here would certainly have been a crime. Congress refused, however, to make it a crime. The Government is here asking this Court to remake that decision. This Court has no such power.

Either the Government has the power under statutory grant to use traditional criminal law to protect the country or, if there is no basis for arguing that Congress has made the activity a crime, it is plain that Congress has specifically refused to grant the authority the Government seeks from this Court. In either case this Court does not have authority to grant the requested relief. It is not for this Court to fling itself into every breach perceived by some Government official nor is it for this Court to take on itself the burden of enacting law, especially law that Congress has refused to pass.

I believe that the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia should be affirmed and the judg-

ment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit should be reversed insofar as it remands the case for further hearings.

FOOTNOTES

¹ See n. 3, *infra*.

² But see *Kent v. Dulles*, 357 U.S. 118 (1958); *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579 (1952).

³ There are several other statutory provisions prohibiting and punishing the dissemination of information, the disclosure of which Congress thought sufficiently imperiled national security to warrant that result. These include 42 U.S.C. §§ 2161 through 2166 relating to the authority of the Atomic Energy Commission to classify and declassify "Restricted Data" ["Restricted Data" is a term of art employed uniquely by the Atomic Energy Act]. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. § 2162 authorizes the Atomic Energy Commission to classify certain information. 42 U.S.C. § 2274, subsection (a) provides penalties for a person who "communicates, transmits, or discloses . . . with intent to injure the United States or an intent to secure an advantage to any foreign nation. . . ." "Restricted Data" Subsection (b) of § 2274 provides lesser penalties for one who "communicates, transmits, or discloses" such information "with reason to believe such data will be utilized to injure the United States or to secure an advantage to any foreign nation . . ." Other sections of Title 42 of U.S.C. dealing with atomic energy prohibit and punish acquisition, removal, concealment, tampering with, alteration, mutilation, or destruction of documents incorporating "Restricted Data" and provide penalties for employees and former employees of the Atomic Energy Commission, the armed services, contractors and licensees of the Atomic Energy Commission, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2276, 2277, Title 50 U.S.C. Appendix § 781 (part of the National Defense Act of 1941, as amended, 55 Stat. 236) prohibits the making of any sketch or other representation of military installations or any military equipment located on any military installation, as specified; and indeed Congress in the National Defense Act conferred jurisdiction on federal district courts over civil actions "to enjoin any violation" thereof. 50 U.S.C. App. §§ 1152, 50 U.S.C. § 783(b) makes it unlawful for any officers or employees of the United States or any corporation which is owned by the United States to communicate material which has been "classified" by the President to any person whom that governmental employee knows or has reason to believe is an agent or representative of any foreign government or any Communist organization.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 AND 1885.—OCTOBER TERM, 1970]
NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER, v. UNITED STATES

On writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, v. THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Mr. Justice White, with whom Mr. Justice Stewart joins, concurring.

I concur in today's judgments, but only because of the concededly extraordinary protection against prior restraints enjoyed by the press under our constitutional system. I do not say that in no circumstances would the First Amendment permit an injunction against publishing information about government plans or operations.¹ Nor, after examining the materials the Government characterizes as the most sensitive and destructive, can I deny that revelation of these

documents will do substantial damage to public interests. Indeed, I am confident that their disclosure will have that result. But I nevertheless agree that the United States has not met the very heavy burden which it must meet to warrant an injunction against publication in these cases, at least in the absence of express and appropriately limited congressional authorization for prior restraints in circumstances such as these.

The Government's position is simply stated: The responsibility of the Executive for the conduct of the foreign affairs and for the security of the Nation is so basic that the President is entitled to an injunction against publication of a newspaper story whenever he can convince a court that the information to be revealed threatens "grave and irreparable" injury to the public interests;² and the injunction should issue whether or not the material to be published is classified, whether or not publication would be lawful under relevant criminal statutes enacted by Congress and regardless of the circumstances by which the newspaper came into possession of the information.

At least in the absence of legislation by Congress, based on its own investigations and findings, I am quite unable to agree that the inherent powers of the Executive and the courts reach so far as to authorize remedies having such sweeping potential for inhibiting publications by the press. Much of the difficulty inheres in the "grave and irreparable danger" standard suggested by the United States. If the United States were to have judgment under such a standard in these cases, our decision would be of little guidance to other courts in other cases, for the material at issue here would not be available from the Court's opinion or from public records, nor would it be published by the press. Indeed, even today where we hold that the United States has not met its burden, the material remains sealed in court records and it is properly not discussed in today's opinions. Moreover, because the material poses substantial dangers to national interests and because of the hazards of criminal sanctions, a responsible press may choose never to publish the more sensitive materials. To sustain the Government in these cases would start the courts down a long and hazardous road that I am not willing to travel at least without congressional guidance and direction.

It is not easy to reject the proposition urged by the United States and to deny relief on its good-faith claims in these cases that publication will work serious damage to the country. But that discomfiture is considerably dispelled by the infrequency of prior restraint cases. Normally, publication will occur and the damage be done before the Government has either opportunity or grounds for suppression. So here, publication has already begun and a substantial part of the threatened damage has already occurred. The fact of a massive breakdown in security is known, access to the documents by many unauthorized people is undeniable and the efficacy of equitable relief against these or other newspapers to avert anticipated damage is doubtful at best.

What is more, terminating the ban on publication of the relatively few sensitive documents the Government now seeks to suppress does not mean that the law either requires or invites newspapers or others to publish them or that they will be immune from criminal action if they do. Prior restraints require an unusually heavy justification under the First Amendment; but failure by the Government to justify prior restraints does not measure its constitutional entitlement to a conviction for criminal publication. That the Government mistakenly chose to proceed by injunction does not mean that it could not successfully proceed in another way.

When the Espionage Act was under consideration in 1917, Congress eliminated from

the bill a provision that would have given the President broad powers in time of war to proscribe, under threat of criminal penalty, the publication of various categories of information related to the national defense.³ Congress at that time was unwilling to clothe the President with such far-reaching powers to monitor the press, and those opposed to this part of the legislation assumed that a necessary concomitant of such power was the power to "filter out the news to the people through some man." 55 Cong. Rec. 2008 (1917) (remarks of Senator Ashurst). However, these same members of Congress appeared to have little doubt that newspapers would be subject to criminal prosecution if they insisted on publishing information of the type Congress had itself determined should not be revealed. Senator Ashurst, for example, was quite sure that the editor of such a newspaper "should be punished if he did publish information as to the movements of the fleet, the troops, the aircraft, the location of powder factories, the location of defense works, and all that sort of thing." 55 Cong. Rec. 2009 (1917).⁴

The criminal code contains numerous provisions potentially relevant to these cases. Section 797⁵ makes it a crime to publish certain photographs or drawings of military installations. Section 798,⁶ also in precise language, proscribes knowing and willful publications of any classified information concerning the cryptographic systems or communication intelligence activities of the United States as well as any information obtained from communication intelligence operations.⁷ If any of the material here at issue is of this nature, the newspapers are presumably now on full notice of the position of the United States and must face the consequences if they publish. I would have no difficulty in sustaining convictions under these sections on facts that would not justify the intervention of equity and the imposition of a prior restraint.

The same would be true under those sections of the criminal code casting a wider net to protect the national defense. Section 793(e)⁸ makes it a criminal act for any unauthorized possessor of a document "relating to national defense" either (1) willfully to communicate or cause to be communicated that document to any person not entitled to receive it or (2) willfully to retain the document and fail to deliver it to an officer of the United States entitled to receive it. The subsection was added in 1950 because pre-existing law provided no penalty for the unauthorized possessor unless demand for the documents was made.⁹ "The dangers surrounding the unauthorized possession of such items are self-evident, and it is deemed advisable to require their surrender in such a case, regardless of demand, especially since their unauthorized possession may be unknown to the authorities who would otherwise make the demand." S. Rep. No. 2369, 81st Cong., 2d Sess., 9 (1950). Of course, in the cases before us, the unpublished documents have been demanded by the United States and their import has been made known at least to counsel for the newspapers involved. In *Gorin v. United States*, 312 U.S. 19, 28 (1941), the words "national defense" as used in a predecessor of § 793 were held by a unanimous court to have "a well understood connotation"—a "generic concept of broad connotations, referring to the military and naval establishment and the related activities of national preparedness"—and to be "sufficiently definite to apprise the public of prohibited activities" and to be consonant with due process. 312 U.S., at 82. Also, as construed by the Court in *Gorin*, information "connected with the national defense" is obviously not limited to that threatening "grave and irreparable" injury to the United States.¹⁰

It is thus clear that Congress has addressed itself to the problems of protecting

Footnotes at end of article.

the security of the country and the national defense from unauthorized disclosure of potentially damaging information. *CI, Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U. S. 579, 595-600 (1953); see also *id.*, at 601-628 (Frankfurter, J. concurring). It has not, however, authorized the injunctive remedy against threatened publication. It has apparently been satisfied to rely on criminal sanctions and their deterrent effect on the responsible as well as the irresponsible press. I am not, of course, saying that either of these newspapers has yet committed a crime or that either would commit a crime if they published all the material now in their possession. That matter must await resolution in the context of a criminal proceeding if one is instituted by the United States. In that event, the issue of guilt or innocence would be determined by procedures and standards quite different from those that have purported to govern these injunctive proceedings.

FOOTNOTES

1 The Congress has authorized a strain of prior restraints against private parties in certain instances. The National Labor Relations Board routinely issues cease-and-desist orders against employers whom it finds have threatened or coerced employees in the exercise of protected rights. See 29 U.S.C. § 160(c). Similarly, the Federal Trade Commission is empowered to impose cease-and-desist orders against unfair methods of competition. 15 U.S.C. § 45(b). Such orders can, and quite often do, restrict what may be spoken or written under certain circumstances. See, e.g., *NLRB v. Gissel Packing Co.*, 395 U.S. 575, 616-620 (1969). Art. I, § 8 of the Constitution authorizes Congress to secure the "exclusive right" of authors to their writings, and no one denies that a newspaper can properly be enjoined from publishing the copyrighted works of another. See *Westermann Co. v. Dispatch Co.*, 249 U.S. 100 (1919). Newspapers do themselves rely from time to time on the copyright as a means of protecting their accounts of important events. However, those enjoined under the statutes relating to the National Labor Relations Board and the Federal Trade Commission are private parties, not the press; and when the press is enjoined under the copyright laws the complainant is a private copyright holder enforcing a private right. These situations are quite distinct from the Government's request for an injunction against publishing information about the affairs of government, a request admittedly not based on any statute.

2 The "grave and irreparable danger" standard is that asserted by the Government in this Court. In remanding to Judge Gurfein for further hearings in the *Times* litigation, five members of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit directed him to determine whether disclosure of certain items specified with particularity by the Government would "pose such grave and immediate danger to the security of the United States as to warrant their publication being enjoined."

3 "Whoever, in time of war, in violation of reasonable regulations to be prescribed by the President, which he is hereby authorized to make and promulgate, shall publish any information with respect to the movement, numbers, description, condition, or disposition of any of the armed forces, ships, aircraft, or war materials of the United States, or with respect to the plans or conduct of any naval or military operations, or with respect to any works or measures undertaken for or connected with, or intended for the fortification or defense of any place, or any other information relating to the public defense calculated to be useful to the enemy, shall be punished by a fine . . . or by imprisonment . . ." 55 Cong. Rec. 2100 (1917).

4 Senator Ashurst also urged that " . . . 'freedom of the press' means freedom from

the restraints of a censor, means the absolute liberty and right to publish whatever you wish; but you take your chances of punishment in the courts of your country for the violation of the laws of libel, slander and treason." 55 Cong. Rec. 2005 (1917).

5 Section 707, 18 U.S.C., provides: "On and after thirty days from the date upon which the President defines any vital military or naval installation or equipment as being within the category contemplated under section 705 of this title, whoever reproduces, publishes, sells, or gives away any photograph, sketch, picture, drawing, map, or graphical representation of the vital military or naval installations or equipment so defined, without first obtaining permission of the commanding officer of the military or naval post, camp, or station concerned, or higher authority, unless such photograph, sketch, picture, drawing, map, or graphical representation has clearly indicated thereon that it has been censored by the proper military or naval authority, shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both."

6 In relevant part 18 U.S.C. § 798 provides: "(a) Whoever knowingly and willfully communicates, furnishes, transmits, or otherwise makes available to an unauthorized person, or publishes, or uses in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States or for the benefit of any foreign government to the detriment of the United States any classified information—

"(1) concerning the nature, preparation, or use of any code, cipher, or cryptographic system of the United States or any foreign government; or

"(2) concerning the design, construction, use, maintenance, or repair of any device, apparatus, or appliance used or prepared or planned for use by the United States or any foreign government for cryptographic or communication intelligence purposes; or

"(3) concerning the communication intelligence activities of the United States or any foreign government; or

"(4) obtained by the processes of communication intelligence from the communications of any foreign government, knowing the same to have been obtained by such processes—

"Shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both."

7 The purport of 18 U.S.C. § 798 is clear. Both the House and Senate Reports on the bill, in identical terms, speak of furthering the security of the United States by preventing disclosure of information concerning the cryptographic systems and the communication intelligence systems of the United States, and explaining that "[t]his bill makes it a crime to reveal the methods, techniques, and materiel used in the transmission by this Nation of enciphered or coded messages. . . . Further, it makes it a crime to reveal methods used by this Nation in breaking the secret codes of a foreign nation. It also prohibits under certain penalties the divulging of any information which may have come into this Government's hands as a result of such a code-breaking." H.R. Rep. No. 1895, 81st Cong., 2d Sess., 1 (1950). The narrow reach of the statute was explained as covering "only a small category of classified matter, a category which is both vital and vulnerable to an almost unique degree." *Id.*, at 2. Existing legislation was deemed inadequate.

8 At present two other acts protect this information, but only in a limited way. These are the Espionage Act of 1917 (40 Stat. 217) and the act of June 10, 1933 (48 Stat. 122). Under the first, unauthorized revelation of information of this kind can be penalized only if it can be proved that the person making the revelation did so with an intent to injure the United States. Under the second, only diplomatic codes and messages transmitted in diplomatic codes are protected. The present bill is designed to protect against

knowing and willful publication or any other revelation of all important information affecting the United States communication intelligence operations and all direct information about all United States codes and ciphers." *Ibid.*

9 Section 708 obviously was intended to cover publications by non-employees of the Government and to ease the Government's burden in obtaining convictions. See H.R. Rep. No. 1895, *supra*, at 2-5. The identical Senate Report, not cited in parallel in the text of this footnote, is S. Rep. No. 111, 81st Cong., 1st Sess. (1949).

10 Section 793(e) of 18 U.S.C. provides that:

"(e) Whoever having unauthorized possession of, access to, or control over any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blueprint, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note relating to the national defense, or information relating to the national defense which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation, willfully communicates, delivers, transmits or causes to be communicated, delivered, or transmitted, or attempts to communicate, deliver, transmit or cause to be communicated, delivered, or transmitted the same to any person not entitled to receive it, or willfully retains the same and fails to deliver it to the officer or employee of the United States entitled to receive it;"

is guilty of an offense punishable by 10 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both. It should also be noted that 18 U.S.C. § 793(g), added in 1950, see 64 Stat. 1004-1005 (1950); S. Rep. No. 2369, 81st Cong., 2d Sess., 9 (1950), provides that "[i]f two or more persons conspire to violate any of the foregoing provisions of this section, and one or more of such persons do any act to effect the object of the conspiracy, each of the parties to such conspiracy shall be subject to the punishment provided for the offense which is the object of such conspiracy."

11 The amendment of § 793 that added subsection (c) was part of the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950, which was in turn Title I of the Internal Security Act of 1950. Sec. 64 Stat. 987 (1950). The report of the Senate Judiciary Committee best explains the purposes of the amendment:

"Section 18 of the bill amends section 793 of title 18 of the United States Code (espionage statute). The several paragraphs of section 793 of title 18 are designated as subsections (a) through (g) for purposes of convenient reference. The significant changes which would be made in section 793 of title 18 are as follows:

"(1) Amends the fourth paragraph of section 793, title 18 (subsec. (d)), to cover the unlawful dissemination of "information relating to the national defense which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation." The phrase "which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation" would modify only "information relating to the national defense and not the other items enumerated in the subsection. The fourth paragraph of section 793 is also amended to provide that only those with lawful possession of the items relating to national defense enumerated therein may retain them subject to demand therefor. Those who have unauthorized possession of such items are treated in a separate subsection."

"(2) Amends section 793, title 18 (subsec. (e)), to provide that unauthorized possessors of items enumerated in paragraph 4 of section 793 must surrender possession thereof to the proper authorities without demand. Existing law provides no penalty for the unauthorized possession of such items unless a demand for them is made by the person en-

titled to receive them. The dangers surrounding the unauthorized possession of such items are self-evident, and it is deemed advisable to require their surrender in such a case, regardless of demand, especially since their unauthorized possession may be unknown to the authorities who would otherwise make the demand. The only difference between subsection (d) and subsection (e) of section 793 is that a demand by the person entitled to receive the items would be a necessary element of an offense under subsection (d) where the possession is lawful, whereas such a demand would not be a necessary element of an offense under subsection (e) where the possession is unauthorized." S. Rep. No. 2369, 81st Cong., 2d Sess., 6-9 (1950) (emphasis added).

It seems clear from the foregoing, contrary to the intimations of the District Court for the Southern District of New York in this case, that in prosecuting for communicating or withholding a "document" as contrasted with similar action with respect to "information" the Government need not prove an intent to injure the United States or to benefit a foreign nation but only willful and knowing conduct. The District Court relied on *Gorin v. United States*, 312 U.S. 19 (1941). But that case arose under other parts of the predecessor to § 793, see 312 U.S. at 21-22—parts that imposed different intent standards not repeated in § 793(d) or § 793(e). Cf. 18 U.S.C. §§ 793 (a), (b), and (c). Also, from the face of subsection (e) and from the context of the act of which it was a part, it seems undeniable that a newspaper, as well as others unconnected with the Government, are vulnerable to prosecution under § 793(e) if they communicate or withhold the materials covered by that section. The District Court ruled that "communication" did not reach publication by a newspaper of documents relating to the national defense. I intimate no views on the correctness of that conclusion. But neither communication nor publication is necessary to violate the subsection.

¹⁰ Also relevant is 18 U.S.C. § 794. Subsection (b) thereof forbids in time of war the collection or publication, with intent that it shall be communicated to the enemy, any information with respect to the movements of military forces, "or with respect to the plans or conduct . . . of any naval or military operations . . . or any other information relating to the public defense, which might be useful to the enemy. . . ."

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1885.—October Term, 1970]
 NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER, 1873
 v. UNITED STATES

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, 1885 v. THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Mr. Justice Stewart, with whom Mr. Justice White joins, concurring.

In the governmental structure created by our Constitution, the Executive is endowed with enormous power in the two related areas of national defense and international relations. This power, largely unchecked by the Legislative¹ and Judicial² branches, has been pressed to the very limit since the advent of the nuclear missile age. For better or for worse, the simple fact is that a President of the United States possesses vastly greater constitutional independence in these two vital areas of power than does, say, a prime minister of a country with a parliamentary form of government.

In the absence of the governmental checks and balances present in other areas of our national life, the only effective restraint up-

on executive policy and power in the areas of national defense and international affairs may lie in an enlightened citizenry—in an informed and critical public opinion which alone can here protect the values of democratic government. For this reason, it is perhaps here that a press that is alert, aware, and free most vitally serves the basic purpose of the First Amendment. For without an informed and free press there cannot be an enlightened people.

Yet it is elementary that the successful conduct of international diplomacy and the maintenance of an effective national defense require both confidentiality and secrecy. Other nations can hardly deal with this Nation in an atmosphere of mutual trust unless they can be assured that their confidences will be kept. And within our own executive departments the development of considered and intelligent international policies would be impossible if those charged with their formulation could not communicate with each other freely, frankly, and in confidence. In the area of basic national defense the frequent need for absolute secrecy is, of course, self-evident.

I think there can be but one answer to this dilemma, if dilemma it be. The responsibility must be where the power is.³ If the Constitution gives the Executive a large degree of unshared power in the conduct of foreign affairs and the maintenance of our national defense, then under the Constitution the Executive must have the largely unshared duty to determine and preserve the degree of internal security necessary to exercise that power successfully. It is an awesome responsibility, requiring judgment and wisdom of a high order. I should suppose that moral, political, and practical considerations would dictate that a very first principle of that wisdom would be an insistence upon avoiding secrecy for its own sake. For when everything is classified, then nothing is classified, and the system becomes one to be disregarded by the cynical or the careless, and to be manipulated by those intent on self-protection or self-promotion. I should suppose, in short, that the hallmark of a truly effective internal security system would be that secrecy can best be preserved only when credibility is truly maintained. But be that as it may, it is clear to me that it is the constitutional duty of the Executive—as a matter of sovereign prerogative and not as a matter of law as the courts know law—through the promulgation and enforcement of executive regulations, to protect the confidentiality necessary to carry out its responsibilities in the fields of international relations and national defense.

This is not to say that Congress and the courts have no role to play. Undoubtedly Congress has the power to enact specific and appropriate criminal laws to protect government property and preserve government secrets. Congress has passed such laws, and several of them are of very colorable relevance to the apparent circumstances of these cases. And if a criminal prosecution is instituted, it will be the responsibility of the courts to decide the applicability of the criminal law under which the charge is brought. Moreover, if Congress should pass a specific law authorizing civil proceedings in this field, the courts would likewise have the duty to decide the constitutionality of such a law as well as its applicability to the facts proved.

But in the cases before us we are asked neither to construe specific regulations nor to apply specific laws. We are asked, instead, to perform a function that the Constitution gave to the Executive, not the Judiciary. We are asked, quite simply, to prevent the publication by two newspapers of material that the Executive Branch insists should not, in the national interest, be published. I am convinced that the Executive is correct with respect to some of the documents involved.

But I cannot say that disclosure of any of them will surely result in direct, immediate, and irreparable damage to our Nation or its people. That being so, there can under the First Amendment to put one judicial resolution of the issues before us. I join the judgments of the Court.

FOOTNOTES

¹ The President's power to make treaties and to appoint ambassadors is of course limited by the requirement of Article, II, § 1, of the Constitution that he obtain the advice and consent of the Senate. Article I, § 8, empowers Congress to "raise and support Armies," and "provide and maintain a Navy." And, of course, Congress alone can declare war. This power was last exercised almost 30 years ago at the inception of World War II. Since the end of that war in 1945, the Armed Forces of the United States have suffered approximately half a million casualties in various parts of the world.

² See *Chicago & Southern Air Lines v. Waterman Steamship Corp.*, 333 U.S. 103; *Hirabayashi v. United States*, 320 U.S. 81; *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corp.*, 299 U.S. 304; cf. *Mora v. McNamara*, cert. denied 389 U.S. 934.

³ It is quite apparent that if, in the maintenance of our international relations, embarrassment—perhaps serious embarrassment—is to be avoided and success for our aims achieved, congressional legislation which is to be made effective through negotiation and inquiry within the international field must often accord to the President a degree of discretion and freedom from statutory restriction which would not be admissible were domestic affairs alone involved. Moreover, he, not Congress, has the better opportunity of knowing the conditions which prevail in foreign countries, and especially is this true in time of war. He has his confidential sources of information. He has his agents in the form of diplomatic, consular and other officials. Secrecy in respect of information gathered by them may be highly necessary, and the premature disclosure of it productive of harmful results. Indeed, so clearly is this true that the first President refused to accede to a request to lay before the House of Representatives the instructions, correspondence and documents relating to the negotiation of the Jay Treaty—a refusal the wisdom of which was recognized by the House itself and has never since been doubted. . . . *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Corp.*, 299 U.S. 304, at 320.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1885.—October Term, 1970]
 NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER,
 1873 v. UNITED STATES

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, 1885 v. THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Mr. Justice Brennan, concurring.

I

I write separately in these cases only to emphasize what should be apparent; that our judgment in the present cases may not be taken to indicate the propriety, in the future, of issuing temporary stays and restraining orders to block the publication of material sought to be suppressed by the Government. So far as I can determine, never before has the United States sought to enjoin a newspaper from publishing information in its possession. The relative novelty of the questions presented, the necessary haste with which decisions were reached, the magnitude of the interests asserted, and the fact that all the parties have concentrated their arguments upon the question whether permanent

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restraints were proper may have justified at least some of the restraints heretofore imposed in these cases. Certainly it is difficult to fault the several courts below for seeking to assure that the issues here involved were preserved for ultimate review by this Court. But even if it be assumed that some of the interim restraints were proper in the two cases before us, that assumption has no bearing upon the propriety of similar judicial action in the future. To begin with, there has now been ample time for reflection and judgment; whatever values there may be in the preservation of novel questions for appellate review may not support any restraints in the future. More important, the First Amendment stands as an absolute bar to the imposition of judicial restraints in circumstances of the kind presented by these cases.

II

The error which has pervaded these cases from the outset was the granting of any injunctive relief whatsoever, interim or otherwise. The entire thrust of the Government's claim throughout these cases has been that publication of the material sought to be enjoined "could," or "might," or "may" prejudice the national interest in various ways. But the First Amendment tolerates absolutely no prior judicial restraints of the press predicated upon surmise or conjecture that untoward consequences may result.* Our cases, it is true, have indicated that there is a single, extremely narrow class of cases in which the First Amendment's ban on prior judicial restraint may be overridden. Our cases have thus far indicated that such cases may arise only when the Nation "is at war," *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47, 52 (1919), during which times "no one would question but that a Government might prevent actual obstruction to its recruiting service or the publication of the sailing dates of transports or the number and location of troops." *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697, 716 (1931). Even if the present world situation were assumed to be tantamount to a time of war, or if the power of presently available armaments would justify even in peacetime the suppression of information that would set in motion a nuclear holocaust, in neither of these actions has the Government presented or even alleged that publication of items from or based upon the material at issue would cause the happening of an event of that nature. "The chief purpose of [the First Amendment's] guarantee [is] to prevent previous restraints upon publication." *Near v. Minnesota*, *supra*, at 713. Thus, only governmental allegation and proof that publication must inevitably, directly and immediately cause the occurrence of an event kindred to imperiling the safety of a transport already at sea can support even the issuance of an interim restraining order. In no event may mere conclusions be sufficient: for if the Executive Branch seeks judicial aid in preventing publication, it must inevitably

* *Freedman v. Maryland*, 380 U.S. 51 (1965), and similar cases regarding temporary restraints of allegedly obscene materials are not in point. For those cases rest upon the proposition that "obscenity is not protected by the freedoms of speech and press." *Roth v. United States*, 354 U.S. 476 (1957). Here there is no question but that the material sought to be suppressed is within the protection of the First Amendment; the only question is whether, notwithstanding that fact, its publication may be enjoined for a time because of the presence of an overwhelming national interest. Similarly, copyright cases have no pertinence here: the Government is not asserting an interest in the particular form of words chosen in the documents, but is seeking to suppress the ideas expressed therein. And the copyright laws, of course, protect only the form of expression and not the ideas expressed.

submit the basis upon which that aid is sought to scrutiny by the judiciary. And therefore, every restraint issued in this case, whatever its form, has violated the First Amendment—and none the less so because that restraint was justified as necessary to afford the court an opportunity to examine the claim more thoroughly. Unless and until the Government has clearly made out its case, the First Amendment commands that no injunction may issue.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1878 and 1885.—October Term, 1970]
NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER, 1873
V. UNITED STATES

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, 1865 V. THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Mr. Justice Douglas, with whom Mr. Justice Black joins, concurring.

While I join the opinion of the Court I believe it necessary to express my views more fully.

It should be noted at the outset that the First Amendment provides that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press." That leaves, in my view, no room for governmental restraint on the press.¹

There is, moreover, no statute barring the publication by the press of the material which the Times and Post seek to use. 18 U.S.C. § 793(e) provides that "whoever having unauthorized possession of, access to, or control over any document, writing, . . . or information relating to the national defense which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation, wilfully communicates . . . the same to any person not entitled to receive it . . . shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than ten years or both."

The Government suggests that the word "communicates" is broad enough to encompass publication.

There are eight sections in the chapter on espionage and censorship, §§ 792-799. In three of those eight "publish" is specifically mentioned: § 794(b) provides "Whoever in time of war, with the intent that the same shall be communicated to the enemy, collects records, publishes, or communicates . . . [the disposition of armed forces]."

Section 797 prohibits "reproduces, publishes, sells, or gives away" photos of defense installations.

Section 798 relating to cryptography prohibits: "communicates, furnishes, transmits, or otherwise makes available . . . or publishes."

Thus it is apparent that Congress was capable of and did distinguish between publishing and communication in the various sections of the Espionage Act.

The other evidence that § 793 does not apply to the press is a rejected version of § 793. That version read: "During any national emergency resulting from a war to which the U.S. is a party or from threat of such a war, the President may, by proclamation, prohibit the publishing or communicating of, or the attempting to publish or communicate any information relating to the national defense, which in his judgment is of such character that it is or might be useful to the enemy." During the debates in the Senate the First Amendment was specifically cited and that provision was defeated. 55 Cong. Rec. 2166.

Judge Gurfein's holding in the *Times* case

Footnotes at end of article.

that this Act does not apply to this case was therefore preeminently sound. Moreover, the Act of September 23, 1950, in amending 18 U.S.C. § 793 states in § 1 (b) that:

"Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize, require, or establish military or civilian censorship or in any way to limit or infringe upon freedom of the press or of speech as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and no regulation shall be promulgated hereunder having that effect." 64 Stat. 687.

Thus Congress has been faithful to the command of the First Amendment in this area.

So any power that the Government possesses must come from its "inherent power."

The power to wage war is "the power to wage war successfully." See *Hirabayashi v. United States*, 320 U.S. 81, 93. But the war power stems from a declaration of war. The Constitution by Article I, § 8, gives Congress, not the President, power "to declare war." Nowhere are presidential wars authorized. We need not decide therefore what leveling effect the war power of Congress might have.

These disclosures² may have a serious impact. But that is no basis for sanctioning a previous restraint on the press. As stated by Chief Justice Hughes in *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697, 719-720:

" . . . While reckless assaults upon public men, and efforts to bring obloquy upon those who are endeavoring faithfully to discharge official duties, exert a baleful influence and deserve the severest condemnation in public opinion, it cannot be said that this abuse is greater, and it is believed to be less, than that which characterized the period in which our institutions took shape. Meanwhile, the administration of government has become more complex, the opportunities for malfeasance and corruption have multiplied, crime has grown to most serious proportions, and the danger of its protection by unfaithful officials and of the impairment of the fundamental security of life and property by criminal alliances and official neglect, emphasizes, the primary need of a vigilant and courageous press, especially in great cities. The fact that the liberty of the press may be abused by miscreant purveyors of scandal does not make any the less necessary the immunity of the press from previous restraint in dealing with official misconduct."

As we stated only the other day in *Organization for a Better Austin v. Keefe*, — U.S. —, "any prior restraint on expression comes to this Court with a 'heavy presumption' against its constitutional validity."

The Government says that it has inherent powers to go into court and obtain an injunction to protect that national interest, which in this case is alleged to be national security.

Near v. Minnesota, 283 U.S. 697, repudiated that expansive doctrine in no uncertain terms.

The dominant purpose of the First Amendment was to prohibit the widespread practice of governmental suppression of embarrassing information. It is common knowledge that the First Amendment was adopted against the widespread use of the common law of seditious libel to punish the dissemination of material that is embarrassing to the powers-that-be. See Emerson, *The System of Free Expressions*, c. V (1970); Chafee, *Free Speech in the United States*, c. XIII (1941). The present cases will, I think, go down in history as the most dramatic illustration of that principle. A debate of large proportions goes on in the Nation over our posture in Vietnam. That debate antedated the disclosure of the contents of the present

documents. The latter are highly relevant to the debate in progress.

Secrecy in government is fundamentally anti-democratic, perpetuating bureaucratic errors. Open debate and discussion of public issues are vital to our national health. On public questions there should be "open and robust debate." *New York Times, Inc. v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 254, 269-270.

I would affirm the judgment of the Court of Appeals in the *Post* case, vacate the stay of the Court of Appeals in the *Times* case and direct that it affirm the District Court.

The stays in these cases that have been in effect for more than a week constitute a flouting of the principles of the First Amendment as interpreted in *Near v. Minnesota*.

FOOTNOTES

¹ See *Branham v. Illinois*, 343 U.S. 250, 257 (dissenting opinion of Mr. Justice Black), 284 (my dissenting opinion); *Roth v. United States*, 354 U.S. 476, 508 (my dissenting opinion which Mr. Justice Black joined); *Yates v. United States*, 354 U.S. 298, 339 (separate opinion of Mr. Justice Black which I joined); *New York Times v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 293 (concurring opinion of Mr. Justice Black which I joined); *Garrison v. Louisiana*, 379 U.S. 64, 80 (my concurring opinion which Mr. Justice Black joined).

² These papers contain data concerning the communications system of the United States, the publication of which is made a crime. But the criminal sanction is not urged by the United States as the basis of equity power.

³ There are numerous sets of this material in existence and they apparently are not under any controlled custody. Moreover, the President has sent a set to the Congress. We start then with a case where there already is rather wide distribution of the material that is destined for publicity, not secrecy. I have gone over the material listed in the *in camera* brief of the United States. It is all history, not future events. None of it is more recent than 1968.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1885.—October Term, 1970]

NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, PETITIONER,
1873 v. UNITED STATES

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, 1885 v. THE
WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

Mr. Justice Harlan, with whom The Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Blackmun join, dissenting.

These cases forcefully call to mind the wise admonition of Mr. Justice Holmes, dissenting in *Northern Securities Co. v. United States*, 193 U.S. 197, 400-401 (1904):

"Great cases like hard cases make bad law. For great cases are called great, not by reason of their real importance in shaping the law of the future, but because of some accident of immediate overwhelming interest which appeals to the feelings and distorts the judgment. These immediate interests exercise a kind of hydraulic pressure which makes what previously was clear seem doubtful, and before which even well settled principles of law will bend."

With all respect, I consider that the Court has been almost irresponsibly feverish in dealing with these cases.

Both the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rendered judg-

ment on June 23. The *New York Times'* petition for certiorari, its motion for accelerated consideration thereof, and its application for interim relief were filed in this Court on June 24 at about 11 a.m. The application of the United States for interim relief in the *Post* case was also filed here on June 24, at about 7:15 p.m. This Court's order setting a hearing before us on June 26 at 11 a.m., a course which I joined only to avoid the possibility of even more peremptory action by the Court, was issued less than 24 hours before. The record in the *Post* case was filed with the Clerk shortly before 1 p.m. on June 25; the record in the *Times* case did not arrive until 7 or 8 o'clock that same night. The briefs of the parties were received less than two hours before argument on June 26.

This frenzied train of events took place in the name of the presumption against prior restraints created by the First Amendment. Due regard for the extraordinarily important and difficult questions involved in these litigations should have led the Court to shun such a precipitate timetable. In order to decide the merits of these cases properly, some or all of the following questions should have been faced:

1. Whether the Attorney General is authorized to bring these suits in the name of the United States. Compare *In re Debs*, 158 U.S. 564 (1895), with *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579 (1962). This question involves as well the construction and validity of a singularly opaque statute—the Espionage Act, 18 U.S.C. § 793(e).

2. Whether the First Amendment permits the federal courts to enjoin publication of stories which would present a serious threat to national security. See *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697, 716 (1931) (dictum).

3. Whether the threat to publish highly secret documents is of itself a sufficient implication of national security to justify an injunction on the theory that regardless of the contents of the documents harm enough results simply from the demonstration of such a breach of secrecy.

4. Whether the unauthorized disclosure of any of these particular documents would seriously impair the national security.

5. What weight should be given to the opinion of high officers in the Executive Branch of the Government with respect to questions 3 and 4.

6. Whether the newspapers are entitled to retain and use the documents notwithstanding the seemingly uncontested facts that the documents, or the originals of which they are duplicates, were purloined from the Government's possession and that the newspapers received them with knowledge that they had been feloniously acquired. Cf. *Liberty Lobby, Inc. v. Pearson*, 390 F. 2d 489 (CA-DC 1968).

7. Whether the threatened harm to the national security or the Government's possessory interest in the documents justifies the issuance of an injunction against publication in light of—

- The strong First Amendment policy against prior restraints on publication;
- The doctrine against enjoining conduct in violation of criminal statutes; and
- The extent to which the materials at issue have apparently already been otherwise disseminated.

These are difficult questions of fact, of law, and of judgment; the potential consequences of erroneous decision are enormous. The time which has been available to us, to the lower courts,* and to the parties

* The hearing in the *Post* case before Judge Gesell began at 8 a.m. on June 21, and his decision was rendered, under the hammer of a deadline imposed by the Court of Appeals, shortly before 5 p.m. on the same day. The hearing in the *Times* case before Judge Gurfein was held on June 18 and his decision was rendered on June 19. The Government's appeals in the two cases were heard by the

has been wholly inadequate for giving these cases the kind of consideration they deserve. It is a reflection on the stability of the judicial process that these great issues—so important as any that have arisen during my time on the Court—should have been decided under the pressures engendered by the torrent of publicity that has attended these litigations from their inception.

Forced as I am to reach the merits of these cases, I dissent from the opinion and judgments of the Court. Within the severe limitations imposed by the time constraints under which I have been required to operate, I can only state my reasons in telescoped form, even though in different circumstances I would have felt constrained to deal with the cases in the fuller sweep indicated above.

It is a sufficient basis for affirming the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in the *Times* litigation to observe that its order must rest on the conclusion that because of the time elements the Government had not been given an adequate opportunity to present its case to the District Court. At the least this conclusion was not an abuse of discretion.

In the *Post* litigation the Government had more time to prepare; this was apparently the basis for the refusal of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on rehearing to conform its judgment to that of the Second Circuit. But I think there is another and more fundamental reason why this judgment cannot stand—a reason which also furnishes an additional ground for not reinstating the judgment of the District Court in the *Times* litigation, set aside by the Court of Appeals. It is plain to me that the scope of the judicial function in passing upon the activities of the Executive Branch of the Government in the field of foreign affairs is very narrowly restricted. This view is, I think, dictated by the concept of separation of powers upon which our constitutional system rests.

In a speech on the floor of the House of Representatives, Chief Justice John Marshall, then a member of that body, stated:

"The President is the sole organ of the nation in its external relations, and its sole representative with foreign nations." *Annals*, 6th Cong., col. 613 (1800). From that time, shortly after the founding of the Nation, to this, there has been no substantial challenge to this description of the scope of executive power. See *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corp.*, 299 U.S. 304, 319-321 (1936), collecting authorities.

From this constitutional primacy in the field of foreign affairs, it seems to me that certain conclusions necessarily follow. Some of these were stated concisely by President Washington, declining the request of the House of Representatives for the papers leading up to the negotiation of the Jay Treaty:

"The nature of foreign negotiations requires caution, and their success must often depend on secrecy; and even when brought to a conclusion a full disclosure of all the measures, demands, or eventual concessions which may have been proposed or contemplated would be extremely impolitic; for this might have a pernicious influence on future negotiations, or produce immediate inconveniences, perhaps danger and mischief, in relation to other powers." 1 J. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents 194-195* (1899).

The power to evaluate the "pernicious influence" of premature disclosure is not, however, lodged in the Executive alone. I agree that, in performance of its duty to protect the values of the First Amendment against political pressures, the judiciary must review the initial Executive determination to

Courts of Appeals for the District of Columbia and Second Circuits, each court sitting *en banc*, on June 22. Each court rendered its decision on the following afternoon.

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the point of satisfying itself that the subject matter of the dispute does lie within the proper compass of the President's foreign relations power. Constitutional considerations forbid "a complete abandonment of judicial control." Cf. *United States v. Reynolds*, 345 U.S. 1, 8 (1953). Moreover, the Judiciary may properly insist that the determination that disclosure of the subject matter would irreparably impair the national security be made by the head of the Executive Department concerned—here the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense—after actual personal consideration by that officer. This safeguard is required in the analogous area of executive claims of privilege for secrets of state. See *United States v. Reynolds*, *supra*, at 8 and n. 20; *Duncan v. Cammell, Laird & Co.*, [1942] A. C. 624, 638 (House of Lords).

But in my judgment the Judiciary may not properly go beyond these two inquiries and redetermine for itself the probable impact of disclosure on the national security.

"[T]he very nature of executive decisions as to foreign policy is political, not judicial. Such decisions are wholly confided by our Constitution to the political departments of the government, Executive and Legislative. They are delicate, complex, and involve large elements of prophecy. They are and should be undertaken only by those directly responsible to the people whose welfare they advance or imperil. They are decisions of a kind for which the Judiciary has neither aptitude, facilities nor responsibility and which has long been held to belong in the domain of political power not subject to judicial intrusion or inquiry." *Chicago & Southern Air Lines v. Waterman Steamship Corp.*, 333 U.S. 103, 111 (1948) (Jackson, J.).

Even if there is some room for the Judiciary to override the executive determination, it is plain that the scope of review must be exceedingly narrow. I can see no indication in the opinions of either the District Court or the Court of Appeals in the *Post* litigation that the conclusions of the Executive were given even the deference owing to an administrative agency, much less that owing to a co-equal branch of the Government operating within the field of its constitutional prerogative.

Accordingly, I would vacate the judgment of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on this ground and remand the case for further proceedings in the District Court. Before the commencement of such further proceedings, due opportunity should be afforded the Government for procuring from the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense or both an expression of their views on the issue of national security. The ensuing review by the District Court should be in accordance with the views expressed in this opinion. And for the reasons stated above I would affirm the judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Pending further hearings in each case conducted under the appropriate ground rules, I would continue the restraints on publication. I cannot believe that the doctrine prohibiting prior restraints reaches to the point of preventing courts from maintaining the *status quo* long enough to act responsibly in matters of such national importance as those involved here.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES,
Nos. 1873 and 1885.—OCTOBER TERM, 1970
NEW YORK TIMES CO., PETITIONER,
VERSUS UNITED STATES

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, VERSUS THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[JUNE 30, 1971]

Mr. JUSTICE BLACK, with whom Mr. Justice DOUGLAS joins, concurring.

I adhere to the view that the Government's case against the Washington Post should have been dismissed and that the injunction against the New York Times should have been vacated without oral argument when the cases were first presented to this Court. I believe that every moment's continuance of the injunctions against these newspapers amounts to a flagrant, indefensible, and continuing violation of the First Amendment. Furthermore, after oral arguments, I agree completely that we must affirm the judgment of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and reverse the judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit for the reasons stated by my Brothers DOUGLAS and BRENNAN. In my view it is unfortunate that some of my Brethren are apparently willing to hold that the publication of news may sometimes be enjoined. Such a holding would make a shambles of the First Amendment.

Our Government was launched in 1789 with the adoption of the Constitution. The Bill of Rights, including the First Amendment, followed in 1791. Now, for the first time in the 182 years since the founding of the Republic, the federal courts are asked to hold that the First Amendment does not mean what it says, but rather means that the Government can halt the publication of current news of vital importance to the people of this country.

In seeking injunctions against these newspapers and in its presentation to the Court, the Executive Branch seems to have forgotten the essential purpose and history of the First Amendment. When the Constitution was adopted, many people strongly opposed it because the document contained no Bill of Rights to safeguard certain basic freedoms.¹ They especially feared that the new powers granted to a central government might be interpreted to permit the government to curtail freedom of religion, press, assembly, and speech. In response to an overwhelming public clamor, James Madison offered a series of amendments to satisfy citizens that these great liberties would remain safe and beyond the power of government to abridge. Madison proposed what later became the First Amendment in three parts, two of which are set out below, and one of which proclaimed: "The people shall not be deprived or abridged of their right to speak, to write, or to publish their sentiments; and the freedom of the press, as one of the great bulwarks of liberty, shall be inviolable."² The amendments were offered to curtail and restrict the general powers granted to the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches two years before in the original Constitution. The Bill of Rights changed the original Constitution into a new charter under which no branch of government could abridge the people's freedoms of press, speech, religion, and assembly. Yet the Solicitor General argues and some members of the Court appear to agree that the general powers of the Government adopted in the original Constitution should be interpreted to limit and restrict the specific and emphatic guarantees of the Bill of Rights adopted later. I can imagine no greater perversion of history. Madison and the other Framers of the First Amendment, able men that they were, wrote in language they earnestly believed could never be misunderstood: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of the press . . ." Both the history and language of the First Amendment support the view that the press must be left free to publish news, whatever the

source, without censorship, injunctions, or prior restraints.

In the First Amendment the Founding Fathers gave the free press the protection it must have to fulfill its essential role in our democracy. The press was to serve the governed, not the governors. The Government's power to censor the press was abolished so that the press would remain forever free to censure the Government. The press was protected so that it could bare the secrets of government and inform the people. Only a free and unrestrained press can effectively expose deception in government. And paramount among the responsibilities of a free press is the duty to prevent any part of the government from deceiving the people and sending them off to distant lands to die of foreign fevers and foreign shot and shell. In my view, far from deserving condemnation for their courageous reporting, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and other newspapers should be commended for serving the purpose that the Founding Fathers saw so clearly. In revealing the workings of government that led to the Viet Nam war, the newspapers nobly did precisely that which the Founders hoped and trusted they would do.

The Government's case here is based on premises entirely different from those that guided the Framers of the First Amendment. The Solicitor General has carefully and emphatically stated:

"Now, Mr. Justice [BLACK], your construction of . . . [the First Amendment] is well known, and I certainly respect it. You say that no law means no law, and that should be obvious. I can only say, Mr. Justice that to me it is equally obvious that 'no law' does not mean 'no law', and I would seek to persuade the Court that that is true. . . . [T]here are other parts of the Constitution that grant power and responsibilities to the Executive and . . . the First Amendment was not intended to make it impossible for the Executive to function or to protect the security of the United States."³

And the Government argues in its brief that in spite of the First Amendment, "[t]he authority of the Executive Department to protect the nation against publication of information whose disclosure would endanger the national security stems from two interrelated sources: the constitutional power of the President over the conduct of foreign affairs and his authority as Commander-in-Chief."⁴

In other words, we are asked to hold that despite the First Amendment's emphatic command, the Executive Branch, the Congress, and the Judiciary can make laws enjoining publication of current news and abridging freedom of the press in the name of "national security." The Government does not even attempt to rely on any act of Congress. Instead it makes the bold and dangerously far-reaching contention that the courts should take it upon themselves to "make" a law abridging freedom of the press in the name of equity, presidential power and national security, even when the representatives of the people in Congress have adhered to the command of the First Amendment and refused to make such a law.⁵ See concurring opinion of Mr. Justice DOUGLAS, *post*, at —. To find that the President has "inherent power" to halt the publication of news by resort to the courts would wipe out the First Amendment and destroy the fundamental liberty and security of the very people the Government hopes to make "secure." No one can read the history of the adoption of the First Amendment without being convinced beyond any doubt that it was injunctions like those sought here that Madison and his collaborators intended to outlaw in this Nation for all time.

The word "security" is a broad, vague generality whose contours should not be invoked

Footnotes at end of article.

to abrogate the fundamental law embodied in the First Amendment. The guarding of military and diplomatic secrets at the expense of informed representative government provides no real security for our Republic. The Framers of the First Amendment, fully aware of both the need to defend a new nation and the abuses of the English and Colonial governments, sought to give this new society strength and security by providing that freedom of speech, press, religion, and assembly should not be abridged. This thought was eloquently expressed in 1937 by Mr. Chief Justice Hughes—great man and great Chief Justice that he was—when the Court held a man could not be punished for attending a meeting run by Communists.

"The greater the importance of safeguarding the community from incitements to the overthrow of our institutions by force and violence, the more imperative is the need to preserve inviolate the constitutional rights of free speech, free press and free assembly in order to maintain the opportunity for free political discussion, to the end that government may be responsive to the will of the people and that changes, if desired, may be obtained by peaceful means. Therein lies the security of the Republic, the very foundation of constitutional government."¹

FOOTNOTES

¹ In introducing the Bill of Rights in the House of Representatives, Madison said: "[B]ut I believe that the great mass of the people who opposed [the Constitution], disliked it because it did not contain effectual provisions against the encroachments on particular rights. . . ." 1 Annals of Congress 433 (1834). Congressman Goodhue added: "[I]t is the wish of many of our constituents, that something should be added to the Constitution, to secure in a stronger manner their liberties from the inroads of power." *Id.* at 426.

² The other parts were:

"The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretext, infringed.

"The people shall not be restrained from peaceably assembling and consulting for their common good; nor from applying to the Legislature by petitions, or remonstrances, for redress of their grievances." 1 Annals of Congress 434 (1834). (Emphasis added.)

³ Transcript of Oral Argument, at 76.

⁴ Brief for United States, at 12.

⁵ Compare the views of the Solicitor General with those of James Madison, the author of the First Amendment. When speaking of the Bill of Rights in the House of Representatives, Madison said: "If they (the first ten amendments) are incorporated into the Constitution, independent tribunals of justice will consider themselves in a peculiar manner the guardians of those rights; they will be an impenetrable bulwark against every assumption of power in the Legislative or Executive; they will be naturally led to resist every encroachment upon rights expressly stipulated for in the Constitution by the declaration of rights." 1 Annals of Congress 439 (1834).

⁶ *DeJonge v. Oregon*, 299 U.S. 353, 365 (1937).

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1825.—October Term, 1970]

NEW YORK TIMES CO., PETITIONER, VERSUS UNITED STATES

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, VERSUS THE WASHINGTON POST CO., ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

MR. JUSTICE BLACKMUN.

I join Mr. Justice HARLAN in his dissent. I also am in substantial accord with much that Mr. Justice WHITE says, by way of admonition, in the latter part of his opinion.

At this point the focus is on only the comparatively few documents specified by the Government as critical. So far as the other material—vast in amount—is concerned, let it be published and published forthwith if the newspapers, once the strain is gone and the sensationalism is eased, still feel the urge so to do.

But we are concerned here with the few documents specified from the 47 volumes. Almost 70 years ago Mr. Justice Holmes, dissenting in a celebrated case, observed:

"Great cases like hard cases make bad law. For great cases are called great, not by reason of their real importance in shaping the law of the future, but because of some accident of immediate overwhelming interest which appeals to the feelings and distorts the judgment. These immediate interests exercise a kind of hydraulic pressure . . ." *Northern Securities Co. v. United States*, 193 U.S. 197, 400-401 (1904).

The present cases, if not great, are at least unusual in their posture and implications, and the Holmes observation certainly has pertinent application.

The New York Times clandestinely devoted a period of three months examining the 47 volumes that came into its unauthorized possession. Once it had begun publication of material from those volumes, the New York case now before us emerged. It immediately assumed, and ever since has maintained, a frenetic pace and character. Seemingly, once publication started, the material could not be made public fast enough. Seemingly, from then on, every deferral or delay, by restraint or otherwise, was abhorrent and was to be deemed violative of the First Amendment and of the public's "right immediately to know." Yet that newspaper stood before us at oral argument and professional criticism of the Government for not lodging its protest earlier than by a Monday telegram following the initial Sunday publication.

The District of Columbia case is much the same.

Two federal district courts, two United States courts of appeals, and this Court—within a period of less than three weeks from inception until today—have been pressed into hurried decision of profound constitutional issues on inadequately developed and largely assumed facts without the careful deliberation that, hopefully, should characterize the American judicial process. There has been much writing about the law and little knowledge and less digestion of the facts. In the New York case the judges, both trial and appellate, had not yet examined the basic material when the case was brought here. In the District of Columbia case, little more was done, and what was accomplished in this respect was only on required remand, with the Washington Post, on the excuse that it was trying to protect its source of information, initially refusing to reveal what material it actually possessed, and with the district court forced to make assumptions as to that possession.

With such respect as may be due to the contrary view, this, in my opinion, is not the way to try a law suit of this magnitude and asserted importance. It is not the way for federal courts to adjudicate, and to be required to adjudicate, issues that allegedly concern the Nation's vital welfare. The country would be none the worse off were the cases tried quickly, to be sure, but in the customary and properly deliberative manner. The most recent of the material, it is said, dates no later than 1968, already about three years ago, and the Times itself took three

months to formulate its plan of procedure and, thus, deprived the public for that period.

The First Amendment, after all, is only one part of an entire Constitution. Article II of the great document vests in the Executive Branch primary power over the conduct of foreign affairs and places in that branch the responsibility for the Nation's safety. Each provision of the Constitution is important, and I cannot subscribe to a doctrine of unlimited absolutism for the First Amendment at the cost of downgrading other provisions. First Amendment absolutism has never commanded a majority of this Court. See, for example, *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697, 708, (1931), and *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47, 52 (1919). What is needed here is a weighing, upon properly developed standards, of the broad right of the press to print and of the very narrow right of the Government to prevent. Such standards are not yet developed. The parties here are in disagreement as to what those standards should be. But even the newspapers concede that there are situations where restraint is in order and is constitutional. Mr. Justice Holmes gave us a suggestion when he said in *Schenck*:

"It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right." 249 U.S. at 52.

I therefore would remand these cases to be developed expeditiously, of course, but on a schedule permitting the orderly presentation of evidence from both sides, with the use of discovery, if necessary, as authorized by the rules, and with the preparation of briefs, oral argument and court opinions of a quality better than has been seen to this point. In making this last statement, I criticize no lawyer or judge. I know from past personal experience the agony of time pressure in the preparation of litigation. But these cases and the issues involved and the courts, including this one, deserve better than has been produced thus far.

It may well be that if these cases were allowed to develop as they should be developed, and to be tried as lawyers should try them and as courts should hear them, free of pressure and panic and sensationalism, other light would be shed on the situation and contrary considerations, for me, might prevail. But that is not the present posture of the litigation.

The Court, however, decides the cases today the other way. I therefore add one final comment.

I strongly urge, and sincerely hope, that these two newspapers will be fully aware of their ultimate responsibilities to the United States of America. Judge Wilkey, dissenting in the District of Columbia case, after a review of only the affidavits before his court (the basic papers had not then been made available by either party), concluded that there were a number of examples of documents that, if in the possession of the Post, and if published, "could clearly result in great harm to the nation," and he defined "harm" to mean "the death of soldiers, the destruction of alliances, the greatly increased difficulty of negotiation with our enemies, the inability of our diplomats to negotiate. . . ." I, for one, have now been able to give at least some cursory study not only to the affidavits, but to the material itself. I regret to say that from this examination I fear that Judge Wilkey's statements have possible foundation. I therefore share his concern. I hope that damage already has not been done. If, however, damage has been done, and if, with the Court's action today, these newspapers proceed to publish the critical documents and their results therefrom "the death of soldiers, the destruction

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of alliances, the greatly increased difficulty of negotiation with our enemies, the inability of our diplomats to negotiate," to which list I might add the factors of prolongation of the war and of further delay in the freeing of United States prisoners, then the Nation's people will know where the responsibility for these sad consequences rests.

[Supreme Court of the United States, Nos. 1873 and 1885.—October Term, 1970]

NEW YORK TIMES CO., PETITIONER, VERSUS UNITED STATES

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

UNITED STATES, PETITIONER, VERSUS THE WASHINGTON POST CO., ET AL.

On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

[June 30, 1971]

MR. CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER, dissenting.

So clear are the constitutional limitations on prior restraint against expression, that from the time of *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697 (1931), until recently in *Organization for a Better Austin v. Keeffe*,—U.S.— (1971), we have had little occasion to be concerned with cases involving prior restraints against news reporting on matters of public interest. There is, therefore, little variation among the members of the Court in terms of resistance to prior restraints against publication. Adherence to this basic constitutional principle, however, does not make this case a simple one. In this case, the imperative of a free and unfettered press comes into collision with another imperative, the effective functioning of a complex modern government and specifically the effective exercise of certain constitutional powers of the Executive. Only those who view the First Amendment as an absolute in all circumstances—a view I respect, but reject—can find such a case as this to be simple or easy.

This case is not simple for another and more immediate reason. We do not know the facts of the case. No District Judge knew all the facts. No Court of Appeals judge knew all the facts. No member of this Court knows all the facts.

Why are we in this posture, in which only those judges to whom the First Amendment is absolute and permits of no restraint in any circumstances or for any reason, are really in a position to act?

I suggest we are in this posture because these cases have been conducted in unseemly haste. Mr. JUSTICE HARLAN covers the chronology of events demonstrating the hectic pressures under which these cases have been processed and I need not restate them. The prompt setting of these cases reflects our universal abhorrence of prior restraint. But prompt judicial action does not mean unjudicial haste.

Here, moreover, the frenetic haste is due in large part to the manner in which the *Times* proceeded from the date it obtained the purloined documents. It seems reasonably clear now that the haste precluded reasonable and deliberate judicial treatment of these cases and was not warranted. The precipitous action of this Court aborting a trial not yet completed is not the kind of judicial conduct which ought to attend the disposition of a great issue.

The newspapers make a derivative claim under the First Amendment; they denominate this right as the public right-to-know; by implication, the *Times* asserts a sole trusteeship of that right by virtue of its journalist "scoop." The right is asserted as an absolute. Of course, the First Amendment right itself is not an absolute, as Justice Holmes so long ago pointed out in his aphorism concerning the right to shout of fire in a crowded theater. There are other exceptions, some of which Chief Justice

Hughes mentioned by way of example in *Near v. Minnesota*. There are no doubt other exceptions no one has had occasion to describe or discuss. Conceivably such exceptions may be lurking in these cases and would have been flushed had they been properly considered in the trial courts, free from unwarranted deadlines and frenetic pressures. A great issue of this kind should be tried in a judicial atmosphere conducive to thoughtful, reflective deliberation, especially when haste, in terms of hours, is unwarranted in light of the long period the *Times*, by its own choice, deferred publication.

It is not disputed that the *Times* has had unauthorized possession of the documents for three to four months, during which it has had its expert analysts studying them, presumably digesting them and preparing the material for publication. During all of this time, the *Times*, presumably in its capacity as trustee of the public's "right to know," has held up publication for purposes it considered proper and thus public knowledge was delayed. No doubt this was for a good reason; the analysis of 7,000 pages of complex material drawn from a vastly greater volume of material would inevitably take time and the writing of good news stories takes time. But why should the United States Government, from whom this information was illegally acquired by someone, along with all the counsel, trial judges, and appellate judges be placed under needless pressure? After these months of deferral, the alleged right-to-know has somehow and suddenly become a right that must be vindicated instantaneously.

Would it have been unreasonable, since the newspaper could anticipate the government's objections to release of secret material, to give the government an opportunity to review the entire collection and determine whether agreement could be reached on publication? Stolen or not, if security was not in fact jeopardized, much of the material could no doubt have been declassified, since it spans a period ending in 1968. With such an approach—one that great newspapers have in the past practiced and stated editorially to be the duty of an honorable press—the newspapers and government might well have narrowed the area of disagreement as to what was and was not publishable, leaving the remainder to be resolved in orderly litigation if necessary. To me it is hardly believable that a newspaper long regarded as a great institution in American life would fail to perform one of the basic and simple duties of every citizen with respect to the discovery or possession of stolen property or secret government documents. That duty, I had thought—perhaps naively—was to report forthwith, to responsible public officers. This duty rests on taxi drivers, Justices and the *New York Times*. The course followed by the *Times*, whether so calculated or not, removed any possibility of orderly litigation of the issues. If the action of the judges up to now has been correct, that result is sheer happenstance.¹

Our grant of the writ before final judgment in the *Times* case aborted the trial in the District Court before it had made a complete record pursuant to the mandate of the Court of Appeals, Second Circuit.

The consequence of all this melancholy series of events is that we literally do not know what we are acting on. As I see it we have been forced to deal with litigation concerning rights of great magnitude with-

¹ Interestingly the *Times* explained its refusal to allow the government to examine its own purloined documents by saying in substance this might compromise their sources and informants! The *Times* thus asserts a right to guard the secrecy of its sources while denying that the Government of the United States has that power.

out an adequate record, and surely without time for adequate treatment either in the prior proceedings or in this Court. It is interesting to note that counsel in oral argument before this Court were frequently unable to respond to questions on factual points. Not surprisingly they pointed out that they had been working literally "around the clock" and simply were unable to review the documents that give rise to these cases and were not familiar with them. This Court is in no better posture. I agree with Mr. JUSTICE HARLAN and Mr. JUSTICE BLACKMUN but I am not prepared to reach the merits.²

I would affirm the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and allow the District Court to complete the trial aborted by our grant of certiorari meanwhile preserving the status quo in the *Post* case. I would direct that the District Court on remand give priority to the *Times* case to the exclusion of all other business of that court but I would not set arbitrary deadlines.

I should add that I am in general agreement with much of what Mr. JUSTICE WHITE has expressed with respect to penal sanctions concerning communication or retention of documents or information relating to the national defense.

We all crave speedier judicial processes but when judges are pressured as in these cases the result is a parody of the judicial process.

THE QUAGMIRE MYTH AND THE STALEMATE MACHINE

(By Daniel Ellsberg)

In South Vietnam, the U.S. had stumbled into a bog. It would be mired down there a long time.—Nikita Khrushchev to Ambassador Thompson, July 1962.

By middle of the First Indochina War, French journalists, contradicting the generals, were telling French readers of a bog in Indochina. Lucien Bodard's account of the 1946-1950 period—which looks quasi-prophetic today—was entitled "The Boggling Down," or in its American edition, *The Quicksand War*.¹ By the mid-1960s Americans had similar stories to tell. The parallel account was David Halberstam's *The Making of a Quagmire*,² published just as the real buildup of American ground forces and airpower was beginning.

"Many people thought the title was too harsh, more pessimistic than was warranted," Halberstam recalls. Within two years many of the same people had come to find that title just right. This included some former officials—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., for one, and later Richard Goodwin and Townsend Hoopes—who now saw the war, with its greatly increased human and material costs, reflecting good intentions but wrong premises and offering little promise of success.

For a great many, perhaps most Americans, images of "quagmire . . . morass . . . quicksand . . . bog" dominate their perception of America's relation to the Second Indochina War. Along with the notion of "stumbling in," these metaphors convey a particular, widely-shared understanding of the process of decisionmaking that has yielded a steadily expanding American military involvement in Indochina.

It is a conception that Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., has made precise, as we shall see below. Its implications of lack of foresight, awareness, or calculation are not highly flattering to past responsible officials but are at least extenuating. They accord with the almost universal presumption that the outcome of the process—in Schlesinger's words, "that nightmare of American strategists, a land war in Asia"—must be "a war which no President . . . desired or intended," a war in which "we"—Presidents and all—"find ourselves entrapped."³

Yet the quagmire conception is, it will be argued here, a profoundly misleading one. The factual premises on which it is based, about what the President was told to expect from various courses, are mistaken. On more inferential matters, it suggests answers that are probably wrong to the questions: What did our Presidents think they were doing? What was aimed at, what hoped for? What was the causal role of inattention, bureaucratic conflict, and overoptimism? With respect to the future working of the decision-making process, the "quagmire" notion is likely to yield poor predictions, and poor advice on how to bring about change.

For one critical decision period, at least—the fall of 1961—information now publicly available is sufficient to test, and indeed to establish, these propositions. That is possible mainly because of the revelation by the "Kennedy historians" of much previously concealed data relating to the decisions. For few other periods are the public data relating to the decisions. For few other periods are the public data comparably adequate. Thus, until more such materials are made public, readers who have not had official access to them can only regard most of the propositions presented here with respect to periods other than 1961 as hypotheses. As such, their implications, at least, can be analyzed; and they can be tested to some extent against the judgments of others who have had relevant governmental experience, as well as against past and current events.⁴

Let us begin by examining the late-1961 decisions in detail, as a test of Schlesinger's "quagmire model," which is first defined. Then we shall turn to the origins in 1949-1950 of American military involvement in support of the French, for clues to an alternative understanding of presidential motives, perceptions, and choices. One hypothesis that seems to fit well many otherwise puzzling aspects of choices over the entire period from 1950 to 1968, and perhaps later, is presented in the form of a "stalemate machine": a set of decision rules that Presidents

Footnotes at end of article.

Source: Public Politics, Spring 1971.

(four so far, going on five) have acted "as if" they obeyed. After exploring some of the patterns in policy and performance that emerge from applying such rules to the problems officials have perceived in Indochina, we will return to the "quagmire model" to consider why, flawed as it is empirically, it appears so plausible and appeals so strongly.

THE SCHLESINGER "QUAGMIRE MODEL"

The precise implications of the "quagmire" notion for an understanding of the policy process have been spelled out by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in two much-quoted passages, the first referring to the increases in the level of military advisers in Vietnam under President Kennedy in November 1961:

"This was the policy of 'one more step'—each new step always promising the success which the previous last step had also promised but had unaccountably failed to deliver . . ."

"And so the policy of 'one more step' lured the United States deeper and deeper into the morass. In retrospect, Vietnam is a triumph of the politics of inadvertence. We have achieved our present entanglement, not after due and deliberate consideration, but through a series of small decisions. It is not only idiot but unfair to seek out guilty men. President Eisenhower, after rejecting American military intervention in 1954, set in motion the policy of support for Saigon which resulted, two Presidents later, in American military intervention in 1965. Each step in the deepening of the American commitment was reasonably regarded at the time as the last that would be necessary. Yet, in retrospect, each step led only to the next, until we find ourselves entrapped in that nightmare of American strategists, a land war in Asia."

With this dynamic "quagmire" model, "step by step, each one promising success," Schlesinger purports to explain the whole process that led from Eisenhower's support to Diem in 1954 to American military intervention in 1965. The model can as well be measured against the longer period from our first direct military grants to the French in 1950 under Truman—Schlesinger curiously neglects these Democratic roots—to the present. Many would find it equally persuasive, compellingly so, for the whole period.

It is an unusually satisfying abstraction. It is simple, even elegant. It sums up a long series of decisions coherently to explain a baffling outcome. It is unquestionably plausible: almost surely more so than any simple alternative drawing upon publicly available evidence. So many of the gross, observable features of our involvement are encompassed: the gradualness; the public, sometimes clearly genuine optimism; evidently surprising setbacks followed by new commitments. And it accords with the major, almost universal presumption that the "nightmare" outcome must have been as unforeseen even as a strong possibility by those who made the decisions leading toward it; or else they would have drawn back, or warned the public of the demands ahead.

As a generalized account of the important decisions, and the considerations that led to them, which increased American involvement in Indochina, this explanation is marred only by being totally wrong for each one of those decisions over the last twenty years.

This is not to deny that these were months and years in those two decades when ill-founded optimism—which was publicly asserted almost continuously by officials to the American people—actually ruled the minds of most insiders including the President. For example, this was true during most of 1962; likewise, parts of 1955, 1957, and 1967. But none of these were years in which significant new U.S. commitments were determined or begun. Indeed, what needs explaining is not how optimism led regularly to decisions to

escalate—there is no such pattern, nor even a major instance through 1968—but how bureaucratic optimism developed after, and out of, decisions to expand the nature of U.S. involvement. The latter decisions, as revealed in internal documentation, reflected desperation more than hope.

The specific years in which these new involvements and new programs were chosen and begun were without exception periods of crisis and pessimism, generally far blacker than ever admitted to the public. Nor, in retrospect, do the dark assessments during these periods appear nearly so distorted or unfounded as do, now, the moods of optimism that regularly came later. In the actual years of decision, the gap between estimates and reality—covering both the current situation and the prospects of the option actually chosen—was relatively small, surprisingly and creditably so.

Not one of these decision points, in fact—1950, 1954, 1965, 1961, 1963, 1965 (see the discussion below)—fits Schlesinger's generalization to the slightest degree. For not one of them, viewed from the inside, is that description anything but radically misleading.

That is strikingly true of the very decision that Schlesinger characterizes as typifying the "policy of 'one more step'": John F. Kennedy's decision to break openly through the 1954 Geneva ceiling on U.S. military personnel in South Vietnam, starting the climb from under 1,000 to over 16,000 "advisors" and support personnel at the time of his death.

To be sure, newspaper accounts at the time of this episode of policymaking—whose public aspects began with Kennedy's sending General Maxwell Taylor and Walt W. Rostow on a mission to Saigon—fully support, in retrospect, the "quagmire" interpretation. But those accounts were mistaken, based partly on official lies. Ironically, it is Schlesinger's own account that reveals the facts that contradict both these earlier, "managed" inferences and his own generalization. Because the phenomenon of deception is part of what is to be explained, let us look first at the newspaper versions, then at Schlesinger's report.

THE NOVEMBER 1961 DECISION

The day that General Taylor and his mission left Washington for South Vietnam, the *New York Times* headlined a story by Lloyd Garrison: "Taylor Cautious on GI's for Asia"; "Departs for South Vietnam—Hints US Reluctance to Commit Troops."

The story noted:

"Last week President Kennedy announced that he was sending General Taylor and an eleven-man mission to South Vietnam to make 'an educated guess' about whether the United States would be required to send troops to stop Communist advances in Southeast Asia. . . ."

"Before he departed aboard a military jet airliner, General Taylor, who is the President's special military adviser, was asked to comment on reports that President Kennedy was becoming increasingly reluctant to commit United States forces to a fighting role in South Vietnam. . . ."

"General Taylor declined to speak for the President, but declared: 'Any American would be reluctant to use troops unless absolutely necessary.'"

"His remarks appeared to reflect a tendency on the part of high Administration sources to pull back from earlier warnings of the possible use of United States troops in the fighting."

James Reston, in a column from Washington dated October 19, declared that reports aroused by the Taylor mission that "the United States is about to plunge into the guerrilla warfare of Southeast Asia . . . should be taken with considerable skepticism, at least for the time being."

"General Taylor is not only a soldier but a philosopher with a soldier's respect for

power and geography, and a philosopher's sense of perspective. Accordingly he is not likely to favor plunging blithely into a jungle war 7,000 miles from home where the landscape and the logistics favor the enemy. . . ."

"President Kennedy is not eager to add to his problems in Germany by mounting an adventure in Southeast Asia, and while additional troops may be sent there to help train and direct the defenders, General Taylor has certainly not gone there to organize an invasion."

Over the next week, speculation continued to focus on Taylor's conclusion as to whether or not U.S. combat troops would be needed in South Vietnam. Speaking at the airport as he left Saigon, Taylor agreed that this issue was "one of the principal things I have been asked to look at," but kept his opinions for the President.

"I am going back with my own impressions of what might be done. . . Obviously I cannot discuss what these recommendations will be as they are primarily the property of my President and he will have to decide what to do about it," General Taylor declared.

"I have great confidence in the military capability of South Vietnam to cope with anything within its border," he went on, and to defend the country against conventional attack."¹⁹

On November 3, General Taylor returned to Washington, spoke to reporters at the airport, then saw President Kennedy for two hours at the White House. The lead story in the *New York Times* on November 4, by E. W. Kenworthy, reported:

"On his return from a three-week mission to Southeast Asia, General Taylor said that President Ngo Dinh Diem had the 'assets' available to prevail against the Communist threat."

"The General declined to comment directly on whether he would recommend sending United States combat troops to stiffen the Vietnamese forces in their fight against the Viet Cong (Communist) guerrillas."

"However, when General Taylor was reminded at the airport that his remarks before leaving Saigon had been interpreted as meaning that President Ngo Dinh Diem's problem was not manpower, the general replied: 'That is correct. It is a populous country.'"

"Officials said it was correct to infer from this that General Taylor did not look favorably on the sending of United States combat troops at this time. . . ."

Although some officials in the White House and the State and Defense Departments are known to favor the dispatch of American forces, there would be considerably surprise here if General Taylor recommended such a move.²¹

"Furthermore, the President is known to be opposed to sending troops except as a last resort. . . ."

"While opposing the sending of American combat forces, General Taylor is understood to favor the dispatch of necessary military technicians and to propose intensified training of South Vietnamese elite troops in anti-guerrilla warfare by United States Rangers."

On November 16, Kenworthy reported:

"President Kennedy has decided on the measures that the United States is prepared to take to strengthen South Vietnam against attack by Communists."

"The measures, which received final approval yesterday at a meeting of the National Security Council, closely follow the recommendations made by General Maxwell D. Taylor, the President's military adviser. . . ."

"The United States' plans do not include the dispatching of combat units at this time."

"Officials emphasized that President Kennedy and the National Security Council had not foreclosed the possibility of sending ground and air combat units if the situation deteriorated drastically. The President, it was

Footnotes at end of article.

said, does not wish to bind himself to a "never-position."

"However, the President and General Taylor are agreed, according to reliable informants here, that the South Vietnamese Government is capable of meeting and turning back the Communists' threat provided it speeds the training of its regular forces, solves the problem of mobility, develops a reliable intelligence system and adopts reforms in its military staff structure to free it from political interference."

From this series of articles, based on "reliable, official" sources, uncontradicted by any official, readers of the *New York Times* could only conclude that Taylor and Rostow, sent over to Vietnam to evaluate the need for combat units, had recommended against sending such forces and had assured the President that the programs he adopted, which did not include combat units and which allegedly encompassed their recommendations, were adequate to meet U.S. objectives.

This was the opposite of the truth.

What Taylor and Rostow actually recommended was exposed to the public by Arthur Schlesinger's own account, half a decade later:

"The Taylor-Rostow report recommended an enlargement of the American role, essentially through the penetration of the South Vietnamese army and government by American 'advisers,' attached to Vietnamese military units of government offices and designed to improve the level of local performance. Taylor and Rostow also recommended that an American military task force—perhaps 10,000 men—go to Vietnam, commissioned to conduct combat operations for self-defense and perimeter security and, if the Vietnamese army were hard pressed, to act as an emergency reserve. The report concluded by saying that this program would work only if infiltration from the north were stopped and that, therefore, should this infiltration continue, the United States should consider a contingency policy of retaliation against the north, graduated to match the intensity of Hanoi's aid to the Viet Cong.

"Kennedy rejected both the northern strategy and the use of combat soldiers. . . . He increased the number of military advisers."¹²

Schlesinger does not seem to have noticed what damage this account does to his proposition just two sentences later concerning Kennedy's decision: "This was the policy of 'one more step'—each step always promising the success which the previous last step had also promised but had unaccountably failed to deliver."

He reports, after all, no promises whatever concerning the set of programs Kennedy actually adopted, which omitted both of the critical elements mentioned, "the northern strategy and the use of combat soldiers." And in fact, for what remained, no promises were made by Taylor and Rostow, or by anyone else.

The implications of this discrepancy are obscured by Schlesinger's rather offhand comment that Taylor and Rostow "also" recommended—or as he put it elsewhere, "even envisaged"—"sending an American combat task force. Such phrases hint that this proposal was presented as merely one among many, perhaps as a tentative luxury that could be discarded without affecting essentially the prospects of an otherwise-adequate strategy."

The fact is that Taylor described the sending of U.S. ground combat units as essential if the U.S. were to reverse the current downward trend of events. He reported that he did not, in fact, believe that the program to save South Vietnam would succeed without it. As Theodore Sorensen reports, "Many believed that American troops were needed less

for their numerical strength than for the morale and will they could provide to Diem's forces and for the warning they could provide to the Communists."¹⁴

But if these were, as Sorensen describes them, "speculative psychological reasons," Taylor and Rostow did not put them forward lightly. The immediate problem they found in Vietnam was "a double crisis of confidence: doubt that the United States was really determined to save Southeast Asia; doubt that Diem's methods could really defeat the Viet Cong."¹⁵ No alternative action, Taylor maintained, could be so convincing of U.S. seriousness of purpose and hence so reassuring to the people and government of South Vietnam and to her allies as the introduction of U.S. forces. The Vietnamese and Southeast Asians would undoubtedly draw definitive conclusions, Taylor and Rostow believed, in the coming weeks and months concerning the probable outcome and would adjust their behavior accordingly. What the U.S. did or failed to do (i.e., in that period) would be decisive to the end result.

A force large enough to have the psychological effects required, Taylor suggested, must be more than a bare token, and must be capable of performing tasks of significant value, including (in Schlesinger's paraphrase), "conducting combat operations for self-defense and perimeter security and, if the Vietnamese Army were hard pressed, of providing an emergency reserve."¹⁶

Taylor underlined the urgency by making explicit his recognition of an impressive list of disadvantages of the proposed move. These included: an increased engagement of U.S. prestige; the difficulty of resisting pressure to reinforce the first contingent if it were not enough (there was no limit to the possible commitment, he warned, if we sought ultimately to clean up the insurgents, unless we attacked the source in Hanoi); and the risk of escalation into a major war in Asia.

It was in the face of all these possible drawbacks that he made his recommendation to introduce a task force without delay—made it on the grounds that a U.S. program to save South Vietnam simply would not succeed without it.

Thus, the initial task force was presented as necessary to succeed. Would it also be sufficient? Certainly not in case of invasion, which it might possibly provoke; in that case, it was made clear, the initial 8,000–10,000 troops would be no more than an advance guard. But even short of that contingency, the report emphasized that continued infiltration—which was more likely than not—would require not only larger U.S. forces, but the bombing of North Vietnam. In Schlesinger's words:

"Taylor and Rostow hoped that this program (i.e. including the Task Force) would suffice to win the civil war—and were sure it would if only the infiltration from the north could be stopped. But if it continued, then they could see no end to the war. They therefore raised the question of how long Saigon and the United States could be expected to play by the existing ground rules, which permitted North Vietnam to train and supply guerrillas from across the border and denied South Vietnam (sic) the right to strike back at the source of aggression. Rostow argued so forcibly for a contingency policy of retaliation against the north, graduated to match the intensity of Hanoi's support of the Viet Cong, that 'Rostow Plan 6' became jocularly established in the contingency planning somewhere after SEATO plan 5."¹⁷

In the spring of 1961, for an audience at the Fort Bragg Special Forces School and later in public writings, Rostow had described the "sending of men and arms across international boundaries and the direction of guerrilla war from outside a sovereign nation" as a new form of aggression, calling

for unilateral retaliation against the "ultimate source of aggression" in the absence of international action.¹⁸ (Apparently the major lesson Rostow and Taylor had learned from the Bay of Pigs operation, which took place about the same time as Rostow's speech, was that Castro, or Khrushchev, had the right to bomb Florida, and Washington.)

In a passage of his report later revealed by President Johnson, Taylor foreshadowed the "Rolling Thunder" bombing campaign that Johnson initiated three years later, when Taylor was Ambassador to South Vietnam:

"It is clear to me that the time may come in our relations to Southeast Asia when we must declare our intention to attack the source of guerrilla aggression in North Vietnam and impose on the Hanoi Government a price for participating in the current war which is commensurate with the damage being inflicted on its neighbors to the south."¹⁹

Such were the views of President Kennedy's most trusted military advisor, whom he had brought out of retirement and later named Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sent to Vietnam precisely to evaluate which, if any, of several proposed schemes of U.S. combat deployment to Vietnam would be appropriate, Taylor came back to tell the President his answer: The situation was "serious but not hopeless," i.e., not hopeless if and only if the President promptly dispatched sizeable U.S. combat units, with the understanding that more troops, and bombing of the North, would probably be required as later steps.

The initial program, as a whole, was presented as adequate for the short run; probably inadequate for the long run, requiring major additional measures; almost surely inadequate for both long-run and short-run aims without the vital element of the task force, for which there was no convincing substitute.

President Kennedy bought the program minus the task force.

Nor was this rejection of the task force because Taylor and Rostow were alone in their advocacy of it. As Sorensen reveals, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had advocated a commitment of U.S. ground troops to Vietnam (and/or Laos) as early as May 1961, as had an interagency task force.²⁰ After Taylor's return, the Joint Chiefs of Staff reiterated this recommendation. Moreover, they subscribed to Taylor's emphasis on its urgency and, among the whole shopping list of proposals, its critical role. Moreover, in the first week in November 1961, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and his Deputy, Roswell Gilpatric, strongly associated themselves with the appreciation and recommendations of Taylor and the JCS.

It must be underscored that there was no haziness in internal discussion about the distinction between U.S. ground combat units, on the one hand, and the mixed bag of advisors, logistics, and combat support troops, including intelligence, communications, and helicopter personnel, on the other. These two categories were regarded by all as posing very different risks and benefits; and by October 1961, even prior to Taylor's trip, it was regarded as almost a foregone conclusion that the latter would be supplied.

Given the expectation prior to the Taylor-Rostow Mission that at least the advisory build-up and other measures short of troops would be approved, and given the recommendations he actually received, it seems likely that the President himself and his high-level advisors regarded his rejection of the proposal to send combat units immediately as his most, perhaps only significant, decision of the period (although, as such, it was successfully concealed from the public). As Sorensen puts it: "All his principal advisors on Vietnam favored it," calling it the "touchstone" of our good faith, a symbol of our de-

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termination. But the President in effect voted 'no'—and only his vote counted." "Yet at the same time the President voted 'yes' to a set of remaining programs which every one of his advisors described as almost surely inadequate in the light of his various 'no's,' and perhaps in any case: inadequate not only to achieve long-run success but to avoid further deterioration in the mid-term.

Why the President may have cast his pair of votes this way is a question for later—and more speculative—discussion; likewise, the consequences of his doing so, and a critical evaluation of such choices. What can be said unequivocally about this description of the alternatives and forecasts presented to Kennedy, and of his choice, is that it flatly contradicts Schlesinger's "quagmire" model. It defines what is to be explained about the actual decision process in terms quite different from Schlesinger's.

There is no basis whatever for describing the President in this instance as taking a "small step" because he was promised success with it, or because it was "reasonably regarded as the last that would be necessary." What he was told was the contrary, and that from virtually every source. His decisions, he was assured, held out the almost certain prospect that new, larger steps, or else retreat, would present themselves as hard choices in the not-distant future.

The "promise" of inadequacy of the chosen measures was not limited to the Pentagon, nor did it relate merely to the omission of combat forces. Each agency had its own top candidates for features of U.S. policy "essential" to success in Vietnam. Before the year was out, the policy had given up pretensions, at least temporarily, to maintaining any one of these features.

Thus the State Department pressed political reforms and "broadening" of the Saigon regime as "essential"; without these, it was judged, even the full military commitment recommended by the Pentagon would probably fail. In Saigon, the MAAG continued to emphasize administrative and command changes as "essential" to long-run success.

Both of these proposals had bureaucratic opponents who argued that however useful or even necessary they might be in the long run, they were risky or "counterproductive" in the short term: "rocking the boat," risking the stability of the Diem regime or U.S. influence on it needed for more pressing matters. Nevertheless, in contrast to the proposed combat task force both of these sorts of "reforms" were included in the programs determined by Kennedy in mid-November and presented by the Ambassador to President Diem. By December or January, both had been, for practical purposes, abandoned. Critical measures urged by AID and CIA met the same fate.

Advocates of short-run priorities had won out bureaucratically, in the face of Diem's open resistance to these attempted "interventions." (Diem's intransigence and U.S. lack of "leverage" were even more marked than usual, reflecting embarrassment on both sides that he was getting neither the bilateral defense treaty for which he had privately asked nor the U.S. troop commitment for which Taylor had led him to hope.) Thus, the new presidential program for Vietnam preserved the peculiar character of omitting every feature emphasized by any U.S. agency—or by the Diem regime—as "essential" to longer-run success.

The President, of course, had his reasons. Many of them were good enough reasons, even in retrospect. But they had little to do either with optimism or inattention. For one thing, John F. Kennedy, who had first visited Indochina in 1951 and had criticized the French effort and U.S. intervention in the Senate, was one of the few officials—George Ball was another—who both knew the French experience and could perceive it as a warning even to Americans.

Moreover, by November, 1961, President Kennedy—"his skepticism deepened by the Bay of Pigs experience and the holes in the Laos report"—had bureaucratic lessons of his own to draw upon. Both bodies of experience pointed to the same moral: the threat of quicksand. Or, to change the metaphor, as Kennedy did in a pithy remark to Schlesinger relating to Taylor's request, the risk of addiction:

"They want a force of American troops. . . . They say it's necessary in order to restore confidence and maintain morale. But it will be just like Berlin. The troops will march in; the bands will play; the crowds will cheer; and in four days everyone will have forgotten. Then we will be told we have to send in more troops. It's like taking a drink. The effect wears off, and you take another."

"Yet"—the sympathetic historian is forced to record—"he felt obliged to offer a small drink himself, and he increased the number of advisers."

"More drinks were still to come. At the end of 1961 there were 1,384 American military personnel in South Vietnam; and the end of 1962, 9,865; at the time of Kennedy's death in November 1963, about 15,000. This was the policy of 'one more step' . . ."

Why? Why that small drink? Ignorance of the risks of addiction is belied by Schlesinger's own anecdote of his conversation with the President; belief that one small drink was all that the doctor ordered, as Schlesinger's generalization implies, is belied by his whole account. If the President was not willing to do more than he did, why did he not do much less? Why court both commitment and costly failure?

TWO DECADES OF CHOOSING STALEMATE

It appears, in the light of internal documentation, that the elements of paradox above apply virtually across-the-board to major presidential initiatives on Vietnam over the last two decades. (This study, however, addresses decisions only through 1968.) No more than in 1961 were the measures of increased involvement that were actually adopted promised or expected to be adequate "last steps" or, indeed, anything but holding actions, adequate to avoid defeat in the short run but long shots so far as ultimate success was concerned. This is true of each of the major years of decision over that generation:

1. 1950, when the first \$10 million in credits were granted by the Truman administration to the French and Vietnamese efforts against the Viet Minh (in May, a month before the Korean invasion);
2. 1954, when direct entry into the war was considered and rejected by Eisenhower, followed by a gradually hardening commitment to the support of Diem;
3. late-1954;
4. 1963, the Kennedy decision to encourage the overthrow of Diem;
5. 1965, the Johnson decisions to bomb North Vietnam, then to deploy U.S. troops in limited numbers to South Vietnam and employ U.S. air support, then after mid-July, to accept open-ended ground force commitment;
6. 1968, when proposals to mobilize reserves and expand the war to Cambodia and Laos were considered and rejected, followed by "Vietnamization" and talks.

In some of these years—e.g., 1954, 1961, 1965, 1968—certain approaches were presented by their proponents as winning strategies—and this reassurance that a "win" was possible may have had some influence on the climate of policy-making—but these were never the options chosen. This fact underscores the perceived inadequacy of the courses actually adopted, which emerges even more directly from intelligence estimates at the time; these estimates rarely

endorsed even the optimistic claims made by "operators" for the more drastic proposals that were rejected. In other years—e.g., 1950, 1955-56—the policy followed was seen by all as about the best available, yet offering little promise of victory.

In fact, perhaps the most striking discovery to be made by someone surveying the internal documentation for the first time (probably approaching it with something like the quicksand model in mind) is the persistent skepticism about long-run non-Communist prospects and about proposals for improving them, a pessimism almost unrelieved, often stark—yet in retrospect, creditably realistic, frank, cogent—that runs through the intelligence estimates. That is true especially from 1960 through 1961, but after as well.

As for policy analyses and proposals, as distinct from intelligence estimates, one peculiar format for major recommendations on policy is so generally characteristic that it might be called the Proposal Pattern, or more suggestively (since these recommendations came close to adoption, or were chosen, only in crisis periods) the Desperate Proposal Pattern. This takes the form, not (as the quagmire model suggests) "Do this, because it will work, or work better, cheaper, faster, or with less risk," but simply "Do this—because the alternatives are certain to fail—and failure would be 'unacceptable, intolerable.'"

It is of the essence of the Desperate Proposal Pattern (DPP) that these limited assertions are all there is to it. There is no mention, in particular, that the proposed approach itself will work, with any degree of probability. Although it is implied, and sometimes stated, that the proposed course might "succeed," in contrast to alternatives, there is no mention at all of the probable total scale or costs of the recommended program or, even roughly, its probability of success, or the consequences of failure.

How could decision-making proceed on such a basis? How could Presidents, time after time, tolerate recommendations being presented in such a form, without pressing for more information?

To come this close to the fine grain of official choices on Vietnam is to be confronted with puzzles and doubts, to be mired, indeed, in uncertainties. What seemed clear as one listened to speeches, or observed official actions, or compared the two, is less so when files are opened, and concealed actions, official estimates, and internal arguments emerge. Under the magnifying lens, previously evident over-all patterns—like the quagmire hypothesis—dissolve like the camels on Mars.

As Leslie Gelb sums up this long period, in an important forthcoming paper: "

"The system worked. The story of United States policy toward Vietnam is either far better or far worse than supposed. Our Presidents and most of those who influenced their decisions did not stumble step-by-step into Vietnam, unaware of the quagmire. U.S. involvement did not stem from a failure to foresee consequences."

Almost regardless of his attitudes on the war, a reader is likely to rise from a survey of internal evidence baffled and troubled, with the question on his mind: "How could they?" How could four Presidents—Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson—in the face of estimates and program analyses and recommendations like these, so persistently have chosen what were almost always presented at the time of decision as long shots, almost surely inadequate in the long run, potentially costly and risky, in favor either of measures purported to be more effective or of lesser involvement?

Documentary evidence on the internal decision-making process is far from adequate to answer the critical question of what considerations were salient to presidential atten-

tion at a given moment. The President—having no formal need to persuade a superior, to coordinate a proposal or to justify a decision internally—puts much less down on paper than other participants in the bureaucratic process. Because of his overlapping roles, he conceals or dissembles his own views even more than other participants, except selectively to his closest associates. They in turn guard them closely, for reasons of loyalty, their own access, and politics, even when they later come to write "history."

In fact, certain general considerations caution the analyst/historian not to take the mosaic of bureaucratic inputs to presidential decision as a close or highly reliable guide to the President's own view of a matter, his private expectations and aims.

First, the President may, to some degree, disbelieve the estimates. He may believe that a pessimistic tone reflects a bias, or a bureaucratic hedge. (Although in retrospect, the intelligence analyses of the 1950s, and to a somewhat lesser extent the 1960s, look realistic, not vague or excessive, in their pessimism; they read well today.)

As for claims that measures he has decided to reject or postpone are "essential," he may feel (often with justice) that this language is largely a bureaucratic ploy, an attempt to tie his hands or to make a record as a future hedge.

Most Presidents probably acquire, fairly quickly, some skepticism about assertions that they "must" act *immediately*, or adopt a proposal in full or on a vast scale, if they are to avoid disaster or have any likelihood of success. They are likely to be drawn to converting a program into a sequential decision, "buying time, awaiting information, keeping options open." They can also claim to be doing so, as a way of rejecting a proposal without foreclosing its proponents' hopes.²⁷

Moreover, as Richard Moorsteen has pointed out to me, many Presidents, as successful politicians, are likely to exhibit these same traits for temperamental reasons as well. A strong focus on the short run, a hopeful attitude toward one's future, a tendency to put off painful decisions in the hope, and with some confidence, that "something will turn up" (to make the decision either unnecessary, or easier): All these are part of the typical make-up of a politician. A President, as Moorsteen puts it, will have attained that office only by winning a long succession of long shots; by the time he gets there he is likely to have a strong belief in his lucky star, a confidence that he can get away with what looks like chance-taking where others might not, confidence that something will always turn up for him. A Bay of Pigs experience comes to him as a special shock; yet even that will probably not erase the traits permanently.

These considerations go some part of the way to explain discrepancies between the President's view and choice and the estimates and proposals pressed on him by his advisers. But they cannot really bear the main weight of explanation. To explain these actual discrepancies almost wholly in terms of presidential operating traits or temperament, for example, would imply White House wishfulness, or a general exclusive focus upon the short run, so extreme as to seem almost psychotic. Rather, it is likely that the factors above did work marginal differences in degree in the President's thinking from that of his advisers, but unlikely that they counted for more than that. There is simply no evidence that, in any instance, a President was radically more optimistic than the expressed appreciations of odds and possibilities presented to him: a conclusion which leaves us still facing the earlier puzzles.

Thus, when all this is said, the stumbling-into-quick-sand image cannot be revived when

one looks at the internal record. Instead one sees, repeatedly, a leader striding with his eyes open into what he sees as quicksand, renewing efforts and carrying his followers deeper in, knowingly. Why? Presumably, because he sees no alternative, and hopes to find a way through, or because the alternatives seem even more threatening, worse in the short run. But what is the alternative future that the DPP describes as "intolerable"? What is the failure so ominous that it must be postponed at such costs, while concealing its prospect from the public?

Looking only at the set of critical decision points, one sees, not an unwary traveller miring down imperceptibly, but a different image: Eliza, fleeing across the broken ice of the river, leaping from block to block as each begins to slip. . . . And the question becomes: What whips threaten, what are the bounds that bay on the departed shore?

In one period, at least, 1949-1950, the identity of the pursuers was in little doubt. A close look at that decision point—when lack of prior involvement screens out several of the hypotheses competing for attention later—suggests answers to many of the questions raised so far.

1950 THE EDGE OF THE BOG

At the time an American President first left solid ground behind to step into the Indochina War, the main pursuers to his rear had known faces and names, and their accents were American. The voices included those of such Senators as William Knowland, Styles Bridges, Kenneth Wherry, and Pat McCarran, three "Asia-first" Republicans and a right-wing Democrat, who denounced the China White Paper issued by the State Department on August 5, 1949, as "a 1,054-page whitewash of a wishful, do-nothing policy which has succeeded only in placing Asia in danger of Soviet conquest."²⁸ And even Arthur Vandenberg: "I think we virtually 'sold China down the river' at Yalta and Potsdam and in our subsequent official demands for coalition with the armed Chinese Communists."²⁹ And Richard Nixon, whose questioning of Alger Hiss in 1948 had broken down the Hiss defense and whose efforts were more responsible than any others in bringing an indictment against Hiss (and helped him defeat Helen Douglas for the Senate in the fall of 1950 on the theme of her "soft attitude toward Communism"). But also, a man who was to defeat Richard Nixon a decade later—in part on the charge that the Republicans had lost Cuba to Communism—who was granted one minute to address the House as follows on January 25, 1949:

"Mr. Speaker, over this week end we have learned the extent of the disaster that has befallen China and the United States. The responsibility for the failure of our foreign policy in the Far East rests squarely with the White House and the Department of State.

"The continued insistence that aid would not be forthcoming unless a coalition government with the Communists was formed, was a crippling blow to the National Government.

"So concerned were our diplomats and their advisers, the Lattimores and the Fairbanks, with the imperfection of the democratic system in China after 20 years of war and the tales of corruption in high places that they lost sight of our tremendous stake in a non-Communist China.

"Our policy, in the words of the Premier of the National Government, Sun Fo, of vacillation, uncertainty, and confusion has reaped the whirlwind.

"This House must now assume the responsibility of preventing the onrushing tide of Communism from engulfing all of Asia."³⁰

Thus the Democratic Representative from Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy.

Above all, by the spring of 1950 there was the voice of Senator Joe McCarthy, whose sensational charges of Communist infiltration of the State Department began 18 days after Hiss was convicted in a second trial—

or two weeks after Secretary of State Acheson announced, "I will not turn my back on Alger Hiss"—with his speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, on February 9, 1950.

"How can we account for our present situation," McCarthy was to ask later, unless we believe that men high in this government are concerting to deliver us to disaster? This must be the product of a great conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous venture in the history of man."³¹

Or more specifically, in a Senate speech on March 30, 1950:

"It was not Chinese democracy under Mao that conquered China, as Acheson, Lattimore, Jessup and Hanson contend. Soviet Russia conquered China and an important ally of the conquerors was this small left-wing element in our Department of State."³²

In less than nine months, criticism of "our loss of China" had moved from condemnation of our "wishful, do-nothing" policy to discern a more sinister meaning in what had seemed passivity. As Graebner paraphrases the attack:

"United States policy failed, in short, because it had pursued the goals, not of this nation, but of the Soviet Union."³³

Meanwhile, in December 1949, Chinese Communist troops had reached the borders of Indochina. At that point, granted sanctuary, supplies and expert advisers, it became virtually impossible for the Communist-led nationalist forces of the Viet Minh to lose to the French. But for the same reason, given the domestic environment in the U.S. described above, it had become "intolerable" to the Truman Administration that they should win.

"The unfortunate but inescapable fact is that the ominous result of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the government of the United States. Nothing that this country did or could have done within the reasonable limits of its capabilities could have changed that result; nothing that was left undone by this country has contributed to it. It was the product of internal Chinese forces, forces which this country tried to influence but could not. A decision was arrived at within China, if only a decision by default."³⁴

There is a statement that might have suggested itself, in every year from 1949 to the present, as providing the format for explaining a U.S. government decision to abstain or extricate itself from involvement in Indochina. But it is doubtful if that thought ever came to bureaucratic consciousness: the reception of the China White Paper did not encourage it. The argument simply did not "sell," even though its logic rested on the facts that opposing forces in China were immense and dynamic, no American troops were engaged, and there was no real U.S. support for their involvement. As Acheson has put it recently, the conclusion above "was unpalatable to believers in American omnipotence, to whom every goal unattained in explicable only by incompetence or treason."³⁵ What the State Department learned then, and evidently has never forgotten, was the number of such believers, and their power to wreck policies, administrations, . . . and careers.

In this atmosphere there was no impatience in the State Department to commence the drafting of a parallel Indochina White Paper. In Indochina the battle against Communist-led guerrillas, whose ultimate direction—here Acheson agreed with his attackers—was seen in "the Kremlin," was being carried by Western troops unquestionably able and willing to utilize U.S. materiel. No U.S. troops were needed, or desired; at least, to avert defeat, to bring about a stalemate. On the other hand, temporary stalemate was about all that U.S. estimates offered as the outcome of U.S. aid at that time: at least, in the absence of changes in political strategy that France was extremely unlikely to adopt. Yet the need was urgent; official

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estimates at the end of 1949 gave French forces in Tonkin only six to nine more months, lacking U.S. aid.

In February 1949, at the apparent initiative of the new Secretary of State, Acheson, the NSC had recommended withholding supplies already earmarked for China. Senator Vandenberg argued successfully against the move, even though he admitted that Communist victory seemed inevitable: "I decline to be responsible for the *last push* which makes it possible." "The aid continued; even this did little to protect the administration from its critics, yet it was becoming evident that to have done any less would have been still more risky, more ominously "questionable."

A year later, the position of a proponent within the State Department for withholding military aid from our NATO ally, France, thereby accepting full responsibility for its prompt defeat in Indochina by the forces of the Kremlin, would have been an isolated one. And this despite the fact that estimates at the time held out scant hope that France would accept the political strategies that one might give a significant chance of ultimate victory.

No matter how slim the probability of "winning," there was little debate within the government as to whether the open-ended direct aid policy we commenced in May 1950, with a first installment of \$10 million, was worthwhile. It could (and did) buy a stalemate; and the alternative was to add the Democrats' "loss" of Indochina to their "loss" of China. That was enough to know. To postpone the loss of Tonkin beyond the tenure of the Truman Administration evidently seemed worth more than the several billion dollars (and one must add, the French and Vietnamese lives) that it cost.

What leads one to what would otherwise seem a harsh and cynical interpretation is, beside the fact of timing, the great difficulty otherwise of explaining a decision directly to involve ourselves in this struggle—against what was perceived within the U.S. government as a nationalist movement, Communist-led but with the support of the great majority of Vietnamese people—especially given the extreme pessimism of official estimates concerning French prospects in the long run, even with our aid. No more in this first instance than in later ones did the promise of the quicksand model apply: "one small step promising success."

Moreover, other hypotheses on possible motives for accepting a long shot, plausible in later periods, cannot apply here. In 1950, it could not be said that we had to carry out prior commitments or promises; or that our prestige rested on earlier involvement; or that, our own forces having been engaged, we could not afford our own "military defeat."

The relevant events determining our response had taken place outside Indochina. They were the fall of China, following earlier disappointments in Eastern Europe, the Czech coup, and in general, the Cold War; and the response of Republican leadership to these events and to the stunning frustration of their 1948 electoral defeat. (Senator Taft's decision to back McCarthy was an important part of this response.) After these developments, even had there been no prior U.S. involvement in Indochina, "a communist victory in Asia that the U.S. might have prevented" was sure to be read as a defeat for the U.S., a culpable failure by the administration, a basis, even, for charges of conscious treachery.

The facts that involvement posed the likelihood of greater costs in future, risks, even, of major war with China or Russia if the Chinese Communists should enter, all uncompensated by significant promise of eventual success: none of this outweighed

the credible promise of intervention to "buy time," i.e., to *postpone defeat*, and to avert the political and personal consequences of charges of "softness on Communism."

With the outbreak of the Korean War, followed rapidly by public disenchantment (and charges that Acheson had even invited it), the message of Republican victories in the fall, and above all the entry of the Chinese Communists into the war, all the earlier motives were sharpened for "buying time" in Indochina. But still not "at any price." Despite the renewed judgment that the strategic stakes in Southeast Asia were of the highest order, there was even less interest than before in committing U.S. ground troops to Indochina. The "Never Again Club" in the Pentagon was in the process of consolidating. And controversy over General MacArthur's dismissal in April 1951 both mobilized critics of administration policy and publicized a premise already present earlier in the attacks by the "Asia-first" Republicans. This was a belief that "victory" was not only, as MacArthur emphasized, indispensable, but that it could be had on the cheap, by a patriotic and resolute administration: by a combination of commitment to victory, unrestrained use of airpower, and strong support of Asian allies.³⁷ To have to employ U.S. ground troops against Asians showed weak strategy, incompetence, irresolution, or neglect of potential Asian allied troops; to lose an area to Communism marked either culpable negligence or treason.

Anyone who has witnessed from inside the U.S. government decision-making on Indochina in such a period as, say, the autumn of 1964 (perhaps the nadir of U.S. hopes regarding South Vietnam in the last decade) will almost surely feel on reading accounts³⁸ of the 1948-1954 period that he is learning, at least, the genesis of many bureaucratic-political premises of the later debate. Such books describe the events that scratched the minds of a generation of bureaucrats and politicians.

Patterns evident today that become immediately explicable from this history, in career and party terms, include powerful inhibitions against:

1. Proposing "coalition" with Communists (as Marshall was charged with doing in China), or regarding local accommodation as less than tantamount to Communist victory;
2. Pressuring an Asian ally toward "reforms," to the point of risking the charge of weakening his confidence or political base or military capability;
3. Regarding Communist adversaries as anything but terrorists and aggressors (though blessed with "organizational skills");
4. Withholding approval, indefinitely, from military proposals for "victory through airpower";
5. Strongly questioning the assurance, speed, or impact on U.S. interest of an Asian "accommodation" to the Communists after Communist victory in South Vietnam (the "domino theory");
6. Appearing to "do nothing" in face of a possible "loss to Communism" (whether or not an action of any promise of effectiveness is at hand); or regarding such a possible loss as anything but "intolerable."³⁹

Thus, for example, in illustration of the last point, an argument made in late 1964 and early 1965 for commencing the bombing of North Vietnam by some who did not hold out high hopes for its effect on the North Vietnamese efforts was that "even if it failed, it would have been worthwhile; it would have demonstrated our willingness to risk, to bloody our opponent, to go the last mile for an ally. . . ." Demonstrate to whom? Allegedly, to foreigners: opponents and allies. Yet the confident assurance—mocked by events—that "such benefits would outweigh costs and risks seemed peculiar, even at the time; unless one noted that "doing some-

thing" to hurt Communist opponents, no matter how costly and unpromising, would be strong protection against domestic charges of culpable underestimation of a Communist threat, or of defeatism, or even—fantastic as these would have seemed before 1960—of literal treason.

Officials writing such phrases in internal memoranda in 1964 had almost surely not read Vandenberg's diary on his 1949 plea—"I decline to be responsible for the *last push* . . ."—but its bureaucratic echoes had lasted fifteen years. What had been lost to memory was Acheson's counterargument, as expressed at the beginning of 1950 with reference to American involvement in the defense of Formosa: "The Chiefs again objected to the involvement of American forces but proposed some funds for military materiel and a fact-finding mission. I objected to this *toying with the mousetrap* . . ."⁴⁰ To a reader in 1971, that last comment appears almost stunning in its cogency and prescience. Yet to an impartial political scientist writing in the mid-1950s, it marked an attitude and a set of tactics that were simply "politically foolhardy":

"Now, it may be true that Chiang could have been saved only by very large-scale intervention by the United States 'beyond the reasonable limits of its capabilities' (as Acheson asserted in the 1949 White Paper.) But it seems to be carrying logic in the conduct of foreign affairs to self-defeating extremes to make that belief a justification for attempting to block all substantial aid, in order to cut American losses. By spending expeditiously a few hundred million more on military aid, as the GOP requested, and by sending as many military advisers as could possibly be spared, the State Department in 1947 could probably still have forced the Republicans to share public responsibility for any later decision to cut the losses. . . . If then the American public had shown a willingness to press on, the rewards of victory or even a stalemate would have been vastly greater than was eventually the case in Korea."⁴¹

There is the domestic political case for "toying with mousetraps": even if the outcome should be the "rewards of stalemate." That was the lesson that stuck, for Acheson and a generation of successors, when it came to drawing morals for Indochina from the debacle of China policy.

Of course, to point to domestic political considerations as of critical importance to a particular foreign policy decision is not to say either that (1) only such domestic concerns figured in the decision; or (2) domestic and international-strategic factors were independent; or (3) domestic considerations were of only one simple sort, e.g., winning the next presidential election. Let us consider these points in reverse order.

Relevant aspects of domestic "politics" that can be influenced by or influence a particular foreign policy include: the prospects of passing a current legislative program (e.g., the Great Society program in 1964); the composition of the next Congress, with its implications for subsequent programs and elections; a President's chances for renomination by his own party, as well as for reelection (see 1968); the prospects of tumultuous controversy during primaries and the election campaign, with its implications for effective governing (again, 1968); the future of one's party (e.g., the feasibility in the 1970s of creating a "new Republican majority"); a President's reputation, his place in history, and his own self-respect (thus, the concern of both Johnson and Nixon not to be "the first U.S. President to lose a war").

Each of these considerations interacts with strategic concerns or with other matters of domestic policy. No President, after all, believes that victory for himself or his party, or the defeat of a particular opponent, is of no more than selfish interest to himself and

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his supporters: Important issues of foreign and domestic policy and concern are seen as dependent on these legislative and electoral outcomes. And a "humiliation" for an American President is seen—especially by that President, but not only by him—as inevitably a setback for the prestige and influence of the United States as well.

Moreover, to somewhat varying degree, each one of these post-war Presidents has been a "true believer" in the premises of cold-war policy that have figured consistently in their rhetoric. And they themselves have contributed crucially to making these premises influential factors in domestic politics, matters of potential vulnerability for an incumbent. Thus, in their eyes, the imperatives of domestic politics point in the same general direction as do their instincts of "what is right for America."

In the spring of 1950, although Indochina was surely not prominent among the concerns of officials of the Truman administration, all the considerations above pointed to one conclusion, sufficient to determine policy: "This is not a good year for this administration to lose Vietnam to Communism."

Nor was 1951. Or 1952. Korea, the Chinese Communists, MacArthur, an upcoming presidential election, all ensured that.

Nor—for a new administration that had come to office on charges of Democratic "losses" and with loud talk of "rollback" and of "unleashing" Chiang—was 1953 a good year to abandon Vietnam; or, after 1954, South Vietnam. . . .

A decade after 1950, a new Democratic President inherited the task, among others, that he had defined sometime earlier: "preventing the onrushing tide of Communism from engulfing all of Asia." Nine months into his first year in office, he had experienced the Bay of Pigs, the need to seek a negotiated—and probably unstable—settlement in Laos, Vienna, the Wall and Khrushchev's threats on Berlin, and the resumption of Soviet nuclear testing. After all this, John F. Kennedy found 1961, like 1950 and the years between, a bad time to decide to lose South Vietnam to Communism.

Likewise, most of 1962. Yet by that year's end, the situation might have been seen differently, at least on the international front. The Cuban Missile Crisis had established Kennedy's resolve, split further the Soviets and Chinese Communists, ended the Berlin confrontation and prepared the way for the test ban. At the same time, Kennedy's White House Chief of Staff, Kenneth O'Donnell, has revealed, the mood of optimism about Vietnam that had set in during 1962 had been drained for his boss by the end of the year, and still more by the following spring.

In O'Donnell's account,¹² seconded by Senator Mansfield, Kennedy had been disturbed in late 1962 to find himself agreeing with an unexpected argument by Mansfield that he should stop sending more military reinforcements to South Vietnam and then withdraw all U.S. forces from that country's civil war.

A continued steady increase of American military advisers in South Vietnam, the Senator argued, would lead to sending still more forces to beef up those that were there, and soon the Americans would be dominating the combat in a civil war that was not our war. Taking over the military leadership and fighting in the Vietnam war, Mansfield warned, would hurt American prestige in Asia and would not help the South Vietnamese to stand on their own two feet, either.

Impressed, Kennedy still did not change his public position on the need for U.S. support of Diem. But when Mansfield renewed the argument in the spring of 1963, the President called him in privately, and O'Donnell (a witness) reports:

"The President told Mansfield that he had been having serious second thoughts about Mansfield's argument and that he now agreed with the Senator's thinking on the need for a complete military withdrawal from Vietnam.

"But I can't do it until 1965—after I'm re-elected," Kennedy told Mansfield.

"President Kennedy felt, and Mansfield agreed with him, that if he announced a total withdrawal of American military personnel from Vietnam before the 1964 election, there would be a wild conservative outcry against returning him to the Presidency for a second term.

"After Mansfield left the office, the President told me that he had made up his mind that after his reelection he would take the risk of unpopularity and make a complete withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam. 'In 1965, I'll be damned everywhere as a Communist appeaser. But I don't care. If I tried to pull out completely now, we would have another Joe McCarthy red scare on our hands, but I can do it after I'm reelected. So we had better make damned sure that I am reelected.'"

There is no way, starting from O'Donnell's understanding of Kennedy's views at this time, to attribute either (1) the continued buildup of advisers throughout most of 1963, or (2) the encouragement of the Diem coup, or (3) Kennedy's continued avowals in 1963 of the domino credo and our unswerving commitment, either to (a) inattention or inadvertence, or (b) confidence in subordinates' optimistic promises, or (c) perception of "no alternative," due to the involvement or pledges of predecessors, or to international concerns.

Indeed, in the light of these revelations of the President's pessimism and intentions, there seems no way to read his measures in 1963 increasing or confirming national involvement in and commitment to the war in Vietnam, except as reflections of John Kennedy's judgment that 1963 was a worse time than 1965 for him to lose a war to Communists, so that he would just have to keep it going till then.

To be sure, "continuing a war" in Vietnam did not mean just the same thing in 1963 that it did in 1965, or 1970, especially for Americans. As O'Donnell pointed out to me recently (February 24, 1971): "43 Americans had been killed in Vietnam at the time of President Kennedy's death. We lost that many in the last two weeks over Laos." (The difference for the Vietnamese between the two periods, although significant, was considerably less.)

Nevertheless, as quoted by O'Donnell, Kennedy did not even claim that he might avoid or reduce the "McCarthy red scare" by postponing it—"In 1965, 'I'll be damned everywhere as a Communist appeaser'—but merely that he could prevent it from interfering with his re-election. He proposed to do so by accepting two more years of U.S. involvement, with its evident risks, unless he were "damned sure" to be re-elected, and perhaps even then—of later escalation, U.S. combat involvement, vastly increased American and Vietnamese deaths, and domestic disaster.

All these risks were realized. Kennedy did not live either to win the election or to leave the war. Instead he willed the war to a President determined not to be the first to lose one, leaving an unchanged U.S. policy toward Vietnam to an insecure successor who had some reason to fear the political consequences—even at the hands of the dead President's heirs, officials, and supporters—of publicly abandoning it.

(The risk that "losing" Vietnam would pose some risk from a faction within the President's own party was one that Johnson in 1964 shared with Eisenhower in 1954. Even Richard Nixon has seen himself as facing comparable problems in 1969-1971, his Spe-

cial Assistant Henry A. Kissinger has reported in numerous "backgrounders":

"If we had done in our first year what our loudest critics called on us to do, the 13 percent that voted for Wallace would have grown to 35 or 40 percent; the first thing the President set out to do was to neutralize that faction."")

Sorenson's final comments in *Kennedy* (published in 1965) on his Chief's Vietnam legacy are not unduly upbeat, but they need interpreting. They begin:

"He could show little gain in that situation to pass on to his successor, either in the military outlook or the progress toward reform. His own errors had not helped."

In this, of course, Kennedy does not suffer by comparison with his two predecessors, or his successor. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., spans his account of the Kennedy term in *The Bitter Heritage* with the sentences: "In January, 1961 the Vietnam mess fell to a new American president . . . [in 1963] a new President inherited the trouble." From the President's perspective of 1961, was this failure, or was it reasonable success? Just the same statements, after all, could be said for the comparable milestones 1953, 1961, 1969. And in no case was this assessment at the end of a term worse than had been predicted internally—though this was not revealed to the public—at the earlier moment the President had chosen to sustain and deepen the nation's involvement. Had any of them honestly expected more (except for intermittent periods)? If not—as seems likely—what does this tell us about the pressures driving these four Presidents, about their aims and motives?

To go on with Sorenson:

"But if asked why he had increased this nation's commitment, he might have summed up his stand with the words used by William Pitt when asked in the House of Commons in 1803 what was gained by the war against France: 'We have gained everything that we would have lost if we had not fought this war.' In the case of Vietnam, that was a lot." (Italics added.)

Specifically, that was—as John F. Kennedy had hoped in 1963—"a Democratic victory in 1964, although not for himself.

It does not seem enough.

THE STALEMATE MACHINE

Although the data that have been discussed are adequate decisively to reject the Schlesinger "quagmire model" of the generation-long process of U.S. involvement, they do not point conclusively to an alternative. They do begin to suggest some answers to puzzles identified earlier, and it is time to draw these together.

What follows is a discussion of a particular "decision model"—in the form of "presidential decision rules in Vietnam crises"—that does, given actual perception and premises of Washington decision-makers, imply policy choices and executive performance conforming in considerable detail to those actually obtaining at major escalation points between 1950 and 1968. (Presidential decisions significantly escalating the nature of U.S. involvement have occurred, in fact, only in crisis situations of impending failure.) That is all I can say for it, at this point. I cannot prove, or even feel sure, that any particular President has actually seen his decision problem and constraints in just this way. Similar models but with different emphases can be equally consistent with the data; see, for example, Leslie Gelb's paper cited earlier. The same might be true for radically different approaches; however, none that I have seen or considered explains so well so many characteristics of the available data.

One of these characteristics happens to be the striking impression of the sameness of the bureaucratic debate, in substance, tone, and agency position, and of its relation to

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presidential choice, at decision points throughout the twenty-year period. This is in itself a surprising, if subjective, datum, given the differences in circumstances—e.g., the steadily rising level of prior U.S. involvement—and in the character of the several Presidents.

The obvious differences between administrations do not, after all, seem to have made much difference in Vietnam policy; at least, so far as concerns a determination to stay in Vietnam, to do what was necessary at any given time to avoid losing, and not, at that time, much more. (As Morton H. Halperin has pointed out, this does not mean that a permutation of the sequence of actual Presidents would have made no difference at all; for example, if Lyndon Johnson—or still more, Richard Nixon—had come earlier than he actually did, escalation might well have started sooner and gone further.) This sameness suggests that a single, perhaps complex, hypothesis might cover the whole set of decisions with more validity than a set of purely *ad hoc* explanations. (To this degree, one sympathizes with Schlesinger's approach.)

In any case, it appears that an appropriate abstraction of elements of the initial 1950 decision to intervene—despite the lack of major prior commitment or involvement—fits very well all the major subsequent decisions to escalate or to prolong the war, at least through 1968 and probably beyond.

We have already seen one presidential ruling at work both in 1950 and 1961: "This is a bad year for me to lose Vietnam to Communism." Along with some rules on constraints (see below), this amounts to a recursive formula for calculating presidential decisions on Vietnam realistically, given inputs on alternatives, anytime from 1950 on. The mix of motives behind this judgment can vary with circumstances and Presidents, but since 1950 a variety of domestic political considerations have virtually always been present. These have been sufficient underpinning in these years when (unlike, say, 1961) "strategic" concerns were not urgent.

In brief: A decade before what Schlesinger calls Kennedy's "low-level crisis" in South Vietnam, the right wing of the Republican Party tattooed on the skins of politicians and bureaucrats alike some vivid impressions of what could happen to a liberal administration that chanced to be in office the day a red flag rose over Saigon.

Starting in early 1950, the first administration to learn painfully this "lesson of China" began to undertake—as in a game of Old Maid—to pass that contingency on to its successor. And each administration since has found itself caught in the same game.

Rule 1 of that game is: "Do not lose the rest of Vietnam to Communist control before the next election."

But the rules do not end with that. There is also—ever since late 1950, when Chinese Communists entered Korea—Rule 2, which asserts among other things: "Do not commit U.S. ground troops to a land war in Asia, either."

Breaking Rule 2 (which has some further clauses) will not expose one to the charge of treason, but otherwise the political risks—loss of electoral support, loss of Congress, loss of legislative program, loss of reputation—are about the same. And many of the very same pursuers who would be howling and pointing at the scent of a violation of the first rule would be among the pack chasing a President who proposed to ignore the second.

It so happens that a factional attitude within Congress or the public of intense appreciation of U.S. stakes in a non-Communist Southeast Asia does not go with a willingness politically to support costly or

risky or domestically unpopular measures to protect those stakes. On the contrary, it tends to be coupled precisely with a determination to oppose and punish many such measures (in company with those who do not believe the stakes are all that important), because it is typically part of a philosophy asserting such efforts to be both unnecessary—to a patriotic and resolute administration willing to rely on Asian allies and the threat or use of U.S. airpower—and dangerous to the economy.

Suppose, then, an administration fears attack by or needs the support of the particular faction that holds these attitudes (which is suspected of being able to mobilize a much larger following on these issues in a crisis). What if the President is informed that he cannot avoid enraging that faction by losing part of Southeast Asia in the near future to Communist control, except by antagonizing other major groups (and perhaps it is well) by committing troops, or mobilizing reserves, or risking war with the Soviet Union or China?

In that case, the President is in a bind. The Indochina Bind.

That dilemma is all the more certain to recur because of some other politically-derived premises that constrict policy. One of the sacred beliefs, inherited from the late 1940s, that any U.S. official must appear to share (and probably does share) is that toleration of an overt Communist Party in a less-developed country, or a provisional or coalition government including Communists, must inevitably lead to total Communist domination. Any prospects of these developments, then, are proscribed under Rule 1.

But that means that acceptable U.S. long-run aims for South Vietnam must be quite ambitious: the total exclusion from national power of the Communist Party; the assurance indefinitely of a totally non-Communist regime.

These were internally-stated U.S. goals until at least 1969; lest they appear too ambitious or interventionist, they were rarely spelled out publicly, and the public position was ambiguous. It is not clear yet—and appears doubtful—whether recent changes in public formulae correspond to genuine operational changes in the outcomes perceived as "tolerable."

U.S. intelligence analyses have generally recognized that in the face of the actual strength of the Communist Party of Vietnam, such goals could not be achieved—without major U.S. involvement indefinitely—by the sort of narrow, conservative, foreign-oriented, anti-Communist, authoritarian regime (supported mainly by Catholics, the Army, bureaucrats, and the rich) that alone among Vietnamese political elements was willing to pursue such an aim. Hence, for the long-run goal of an acceptable outcome at an acceptable cost to the U.S., civilian analysts have regularly stressed "reform" and "broadening" of the Saigon regime.

But this runs into another sort of bind. For even proponents of those political changes admit that such a "broadened" government, or even U.S. pressures to achieve it or reduce the influence of the Army, would increase to some degree the risk in the short run of "instability"—coups, chaos, military weakening, governmental paralysis—and thus quick Communist take-over. Thus any measures—U.S. "leverage," political strategies, genuinely "revolutionary" social-political approaches, broad-based regimes—to achieve such long-run aims conflict directly with Rule 1, and perhaps with Rule 2 as well. The rules have always won out.

It follows that in those periods when major U.S. policy innovations have actually been determined, long-run success at acceptable cost, if attainable at all, has been perceived to depend either on U.S. military measures that involved high domestic risks—unless they were sure to be quickly successful,

which could not be guaranteed and which Presidents tend to doubt—or upon political strategies in Vietnam that posed the equally high domestic political risks of short-run instability and failure in Vietnam.

The standard resolution at such moments has been simply to turn away from long-run aims and the measures associated with them, to concentrate almost exclusively upon the aim of minimizing the short-run risk of non-Communist collapse or Communist take-overs. To this end the policy relies heavily on means that do not raise domestic apprehension and opposition, but it also includes those types of instruments "restricted" under Rule 2—their acceptability roughly in the order listed below—judged by the President minimally necessary to this short-run aim.

Rule 2 (extended): Do not, unless needed to satisfy Rule 1:

1. Bomb North Vietnam;
2. Commit U.S. combat troops to Vietnam;
3. Commit U.S. combat troops to Laos or Cambodia;
4. Mobilize reserves;
5. Destroy major cities in North Vietnam;
6. Institute wartime domestic controls;
7. Take major risks of war with Soviet China or Communist China;
8. Invade North Vietnam;
9. Use nuclear weapons.

Strong political inhibitions against initiating such "restricted" measures are revealed by the prolonged unwillingness of any administration to introduce any of them until needed to sustain Rule 1: i.e., to prevent defeat in Vietnam before the next election. The President himself must be persuaded that they are essential for that purpose; this is usually long after their use has been urged by others. Indeed, most of these measures have never yet been used. Although most of them have been considered or recommended at various times, often on the more-or-less plausible grounds that they were essential, or highly important, to achieving real "success." Presidents have not, in fact, been willing to adopt any one of them unless and until it was judged essential to avoiding short-run defeat: i.e. to restore a stalemate.

A general presidential tendency to preserve flexibility, or to focus on or value only short-run consequences, or to economize on means, could not explain the strength and specificity of these inhibitions. Nor have Presidents been strictly indifferent to longer-run prospects, or to the possibility of "victory." The chosen policy usually employs far more in the way of "nonrestricted" instruments than is needed merely to avoid defeat. These include: non-U.S. ground forces; commitments and assurances to allies, warnings to opponents; clandestine activities; economic and military aid; advisers; combat, logistic, mobility, and air support (even to allied invasion forces).

Moreover, once a "restricted item" is first used to avoid defeat, its use may be greatly expanded in pursuit of ultimate "success": thus, Johnson's use of U.S. ground troops in South Vietnam and bombing of "military targets" in North Vietnam and Laos, after they had been introduced in 1965 to avoid imminent defeat. Yet even in the optimistic mood of 1967 and despite the urgings of his military commanders that new means could bring a "win," Johnson resisted going further down the list—e.g., to drop all White House controls on the target list in North Vietnam, or to invade Laos or Cambodia, or mobilize reserves—in the absence of an urgent need to avert failure.

After March, 1968, de-escalation was subject to limits similar to those earlier for escalation; again, choices had the desired effect of avoiding short-run collapse, in this case, on the U.S. domestic front; in other

words, once more "buying time" rather than winning or losing; buying stalemate; prolonging the war.

Many of the paradoxical features of U.S. escalating decisions as seen from the inside—the "discrepancies" noted earlier between chosen policies, on the one hand, and internal predictions, recommendations and long-run aims on the other—can thus be seen to reflect conflict between domestic political requirements on outcomes and domestic political constraints on means.

A peculiar effect of a strong domestic political ingredient in policymaking is greatly to enhance the salience and importance of short-run considerations. There are always a legislative program and presidential appointments to get through Congress this year, and Congressional elections no later than next year, even when a presidential election is not close at hand.

It so happens that in Vietnam policy alternatives have not allowed a subtle adjustment of long-term and short-term considerations, which appear in sharp conflict. The President is challenged, in effect, to pursue one or the other. Thus, the long-run aim of a self-sufficient and relatively democratic South Vietnam not entirely dominated by Communists seems to demand an approach—e.g., a regime based on Southern, civilian, nationalist, and non-Catholic religious leadership, drawing peasant and union support—that poses relatively high risks in the short run of governmental collapse or of "accommodation" to Communists. To decide that short-run interests are very important is to bias policy almost entirely toward a short-run orientation: away from such approaches as that above, whatever their long-run merits, toward policies whose only advantages lie in their higher degree of U.S. control and security against short-run "disaster."

Thus, among the consequences of applying Rules 1 and 2 to policy choices, as officials have perceived the alternatives in Vietnam, are several of the patterns observed earlier:

1. Chosen policies appear from the inside as oriented almost exclusively to short-run considerations; evidently ignoring or trading off very large differences in predicted long-run costs, risks, benefits, and probability of success in pursuit of small reductions in the short-run risk (tacitly, of "losing" South Vietnam prior to the next election).

2. Chosen programs are predicted internally to be inadequate—or at best "long shots"—either to "win" or even to avert defeat in the long run (in contrast to public statements, and to some recommended policies that pose higher short-run domestic risks).

3. Actual policies emphasize predominantly military—rather than political—means, aims, considerations, and executive responsibility, on both the Vietnamese and Americans sides, for reasons of short-run security.

4. The U.S. supports—intervening as necessary to instate or maintain—a narrow-based, right-wing, anti-Communist, "pro-American," authoritarian (since 1963, essentially military) regime in Saigon, with heavy Northern and Catholic influence; despite its inability to win wider support for long-run self-sufficiency.

All of these features combine to give American policy its peculiar appearance, seen from inside, of being dedicated to preserving a stalemate, at ever-increasing levels of violence.

Moreover, at least three other characteristics of U.S. government performance, not discussed earlier, correspond to the implications of this decision model: lack of "leverage," lying, and self-deception. Let us examine these in turn.

The notable weakness of U.S. influence on

the policies, either political or military, of its principal ally—first the French and then the GVN—despite near-total dependence of the ally on U.S. support to pursue the war, follows directly from the U.S. political imperatives.

Rules 1 and 2 together led us, from 1950 to 1966, to accept the role continuously of adviser and supporter to another government carrying the responsibility for administration and fighting—even when our limited role seemed to risk imminent defeat of the non-Communist efforts. From time to time in those fifteen years, administration leaders would point out publicly of the ally we were supporting: "It is, after all, *their* fight." But these officials' private perceptions would have been better expressed: "In view of our strategic (and domestic political) interests, it is *our* fight all right, but they have got to fight it for us; because if they don't, we might have to, and that would be nearly as bad as losing."

Given the domestic political constraints embodied in Rule 1, U.S. leaders saw the avoidance of Communist take-over of all of Vietnam as of very considerable importance, both internationally and domestically. Yet for the same reasons as reflected in Rule 2, they had to hope urgently they could induce others to do the fighting, and take the responsibility for the failures and the casualties, leaving us only with the burden of dollars, material, and advice.

This "bargain"—first with the French, then with the GVN—has always seemed in danger of breaking down, facing the current administration with the loss of South Vietnam or with a necessity to take over the combat ourselves. Hence, our officials rarely felt they could afford to strain the bargain by "pressuring" our ally into fighting better or differently, or into taking political measures to which it was, in fact, adamantly opposed, even when we suspected that such changes were critical to success. In effect the U.S. had no leverage to use, despite the intelligence perception that the military-political challenge of the Communist-led forces would almost surely grow, and the ability of the ally (French, then the GVN/RVNAF) to meet it would decline, unless these changes did occur.

Meanwhile, as an essential part of the bargain with our ally—serving to keep it in power, fighting—high U.S. officials provided verbal and symbolic encouragement and evidence of U.S. concern and commitment. This came "cheap" in terms of current demands on the U.S. public. But it was making ever more certain the provision of U.S. combat forces if that became essential to holding Vietnam.

To convince the GVN (and its Vietnamese critics and rivals)—in lieu of sending U.S. troops immediately—that we would do "whatever necessary" to support them, the administration had to say so publicly, and to assert that major U.S. interests were at stake; likewise, to warn Hanoi's leaders and deter them from pressure.

On the other hand, to get sizeable enough sums of money out of Congress, these officials had to say, again, that major U.S. interests were at stake, implying that even major commitments would be justified; but at the same time suggest that there was very little likelihood that these programs would lead to U.S. combat involvement. The only way in which these requirements could be harmonized was to profess, at any given time, great optimism for the results of the GVN's performance if the U.S. aid were sent (combined with pessimism, and the prospects of major losses for the U.S. if it were not).

Here, then, is the explanation for the news management recounted earlier. Deceptive games with Congress and public are played for serious stakes. The President's resolution of the conflicting demands and constraints upon him called for suppressing any indications of possible inadequacy of the programs

he proposed. The penalty for frankness could be to ally against his programs those who might conclude these were not worth attempting at all, and those who would condemn him for not doing much more. Yet the latter could be expected to oppose him if he did ask and do much more, unless he won quickly, which he did not expect; and the former would desert him if he took their advice, and lost Vietnam. Honesty, it appeared, would only earn him opposition whatever he did, and sooner than otherwise.

But in this case, internal analyses, estimates, reports, planning, recommendations, all indicated that in a whole variety of ways these programs were inadequate. Thus all these documents and opinions had to be concealed, by secrecy and deception.

In short, the public is lied to; about what the President's decision is, what advice he rejects, what he was told to expect, what he foresees and intends for the future.

When he decides to go slow and small, as in November 1961, the fact that much more was considered and recommended is suppressed lest doubts be raised on the meaningfulness of the program. James Reston's remark at the outset of the Taylor mission that Taylor was not a man who would "blithely" recommend committing U.S. combat units to a jungle war was presumably right; likewise Taylor's own comment that "any American" would be reluctant to do so "unless absolutely necessary." Nevertheless, that is what Taylor did recommend. The fact that he did so, therefore, carried an important message about the seriousness of the situation, and the prospects of the lesser course the President chose. To suppress the fact of this recommendation, as the President chose to do, was to conceal this information. And for officials to lie to reporters about Taylor's views—which were shared by Rostow and the JCS, and initially at least by McNamara and Gilpatric—was to convey the opposite, untrue impression.

By the same token, when a President finally decided to go in big, the schedule and total commitment were concealed, with increments—actually programmed in advance—being announced as if based on a sequence of *ad hoc* decisions on "small steps," lest public fears be aroused on the costs of the program, and the ultimate risks and commitment. This was the nature of the "public information" program associated with the early bombing campaign against North Vietnam, the build-up of troop levels to 75,000 in the spring of 1965, and the open-ended build-up of troops to 175,000 and beyond, determined in July 1965 (the latter after an announcement of mobilization had been tentatively decided on and drafted—by me, for one—then abandoned).

One pertinent effect of this information policy was that it considerably distorted the public view, then and later, of what the President thought he was getting us into, what he thought of the chances and the relevant goals, and just what was in the inner pages of the contracts Congress and the public were being asked, implicitly, to sign.

From such a mistaken understanding of this and the other choices, bad predictions and prescriptions must follow. It leads to wrong questions and wrong inferences about presidential motives, and about what changes in his calculations and in the pressures on him might influence his choices. It could lead, for example, to the inference that "the only thing we have to fear is (presidential) hope": when, in truth, unrealistic presidential hopes were not a prominent factor in any major decisions to press onward.

Thus those who keep secret the past condemn us to repeat it.

Footnotes at end of article.

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ESCALATION, PHASE B: THE QUAGMIRE MACHINE

Both of the deceptive practices noted above bear on the question: Why is the quagmire model, flawed as it is, so plausible to the public eye?

Part of the answer is that Presidents choose to foster to a misleading degree impressions that their Vietnam decision-making is subject to a "quick-and-process." They do this despite a number of unfavorable implications: "inadvertence"; ignorance; inattention; lack of Presidential control; lack of realistic planning; lack of expertise; over-ambitious aims for means used; over-optimistic expectations. They choose to encourage, ultimately, these particular criticisms because either a different substantive policy or a more accurate public understanding of their actual policy seems to them to pose even greater disadvantages and risks.

All very calculated, this. But, it turns out, this posture of secrecy and deception toward Congress and the public, maintained over time, takes its internal toll. Ironically, one price is that all of the above imputed flaws and limitations increasingly do characterize the executive decision-making process. And for a number of reasons, as the chosen policy begins to be implemented, internal operational reporting, program analyses, and high-level expectations do gradually drift in the direction of the public optimism expressed constantly from the outset.

Thus real hopes—ill-founded hopes—follow hard upon the crisis choices, eventually replacing phony and invalid optimism with genuine invalid optimism.

Again, the aftermath of the November 1961 decision is typical. Schlesinger reports it well: the striking move to optimism in official expectations in 1962, a reversal which the public misread as vindication of earlier estimates.⁴ U.S. combat troops, it was now appearing, had not been "essential" after all. (If the President had, indeed, suspected that earlier, he was the only one who seemed vindicated.) But no recriminations blossomed in this atmosphere; only mutual congratulations that the long shot was paying off.

Roger Hilsman reports a meeting in Honolulu in April, 1963, at which,

"General Harkins gave us all the facts and figures—the number of strategic hamlets established, number of Viet Cong killed, operations initiated by government forces, and so on. He could not, of course, he said, give any guarantees, but he thought he could say that by Christmas it would be all over. The Secretary of Defense was elated. He reminded me that I had attended one of the very first of these meetings, when it had all looked so black—and that had been only a year and a half ago."⁵

Why the fast turn-around? For several reasons, none peculiar to this case. First, the new programs had been accompanied by new officials directed to carry them to success. Ignorant of past estimates and current realities in Vietnam, they had no strong reason to assume that the tasks they had been given were infeasible with the means at hand. And they quickly learned that Washington tended to rely on reporting up through the chain of operational command; which is to say, their performance in their jobs would be evaluated by their own reports of "progress" in their respective fields. As an American division commander told one of his district advisers, who insisted on reporting the persistent presence of unpacified VC hamlets in his area: "Son, you're writing our own report card in this country. Why are you falling us?"

Even when this did not lead to conscious dishonesty at the higher levels in Saigon, it created a bias toward accepting and reporting favorable information from subordinates

and Vietnamese "counterparts," neither of whom failed to notice.

Thus, it was more mechanism than coincidence that in 1962 and early 1963,

"The strategy of unconditional support of Diem combined with the military adviser system seemed to be working—or so at least the senior American officials in Saigon assured the President."⁶

Such assurances said nothing more nor less than that the two officials themselves were "working"—succeeding—in the precise two programs they had been sent by Kennedy respectively to manage.

"Ngo Dinh Nhu made the strategic hamlet program his personal project and published glowing reports of spectacular success. One might have wondered, whether Nhu was just the man to mobilize the idealism of the villages; but Ambassador Nolting and General Harkins listened uncritically to his claims and passed them back to Washington as facts, where they were read with elation."⁷

One might also have wondered—but no one even seemed to—whether Nhu was just the man uniquely to report upon "his personal project"; or whether Nolting was just the man to report the effects and value of reassuring Diem and Nhu, or Harkins the success of the military adviser system, their own respective personal projects.

But to emphasize exclusively subordinate bureaucratic influences in this process of internal self-deception would be greatly to underrate the impact of the President himself, and of his high-level appointees. They, too, like Nolting, Harkins, or Nhu, had their "personal projects," larger ones, on which they reported to those who controlled their budgets and their tenure: Congress and the public. And they too, thanks to the security system and executive privilege, "wrote their own report cards"; with a little help from their subordinates.

Precisely as at lower levels, but with enormously broader impact, the needs of the President and the Secretaries of State and Defense to use "information" to reassure Congress and the public had its effect on the internal flow of information up to the President. Reports and analyses that supported the administration's public position and could be released or leaked to that end were "helpful" and welcome, while "pessimism" was at best painful, less "useful," if not even dangerous to have down on paper. Executive values like these (vastly sharpened in 1966-1968, when skeptics and critics were louder and had to be refuted) translate into powerful incentives at lower levels to give the Chief what he so obviously wants.

Thus—granted human wishfulness, as well as a factor at all levels—pessimism regarding an ongoing policy is a fragile, unstable phenomenon within the government. Ironically, even the VC and the GVN (earlier, the Viet Minh and French) played their role, too, in providing indicators of allied "progress" and intervals when things "seemed to be working." In 1951, 1956, 1962, and 1965, bureaucratic pressures toward optimism were catalyzed by actual effects of the new programs on allies and opponents in the desired direction. But "in the field" these effects proved very temporary, whereas our reading of them did not. As Kennedy had predicted, the effects of a "small drink" on friend and opponent faded quickly. What he may not fully have foreseen was the far more lasting afterglow in our own system.

In each case, the aftermath of escalation was an increased emphasis on military factors, and an accompanying alteration of mood from pessimism to great optimism. Thus, when U.S. combat units flooded into Vietnam from 1965 on, the pessimism of later 1964 gave way increasingly to buoyant hopes, by 1967, of an essentially military victory. But this had had its counterpart as early as 1951, after U.S. materiel and Ameri-

can liaison teams had made their way to Tonkin to join a failing French effort.⁸

THE QUAGMIRE MYTH AND THE STALEMATE MACHINE

Meanwhile, the Viet Minh, and later the VC, had a characteristic response to a new U.S.-GVN strategy or a scaling-up of our involvement that further encouraged our switch to unbounded optimism. After suffering initial setbacks, it has been their practice to lie low for an extended period, gather data, analyze experience, develop and test new adapted strategies, then plan and prepare carefully before launching them. (Nothing, our Vietnam experience tells us, could be more un-American.)

Since so great a part of U.S. and GVN knowledge of enemy activities comes from operational contacts, there seems to be an irresistible tendency for U.S. operators to believe that data concerning contacts reveals enemy capabilities, i.e., that lessened VC combat operations indicate lessened capability. Another mechanism, then: U.S. optimism grows during VC "inactivity"—periods when VC activities are of a sort we do not observe—reaching a peak, ironically, when extreme VC quiescence is due to intense preparations for an explosion.

Crisis periods, then, are typically preceded by high points in U.S. official expectations. Thus, peaks of U.S. optimism occurred in late 1953 (just before Dien Bien Phu), 1958 (when guerrilla warfare was about to recommence), early 1963 (the VC had been studying the vulnerabilities of the strategic hamlet program, and meanwhile infiltrating massively), and late 1967 (during last-minute recruiting and preparations for the Tet offensive, including feints at the borders).

If a fever chart of U.S. expectations—say, anticipations of success—could be drawn meaningfully for the last twenty years, it would have a recurrent saw-tooth shape: an accelerating rise of optimism just before an abrupt decline (Figure I is a conceptual sketch of such a graph). Our perceptual and emotional experience in Vietnam can be regarded as a sequence of two-phase cycles, in which Phase B—optimism—evolves causally in large part from decisions that follow Phase A, a crisis period of pessimism.

(The B-phases in Figure I have been drawn with a reverse S-shape, signifying three sub-phases: an initial period in which the VC suffer real reverses and the GVN stabilizes on the basis of new programs; then a period in which, in reality, the VC have adapted and the GVN is declining, but U.S. expectations remain at a plateau rather than being reduced; finally, the VC begin quietly preparing for a major offensive, causing U.S. hopes to soar.)

If major escalating decisions qualitatively increasing our involvement had actually been made during Phase B's, that would be the quagmire model. It has never been the case.

However, during the B-phases, although no new major policies or commitments are introduced, U.S. aims may change significantly in the atmosphere of optimism, especially in the last stage, going beyond the avoidance of defeat—dominant aim in Phase A and the early Phase B stage—to achieving a victory. At the same time, real optimism leads officials to be much less cautious in public aims and predictions; to give commanders more leeway; to monitor operations less closely; and to indulge in operations that are costly (in many terms) and of low effectiveness but may speed the coming win. All of these responses lead to toleration of rapidly rising costs, and hence to a feeling, when a new crisis brings the return of Phase A, that the stakes, the investment, the commitment have become still higher than before, the need to avoid "defeat" being now even greater.

Nevertheless, this post-escalation euphoria, or "quagmire phase" of the cycle seems to

Footnotes at end of article.

play no essential role in the escalation process. It simply reinforces the presidential tendency to escalate if and as necessary to avoid a short-run "defeat" or "loss of all Vietnam to Communists." As Leslie Gelb has put it: "Each administration was prepared to pay the costs it could foresee for itself." Political, along with strategic, motives underlying that tendency were already strong enough in 1850 to induce the initial U.S. commitment without any prior or current period of American optimism. And they almost surely were felt strongly enough in subsequent years to have induced much greater escalation than occurred if that had appeared both necessary and effective in the short run.

Consciously oriented as escalating decisions actually were, when chosen, to the defensive aim of averting short-run Communist take-over, each of these decisions of the past two decades can be said to have achieved its initial, internal aim.

In Gelb's phrase: "The system worked." In fact, these presidential policies and tactics, in sequence, had the effect of holding South Vietnam out of Communist hands "cheaply"—i.e., without sizeable numbers of U.S. combat troops—for fifteen years, from 1950 to 1965.

Whether efforts and sacrifices, by Americans and Vietnamese, of even these limited but increasing magnitudes could easily have been justified to various parts of the electorate in terms of such limits aims—in starkest terms, the restoration of stalemate, and the postponement of a possible Communist take-over in Vietnam beyond the date of the next U.S. election—is another question. No administration chose to find out. To publicize more idealistic or strategically decisive goals, as they all did, was to forego credit for meeting successfully the limited short-run objectives that each—it is inferred here—privately accepted. More seriously, it was to incur the likelihood of suffering an appearance of recurrent failure of programs to meet their announced aims, and failure of administration predictions or "hopes" to be confirmed. But these impressions of failure, however embarrassing politically, each administration since 1950 has preferred either to the risks of candor on its private aims and expectations or to the risks of accepting the "loss of Vietnam" during or soon after its term in office.

In these respects, too, the policies "worked." Until 1968, at least, each President avoided the kinds of political costs related to Vietnam that his tactics were meant to avert. In fact, up to the present, no President has had to face a political penalty for losing South Vietnam. Not even LBJ will be blamed in history for that, although he is blamed for other things.

Yet the earlier "cheap victories," year by year from 1950 to 1965, were purchased at a long-term price, one not yet paid in full. Presidential policies and tactics actively sustained and encouraged over that period a high estimate of U.S. strategic stakes in the conflict within the U.S. executive branch and the military, the Congress, and the public. Meanwhile they failed—as was highly likely, in the light of earlier internal estimates—either to strengthen adequately non-Communist Vietnamese efforts; to modify Communist aims; to deter or prevent an increase in Communist capabilities; or, of course, to induce the acceptance by Hanoi's leaders or revolutionary forces in South Vietnam of the U.S. role, presence, or aims in South Vietnam, or of the U.S.-supported Saigon regime.

Thus these presidential policies and tactics locked together with these other factors to produce, from the perspective of most of that fifteen-year period, a high probability that U.S. troops would end up fighting in South Vietnam, and U.S. planes bombing throughout Indochina; i.e., high probabilities that they would be sent if necessary; and that they would be necessary.

This is the future that three U.S. Presidents failed to resist: indeed, knowingly cooperated with and prepared. Not, of course, that any President liked, wanted, or hoped for the darker developments that actually emerged—the deaths, the costs, the disruptions—only that they preferred the risk of these, and later the certainty, to certain, other prospects they saw as alternatives. Thus the first three Presidents determined the reality of large-scale war that the next two accepted and sustained. That is a generation of Presidents: all the Presidents within the lifetime of a recent college graduate.

Will the tradition end with the current President? How many more could it encompass? Nothing in the generalizations we have abstracted in this paper from experience of the last two decades gives a clear hint of a definite breaking-point, or a foreseeable change in basic motives and values either for the Communist-led forces or the U.S. government. On its face, that is simply a limitation of the analysis, a characteristic—perhaps a defect—of the model suggested.

Or perhaps it is a property of reality. If so, it is a human and political reality, and humans can, in principle, change it. But change would not be easy. Rule 1 has deep roots in politicians' fears and motives, and in public responses, that have been powerfully influential for twenty years, through some hard times and challenges. There is little indication yet that it will not speak commandingly to Presidents after this one. (Of its authority for the present one, there can be no real doubt.)⁵³

Improved Presidential foresight—even the awareness that might be attained from this analysis—would not probably supersede Rule 1. If anything, it might serve to relax the constraining influence of Rule 2.

In the spring of 1965 President Johnson is reported to have received calls almost daily from one of his closest advisors telling him (what no one had to tell him): "Lyndon, don't be the first American President to lose a war."

It is true that such advisors omitted warnings of other deadly errors. They neglected to caution him: "Don't, over more than one or two years, lie to the public; or mislead and bypass Congress; or draft and spend and kill and suffer casualties at the rate your military will propose; or abort negotiations; or, even once, allow your generals to describe the enemy as defeated on the eve of their major offensive."⁵⁴

But if they had, and if he had seen the cogency of their warning: Would he then have decided to lose the war? Or would he, mindful of the time constraints, have acted to win it within them?

The same question applies to earlier presidents; and later.

THE RACES OF THE QUAGMIRE

Why is the quagmire model so often pressed? And why is it so widely accepted?

Looking at where their policies and tactics have brought us so far, it is easy to understand why the past four Presidents would want, before and after, to conceal and deprecate their own foreknowledge and intentions.⁵⁵ And it is no harder to guess why—perhaps unconsciously—participant-observers of one of these administrations or another have promoted the same interpretation of foresight and purpose, values and priorities, influence and responsibility, respecting their past colleagues within and outside government. Indeed, they make no secret of the conclusion they wish to convey by the quagmire metaphor and model concerning the responsibility of individuals and groups.

Thus, Townsend Hoopes, acutely and perceptively critical of the policies under Johnson and earlier Presidents, extends what Richard Falk has called "the circle of responsibility" widely indeed, in explicit purpose to

relieve the burden of those seemingly at its center. Traumatized by a lunch with two reporters from the *Village Voice* who suggested that he himself, as Assistant Secretary of the Air Force under Johnson, might have been guilty of war crimes (his subsequent article was titled: "The War Criminals Hedge Their Bets"), Hoopes has published several rejoinders and discussions of the problem of responsibility. In the first of these, after describing his chief concern in the disturbing luncheon conversation as having been "The broad question of how the entire nation had stumbled down the long slippery slope of self-delusion into the engulfing morass," Hoopes concludes:

"The tragic story of Vietnam is not, in truth, a tale of malevolent men bent upon conquest for personal gain or imperial glory. It is the story of an entire generation of leaders (and an entire generation of followers). . . . [Johnson's] principal advisers were, almost uniformly, those considered when they took office to be among the ablest, the best, the most humane and liberal men that could be found for public trust. No one doubted their honest, high-minded pursuit of the best interests of their country, and indeed of the whole non-communist world, as they perceived those interests."⁵⁶

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., less generous in his appreciation of some civilian Johnson lieutenants, is no less reluctant to single them or their Chief out as "guilty" in any special way for their role in our vast national undertaking. In the "quagmire" (literally, "morass") passage so often cited in this paper, he asserts:

"It is not only idle but unfair to seek out guilty men. . . . we find ourselves entrapped today in . . . a war which no President, including President Johnson, desired or intended. The Vietnam story is a tragedy without villains. No thoughtful American can withhold sympathy as President Johnson ponders the gloomy choices which lie ahead."⁵⁷

One can read some of these passages as reflections of the sentiment Hoopes expresses: "What the country needs is not retribution, but therapy. . . ." (It is just possible that both are needed, at this point, in the interests of our country and of others.) He completes the sentence, plausibly, "therapy in the form of deeper understanding of our problems and of each other"; but in all of these passages and the larger arguments in which they are embedded, one senses that the drive for sympathetic therapy is setting back the cause of understanding.

Both the substance of the tentative conclusions in this paper, and my experience of the heuristic process that gradually pointed toward them, warn that a deeper analytical understanding of these well-guarded data and controverted events will not be likely to be reached by a searcher committed and determined to see the conflict and our part in it as "a tragedy without villains": war crimes without criminals, lies without liars, a process of immaculate deception.

The urge in these former officials to defend American institutions and legitimate authority (and surely some former administration leaders and colleagues, if not themselves) from the most extreme charges and sanctions ("Lyndon Johnson, though disturbingly volatile," Hoopes remarks, "was not in his worst moments an evil man in the Hitlerian sense") leads them as analysts to espouse and promulgate a view of process, roles, and motives that is grossly mistaken—as should be known to them from their own experience and access to information as officials.

Thus, an effort to defend against perceptuous or charges of "immorality," in alleged pursuit of "objective judgment," leads in this case to historical and analytical error. And it has political consequences: It underwrites deceptions that have served importantly a succession of Presidents to maintain sup-

⁵³Footnotes at end of article.

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port for their substantive policies of intervention in Vietnam.

Of course, to promulgate a view is not necessarily to have it accepted. But this one has a powerful appeal. Earlier we asked, "Why is the quicksand model accepted by so many?" and offered some cognitive answers. But we can suspect that an image speaks to deeper, more emotional concerns when it is presented regularly in the broad strokes of political cartoons in mass-circulation newspapers. That is what happened on the nation's editorial pages during the Cambodian invasion.

That week, while photographs on the front page showed unwonted images of blitzkrieg—tanks in formation driving across fields trailing plumes of dust, and locust swarms of American armed helicopters moving across, new borders—and while reporters offered verbal pictures of the Cambodian village of Snuol being destroyed and looted, the drawings on the editorial pages were of Uncle Sam and GI Joe engulfed, bemused, floundering from a swamp marked "Vietnam" to one marked "Cambodia." Images, curiously, of impotence, passivity: Ironically contrasting both with the news and the photographs of what Americans in southeast Asia were actually doing and with the President's announced intent to expunge notions of America as a "pitiful, helpless giant."

One cartoon, reproduced in *Time*, left the quagmire symbol to show the "U.S. citizen" in tatters on a raft, confronting three enormous, wide-mouthed whales, labeled: "Vietnam," "Cambodia," and "Laos."

Whales?

The imagery, pressed too far, reveals its key. The scale, and the menace, have simply been reversed. The actual role of America and Americans in and toward Indochina is distorted, to a staggering degree, in the very process of suggesting that it be reconsidered.

Looking back to the quicksand cartoons, one sees their self-pity, their preoccupation with Uncle Sam's predicament, and one finally asks: Where are the Asians? Where are the Cambodians, the Lao, the Vietnamese in these drawings?

Presumably—there is no other sign—they are the particles of the bog, bits of the porridge quagmire that has seized GI Joe and will not free him. . . .

It is not, after all, only Presidents and Cabinet members who have a powerful need and reason to deny their responsibility for this war. And who succeed at it. Just as Presidents and their partisans find comfort and political safety in the quicksand image of the *President-as-victim*, so Americans at large are reassured in sudden moments of doubt by the same image drawn large, *America-as-victim*. It is no more real than the first, and neither national understanding nor extrication truly lie that way.

To understand the process as it emerges in the documents behind public statements, the concerns never written that moved decisions, the history scratched on the minds of bureaucrats: to translate that understanding into images that can guide actions close-related to reality, one must begin by seeing that it is Americans, our leaders and ourselves, that build the bog, a trap much more for other victims: our policies, our politics the quagmire in which Indochina drowns.

FOOTNOTES

* This article is part of a larger study of "mechanisms" and perceptions that have shaped American involvement in Indochina, now in progress at the Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. My particular debt to Leslie Gelb is acknowledged below (see footnote 28). I have also benefitted greatly by discussions with Morton Halperin and Richard Mooresteen.

An earlier and longer version of this paper, entitled "Escalating in a Quagmire," was delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Ameri-

can Political Science Association, Los Angeles, September 12, 1970. This abridgement does not fully reflect the many valuable comments elicited by a wide informal distribution of that version.

¹ Lucien Bodard, *The Quicksand War: Prelude to Vietnam* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), which combines, somewhat abridged, translations of *L'Enlèvement* (Paris, 1963) and its sequel, *L'Humiliation* (Paris, 1965).

² David Halberstam, *The Making of a Quagmire* (New York: Random House, 1964).

³ Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Bitter Heritage* (rev. ed.; New York: Fawcett World, 1968), p. 47.

⁴ The assertions and speculations below on U.S. decision-making reflect the writer's experience as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), August 1964 to August 1965; member of General Lansdale's Senior Liaison Office in Vietnam, August 1965 to December 1966; Special Assistant to the Deputy Ambassador, Saigon, December 1966 to June 1967; and research since that time, in part as a consultant, with official access. All of these functions posed the responsibility and opportunity to learn data on earlier decision-making. Unsatisfactory as it is to present generalizations and assertions without specific citation, it seems less so than either to rely entirely on the public record or to pretend to do so, to forego generalizations or to subscribe to wrong ones.

⁵ Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 39; italics added.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17; italics added. It is only because this statement of a familiar point of view is so explicit, and because his own factual testimony is critical to refuting it, that Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.—who has elsewhere said many cogent and useful things about our Vietnam involvement—is so often cited in this paper in such a way as to appear inadvertently as a whipping boy.

⁷ See Schlesinger's accurate description of the exuberant mood in that year, going into 1963: *op. cit.*, pp. 41, 42; and see the discussion below of the causal mechanisms by which optimism follows from escalation.

⁸ The same is true of a more recent formulation by Schlesinger, which focuses specifically on military promises and responsibility. "At every stage of our descent into the quagmire, the military have played the dominant role. . . . At each point along the ghastly way, the generals promised that just one more step of military escalation would bring the victory so long sought and so steadily denied." See *Partisan Review*, XXXVII (No. 4, 1970), 517.

⁹ *New York Times* (October 16, 1961; story datelined October 15). All newspaper stories cited in this section are from the *New York Times*; dates are dates of publication of stories (generally datelined a day earlier). All italics added.

¹⁰ *New York Times* (October 26, 1961).

¹¹ As we shall see, he had recommended it formally by cable two days earlier, to no one's very great surprise.

¹² Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 39; italics added.

¹³ Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966; page references here are to the paperback edition, New York: Fawcett World, 1967), p. 504.

¹⁴ Theodore Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 653.

¹⁵ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, *op. cit.* p. 501.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 505.

¹⁸ W. W. Rostow, "Guerrilla Warfare in Underdeveloped Areas," in T. N. Greene (ed.), *The Guerrilla—And How to Fight Him* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 60.

¹⁹ Letter from President Johnson to Senator Henry M. Jackson, quoting the "Taylor Report," *New York Times* (March 3, 1967); cited in Chester L. Cooper, *The Lost Crusade* (New York, 1970).

²⁰ Sorensen, *op. cit.*, p. 652.

²¹ It is not clear that this was true of Rusk at this time.

²² Sorensen, *op. cit.*, p. 653.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 652.

²⁴ Schlesinger, *The Bitter Heritage*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Leslie H. Gelb, "Vietnam: The System Worked," revised version of a paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Los Angeles, September 1970, to be published in a forthcoming issue of *Foreign Policy*.

I am happy to acknowledge great stimulation from discussions with Gelb—now at the Brookings Institution, formerly an acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)—whose studies of the earlier periods preceded my own and who in particular pointed out that the propositions emerging from my study of 1961 and my experience in 1964-1965 applied as well to decisions going back to the 1940s and 1950s.

²⁷ This is what Hillsman claim Kennedy did with the proposal to send combat forces in 1961. "In an interesting example of one type of gambit in the politics of Washington policy-making, the President avoided a direct 'no' to the proposal for introducing troops." See Roger Hillsman, *To Move a Nation* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), p. 124. Such a tactic could account for the success of efforts to keep secret the Taylor/JCS recommendations to send troops. The hope of still persuading the President would discourage leaks among proponents of the measure.

²⁸ Norman Graebner, *The New Isolationism* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956), p. 45.

²⁹ Arthur H. Vandenberg, Jr. (ed.), *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), p. 536.

³⁰ *Congressional Record—House*, (January 25, 1919), pp. 532, 533.

³¹ Graebner, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

³² Alan D. Harper, *The Politics of Loyalty* (Westport: Greenwood, 1969), p. 133.

³³ Graebner, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

³⁴ *United States Relations with China, with Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1949), p. xvi.

³⁵ Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (New York: Norton, 1969), p. 303.

³⁶ Vandenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 532; italics in original.

³⁷ See Harper, *op. cit.*, chaps. 5 and 9; and Graebner, *op. cit.*, chaps. 3 and 5.

³⁸ In addition to those cited, see in particular Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1944-50* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); H. Bradford Westerfield, *Foreign Policy and Party Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955); and Earl Latham, *The Community Controversy in Washington* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966). And look again at the 1949 quotation presented earlier from John F. Kennedy.

³⁹ This last evaluation—unchallengeable bureaucratically by prudent rules of the game since 1950—leads directly to the logic of the Desperate Proposal Pattern. To avoid an "intolerable" (infinitely negative) outcome, any measure with some chance of success is justified, no matter how low its probability of success, or how high its cost and risks. Hence no need to report or even calculate the latter characteristics: enough to say that, unlike current policy, the one proposed is not certain to fail.

⁴⁰ Acheson, *op. cit.*, p. 350; italics added.

⁴¹ Westerfield, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

⁴² "LBJ and the Kennedys," *Life* (August 7, 1970). Mansfield was subsequently quoted in interviews as confirming in substance.

⁴³ Derek Shearer, "Kissinger Road Show: An Evening with Henry," *The Nation* (March 8, 1971), 297, reporting on an off-the-record meeting with Kissinger at Endicott House, January 29, 1971. The quotation is accurate, although the political judgment seems highly dubious. It was for this reason, Kissinger

explained, that the pace of "withdrawal" had been slow, although "We are ending the war . . . the war is trending down, and it will continue to trend down. . . ." (Unknown to his audience because of a news embargo, the bombing of Laos had been stepped up that evening to a near-record level, preparatory to invasion.)

¹⁰ Sorensen, *op. cit.*, p. 664; Italics added.

¹¹ According to his White House Chief of Staff, O'Donnell.

¹² This lesson was implanted so powerfully between 1949 and 1954 that some special circumstance of that period, limiting its future validity, may well have been overlooked. Thus, Truman's startling victory in 1948, prolonging almost by accident what was already a sixteen-year Democratic reign, not only assured that Democrats would still be in office for the fast-approaching victory of Communists in China, but assured that this vulnerability would be exploited to the hilt, and beyond, by the madly frustrated Republicans. For a provocative discussion of this thesis, see Latham, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7, 416-423.

¹³ Fear of McCarthy's and McCarthyism's power at the polls may always have been overdrawn, even in 1950-52, and still more so today. See Michael Paul Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy*, (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1967). Yet what matters, of course, is what Congressmen and officials believe their risks to be, and what risks they are willing to take. (See the citation of Kissinger earlier.)

¹⁴ To my knowledge, no other paper challenged the *Times*, or the administration, on these versions of Taylor's advice. Nor did any different version appear until the appearance in 1965 of the Schlesinger and Sorensen histories, neither of which drew attention to the fact that they directly contradicted all newspaper stories of the time and subsequent accounts. See, for example, the comments in Robert Shaplen, *The Lost Revolution* (rev. ed.: New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 153, 154; or in David Halberstam, *op. cit.*, p. 67: "Above all else, Taylor wanted to keep American combat troops out of the Vietnamese jungles."

¹⁵ So much for the belief, widely held in some circles and encouraged by the government, that "everything comes out in the *New York Times*. . . . There are no real secrets," and that the *Times* is an adequate basis for understanding an ongoing or past decision-making process within the Executive Branch.

¹⁶ See Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, *op. cit.*, p. 508, and *The Bitter Heritage*, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 12.

¹⁷ Hibsman, *op. cit.*, pp. 166, 167; Italics added.

¹⁸ Schlesinger, *The Bitter Heritage*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ See Senator John F. Kennedy's speech in 1951, cited in Schlesinger, *The Bitter Heritage*, *op. cit.*, p. 27, on official optimism underlying a Truman-Eisenhower "credibility gap" in Indochina.

²¹ The discussion has gone only through 1968; no attempt is made here to apply the conjectures and generalizations of this paper to the statements and actions of the current administration. That is left as an exercise to the reader.

²² Nothing in the past attitudes and history of the current President, or any of his public statements or official actions so far in office suggests in any way that these generalizations should be less applicable to him than to any of his predecessors; thus this extrapolation should be a fair test. One might, for example, address the question: Which year between now and 1977 might Richard Milhous Nixon consider an acceptable one, for him, to lose South Vietnam to Communist control?

²³ For my own views, see my article, "Murder

in Laos: The Reason Why," *New York Review of Books* (March 11, 1971), 13-17: "Like Kennedy and Johnson before him, Richard Nixon believes he cannot hold the White House for a second term unless he holds Saigon through his fist."

²⁴ No advisor is perfect. There are things Presidents have to learn for themselves. One supposes no one told President Nixon before the event: "Don't condone the shooting of white students by National Guardsmen just after crossing a national border with troops without consulting Congress, the public, or the country invaded."

²⁵ No event, and no presidential decision, of course, occurred because it "had" to, in any sense of certainty or absolute determinism. What does? On the other hand, in every major case, from the perspective of existing inside knowledge and opinion years earlier, what actually occurred in the way of presidential decision and of resulting developments in Vietnam would have seemed the way to bet.

²⁶ Townsend Hoopes, "The Nuremberg Suggestion," *Washington Monthly* (December 1969), italics added; reprinted, with reply, in "The Hoopes Defense," by Judith Coburn and Geoffrey Cowan (authors of the original article referred to above, *Village Voice*, December 4, 1969), *Village Voice* (January 29, 1970). See also the cogent comment by lawyer Peter Weiss (with reply by Hoopes), *Washington Monthly* (June 1970, 1-8).

²⁷ In none of his comments (nor in his later *Foreign Affairs* article, "Legacy of the Cold War in Indochina" July 1970) does Hoopes dissent from this earlier general evaluation of the aims and values of the Johnson advisors, although it would seem fair to re-examine these on the basis of their official performance as it becomes increasingly known; and on their sense of social responsibility for events, shown after leaving office.

²⁸ Schlesinger, *The Bitter Heritage*, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 18; italics added. Schlesinger's more recent comments, quoted earlier—"At every stage of our descent into the quagmire, the military have played the dominant role. . . . At each point along the ghastly way, the generals promised. . . .—do, of course, add villains to the tragedy, although not civilian ones. If he no longer thinks it idle to seek out guilty men, he has nevertheless managed to be unfair."

TRANSCRIPT OF ELLSBERG INTERVIEW ON TV

Following is the transcript of an interview with Dr. Daniel Ellsberg by Walter Cronkite on the C.B.S. Television 7 P.M. news program last night, as recorded by The New York Times:

DR. ELLSBERG. The fact is that in the 7,000 to 10,000 pages of this study I don't think there is a line in them that contains an estimate of the likely impact of our policy on the over-all casualties among the Vietnamese or the refugees to be caused, the effects of defoliation in an ecological sense, nor a calculation of past offense ever, and the documents simply concern the internal concerns, reflect the internal concerns of our officials. That says nothing more nor less than our officials never did concern themselves in writing and I think in no informal way either, with the effect of our policies on the Vietnamese.

I was struck by the cover of Newsweek here. I refer to this super-history of Vietnam—a map of Vietnam with the faces of important people who effected that secret history of Vietnam. You notice they are all Americans. Every one of them. That reflects accurately the way the history of Vietnam emerges from those studies—that is, from the internal documents of the United States.

WAS "PART OF SYSTEM"

It affects the way the Vietnam War is seen from Washington, as to who matters and who doesn't. And there is great realism to

that, actually. As I say I'm familiar, I was part of that system. I know how that's looked at. There's realism to that.

The war has been an American war and there is certainly realism to the way that it's been reflecting the actual attitudes of the people who make decisions.

Nowhere in those cables or estimates, I think outside of memos by a few people, General Ansfield being one, I think, will the public find when they read these Vietnamese leader described with concern, friendship, respect or evaluated in any terms other than as an instrument of American policy.

The Vietnamese leaders with whom we've been dealing unfortunately have the character that they tend to see themselves that way and the other Vietnamese know it.

As for Vietnamese who aren't leaders, they're not in the study at all. They're just not there. Only this side and that's a large part of what's been wrong.

I came back then with this sense, an additional sense, of concern then about what we were doing to the people of Vietnam as well as what was happening to this country, a concern that many people shared by '67 and '68.

By '68 I had read most of this study, written in a draft for one volume of it and well, can you imagine yourself what you'd feel like to have read those 7,000 pages judging from the 1,000 or so you've seen summaries or so far? And reading the news to the public every night, not able to tell them of the existence of the study or what it was you'd read.

FELT VERY CONCERNED

I've been reading about myself obviously in these accounts and it's—some of it's—almost amusing, the inferences of my being very tortured by guilt. Actually I had to say I didn't feel guilty for things that I'd done in Vietnam. I felt very concerned. I felt that the knowledge gave me a kind of responsibility that others didn't have.

A very simple explanation came to me as to the impression I apparently have been giving to people over the last year is that I read this history, I read all of it and I've read it several times. I think it obviously led me to kinds of activity against the war publicity. It was simply very baffling to my colleagues, none of whom had read the study, almost none of whom knew of its existence or the fact that I had read it.

I think maybe they'll understand some strange things about my intensity that they describe a month from now. I hope we'll see some more intense involvement in ending this war.

I'm sure this story is more painful for many people at this moment than for me, because, of course, it is familiar to me having read it several times, but it must be painful for the American people now to read these papers—and there's a lot more to come—and to discover that the men whom they gave so much respect and trust as well as power regarded them as contemptuously as they regarded our Vietnamese allies.

CRONKITE. It's a black history as it's been drawn so far. Are there any heroes in it?

MYLAI SOLDIER A HERO

ELLSBERG. I think that a man I read about named Bernard who put his rifle down to the ground at the risk of his life and refused the orders of his superior commander to fire at civilians at Mylai. He's a hero.

CRONKITE. You don't find them on a higher level?

ELLSBERG. That's a hard question you've asked me. I hate—I hate not to find it easy to answer. I hate as an American not to find it easy to answer. Looking at the record it seems hard for me to find men who have lived up to the responsibilities of their office in terms of not only of what they did but of what they could have done, what they should have done, given their feelings.

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CRONKITE. What would you expect to be revealed from the documents that might come out in future days or weeks? What's still back there that we can look forward to?

ELLSWORTH. Well, I think that the real lessons to be drawn are yet to be seen by the public, and they're not from any one period or any one episode. They really come from seeing the whole sweep of the history.

There's never been in a year when there would have been a war in Indochina with American money fueling it. The perception that I had, just like most people in the country, that this was in some sense an on-going war which we had joined for good or bad, screened out many of the moral aspects of the conflict, and to discover on the contrary that in Indochina if we had not been supplying money and the napalm and buying soldiers and equipment and finally supplying our own soldiers there would have been violence, there would have been violence among non-Communists, among the sects, political violence, there would have been assassinations, raids, some degree of guerrilla action, Communists against other Communists, the Trotskyites were wiped out by other Communists in Saigon in '46, there wouldn't have been anything that looked like a war, and to say that is to say that Americans now bear major responsibility, as I read this history, for every death in combat in Indochina in the last 25 years, and that's one-million to two-million people.

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