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6/19/62*~~SECRET~~

13 June 1962

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Report of Meeting at the White House, 13 June 1962

1. A meeting was held at the White House on 13 June to discuss certain aspects of the situation in Southeast Asia. The following were present:

The President

Department of Defense

Secretary McNamara  
General Lemnitzer  
Mr. Gilpatrick  
Mr. Nitze  
Mr. W. Bundy

Department of State

Secretary Rusk  
Governor Harriman

White House

Mr. McGeorge Bundy  
Mr. Forrestal

Agency

Mr. Cooper

2. The principal matter for discussion was Secretary McNamara's proposal to improve the US logistic position in Thailand by providing that country with additional transport equipment (including rolling stock), a pipeline for POL, and airfield improvements. This program is to cost approximately \$20 million. It will also necessitate the despatch of approximately 1,500 additional US military personnel (primarily construction personnel) to Thailand.

The President subscribed to this proposal and suggested that it be implemented in the form of a civil aid program.

3. Secretary Rusk discussed the recent agreement of the three Princes. He emphasized that this was just the beginning of a new process to establish a genuinely neutral Laos. He urged that we be very watchful during the next several weeks and pointed out that between now and the signing of the Geneva Agreements, there would be plenty of opportunities for "doublecross." In particular, he viewed with concern the absence from Laos during late June and early July of both Souvanna (who will be attending his daughter's wedding in Paris) and Phoumi (who will head the Lao Delegation in Geneva), with the government in the hands of Souphannouvong. Because of the tenuous nature of the situation in Laos, he emphasized that contingency planning for using American forces in Laos should continue. Secretary McNamara and General Lemnitzer assured the President that such planning was well advanced.

4. The President raised the question of working out some arrangements with Souvanna that might result in a closer relationship between Souvanna and the West. Governor Harriman pointed out that major responsibility for exerting influence on Souvanna would probably have to be given to the French, but that we were planning to take some initiatives as well. The Governor noted that much of the responsibility in this respect might rest with CIA and that the Agency had some plans to implement this. I confirmed this (on the basis of a discussion I had earlier this morning with [redacted]). The President requested a memorandum from the Department on political actions that the US was planning with respect to the new government of Laos.

(b)(3)

5. Other matters raised and discussed briefly were:

a. In response to a query by the President, Governor Harriman indicated that we were pressing the Korean government to reform its legal system going ahead with discussions of a Status of Forces Agreement.

b. Mr. Unger, who is now DCM, Bangkok, has been appointed as the new ambassador to Laos and is to report there as soon as possible.

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c. Governor Harriman indicated his concern about possible Soviet behavior in Geneva now that there is a coalition government. He felt that this would provide an acid test of Soviet intentions in Southeast Asia.

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