

THE PENTAGON'S SECRETS AND HALF- SECRETS

Published by
Viet Nam Courier
Hanoi 1971

*THE PENTAGON'S SECRETS
AND HALF - SECRETS*

THE PENTAGON'S SECRETS AND HALF-SECRETS

Published by
VIET NAM COURIER
HANOI — 1971

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

HIGHLIGHTS OF AMERICAN INTERVENTION

ABBREVIATIONS

KEY DOCUMENTS

1950 — 1954 period :

- Political Report Read by President Ho Chi Minh
at the Viet Nam Workers' Party Second Congress,
February 1951 25
 - 1952 Policy Statement by the US on Goals in South-
east Asia 26
 - Statement by President D. Eisenhower at a
Governors' Conference, August 4, 1953 32
 - 1954 Report by Special Committee on the Threat
of Communism 33
- 5

1954 — 1960 period :

— President Ho Chi Minh's Speech on DRVN National Day, Sept. 2, 1955	34
— President Ho Chi Minh's Letter to South Viet Nam Cadres Regrouped in the North, June 19, 1956	35
— President Ho Chi Minh's Speech at Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee, April 24, 1956	36
— Manifesto of the South Viet Nam NFL, Dec. 1960	
— Lao Patriotic Front CC's Letter to International Commission in Laos, July 18, 1959	37
— President D. Eisenhower's Memoirs	38
— President D. Eisenhower's Instructions to US Envoy at Geneva Talks, May 12, 1954	39
— President Eisenhower's Declaration on Geneva Agreements, July 21, 1954	40
— Secretary of State J.F. Dulles's Declaration to the American Senate Appropriations Committee, August 1954	40
— Senator John F. Kennedy's Speech at a Convention of "The American Friends of Viet Nam" June 1, 1955	40
— Lansdale Team's Report on Covert Saigon Mission, 1954 - 1955	41

1960 — 1964 period :

— Appeal by DRVN National Assembly to Parliaments of Various Countries, Oct. 27, 1961	54
— US Ambassadors' 1960 Analysis of Threats to Saigon Regime, September 1960	58
— Viet Nam "Program of Action" by Kennedy's Task Force, May 1961	59
— 1961 Memo from the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Commitment of US forces, May 1961	63

— 1961 Rusk - McNamara Report to Kennedy on South Viet Nam, November 1961	65
— Washington Message to Lodge on Need to Remove The Nhus, August 1963.	70
— Lodge's Reply to Washington, August 1963	72
— Lodge's Cable to Secreraty Rusk on US Policy toward a Coup, August 1963	73
— Lodge's Last Talk with Diem, November 1963	75
— Order by Johnson Reaffirming Kennedy's Policy on Viet Nam, November 1963	76
— McNamara Report to Johnson on the Situation in Saigon in 1963	77

1964 — 1968 period :

— President Ho Chi Minh's Address to the National Assembly, April 15, 1965	80
— President Ho Chi Minh's Speech over Radio Hanoi, July 17, 1966	81
— Statement of NFL Presidium on US Escalation to North Viet Nam	82
— Memorandum of the Lao Patriotic Front on the 3rd Anniversary of 1962 Geneva Agreements	83
— 1964 Memo by Joint Chiefs of Staff Discussing Widening of the War	85
— 1964 McNamara Report on Steps to Change the Trend of the War	87
— US Note to Canada on Points for Envoy to Relay to Hanoi, August 1964	88
— Memorandum of the DRVN Ministry of Foreign Affairs on "Tonkin Gulf incident", Sept 1964	90
— Summary of the Pentagon Papers by the <i>International Herald Tribune</i> on "Tonkin Gulf Incident"	92
— William Bundy Memo on Actions Available to US after Tonkin, August 1964	96

- Pacific Commander's Evaluation of Washington's Action Scenario, August 1964	96
- Joint Chiefs' Recommendations on Military Courses of Action, August 1964	97
- Plan of Action Attributed to McNaughton at Pentagon, September 1964	100
- Memo on Johnson's Approval of Renewed Naval Operations, September 1964	101
- Report of Meeting of US Envoys to Renew Operations in Laos, September 1964	103
- State Department Aide's Report on Actions Taken after Tonkin, November 1964	106
- Taylor's Briefing of Key Officials on Situation in November 1964	112
- Account of Taylor's Meeting with Saigon Generals on Unrest, December 1964	115
- McNaughton Draft for McNamara on "Proposed Course of Action", March 1965	120
- Johnson's Message to Taylor on the May 10, 1965 Halt in Bombing	121
- Notes from McNamara Memo on Course of War in 1966	123
- McNamara Memo of Oct. 14, 1966 opposing Increase in War Effort	123
- Cable to Envoys in Asia on Day of Johnson's De-escalation Speech, March 1968	125

FOREWORD

The disclosure of the Pentagon papers on the Indochina war has shocked public opinion in the United States and the world. For those who lack time or opportunity to read them in full, we have gathered in this booklet the most important documents. We have also contrasted them with documents issued by the Vietnamese and Lao sides (DRVN, South Viet Nam NFL, Lao Patriotic Front) regarding the same events and periods. A few statements by US officials have been quoted from other sources; they usefully complete the recently disclosed papers

Hanoi, September 1971

INTRODUCTION

Honest people hate to think that such an honourable government as that of the US had for long years pre-meditated, prepared and meticulously planned a systematic aggression, a war which was to degenerate into a crime, a genocide and a biocide, against a small people, a small country over 10,000 kilometres from the USA; that this government had for years on end deliberately lied to cover its crimes, camouflage its designs and deceive American opinion, the American Congress and the allies of the USA as well as all its friends and followers in the world.

When US presidents declared that they wanted nothing but peace, that they would never commit aggression, and never use force, that they only wanted to defend democracy and freedom in Viet Nam, many people in the world could hardly believe that these statements were sheer lies and, worse still, cynical cover for careful and elaborate war preparations. Those words should contain, so thought those honest people inclined to believe in others' probity, a minimum of truth and sincerity on the part of the heads of one of the major governments in the world, and there should

perhaps be a fair dose of propaganda in the charges made by the other side against the White House and the Pentagon.

Today, one can't fly in the face of facts. The truth has burst into the open. Official documents, reports, notes, accounts of hearings, directives, circulars—7,000 pages and two and a half million words in all—now reveal in black and white the scope of the US plot and bluff.

For over twenty years, US imperialism had lain in wait for its prey, set its snares, orchestrated its propaganda and framed the necessary provocations, eventually to pour on Viet Nam over 11 million tons of bombs and shells and throw into the Indochina abyss 200 billion dollars (figures quoted in a report to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee). Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and now Nixon display quite different personalities; the Democratic Party and the Republican Party have succeeded each other in power. But Washington's policy on Viet Nam and Indochina has not deviated an inch from a set line.

Aid to the French colonialists to try and quell the resistance of the Indochinese peoples, brutal hold on South Viet Nam right after the 1954 armistice, wilful violation of the Geneva Agreements, bloody repression of the South Vietnamese people, "special war" and even more atrocious "limited war", provocations, bombardments against the DRVN: these events have followed a scenario directed by an inflexible stage manager. The most murderous weapons have been tested, the most barbarous war methods applied, and the most

blood-thirsty stooges enthroned only to be physically liquidated when they proved to be duds.

For the Vietnamese people — who, as early as March 1950, saw the first US warships come to Saigon, then ever since 1950 have seen US military missions at work, and a swarm of Yankee “advisers” of all kinds; followed by hordes of G.I.’s — the disclosure of the Pentagon papers only confirms the views they have held on Yankee imperialism over a score of years. For the Vietnamese, Lao and Khmer peoples, as for all those who have had to face Yankee imperialism over the last years, these documents reveal no secret. For they have judged the men in Washington by their deeds, not by their words, and the succession, the logic of their action has amply proved the real nature of Yankee imperialism.

These documents by no means reveal all the facts; on Diem’s death, on the refusal to hold general elections in 1956, on the “Tonkin Gulf incident”, on the threatened use of nuclear weapons in Indochina, there is much more to say.

But they contain the essential fact: the policy of intervention and aggression carried out with obstinacy and perfidy by Washington against Viet Nam and the Indochinese countries. And beyond Indochina, beyond the towering crimes perpetrated in the course of this war, the whole US policy towards the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America is unveiled. Where can US neo-colonialism lead? How can it act? What credibility can one give the Washington leaders’ speeches and

pledges? The whole world is now warned. Nobody can any longer say he did not know the facts.

The other aspect revealed by these documents is the weak position of Yankee imperialism at each stage, each turning point of this long history. Bellicose and possessed of colossal means, it nevertheless had to admit its powerlessness at every turn and its best trumpcards have proved ineffective. Hence this profound division which splits even the Washington ruling circles, and which has in fact brought about the disclosure of these state secrets.

*
* *

One wonders why President Nixon has stubbornly opposed the publication of secret documents on preceding administrations.

For eight years (1953-1960) Richard Nixon was Vice-president of the United States. He consistently supported the decisions taken by the Eisenhower administration, which led to an enlarged commitment of the United States in Indochina. One should not forget that during the siege of Dien Bien Phu, he backed Radford's and Dulles's proposal for massive bombings of that camp's perimeter to save France from impending defeat. Harold Stassen, then a National Security Council member, recently disclosed that Nixon, as Vice-president, did his best to induce Eisenhower to send land forces to Viet Nam (AP, Philadelphia, July 8). Nixon stood for such an intervention even publicly. "The United States as a leader of the free world cannot afford further retreat in Asia", he stated on April

16, 1954 at a newspaper editors' convention. "It is hoped the United States will not have to send troops there, but if this government cannot avoid it, the administration must face up to the situation and dispatch forces." According to officials of the Eisenhower administration, Nixon went so far as to propose the use of tactical nuclear weapons (*Chicago Sun Times*, June 18, 1971).

Then he sought to torpedo the 1954 Geneva Conference. At the same convention he said: "... the United States must go to Geneva and take a positive stand for a united action by the free world. Otherwise it will have to take on the problem alone and try to sell it to the others." The French and the British being forced to negotiate by public opinion in their countries", he thought, the United States was "the only nation politically strong enough at home to take a position that will save Asia".

Nixon fears to see his past stance revealed, or recalled. For, exactly thirty-six days after the publication of the Pentagon papers by *The New York Times*, he boasted on TV that all through his eight years as Vice-president of the United States, "there were no American combat forces in Viet Nam" and that "no Americans had died in combat".

For eight other years (1960-1968), outside the administration, Nixon never failed, at crucial moments, to advocate all-out war.

There is no substitute for victory in South Viet Nam.

Saigon, April 1, 1964

I believe we should win the ground war in the South and better use our air and sea power in the North.

Newsweek, Dec. 25, 1967

Nixon opposed bombing halts in North Viet Nam and negotiations of any kind.

Now that we have hit the oil supplies we should not be inhibited by the fiction that targets in Hanoi should not be hit... There is no reasonable possibility of a negotiated settlement.

Saigon, August 7, 1966

I rule out any kind of a settlement which would be interpreted as an American defeat or victory for the communists.

Newsweek, December 31, 1967

Nixon persistently advocated intensification of the war, and to this end, maximum utilization of the US military potential.

I am convinced that the war effort will be served by a substantial increase in the Americans available on the ground and by a substantial increase in the air capability...

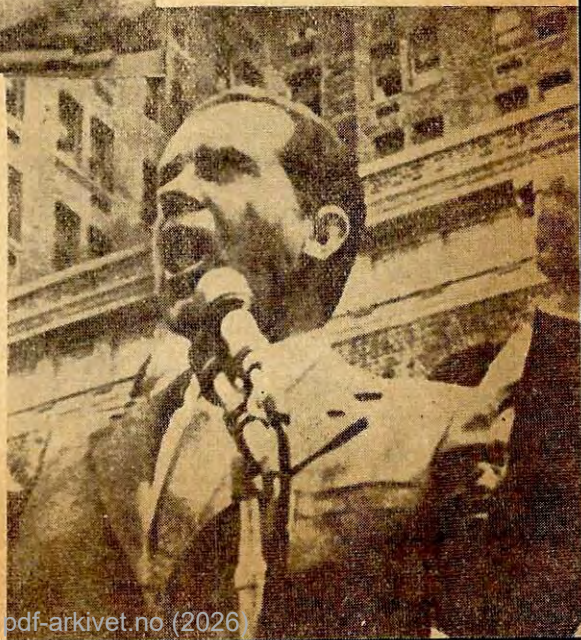
The most effective way to accomplish this is not to have a marginal number in order to accomplish our objectives, but more than enough, because the more power we have concentrated, the sooner this war can be brought to a conclusion.

Saigon, Aug. 7, 1966

Nixon took Kennedy and Johnson to task only on one point: he thought they did not go far enough in their war efforts.



Exit Johnson



Enter Nixon

I support President Kennedy to the hilt and I only hope he will step up the buildup and under no circumstances curtail it because of possible criticism.

Sacramento, California Feb. 15, 1962.

If [President Johnson] makes the right command decision — to end the war by winning it — he could well go down in history as one of our greatest presidents.

New York, Jan. 26, 1965

Since he became president of the United States, Nixon, while applying the policy he had always stood for, has been stubbornly seeking a military victory. Compelled to pull out American troops, he has in fact conducted an overall escalation under the label of. «Vietnamization.» Expansion of the war to Cambodia and Laos, on which none of his predecessors had dared to embark. Escalation in the use of the most murderous weapons ; more intensive use of B.52 bombers, ultra-rapid artillery, heavy (7 tons) and anti-personnel bombs, chemical agents, more ferocious «pacification» operations. Escalation in the use of lies to elude serious talks aimed at a negotiated settlement, to prolong and expand hostilities, and to maintain unpopular native regimes.

Nixon does not at all want to end the policy of aggression practised by his predecessors. To carry on the war he decrees drastic economic measures, makes diplomatic detours, avoids giving an answer to the PRG proposals at the Paris Conference, and shamelessly tries to support Nguyen Van Thieu. But everything

is crystal-clear: Nixon's policy is but the continuation of his predecessors'.

Presidents and administrations have gone but the policy of Yankee imperialism remains the same: to seek to impose, through war if necessary, neo-colonialist domination on the Indochinese peoples.

In this enterprise, beside a gigantic war machine, systematic lies are a major weapon. The Pentagon papers have also shown that every adventure of US imperialism in Indochina, however carefully prepared, has ended in failure pending total fiasco of its policy there.

(Published in *Viet Nam Courier* Sept. 20, 1971, under the title: *The Pentagon's Secrets and Mr Nixon's*)

HIGHLIGHTS OF AMERICAN INTERVENTION

March 18, 1950 : Arrival of an aircraft-carrier and two warships in Saigon for a show of force.

June 1950 : Setting up of an American military mission in Saigon besides the French general staff.

1950-1954 : American aid to Viet Nam amounted to 2,600 million dollars.

April 5, 1954 : Washington proposed to Paris a plan for Operation "Vautour" : massive bombing of Dien Bien Phu by the US Air Force.

July 21, 1954 : Statement of President Eisenhower : The United States are not bound by the Geneva Agreements.

August 1954 : Setting up of SEATO which put Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos under its protection.

1956 : Sabotage of the general elections provided for by the Geneva Agreements.

May 13, 1961 : Johnson-Diem joint communique ; increase of military aid to the Saigon regime. Sending of a host of advisers for the puppet army.

February 8, 1962 : Setting up of an American military commander in Saigon to direct the "special war".

1963—1964 : Repeated setbacks of the Saigon army.

August 5, 1964 : USAF bombardment of several coastal localities of the DRVN.

February 7, 1965 : Beginning of all-out bombardments of the DRVN.

March 7, 1965 : Landing of the first US units in Da Nang, South Viet Nam.

1965-1968 : The US expeditionary corps was boosted to 543,000 men. Many offensives and counter-offensives from both sides.

January 31, 1968 : The Tet offensive and general uprisings began.

March 31, 1968 : Cessation of bombardments of the DRVN up to the 19th parallel; total cessation as from November 1st.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASA — (US) Army Security Agency
AFB — Air Force Base
34-A — Elaborate program of covert military operations
against North Viet Nam
CAS — Code name for Central Intelligence Agency
CAT — Civil Air Transport, ainline based on Taiwan
CHICOM — Chinese Communists
CHMAAG — Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group
CINCPAC — Commander in Chief, Pacific; Position
held in 1963 by Adm. Harry D. Felt.
DE SOTO PATROLS — US destroyer patrols in Tonkin
Gulf
FOA — Foreign Operations Administration
GNV — Government of (South) Viet Nam
HNC — High National Council
HARDNOSE — Code name, apparently for covert
project
ICA — International Cooperation Administration
ICC — International Control Commission for Viet Nam
JCS — Joint Chiefs of Staff

JCSM — Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum
MAAG — Military Assistance Advisory Group
MACV — Military Assistance Command, Viet Nam
MAP — Military Assistance Program
NSC — National Security Council
PDJ — Plaine des Jarres
POL — Petroleum, Oil, Lubricants
PL — Pathet Lao
RAF or FAR — Royal Armed Forces (of Laos)
RLAF — Royal Laotian Air Forces
RLG — Royal Lao Government
RVNAF — Republic of (South) Viet Nam Air Forces
or Armed Forces
SAR — Search and Rescue
USIB — United States Intelligence Board
USIS — United States Information Service
USOM — US Operations Mission
VNAF — (South) Vietnamese Air Forces or Armed Forces

KEY DOCUMENTS

The following are excerpts from key texts from the Pentagon Papers, DRVN, South Viet Nam NFL, Lao Patriotic Front and other documents.

1950 - 1954 period :

POLITICAL REPORT READ BY PRESIDENT
HO CHI MINH AT THE SECOND NATIONAL
CONGRESS OF THE VIET NAM WORKERS'
PARTY, February 1951 (Excerpts)

... The antidemocratic camp is headed by the United States. Immediately after the end of World War II, the United States became the ringleader of imperialists and world reactionaries. Britain and France are its right and left hands and the reactionary governments in the East and the West its henchmen.

Aspiring to world hegemony, the United States brandishes dollars in one hand to lure the world peoples and an atomic bomb in the other to menace them. The Truman Program, the Marshall Plan, NATO, and the Southeast Asia program are all US manoeuvres aiming at preparing a third world war...

At present, the US policy in Asia is to assist the reactionaries such as Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, Bao Dai, etc. to help the British imperialists

repress the resistance forces in Malaya and the French colonialists crush the Resistance War in Viet Nam, while the United States itself wages an aggressive war against Korea and occupies Taiwan in an attempt to undermine the Chinese Revolution.

... Since the beginning of the Resistance War, Britain and the United States have helped the French colonialists. And since 1950, the United States has openly intervened in our country. At the end of 1950, Britain and France prepared to set up a "united" front to put their forces together against the Resistance Wars in Malaya and in Viet Nam.

1952 POLICY STATEMENT BY THE
U.S. ON GOALS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

(Excerpts)

Statement of Policy by the National Security Council, early 1952, on "United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia".

...

Indochina

8. With respect to Indochina the United States should :

a. Continue to promote international support for the three Associated States.

b. Continue to assure the French that the U.S. regards the French effort in Indochina as one of great strategic importance in the general international interest rather than in the purely French interest, and as essential to the security of the free world, not only in the Far East but in the Middle East and Europe as well.

c. Continue to assure the French that we are cognizant of the sacrifices entailed for France in carrying out her effort in Indochina and that, without overlooking the principle that France has the primary responsibility in Indochina, we will recommend to the Congress appropriate military, economic and financial aid to France and the Associated States.

d. Continue to cultivate friendly and increasingly cooperative relations with the Government of France and the Associated States at all levels with a view to maintaining and, if possible, increasing the degree of influence the U.S. can bring to bear on the policies and actions of the French and Indochinese authorities to the end of directing the course of events toward the objectives we seek. Our influence with the French and Associated States should be designed to further those constructive political, economic and social measures which will tend to increase the stability of the Associated States and thus make it possible for the French to reduce the degree of their participation in the military, economic and political affairs of the Associated States.

e. Specifically we should use our influence with France and the Associated States to promote positive

political, military, economic and social policies, among which the following are considered essential elements;

(1) Continued recognition and carrying out by France of its primary responsibility for the defence of Indochina.

(2) Further steps by France and the Associated States toward the evolutionary development of the Associated States.

(3) Such reorganization of French administration and representation in Indochina as will be conducive to an increased feeling of responsibility on the part of the Associated states.

(4) Intensive efforts to develop the armies of the Associated States, including independent logistical and administrative services.

(5) The development of more effective and stable Governments in the Associated States.

(6) Land reform, agrarian and industrial credit, sound rice marketing systems, labor development, foreign trade and capital formation.

(7) An aggressive military, political, and psychological program to defeat or seriously reduce the Viet Minh forces.

(8) US-French cooperation in publicizing progressive developments in the foregoing policies in Indochina.

(9) In the absence of large-scale Chinese Communist intervention in Indochina, the United States should:

a. Provide increased aid on a high priority basis for the French Union forces without relieving French

authorities of their basic military responsibility for the defense of the Associated States in order to:

— Assist in developing indigenous armed forces which will eventually be capable of maintaining internal security without assistance from French units.

— Assist the French Union forces to maintain progress in the restoration of internal security against the Viet Minh.

— Assist the forces of France and the Associated States to defend Indochina against Chinese Communist aggression.

b. In view of the immediate urgency of the situation, involving possible large-scale Chinese Communist intervention and in order that the United States may be prepared to take whatever action may be appropriate in such circumstances, make the plans necessary to carry out the courses of action indicated in paragraph 10 below.

c. In the event that information and circumstances point to the conclusion that France is no longer prepared to carry the burden in Indochina, or if France presses for an increased sharing of the responsibility for Indochina, whether in the UN or directly with the U.S. government, oppose a French withdrawal and consult with the French and the British concerning further measures to be taken to safeguard the area from communist domination.

10. In the event that it is determined, in consultation with France, that Chinese Communist forces (including volunteers) have overtly intervened in the conflict in Indochina, or are covertly participating to such an extent as to jeopardize retention of the Tonkin Delta

area by French Union forces, the United States should take the following measures to assist these forces in preventing the loss of Indochina, to repel the aggression and to restore peace and security in Indochina ;

a. Support a request by France or the Associated States for immediate action by the United Nations which would include a UN resolution declaring that Communist China has committed an aggression, recommending that member states take whatever action may be necessary, without geographic limitation, to assist France and the Associated States in meeting the aggression.

b. Whether or not UN action is immediately forthcoming, seek the maximum possible international support for, and participation in, the minimum courses of military action agreed upon by the parties to the joint warning. These minimum courses of action are set forth in subparagraph immediately below.

c. Carry out the the following minimum course of military action, either under the auspices of the UN or in conjunction with France and the United Kingdom and any other friendly governments ;

— A resolute defense of Indochina itself to which the United States would provide such air and naval assistance as might be practicable.

— Interdiction of Chinese Communist communication lines including those in China.

— The United States would expect to provide the major forces for task (2) above ; but would expect the UK and France to provide at least token forces therefor and to render such other assistance as is normal

between allies and France to carry the burden of providing, in conjunction with the Associated States, the ground forces for the defense of Indochina.

11. In addition to the courses of action set forth in paragraph 10 above, the United States should take the following military actions as appropriate to the situation :

a. If agreement is reached pursuant to paragraph 7-e, establishment in conjunction with the UK and France of a naval blockade of Communist China.

b. Intensification of covert operations to aid anti-communist guerilla forces operating against Communist China and to interfere with and disrupt Chinese Communist lines of communication and military supply areas.

c. Utilization, as desirable and feasible, of anti-communist Chinese forces, including Chinese Nationalist forces in military operations in Southeast Asia, Korea, or China proper.

d. Assistance to the British to cover an evacuation from Hong Kong, if required.

e. Evacuation of French Union civil and military personnel from the Tonkin Delta, if required.

12. If, subsequent to aggression against Indochina and execution of the minimum necessary courses of action listed in paragraph 10-c above, the United States determines jointly with the UK and France that expanded military action against Communist China is rendered necessary by the situation, the United States should take air and naval action, in conjunction with

at least France and the U.K. against all suitable military targets in China, avoiding insofar as practicable those targets in areas near the boundaries of the USSR in order not to increase the risk of direct Soviet involvement.

13. In the event the concurrence of the United Kingdom and France to expanded military action against Communist China is not obtained, the United States should consider taking unilateral action.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT D. EISENHOWER
AT A GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE,
August 4, 1953, Seattle (Excerpts)

If Indochina goes, several things happen right away... The tin and tungsten that we so greatly value from that area would cease to come. So, when the United States votes 400 million dollars to help that war, we are not voting a give-away program. We are voting for the cheapest way that we can to prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the USA, our security, our power and ability to get certain things we need from the Indochinese territory and from Southeast Asia.

1954 REPORT BY SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON THE THREAT OF COMMUNISM (Excerpts)

Recommended courses of action

A. The Special Committee wishes to reaffirm the following recommendations which are made in NCS 5405, the Special Committee Report concerning military operations in Indochina, and the position paper of the Special Committee, concurred in by the Department of Defense, concerning the US courses of action and policies with respect to the Geneva Conference:

(1) It be US policy to accept nothing short of a military victory in Indochina.

(2) It be the US position to obtain French support of this position; and that failing this, the US actively oppose any negotiated settlement in Indochina at Geneva.

(3) It be the US position in event of failure of (2) above to initiate immediate steps with the governments of the Associated States aimed toward the continuation of the war in Indochina to include active US participation and without French support should that be necessary.

1954 - 1960 period :

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S SPEECH ON THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM, September 2, 1955 (Excerpts)

Peace has been restored in Indochina on the basis of recognition of the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia; peace has been brought to us by the 1954 Geneva Conference. It cannot be consolidated as long as our country remains partitioned by the provisional demarcation line at the 17th parallel. Moreover, the attitude of the southern authorities and their sponsors is a serious threat to peace, which has been restored for only two years.

Indeed, although the first step, i.e., the military stage stipulated in the Geneva Agreements, in general ended satisfactorily, as the whole territory of North Viet Nam has been liberated, the second step, i.e., the stage leading to the reunification of Viet Nam through general elections to be held in 1956, cannot as yet be started as a result of Ngo Dinh Diem's deliberate hindrance.

The southern authorities savagely massacre our compatriots and all patriotic and peace forces in the South. Within only one year, they committed more than 3,000 crimes and violations of the Geneva Agreements. At least 4,000 patriots were killed or

wounded and over 19,000 arrested. In addition to these terrorist acts, the Diem administration also feverishly carried out the US political line with a view to turning South Viet Nam into a US colony and military base, which would be permanently incorporated in the sphere of activity of the Southeast Asian aggressive organization (SEATO). Despite these deeds, Ngo Dinh Diem shamelessly boasted of being a "fighter" for peace, democracy, and the independence of Viet Nam.

This situation has determined the tasks of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, which has set itself as primary objective the strict and correct implementation of the Geneva Agreements; that is, immediately to hold the consultative conference between the North and the South, the first step toward the holding of free general elections to reunify the country. Thus, peace and national reunification are our main demands for the time being.

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S LETTER TO
SOUTH VIET NAM CADRES REGROUPED IN
THE NORTH

June 19, 1956 (Excerpts)

The Americans and their agents are endeavoring to sabotage the Geneva Agreements. They refuse to hold political consultations with us or to organize in due time free general elections as has been stipulated in the

Geneva Agreements; they are scheming to divide our country permanently...

As to our struggle, it is a just one; the peace-loving peoples of the world support us. Our people from North to South (including patriots among the religious sects and parties in the South) hate and oppose the American-Diem clique. The North is being increasingly consolidated to become a firm support, a strong base for our entire people's struggle. For these reasons, our political struggle will certainly be victorious.

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S SPEECH CLOSING
THE NINTH (enlarged) SESSION OF THE VIET
NAM WORKERS' PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE
April 24, 1956 (Excerpts)

While recognizing the possibility of reunifying Viet Nam by peaceful means, we should always remember that our people's principal enemies are the American imperialists and their agents who still occupy half our country and are preparing for war; therefore, we should firmly hold aloft the banner of peace and enhance our vigilance.

MANIFESTO
OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT
FOR LIBERATION, December 1960 (Excerpts)

...The 1954 Geneva Agreements restored peace in our country and recognized "the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam".

Our compatriots in South Viet Nam would have been able to live in peace, to earn their livelihood in security and to build a decent and happy life.

However, the American imperialists, who had in the past helped the French colonialists to massacre our people, have now replaced the French in enslaving the southern part of our country through a disguised colonial regime. They have been using their stooge — the Ngo Dinh Diem administration — in their down-right repression and exploitation of our compatriots, in their manoeuvres to permanently divide our country and to turn its southern part into a military base in preparation for war in Southeast Asia.

LETTER OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT
CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMISSION ON THE LAO SITUATION

July 18, 1959 (Excerpts)

... Since it came to power, the Phui Sananikone administration on US order has carried out a series of extremely reactionary policies:

1. — To sabotage the Geneva Agreements step by step, to give up the policy of peace and neutrality so as to let the US imperialists turn Laos into their military base for aggression;

2. — To sabotage the Geneva Agreements on the establishment of a coalition government, and to expel the representative of the Lao Patriotic Front so as freely to sell out Laos to the Americans;

3. — To abolish all elementary democratic liberties for the people, to set up a dictatorship, and to violate the Constitution and the right of the National Assembly to independent action;

4. — To carry out a policy of discrimination, terror and reprisals against the Lao Patriotic Front and other progressive political groups.

5. — To sabotage the agreement on the administrative organization of Sam Neua and Phong Sa Ly provinces, and the integration of former Pathet Lao functionaries into the administrative apparatus of the Kingdom.

6. — To sabotage the military agreement reached by the two sides, to undermine national concord and to trigger a civil war.

PRESIDENT D. EISENHOWER'S MEMOIRS

(Excerpts from *Mandate for Change*,
New York, 1965, p. 449)

"I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indochinese affairs who did not

agree that should elections have been held... possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh".

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S INSTRUCTIONS TO US ENVOY AT GENEVA TALKS

*Cablegram from Secretary of State Dulles to Under
Secretary Walter Bedell Smith, May 12, 1954*

The following basic instructions which have been approved by the President, and which are in confirmation of those already given you orally, will guide you as head of the United States Delegation, in your participation in the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference...

4. The United States is participating in the Indochina phase of the Conference in order thereby to assist in arriving at decision which will help the nations of that area peacefully to enjoy territorial integrity and political independence under stable and free government with the opportunity to expand their economies, to realize their legitimate national aspirations, and to develop security through individual and collective defense against aggression, from within or without. This implies that these people should not be amalgamated into the Communist bloc of imperialist dictatorship".

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S DECLARATION
ON GENEVA AGREEMENTS, July 21, 1954
(Excerpts)

The United States has not been a party to, or bound by, the decisions taken at the Conference... The Agreements contain features which we do not like... The United States is actively pursuing discussions with other free nations to establish an organization of collective defense of Southeast Asia.

SECRETARY OF STATE J.F. DULLES'S
DECLARATION TO US SENATE APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE, August 1954 (Excerpts)

I hope that an anti-communist defense line will be drawn and that this line will pass north of Hue city and will protect Cambodia and Viet Nam, south of the 17th parallel.

SENATOR JOHN F. KENNEDY'S SPEECH AT A
CONVENTION OF "THE AMERICAN FRIENDS
OF VIET NAM" June 1, 1955 (Excerpts)

If we are not the parents of little Viet Nam, then surely we are the godparents. We presided at its birth, we have given assistance to its life, we have helped to shape its future.

LANSDALE TEAM'S REPORT ON COVERT SAIGON MISSION IN 1954 AND 1955

Following are excerpts from the report of the Saigon Military Mission, an American team headed by Edward G. Lansdale, covering its activities in the 1954-55 period

II. Mission

The Saigon Military Mission (SMM) was born in a Washington policy meeting early in 1954, when Dien Bien Phu was still holding out against the encircling Viet Minh. The SMM was to enter into Vietnam quietly and assist the Vietnamese, rather than the French, in unconventional warfare. The French were to be kept as friendly allies in the process, as far as possible.

The broad mission for the team was to undertake paramilitary operations against the enemy and to wage political-psychological warfare. Later, after Geneva, the mission was modified to prepare the means for undertaking paramilitary operations in communist areas rather than to wage unconventional warfare...

III. Highlights of the year

a. Early Days

The Saigon Military Mission (SMM) started on 1 June 1954, when its Chief, Colonel Edward G. Lansdale, USAF, arrived in Saigon with a small box of files and clothes and a borrowed typewriter, courtesy of an SA-16 flight set up for him by the 13th Air

Force at Clark AFB. Lt-General John O'Daniel and Embassy Chargé Rob McClintock had arranged for his appointment as Assistant Air Attache since it was improper for U.S. officers at MAAG at that time to have advisory conferences with Vietnamese officers. Ambassador Heath had concurred already...

Diem himself had reached a nadir of frustration, as his country disintegrated after the conference of foreigners. With the approval of Ambassador Heath and General O'Daniel, our Chief drew up a plan of overall governmental action and presented it to Diem, with Hellyer as interpreter. It called for fast constructive action and dynamic leadership. Although the plan was not adopted, it laid the foundation for a friendship which has lasted...

President Diem had organized a Committee of Cabinet Ministers to handle the problem of refugees from the Communist North. The Committee system was a failure. No real plans had been made by the French or the Americans. After conferences with USOM (FOA) officials and with General O'Daniel, our Chief suggested to Ambassador Heath that he call a U.S. meeting to plan a single Vietnamese agency, under a Commissioner of Refugees to be appointed by President Diem, to run the Vietnamese refugee program and to provide a channel through which help could be given by the U.S., France, and other free nations. The meeting was called and the plan adopted, with MAAG under General O'Daniel in the coordinating role. Diem adopted the plan. The French pitched in enthusiastically to help. CAT asked SMM for help in obtaining a French

contract for the refugee airlift, and got it. In return, CAT provided SMM with the means for secret air travel between the North and Saigon...

Major Concein was given responsibility for developing a paramilitary organization in the north, to be in position when the Viet Minh took over... [His]... team was moved north immediately as part of the MAAG staff working on the refugee problem. The team had headquarters in Hanoi, with a branch in Haiphong. Among cover duties, this team supervised the refugee flow for the Hanoi airlift organized by the French...

A second paramilitary team was formed to explore possibilities of organizing resistance against the Viet Minh from bases in the south. This team consisted of Army Lt-Col Raymond Wittmayer, Army Major Fred Allen, and Army Lt Edward Williams. The latter was our only experienced counter-espionage officer and undertook double duties, including working with revolutionary political groups. Major Allen eventually was able to mount a Vietnamese paramilitary effort in Tonkin from the south, barely beating the Viet Minh shutdown in Haiphong as his teams went in, trained and equipped for their assigned missions.

Navy Lt Edward Bain and Marine Captain Richard Smith were assigned as the support group for SMM. Actually, support for an effort such as SMM is a major operation in itself, running the gamut from the usual administrative and personnel functions to the intricate business of clandestine air, maritime, and land supply of paramilitary materiel. In effect, they became our

official smugglers as well as paymasters, housing officers, transportation officers, warehousemen, file clerks, and mess officers. The work load was such that other team members frequently pitched in and helped.

c. *September 1954*

Highly-placed officials from Washington visited Saigon and, in private conversations, indicated that current estimates led to the conclusion that Vietnam probably would have to be written off as a loss. We admitted that prospects were gloomy, but were positive that there was still a fighting chance.

On 8 September, SMM officers visited Secretary of State for Defense Chan and walked into a tense situation in his office. Chan has just arrested Lt-Col Lan (G-6 of the Vietnamese Army) and Capt Giai (G-5 of the Army). Armed guards filled the room. We were told what had happened and assured that everything was all right by all three principals. Later, we discovered that Chan was alone and that the guards were Lt-Col Lan's commandos. Lan was charged with political terrorism (by his "action" squads) and Giai with anti-Diem propaganda (using G-5 leaflet, rumor, and broadcast facilities).

The arrest of Lan and Giai, who simply refused to consider themselves arrested, and of Lt Minh, officer in charge of the Army radio station which was guarded by Army troops, brought into the open a plot by the Army Chief of Staff, General Hinh, to overthrow the government. Hinh had hinted at such a plot to his American friends, using a silver cigarette box given him by Egypt's Naguib to carry the hint. SMM became

thoroughly involved in the tense controversy which followed, due to our Chief's closeness to both President Diem and General Hinh. He had met the latter in the Philippines in 1952, was a friend of both Hinh's wife and favorite mistress. (The mistress was a pupil in a small English class conducted for mistresses of important personages, at their request...).

While various U.S. officials including General O'Daniel and Foreign Service officer Frank (name illegible) participated in U.S. attempts to heal the split between the President and his Army, Ambassador Heath asked us to make a major effort to end the controversy. This effort strained relations with Diem and never was successful, but did dampen Army enthusiasm for the plot. At one moment, when there was likelihood of an attack by armored vehicles on the Presidential Palace, SMM told Hinh bluntly that U.S. support most probably would stop in such an event...

The northern SMM team under Conein had organized a paramilitary group, (which we will disguise by the Vietnamese name of Binh) through the Northern Dai Viets, a political party with loyalties to Bao Dai. The group was to be trained and supported by the US as patriotic Vietnamese, to come eventually under government control when the government was ready for such activities. Thirteen Binhs were quietly exfiltrated through the port of Haiphong, under the direction of Lt Andrews, and taken on the first stage of the journey to their training area by a U.S. Navy ship. This was the first of a series of helpful actions by Task Force 98, commanded by Admiral Sabin.

Another paramilitary group for Tonkin operations was being developed in Saigon through General Nguyen Van Vy. In September this group started shaping up fast, and the project was given to Major Allen. (We will give this group the Vietnamese name of Hao)....

Towards the end of the month, it was learned that the largest printing establishment in the north intended to remain in Hanoi and do business with the Viet Minh. An attempt was made by SMM to destroy the modern presses, but Viet Minh security agents already had moved into the plant and frustrated the attempt. This operation was under a Vietnamese patriot whom we shall call Trieu ; his case officer was Capt Arundel. Earlier in the month they had engineered a black psy-war strike in Hanoi: leaflets signed by the Viet Minh instructing Tonkinese on how to behave for the Viet Minh takeover of the Hanoi region in early October, including items about property, money reform, and a three-day holiday of workers upon takeover...

d. October 1954

Hanoi was evacuated on 9 October. The northern SMM team left with the last French troops, disturbed by what they had seen of the grim efficiency of the Viet Minh in their takeover, the contrast between the silent march of the victorious Viet Minh troops in their tennis shoes and the clanking armor of the well-equipped French whose Western tactics and equipment had failed against the Communist military-political-economic campaign.

The northern team had spent the last days of Hanoi in contaminating the oil supply of the bus company for

a gradual wreckage of engines in the buses, in taking the first actions for delayed sabotage of the railroad (which required teamwork with a CIA special technical team in Japan who performed their part brilliantly), and in writing detailed notes of potential targets for future paramilitary operations (U.S. adherence to the Geneva Agreement prevented SMM from carrying out the active sabotage it desired to do against the power plant, water facilities, harbor, and bridge). The team had a bad moment when contaminating the oil. They had to work quickly at night, in an enclosed storage room. Fumes from the contaminant came close to knocking them out. Dizzy and weak-kneed, they masked their faces with handkerchiefs and completed the job.

Meanwhile, Polish and Russian ships had arrived in the south to transport southern Viet Minh to Tonkin under the Geneva Agreement. This offered the opportunity for another black psywar strike. A leaflet was developed by Binh with the help of Capt Arundel, attributed to the Vietminh Resistance Committee. Among other items, it reassured the Viet Minh they would be kept safe below decks from imperialist air and submarine attacks, and requested that warm clothing be brought; the warm clothing item would be coupled with a verbal rumor campaign that Viet Minh were being sent into China as railroad laborers...

Contention between Diem and Hinh had become murderous... Finally, we learned that Hinh was close to action; he had selected 26 October as the morning for an attack on the Presidential Palace. Hinh was counting heavily on Lt-Col Lan's special forces and on

Captain Giai who was running Hinh's secret headquarters at Hinh's home. We invited these two officers to visit the Philippines, on the pretext that we were making an official trip, could take them along and open the way for them to see some inner workings of the fight against Filipino Communists which they probably would never see otherwise. Hinh reluctantly turned down his own invitation; he had had a memorable time of it on his last visit to Manila in 1952. Lt Col Lan was a French agent and the temptation to see behind-the-scenes was too much. He and Giai accompanied SMM officers on the MAAG C-47 which General O'Daniel instantly made available for the operation. 26 October was spent in the Philippines. The attack on the palace didn't come off.

e. November 1954

General Lawton Collins arrived as Ambassador on 8 November...

Collins, in his first press conference, made it plain that the U.S. was supporting President Diem. The new Ambassador applied pressure on General Hinh and on 29 November Hinh left for Paris. His other key conspirators followed.

Part of the SMM team became involved in staff work to back up the energetic campaign to save Viet Nam which Collins pushed forward. Some SMM members were scattered around the Pacific, accompanying Vietnamese for secret training, obtaining and shipping supplies to be smuggled into north Vietnam and hidden there. In the Philippines, more support was being constructed to help SMM, in expediting the flow of supplies, and

in creating Freedom Company, a non-profit Philippines corporation backed by President Magsaysay, which would supply Filipinos experienced in fighting the Communist Huks to help in Vietnam (or elsewhere)...

On 23 November, twenty-one selected Vietnamese agents and two cooks of our Hao paramilitary group were put aboard a Navy ship in the Saigon River, in daylight. They appeared as coolies, joined the coolie and refugee throng moving on and off ship, and disappeared one by one. It was brilliantly planned and executed, agents being picked up from unobtrusive assembly points throughout the metropolis. Lt Andrews made the plans and carried out the movement under the supervision of Major Allen. The ship took the Hao agents, in compartmented groups, to an overseas point, the first stage in a movement to a secret training area.

f. December 1954

... Discussions between the U.S., Vietnamese and French had reached a point where it appeared that a military training mission using U.S. officers was in the immediate offing. General O'Daniel had a U.S.-French planning group working on the problem, under Col. Rosson. One paper they were developing was a plan for pacification of Vietminh and dissident areas; this paper was passed to SMM for its assistance with the drafting. SMM wrote much of the paper, changing the concept from the old rigid police controls of all areas to some of our concepts of winning over the population and instituting a classification of areas by the amount of trouble in each, the amount of control

required, and fixing responsibilities between civil and military authorities. With a few changes this was issued by President Diem on 31 December as the National Security Action (Pacification) Directive...

Vietminh relations with the mass of the population during the fighting had been exemplary, with a few exceptions ; in contrast, the Vietnamese National Army had been like too many Asian armies, adept at cowing a population into feeding them, providing them with girls. SMM had been working on this problem from the beginning. Since the National Army was the only unit of government with a strong organization throughout the country and with good communications, it was the key to stabilizing the situation quickly on a nationwide basis. If Army and people could be brought together into a team, the first strong weapon against Communism could be forged...

General O'Daniel was anticipating the culmination of long negotiations to permit U.S. training of the Vietnamese Armed Forces, against some resistance on the part of French groups. In January, negotiations were proceeding so well that General O'Daniel informally organized a combined U.S.-French training mission which eventually became known as the Training Relations and Instruction Mission (TRIM) under his command, but under the overall command of the top French commander, General Paul Ely.

The French had asked for top command of half the divisions in the TRIM staff. Their first priority was for command of the division supervising National Security Action by the Vietnamese, which could be

developed into a continuation of strong French control of key elements of both Army and population. In conferences with Ambassador Collins and General O'Daniel, it was decided to transfer Colonel Lansdale from the Ambassador's staff to TRIM, to head the National Security division. Colonel Lansdale requested authority to coordinate all U.S. civil and military efforts in this National Security work. On 11 January, Ambassador Collins announced the change to the country team, and gave him authority to coordinate this work among all U.S. agencies in Vietnam...

President Diem had continued requesting SMM help with the guard battalion for the Presidential Palace. We made arrangements with President Magsaysay in the Philippines and borrowed his senior aide and military advisor, Col. Napoleon Valeriano, who had a fine combat record against the Communist Huks and also had reorganized the Presidential Guard Battalion for Magsaysay. Valeriano, with three junior officers, arrived in January and went to work on Diem's guard battalion. Later, selected Vietnamese officers were trained with the Presidential Guards in Manila. An efficient unit gradually emerged. Diem was warmly grateful for this help by Filipinos who also continuously taught our concept of loyalty and freedom.

The patriot we've named Trieu Dinh had been working on an almanac for popular sale, particularly in the northern cities and towns we could still reach. Noted Vietnamese astrologers were hired to write predictions about coming disasters to certain Viet minh leaders and carried out under the direction of

Lt Phillips, Southeast Asia. Copies of the almanac were shipped by air to Haiphong and then smuggled into Vietminh territory...

Arms and equipment for the Binh paramilitary team were being cached in the north in areas still free from the Vietminh. Personnel movements were covered by the flow of refugees. Haiphong was reminiscent of our own pioneer days as it was swamped with people whom it couldn't shelter. Living space and food were at a premium, nervous tension grew. It was a wild time for our northern team.

First supplies for the Hao paramilitary group started to arrive in Saigon. These shipments and the earlier ones for the Binh group were part of an efficient and effective air smuggling effort by the 581st (word illegible) Wing, U.S. Air Force, to support SMM, with help by CIA and Air Force personnel in both Okinawa and the Philippines. SMM officers frequently did coolie labor in manhandling tons of cargo, at times working throughout the night... All... officers pitched in to help, as part of our "blood, sweat and tears"...

By 31 January, all operational equipment of the Binh paramilitary group had been trans-shipped to Haiphong from Saigon, mostly with the help of CAT, and the northern SMM team had it cached in operational sites. Security measures were tightened at the Haiphong airport and plans for bringing in the Hao equipment were changed from the air route to sea. Task Force 98, now 98.7 under command of Captain Frank, again was asked to give a helping hand and did so...

.... Major Conein had briefed the members of the Binh paramilitary team and started them infiltrating into the north as individuals... The infiltration was carried out in careful stages over a 30-day period, a successful operation. The Bins became normal citizens, carrying out every day civil pursuits; on the surface.

We had smuggled into Vietnam about eight and a half tons of supplies for the Hao paramilitary group. They included fourteen agent radios, 300 cartines, 90,000 rounds of carbine ammunition, 50 pistols, 10,000 rounds of pistol ammunition, and 300 pounds of explosives. Two and a half tons were delivered to the Hao agents in Tonkin, while the remainder was cached along the Red River by SMM, with the help of the Navy...

1. April 1955

...The Hao paramilitary team had finished its training at the secret training site and been flown by the Air Force to a holding site in the Philippines, where Major Allen and his officers briefed the paramilitary team. In mid-April, they were taken by the Navy to Haiphong where they were gradually slipped ashore. Meanwhile, arms and other equipment including explosives were being flown into Saigon via our smuggling route, being readied for shipment north by the Navy task force handling refugees. The White team office gradually became an imposing munitions depot. Nightly shootings and bombings in restless Saigon caused us to give them dispersed storage behind thick walls as far as this one big house would permit. SMM personnel guarded the house night and day, for it also

contained our major files other than the working file at our Command Post. All files were fixed for instant destruction, automatic weapons and hand grenades distributed to all personnel. It was a strange scene for new personnel just arriving...

Haiphong was taken over by the Vietminh on 16 May. Our Binh and northern Hao teams were in place, completely equipped. It has taken a tremendous amount of hard work to beat the Geneva deadline, to locate, select, exfiltrate, train, infiltrate, equip the men of these two teams and have them in place, ready for actions required against the enemy. It would be a hard task to do openly, but this had to be kept secret from the Vietminh, the International Commission with its suspicious French and Poles and Indians, and even friendly Vietnamese. Movements of personnel and supplies had had to be over thousands of miles...

1960 - 1964 period

APPEAL BY DRVN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO PARLIAMENTS OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES

October 27, 1961 (Excerpts)

...The National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam meeting from October 24 to 27, 1961, is

greatly concerned about the dangerous plots of the U.S. imperialists who are feverishly carrying out military reinforcement to the pro-American Administration of Ngo Dinh Diem and preparing to bring U.S. and aggressive S.E.A.T.O. troops to South Viet Nam.

...After U.S. Vice-President Johnson arrived in Saigon and signed with Ngo Dinh Diem a joint communique on May 13, 1961, the military intervention of the U.S. in South Viet Nam has been stepped up and become ever more frenzied. Carrying out its commitments with Ngo Dinh Diem, the U.S. Government has sent the Staley mission to South Viet Nam to work out a plan for "pacifying South Viet Nam within 18 months". Under this plan, the U.S. Government will supply to Ngo Dinh Diem millions more dollars together with a large quantity of modern weapons and war equipment. Many U.S. military experts have come to train and command the South Viet Nam army. Under the direct command of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group in South Viet Nam, the Ngo Dinh Diem authorities are conducting an intensive campaign of pressganging with a view to increasing their military manpower. The Diem regular army is scheduled to rise from 150,000 to 270,000, the "Civil Guard" from 60,000 to 100,000, the police from 45,000 to 90,000. At the same time, they are rapidly building the militia in the villages.

The U.S. Government has also supplied to Ngo Dinh Diem all the necessary equipment to speed up the setting up of a no-man's land along the 17th parallel and the South Viet Nam border with Laos and Cambodia,

about 100 "prosperity zones" and many "strategic villages" aimed at shifting and concentrating nearly a million of our compatriots in the South. The U.S. imperialists and the Ngo Dinh Diem authorities have carried out hundreds of large-scale raids against the villages.

In short, the U.S. - Diem clique is feverishly stepping up its war against our people in South Viet Nam, in an attempt to exterminate patriots there, compel the 14 million people in the Southern part of our country to live for ever under their iron heels, prolong the partition of our country and prepare to start a new war in Indochina, invade the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and threaten the independence of other countries in Southeast Asia.

Along with the murderous war against our people in South Viet Nam, the U.S. imperialists and the Ngo Dinh Diem authorities have undertaken many acts of sabotage, against North Viet Nam, openly proclaiming this sabotage their "State policy". The fact that a C. 47-D plane of the U.S. used by the South Viet Nam authorities to drop spies and commandos into North Viet Nam was shot down on July 2, 1961 in Ninh Binh province on the territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, constitutes irrefutable evidence of this sabotaging plot.

Over recent days, the U.S. imperialists have gone further ahead with their schemes and activities of military aggression in South Viet Nam.

To sidetrack world public opinion, the U.S. imperialists and the Ngo Dinh Diem authorities have carried out

a series of propaganda activities calumniously charging the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam with "subversive activities in South Viet Nam". U.S. President Kennedy has called many meetings of senior officers to discuss military intervention in the South of our country. On October 16, 1961, the U.S. State Department spokesman openly declared that U.S. official circles were considering the question of sending U.S. troops to South Viet Nam. On October 11, 1961, U.S. President Kennedy himself sent General Maxwell Taylor—his special military adviser—to Saigon to study the feasibility of carrying out new moves of aggression, including the introduction of American troops into South Viet Nam. On October 19, 1961, the Commander of the U.S. marines in the 7th Fleet in the Pacific declared in Manila that U.S. troops were ready to take part in the fighting in South Viet Nam at any time.

The above-mentioned schemes and actions of the U.S. imperialists and the South Viet Nam Administration constitute gross violations of the United Nations Charter and the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights which recognize the right of peoples to self-determination and fundamental democratic liberties of man. These schemes and actions have created a serious tension in South Viet Nam, threatening peace in Indochina and Southeast Asia.

US AMBASSADOR'S 1960 ANALYSIS OF
THREATS TO SAIGON REGIME

*Cablegram from Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow in
Saigon to Secretary of State A. Herter, September 1960
(Excerpts)*

As indicated our 495 and 538 Diem regime confronted by two separate but related dangers. Danger from demonstrations or coup attempt in Saigon could occur earlier; likely to be predominantly non-Communist in origin but Communists can be expected to endeavor infiltrate and exploit any such attempt. Even more serious danger is gradual Viet Cong extension of control over countryside which, if current Communist progress continues, would mean loss free Viet Nam to Communists. These two dangers are related because Communist successes in rural areas embolden them to extend their activities to Saigon and because non-Communist temptation to engage in demonstrations or coup is partly motivated by sincere desire prevent Communist take-over in Viet Nam.

Essentially, (word illegible) sets of measures required to meet these two dangers. For Saigon danger essentially political and psychological measures required. For countryside danger security measures as well as political, psychological and economic measures needed. However, both sets measures should be carried out simultaneously and to some extent individual steps will be aimed at both dangers.

Security recommendations have been made in our 539 and other messages, including formation internal

security council, centralized intelligence, etc. This message therefore deals with our political and economic recommendations. I realize some measures I am recommending are drastic and would be most (word illegible) for an ambassador to make under normal circumstances. But conditions here are by no means normal. Diem government is in quite serious danger. Therefore, in my opinion prompt and even drastic action is called for...

VIETNAM "PROGRAM OF ACTION" BY KENNEDY'S TASK FORCE

Excerpts from "A Program of Action for South Viet Nam", May 8, 1961, presented to President Kennedy by an interdepartmental task force comprising representatives from the Department of State and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, the International Cooperation Administration, the United States Information Agency and the Office of the President.

2. Military :

a. The following military actions were approved by the President at the NSC meeting of 29 April 1961 :

(1) Increase the MAAG as necessary to insure the effective implementation of the military portion of the program including the training of a 20,000-man addition to the present G.V.N. armed forces of 150,000.

Initial appraisal of new tasks assigned CHMAAG indicated that approximately 100 additional military personnel will be required immediately in addition to the present complement of 685.

(2) Expand MAAG responsibilities to include authority to provide support and advice to the Self-Defense Corps with a strength of approximately 40,000.

(3) Authorize MAP support for the entire Civil Guard force of 68,000. MAP support is now authorized for 32,000, the remaining 36,000 are not now adequately trained and equipped.

(4) Install as a matter of priority a radar surveillance capability which will enable the GVN to obtain warning of Communist overflights being conducted for intelligence or clandestine air supply purposes. Initially, this capability should be provided from U.S. mobile radar capability.

(5) Provide MAP support for the Vietnamese Junk Force as a means of preventing Viet Cong clandestine supply and infiltration into South Viet Nam by water. MAP support, which was not provided in the Counter-Insurgency Plan, will include training of junk crews in Viet Nam or at U.S. bases by U.S. Navy personnel.

b. The following additional actions are considered necessary to assist the GVN in meeting the increased security threat resulting from the new situation along the Laos-GVN frontier:

(1) Assist the GVN armed forces to increase their border patrol and insurgency suppression capabilities

by establishing an effective border intelligence and patrol system, by instituting regular aerial surveillance over the entire frontier area and by applying modern technological area-denial techniques to control the roads and trails along Vietnam's borders. A special staff element (approximately 6 U.S. personnel) to concentrate upon solutions to the unique problems of Vietnam's borders, will be activated in MAAG, Viet Nam, to assist a similar special unit in the RVNAF which the GVN will be encouraged to establish; these two elements working as an integrated team will help the GVN gain the support of nomadic tribes and other border inhabitants, as well as introduce advanced techniques and equipment to strengthen the security of South Vietnam's frontiers.

(2) Assist the GVN to establish a Combat Development and Test Center in South Viet Nam to develop, with the help of modern technology, new techniques for use against the Viet Cong forces. (Approximately 4 U.S. personnel).

(3) Assist the GVN forces with health, welfare and public work projects by providing U.S. Army civic action mobile training teams, coordinated with the similar civilian effort. (Approximately 14 U.S. personnel).

(4) Deploy a Special Forces Group (approximately 400 personnel) to Nha Trang in order to accelerate GVN Special Forces training. The first increment, for immediate deployment in Viet Nam, should be a Special Forces company (52 personnel).

(5) Instruct JCS, CINCPAC and MAAG to undertake an assessment of the military utility of a further increase in the GVN forces from 170,000 to 200,000 in order to create two new division equivalents for deployment to the northwest border region. The parallel political and fiscal implications should be assessed...

In Laos, infiltrate teams under light civilian cover to Southeast Laos to locate and attack Vietnamese Communist bases and lines of communications. These teams should be supported by assault units of 100 to 150 Vietnamese for use on targets beyond capability of teams. Training of teams could be a combined operation by CIA and US Army Special Forces.

In North Viet Nam, using the foundation established by intelligence operations form networks of resistance, covert bases and teams for sabotage and light harassment. A capability should be created by MAAG in the South Vietnamese Army to conduct Ranger raids and similar military actions in North Viet Nam as might prove necessary or appropriate. Such action should try to avoid any outbreak of extensive resistance or insurrection which could not be supported to the extent necessary to stave off repression.

Conduct overflights for dropping of leaflets to harass the Communists and to maintain morale of North Vietnamese population, and increase gray broadcasts to North Viet Nam for the same purposes...

1961 MEMO FROM THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
ON COMMITMENT OF US FORCES

Memorandum on "U.S. Forces in South Viet Nam"
from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense
Robert S. McNamara, May 10, 1961.

1. In considering the possible commitment of US forces to South Viet Nam, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have reviewed the over-all critical situation in Southeast Asia with particular emphasis upon the present highly flammable situation in South Viet Nam. In this connection the question, however, of South Viet Nam should not be considered in isolation but rather in conjunction with Thailand and their over-all relationship to the security of Southeast Asia. The views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the question regarding the deployment of US forces into Thailand were provided to you by JCSM-311-61, dated 9 May 1961. The current potentially dangerous military and political situation in Laos, of course, is the focal point in this area. Assuming that the political decision is to hold Southeast Asia outside the Communist sphere, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are of the opinion that US forces should be deployed immediately to South Viet Nam; such action should be taken primarily to prevent the Vietnamese from being subjected to the same situation as presently exists in Laos, which would then require deployment of US forces into an already existing combat situation.

2) In view of the foregoing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the decision be made now to deploy suitable US forces to South Viet Nam. Sufficient forces

should be deployed to accomplish the following purposes :

a) Provide a visible deterrent to potential North Viet Nam and/or Chinese Communist action ;

b) Release Vietnamese forces from advanced and static defense positions to permit their fuller commitment to counter-insurgency actions ;

c) Assist in training the Vietnamese forces to the maximum extent possible consistent with their mission ;

d) Provide a nucleus for the support of any additional US or SEATO military operation in Southeast Asia

e) Indicate the firmness of our intent to all Asian nations.

3. In order to maintain US flexibility in the Pacific, it is envisioned that some or all of the forces deployed to South Viet Nam would come from the United States. The movement of these troops could be accomplished in an administrative manner and thus not tax the limited lift capabilities of CINCPAC.

4. In order to accomplish the foregoing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that :

a) President Diem be encouraged to request that the United States fulfill its SEATO obligation, in view of the new threat now posed by the Laotian situation, by the immediate deployment of appropriate US forces to South Viet Nam :

b) Upon receipt of this request, suitable forces could be immediately deployed to South Viet Nam in order to accomplish the above-mentioned purposes. Details of

size and composition of these forces must include the views of both CINCPAC and CHMAAG which are not yet available.

1961 RUSK-McNAMARA REPORT TO KENNEDY ON SOUTH VIET NAM

Excerpts from memorandum for President Kennedy from Secretary of State Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara, Nov. 11, 1961.

... We should be prepared to introduce United States combat forces if that should become necessary for success. Dependent upon the circumstances, it may also be necessary for United States forces to strike at the source of the aggression in North Viet Nam.

4. The Use of United States Forces in South Viet Nam.

The commitment of United States forces to South Viet Nam involves two different categories: (A) Units of modest size required for the direct support of South Vietnamese military effort, such as communications, helicopter and other forms of airlift, reconnaissance aircraft, naval patrols, intelligence units, etc. and (B) larger organized units with actual or potential direct military mission. Category (A) should be introduced as speedily as possible. Category (B) units pose a more serious problem in that they are much more significant from the point of view of domestic and international

political factors and greatly increase the probabilities of Communist bloc escalation. Further, the employment of United States combat forces (in the absence of Communist bloc escalation) involves a certain dilemma; if there is a strong South Vietnamese effort, they may not be needed; if there is not such an effort, United States forces could not accomplish their mission in the midst of an apathetic or hostile population. Under present circumstances, therefore, the question of injecting United States and SEATO combat forces should in large part be considered as a contribution to the morale of the South Vietnamese in their own effort to do the principal job themselves.

5. Probable Extent of the Commitment of United States Forces.

If we commit Category (B) forces to South Viet Nam, the ultimate possible extent of our military commitment in Southeast Asia must be faced. The struggle may be prolonged, and Hanoi and Peiping may overtly intervene. It is the view of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that, in the light of the logistic difficulties faced by the other side, we can assume that the maximum United States forces required on the ground in Southeast Asia would not exceed six divisions or about 205,000 men (CINCPAC Plan 32/59 PHASE IV). This would be in addition to local forces and such SEATO forces as may be engaged. It is also the view of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that our military posture is, or, with the addition of more National Guard or regular Army divisions, can be made, adequate to furnish these

forces and support them in action without serious interference with our present Berlin plans...

In the light of the foregoing, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense recommend that:

1. We now take the decision to commit ourselves to the objective of preventing the fall of South Viet Nam to communism and that, in doing so, we recognize that the introduction of United States and other SEATO forces may be necessary to achieve the foregoing objective. (However if it is necessary to commit outside forces to achieve the foregoing objective our decision to introduce United States forces should not be contingent upon unanimous SEATO agreement thereto.)

2. The Department of Defense be prepared with plans for the use of United States forces in South Viet Nam under one or more of the following purposes:

a) Use of a significant number of United States forces to signify United States determination to defend Viet Nam and to boost South Viet Nam morale.

b) Use of substantial United States forces to assist in suppressing Viet Cong insurgency short of engaging in detailed counter-guerrilla operations but including relevant operations in North Viet Nam.

c) Use of United States forces to deal with the situation if there is organized Communist military intervention.

3. We immediately undertake the following actions in support of the GVN:

... c) Provide the GVN with small craft, including such United States uniformed advisers and operating personnel as may be necessary for quick and effective operations in effecting surveillance and control over coastal waters and inland waterways...

e) Provide such personnel and equipment as may be necessary to improve the military-political intelligence system beginning at the provincial level and extending upward through the Government and the armed forces to the Central Intelligence Organization.

f) Provide such new terms of reference, reorganization and additional personnel for United States military forces as are required for increased United States participation in the direction and control of GVN military operations and to carry out the other increased responsibilities which accrue to MAAG under these recommendations...

i) Provide individual administrators and advisers for insertion into the Governmental machinery of South Viet Nam in types and numbers to be agreed upon by the two Governments.

5. Very shortly before the arrival in South Viet Nam of the first increments of United States military personnel and equipment proposed under 3, above, that would exceed the Geneva Accord ceilings, publish the "Jordan report" as a United States "white paper", transmitting it as simultaneously as possible to the Governments of all countries with which we have diplomatic relations, including the Communist states.

6. Simultaneous with the publication of the "Jorden report", release an exchange of letters between Diem and the President.

a) Diem's letter would include: reference to the DRV violations of Geneva Accords as set forth in the October 24 GVN letter to the ICC and other documents; pertinent references to GVN statements with respect to its intent to observe the Geneva Accords; reference to its need for flood relief and rehabilitation; reference to previous United States aid and the compliance hitherto by both countries with the Geneva Accords; reference to the USG statement at the time the Geneva Accords were signed; the necessity of now exceeding some provisions of the Accords in view of the DRV violations thereof; the lack of aggressive intent with respect to the DRV; GVN intent to return to strict compliance with the Geneva Accords as soon as the DRV violations ceased; and request for additional United States assistance in framework foregoing policy. The letter should also set forth in appropriate general terms steps Diem has taken and is taking to reform Governmental structure.

b) The President's reply would be responsive to Diem's request for additional assistance and acknowledge and agree to Diem's statements on the intent promptly to return to strict compliance with the Geneva Accords as soon as DRV violations have ceased...

WASHINGTON MESSAGE TO LODGE ON NEED TO REMOVE NHU

*Cablegram from the State Department to Ambassador
Henry Cabot Lodge in Saigon, Aug. 24, 1963.*

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 Tung's Special Forces loyal to him, thus placing onus on military in eyes of world and Vietnamese people. Also clear that Nhu has manoeuvred himself into commanding position.

US Government cannot tolerate situation in which power lies in Nhu's hands. Diem must be given chance to rid himself of Nhu and his coterie and replace them with best military and political personalities available.

If, in spite of all of your efforts, Diem remains obdurate and refuses, then we must face the possibility that Diem himself cannot be preserved.

We now believe immediate action must be taken to prevent Nhu from consolidating his position further. Therefore, unless you in consultation with Harkins perceive overriding objections you are authorized to proceed along following lines:

1. First we must press on appropriate levels of GVN following lines:

a) USG cannot accept actions against Buddhists taken by Nhu and his collaborators under cover martial law.

b) Prompt dramatic actions redress situation must be taken, including repeal of decree 10, release of arrested monks, nuns, etc.

2. We must at same time also tell key military leaders that US would find it impossible to continue support GVN militarily and economically unless above steps are taken immediately which we recognize requires removal of Nhus from the scene. We wish give Diem reasonable opportunity to remove Nhus but if he remains obdurate, then we are prepared to accept the obvious implication that we can no longer support Diem. You may also tell appropriate military commanders we will give them direct support in any interim period of breakdown central government mechanism.

3. We recognize the necessity of removing taint on military for pagoda raids and placing blame squarely on Nhu. You are authorized to have such statements made in Saigon as you consider desirable to achieve this objective. We are prepared to take same line here and to have Voice of America make statement along lines contained in next numbered telegram whenever you give the word, preferably as soon as possible.

Concurrently, with above, Ambassador and country team should urgently examine all possible alternative leadership and make detailed plans as to how we might bring about Diem's replacement if this should become necessary.

Assume you will consult with General Harkins any precautions necessary protect American personnel during crisis period.

You will understand that we cannot from Washington give you detailed instructions as to how this operation should proceed, but you will also know we will back you to the hilt on actions you take to achieve our objectives.

Needless to say we have held knowledge of this telegram to minimum essential people and assume you will take similar precautions to prevent premature leaks.

LODGE'S REPLY TO WASHINGTON

Cablegram from Ambassador Lodge to Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Assistant Secretary of State Roger Hilsman, Aug. 25, 1963.

Believe that chances of Diem's meeting our demands are virtually nil. At same time, by making them we give Nhu chance to forestall or block action by military. Rirk, we believe, is not worth taking, with Nhu in control combat forces Saigon.

Therefore, propose we go straight to Generals with our demands, without informing Diem. Would tell them we prepared have Diem without Nhus but it is in effect up to them whether to keep him. Would also insist Generals take steps to release Buddhist leaders and carry out June 16 agreement.

Request immediate modification instructions. However, do not propose move until we are satisfied with E and E plans. Harkins concurs. I present credentials President Diem tomorrow 11. a.m.

LODGE'S CABLE TO SECRETARY RUSK ON US POLICY TOWARD A COUP

*Cablegram from Ambassador Lodge
to Secretary Rusk, Aug. 29, 1963*

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 US 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 that 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, civil and military — not to mention the American people, in the last few months (and especially days) they have in fact positively alienated these people to an incalculable degree. So that I am personally in full agreement with the policy which I was instructed to carry out by last Sunday's telegram.

2. The chance of bringing off a Generals' coup depends on them to some extent; but it depends at least as much on us.

3. We should proceed to make all-out effort to get Generals to move promptly. To do so we should have authority to do following:

a) That Gen. Harkins repeat to Generals personally message previously transmitted by CAS officers. This

should establish their authenticity. Gen. Harkins should have order on this.

b) If nevertheless Generals insist on public statement that all US aid to VN through Diem regime has been stopped, we would agree, on express understanding that Generals will have started at same time (We would seek persuade Generals that it would be better to hold this card for use in event of stalemate. We hope it will not be necessary to do this at all.)

c) Vietnam Generals doubt that we have the will power, courage, and determination to see this thing through. They are haunted by the idea that we will run out on them even though we have told them pursuant to instructions, that the game had started.

5. We must press on for many reasons. Some of these are :

a) Explosiveness of the present situation which may well lead to riots and violence if issue of discontent with regime is not met. Out of this could come a pro-Communist or at best a neutralist set of politicians.

b) The fact that war cannot be won with the present regime.

c) Our own reputation for steadfastness and our unwillingness to stultify ourselves.

d) If proposed action is suspended, I believe a body blow will be dealt to respect for us by Vietnamese Generals. Also, all those who expect US to straighten out this situation will feel let down. Our help to the regime in past years inescapably gives a responsibility which we cannot avoid.

6. I realize that this course involves a very substantial risk of losing VN. It also involves some additional risk to American lives. I would never propose it if I felt there was a reasonable chance of holding VN with Diem. (Point 7 unavailable).

8. Gen. Harkins thinks that I should ask Diem to get rid of the Nhut before starting the Generals' action. But I believe that such a step has no chance of getting the desired result and would have the very serious effect of being regarded by the Generals as a sign of American indecision and delay. I believe this is a risk which we should not run. The Generals distrust us too much already. Another point is that Diem would certainly ask for time to consider such a far-reaching request. This would give the ball to Nhu.

9. With the exception of par. 8 above Gen. Harkins concurs in this telegram.

LODGE'S LAST TALK WITH DIEM

Excerpts from cablegram from Ambassador Lodge to State Department, Nov. 1, 1963, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. According to the narrative, the message says that at 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 1 President Diem telephoned Ambassador Lodge and the following conversation ensued:

Diem: Some units have made a rebellion and I want to know what is the attitude of the US?

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 US Government cannot possibly have a view.

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 sense 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?

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 re-establish order.

ORDER BY JOHNSON REAFFIRMING KENNEDY'S POLICY ON VIETNAM

*National Security Action Memorandum 273, Nov. 26,
1963, four days after the assassination of President*

Kennedy, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. The following is the study's paraphrase:

A National Security Action Memorandum was drafted to give guidance and direction to our efforts to improve the conduct of the war under the new South Vietnamese leadership. It described the purpose of the American involvement in Vietnam as "to assist the people and Government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy...

And in conclusion, plans were requested for clandestine operations by the GVN against the North and also for operations up to 50 kilometers into Laos.

McNAMARA'S 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 Viet Nam 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...

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 US 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...

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...

6. *Plans for Covert Action into North Viet Nam* were prepared as we had requested and were an excellent job. They present a wide variety of sabotage and psychological operations against North Viet Nam 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...

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 - 1968 Period

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S ADDRESS TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, April 15, 1965 (Excerpts)

...Over the past ten years, the US imperialists and their henchmen have carried out an extremely ruthless

war and have caused much grief to our compatriots in South Viet Nam. Over the past few months, they have frenziedly expanded the war to North Viet Nam. In defiance of the 1954 Geneva Agreements and international law, they have sent hundreds of aircraft and dozens of warships to bomb and strafe North Viet Nam repeatedly. Laying bare themselves their piratical face, the US aggressors are blatantly encroaching upon our country. They hope that by resorting to the force of weapons they can compel our 30 million compatriots to become their slaves. But they are grossly mistaken. They will certainly meet with ignominious defeat.

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S SPEECH OVER
RADIO HANOI, July 17, 1966 (Excerpts)

...They (the US imperialists) have rushed an expeditionary corps of about 300,000 men into the southern part of our country. They have used a puppet administration and a mercenary army fostered by them as instruments of their aggressive policy. They have resorted to extremely savage means of warfare — toxic chemicals, napalm bombs, and so forth. With such crimes they hope to subdue our southern compatriots...

The US aggressors have brazenly launched air attacks on North Viet Nam in an attempt to get out of the quagmire in the South and to impose negotiations on us on their terms...

Of late the US aggressors hysterically took a very serious step further in the escalation of the war: they launched air attacks on the suburbs of Hanoi and Haiphong. That was an act of desperation comparable to the agony convulsions of a grievously wounded wild beast.

Johnson and his clique should realize this: they may bring in 500,000 troops, 1 million, or even more to step up the war of aggression in South Viet Nam. They may use thousands of aircraft for intensified attacks against North Viet Nam. But never will they be able to break the iron will of the heroic Vietnamese people to fight against the US aggression, for national salvation. The more truculent they are, the further they will aggravate their crime. The war may still last ten, twenty years, or longer. Hanoi, Haiphong, and other cities may be destroyed but the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated! Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. When victory day comes, our people will rebuild our country and endow it with bigger and more beautiful constructions.

STATEMENT
OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE SOUTH VIET
NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION,
February 8, 1965, ON US WAR ESCALATION
TO NORTH VIET NAM (Excerpts)

The Vietnamese nation is one, the people in South Viet Nam and North Viet Nam are of the same family,

any aggressive act of the US imperialists against North Viet Nam is a provocation against the entire Vietnamese people. The Presidium of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation Central Committee call on the South Viet Nam army and people to unite as one man, to redouble their vigilance in face of the US imperialists' scheme to expand the war, and to immediately step up their military and political activities in order to curb and foil this plot. We hail the North Viet Nam army and people who have given the enemy a strong rebuff, downing four planes and seriously damaging others in the attack engineered by the US imperialists on February 7, 1965. We acclaim the victory of the armed forces and people in Pleiku who killed many US aggressors and destroyed dozens of enemy planes on February 7. We have to march forward, to deal the US imperialists and their agents more decisive blows. The US imperialists' acts of expanding their war of aggression cannot but strengthen the determination of the people in both zones of Viet Nam to fight the enemy even more energetically. The NFL regards it as the sole proper reply to the American warmongers and aggressors.

MEMORANDUM OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT
ON THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE
SIGNING OF THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENTS
ON LAOS (Excerpts)

... What the Americans and the rightist party now call the Vientiane "government of union" is but a

“government of union” of all the cliques subservient to the USA. There the Kouprasith — Sananikone extreme-rightist group, which is the most influential and gets the most help from the USA, rules the roost and does as it pleases with rival groups. Prince Souvanna Phouma, the nominal “prime minister” of this “government” is but a pawn in the hands of the US imperialists. From weakness to surrender, he has gone to the length of betraying the policy of peace and neutrality of Laos, the true interests of the neutralist party and his people, and conniving with the aggressors and the quislings — the US imperialists and their stooges — against our fatherland.

The present Vientiane leaders, including Prince Souvanna Phouma, have proved to be zealous agents of the US aggressive policy in Laos...

The USA has followed this policy of intervention and aggression in Laos as far back as the last phase of the French colonialists' aggressive war in Indochina in an attempt to turn Laos into its neo-colony and war base in Indochina and Southeast Asia. After the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements which restored peace in Indochina, taking advantage of the French colonialists' military defeat, the US imperialists penetrated into Laos and ousted the French colonialists, setting up their neo-colonialist domination step by step through a system of aid and a network of “advisers”... Going from defeat to defeat in Laos and driven into an impasse in South Viet Nam, the US imperialists embarked on a new adventurous stage in their « special war » in Laos. In May 1964, Washington cynically declared that it

would "carry out reconnaissance flights" over Laos and order its escort jets to "riposte in case of need". Since then, various types of jets taking off from aircraft carriers of the US Seventh Fleet cruising in the South China Sea and from several US bases in Thailand and South Viet Nam, have unceasingly and savagely bombed and strafed nearly all the liberated areas held by the LPF and the patriotic neutralist forces, from North to South Laos... At present, while intensifying their aggressive war in South Viet Nam and applying their "escalation" policy in North Viet Nam, the US imperialists are gradually increasing the scope of their armed aggression in Laos...

1964 MEMO BY JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
DISCUSSING WIDENING OF THE WAR (Excerpts)

Memorandum from Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Secretary of Defense McNamara, Jan. 22, 1964, " Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam. 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...

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 Viet Nam to :

a) Assign to the US military commander responsibilities for the total US program in Viet Nam.

b) Induce the Government of Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam.

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

e) Induce the Government of Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam in its conduct of aerial bombing of critical targets in North Viet Nam and in mining the sea approaches to that country.

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

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

i) Commit additional US forces, as necessary, in support of the combat actions within South Viet Nam.

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

*Excerpts from memorandum "South Viet Nam"
from Secretary of Defense McNamara to President
Johnson, March 16, 1964.*

VII — Recommendations

I recommend that you instruct the appropriate agencies of the US Government:

1. To make it clear that we are prepared to furnish assistance and support to South Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam on a war footing.
3. 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.
7. To assist the Vietnamese to create an offensive guerilla force.

8. To provide the Vietnamese Air Forces 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...

11. To authorize continued high-level US 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 Viet Nam, and to be in a position on 30 days' notice "to initiate the program of "Graduated Overt Military Pressure" against North Viet Nam.

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).

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 patience 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 Viet Nam and Laos.

c) That the US has come to the view that the DRV role in South Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam and in Laos and will be carefully watching the DRV's response to what Mr. Seaborn is telling them.

MEMORANDUM OF THE DRVN MINISTRY
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON "TONKIN GULF
INCIDENT" Sept. 1964 (Excerpts)

The truth about the US-engineered "second Tonkin Gulf incident" — pretext for air attacks against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

On August 4, President L. Johnson summoned two meetings of the National Security Council, conferred with his Cabinet and General Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then with Congressional leaders of both the Democratic and Republican parties.

At 18:00 (local time), US Assistant Defence Secretary Arthur Sylvester issued to the press an announcement which read in part:

"A second deliberate attack was made during darkness by an undetermined number of North Vietnamese PT-boats on the USS *Maddox* and the USS *Turner Joy* while the two destroyers were cruising in company on routine patrol in the Tonkin Gulf international waters about 65 miles from the nearest land.

The attack came at 10:30 p.m. local time (10:30 a.m. August 4, Washington time, or 14:30 GMT)

At 23:40 (local time), President L. Johnson announced to the American people:

"The initial attack on the destroyer *Maddox*, on August 2, was repeated today by a number of hostile vessels attacking two US destroyers with torpedoes."

At about midnight, Defence Secretary McNamara affirmed in a press conference in Washington that these were "North Vietnamese surface vessels".

The truth was totally different from the contentions made by the US President and the US Defence Secretary in their solemn statements to the American people and the world.

First and foremost, this is an impudent fabrication in as much as in the day and night of August 4, 1964, no naval craft of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was present in the area where the US destroyers were allegedly "attacked for a second time by North Vietnamese PT-boats".

The alleged "attack" was deliberately staged by the United States to have a pretext for carrying out its criminal designs against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

According to reports from various sources, a task group of the Seventh Fleet including the aircraft-carrier Ticonderoga and the destroyers Berkeley, Edison, Harry Hubbard, and Samuel More, was cruising on a permanent basis in the South China Sea off Da Nang.

On August 4, 1964 the Harry Hubbard met with the HQ. 609 and HQ. 11 of the South Viet Nam Navy 60 kilometres off Da Nang. Thereafter, the South Vietnamese ships did not return to their base Tien Sa (Da Nang) as usual. On the same night, from 20:00 to 22:00 at about the time when "North Vietnamese PT-boats" allegedly "attacked the *Maddox* and the *Turner Joy*" gun shelling was heard, flares and planes were seen off

the shores of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam on international waters.

That is what the Pentagon termed "the second deliberate attack" on the destroyers *Maddox* and *Turner Joy* or "the second Tonkin Gulf incident".

EXCERPTS FROM A SUMMARY OF THE PENTAGON PAPERS ON THE "TONKIN GULF INCIDENT" BY THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, June 14, 1971

...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 Viet Nam by the South Vietnamese Air Force "on a tit-for-tat basis" in response to guerilla attacks, and "aerial mining... (possibly with US assistance) of the major... ports in North Viet Nam"... The words in parentheses are Mr. McNamara's.

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 would include air attacks against military and

possibly industrial targets." The raids would be carried out by Saigon's Air Commando squadron code-named Farmgate, then operating in South Viet Nam with planes carrying South Vietnamese markings. To conduct the air strikes, they would be reinforced by three squadrons of US 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 "proceed energetically".

As the Viet Cong 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 guerilla 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 Viet Nam in December (1963) and March (1964).

In his December memorandum recommending initiation of the covert 34.A raids, Mr. McNamara painted a "gloomy picture" of South Viet Nam, with the Viet Cong controlling most of the rice and population heartland of the Mekong Delta south and west of Saigon.

Then, in his memorandum of March 10 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 Viet Nam".

The months from the beginning of 1964 to the Tonkin Gulf incident in August were a pivotal period...

The Pentagon papers disclose that in this phase the United States had been mounting clandestine military attacks against North Viet Nam 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...

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 Viet Nam villages near the Laotian border on Aug. 1 and 2...

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 Viet Nam.

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 phase of the bombing campaign...

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...

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

While the assault was occurring, the US destroyer Maddox was 120 to 130 miles away, heading north into the gulf of the year's second De Soto intelligence gathering patrol...

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

The next day, Aug. 3, President Johnson ordered the Maddox reinforced by the destroyer 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 coasts. A second aircraft carrier, the Constellation, was instructed to join the Ticonderoga as quickly as possible...

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

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 Adm. Sharp, he learned that the Ticonderoga had launched its bomb-laden aircraft at 10:43 p.m.

WILLIAM BUNDY MEMO ON ACTIONS AVAILABLE TO US 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.

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.

PACIFIC COMMANDER'S EVALUATION OF WASHINGTON'S ACTION SCENARIO

Excerpts from cablegram from US Adm. Grant Sharp, commander of Pacific Forces, to Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Next Courses of Action in Southeast Asia", Aug. 17, 1964.

What we have not done and must do is make plain to Hanoi and Peiping the cost of pursuing their current objectives and impeding ours. An 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...

A conference to include Viet Nam, before we have overcome the insurgency, would lose US allies in South-east Asia and represent a defeat for the United States.

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. Recent 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 Perce 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 Viet Nam, including emphasis on the Pacification Program and the Hop Tac plan to clear Saigon and its surroundings; (2) interdiction of the relatively unmolested 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 Viet Nam border area through the conduct of "hot pursuit" operations into Cambodia as required; (4) increased pressure on North Viet Nam through military actions.

As part of the program for increased pressures, the OPLAN 34-A operations and the De soto 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 counter-operations 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 counter-operations 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 Viet Nam consisting of 94 targets, recently forwarded to you by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

PLAN OF ACTION ATTRIBUTED TO McNAUGHTON AT PENTAGON

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

3. Outside the borders of South Viet Nam. 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 Viet Nam designed to put increasing pressure on North Viet Nam 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 recce of DRV, US jet recce 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...

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 Viet Nam with Ambassador Taylor and with other advisers and has approved the following actions :

1. US 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 34-A 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. 34-A operations by the GVN will be resumed after completion of a first De Soto patrol. The maritime operations are by far the most important. North Viet Nam 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. 34-A air drop and leaflet operations should also be resumed but are secondary in importance. We should not consider air strikes under 34-A 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 Lao air strikes and possible use of US 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 re-emphasizes the importance of economic and political actions having immediate impact in South Viet Nam, 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 Viet Nam; 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.

REPORT OF MEETING OF US ENVOYS TO REVIEW OPERATIONS IN LAOS

Excerpts from cablegram, signed by Ambassador 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 time-span, which would involve substantial US 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 RLAF 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) 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 RLAF/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 RLAF 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, RLAF/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 companysized units" would be acceptable and would not require clearance by the RLG...

E. It was the view of Saigon group that authority for US advisers 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...

STATE DEPARTMENT AIDE'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.

. . .

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 and 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 frogmen 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+I 15
L+31 Bombard Hon Ne and Hon Me
L+36 Blow up pier at Phuc Loi and bombard Hon
Ngu
L+38 Cut Hanoi - Vinh rail line
L+41 Bombard Dong Hoi and Tiger Island
L+24 Bombard Nightingale Island.

2. Airbone 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...

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...

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 Thai, 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 Khoang 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 Sai) a FAR clearing operation in southern Laos.

4. Strikes on targets on opportunity, including in support of FAR defensive actions such as at Ban Khe 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 Sai.

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. Thai 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 NVN 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 1954 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-Chairman. 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 De Soto Patrols have been held in abeyance pending top-level decision. Ambassador Taylor (Saigon's 1378) sees no advantage in resuming De Soto

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 US 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...

TAYLOR'S BRIEFING OF KEY OFFICIALS ON SITUATION IN NOVEMBER 1964

Excerpts from prepared briefing by Ambassador Taylor, "The Current Situation in South Viet Nam—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 I 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.

ACCOUNT OF TAYLOR'S MEETING WITH SAIGON GENERALS ON UNREST

Excerpts from Saigon airgram 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 Chanh 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. May be 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 14 : 30 to 20 : 30. 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 Cang: It seems that we are being treated as though we were guilty. What we did was good did it only for the good of the...

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 statesmanlike acts 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 communiqué.

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.

McNAUGHTON DRAFT FOR McNAMARA ON ' PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION '

First draft of "Annex-plan for Action for South Viet Nam," 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.

I. 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.

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 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...

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 promptly to senior officers concerned.

NOTES FROM McNAMARA MEMO ON COURSE OF WAR IN 1966

Excerpts from notes accompanying the Pentagon study, from a memorandum for President Johnson from Secretary McNamara, "Military and Political Action Recommended for South Viet Nam", Dec. 7, 1965.

We believe that, whether or not major new diplomatic initiatives are made, the US must send a substantial number of additional forces to Viet Nam if we are to avoid being defeated there...

If the US were willing to commit enough forces—perhaps 600,000 men or more—we could ultimately prevent the DRV/VC from sustaining the conflict at a significant level.

McNAMARA MEMO OF OCT. 14, 1966, OPPOSING INCREASE IN WAR EFFORT

Draft memorandum for President Lyndon B. Johnson, "Actions Recommended for Viet Nam", from Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, Oct. 14, 1966. (Excerpts)

1. *Evaluation of the situation.*

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...

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 Viet Nam and recruitment in South Viet Nam.

Pacification is a bad disappointment...

Pacification has if anything gone backward. As compared with two, or four, years ago, enemy full-time regional forces and part-time guerilla forces are larger... We control little, if any, more of the population; the VC political infrastructure thrives in most of the country...; full security exists nowhere (now 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.

CABLE TO ENVOYS IN ASIA ON DAY OF JOHNSON'S DE-ESCALATION SPEECH

Excerpts from cablegram from State Department to United States Ambassadors in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Laos, the Philippines and South Korea, March 31, 1968, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. The message announced provisions of the major speech President Lyndon B. Johnson was to make hours later. Paragraphs in italics are the study's paraphrase or explanation.

This cable offered the Ambassadors some additional rationale for this new policy for their discretionary use in conversations with their respective heads of government. This rationale represents the only available statement by the Administration of some of its underlying reasons and purposes for and expectations from this policy decision.

a) You should call attention to force increases that would be announced at the same time and would make clear our continued resolve. Also our top priority to re-equipping ARVN forces. .

b) You should make clear that Hanoi is most likely to denounce the project and thus free our hand after a short period. Nonetheless, we might wish to continue the limitation even after a formal denunciation, in order to reinforce its sincerity and put the monkey firmly on Hanoi's back for whatever follows. Of course, any major military change could compel full-scale resumption at any time.

c) With or without denunciation, Hanoi might well feel limited in conducting any major offensives at least in the northern areas. If they did so, this could ease the pressure where it is most potentially serious. If they did not, then this would give us a clear field for whatever actions were then required.

d) 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, air power now used north of 20th can probably be used in Laos (where no policy change planned) and in SVN.

e) 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. But in any case, the period of demonstrated restraint would probably have to continue for a period of several weeks, and we would have time to appraise the situation and to consult carefully with them before we undertook any such action.

.

- The real meaning of the Pentagon papers
- Key texts
- DRVN, NFL and LPF documents

ERRATA

Page	Line	Instead of	Read
52	1	Lt Phillipps, Southeast Asia.	Lt Phillips, based on our concept of the use of astrology for psywar in Southeast Asia.
86	last		add : j) Commit US forces as necessary in direct actions against North Viet Nam.
117	17	What we did good did...	What we did was good and we did it only for the good of the country...