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THOUGHTS AND THINGS

The Job Of
Reconstruction

By Ray Nelson

WHILE THE U.S. AIR Force is still destroying North Vietnam, some agencies of the American government are quietly studying the problems of reconstructing this mountainous, semi-industrialized, and incredibly tough adversary of the United States.

President Nixon (and President Johnson before him) has committed the United States to this course.

Some Americans consider it a matter of conscience.

ACCORDING TO WASHINGTON correspondent Dana Adams Schmidt, the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency have, over the years, accumulated a vast fund of information about North Vietnam, useful originally for knocking the country down, and now for putting it back together again.

This information has been kept secret, but now is being drawn upon by Henry A. Kissinger's staff at the White House, and will soon be passed over to Roderick O'Connor, assistant administrator for special projects in the Agency for International Development (AID), who has been tagged for the reconstruction job.

THE WORLD BANK has had a committee to study Vietnam reconstruction since 1965.

The Soviet Union and Communist China, the most likely sources of technological aid, have plenty of current firsthand information.

Japanese industry has shown a keen interest in getting in on the job, and has already had a mission visiting Hanoi.

Top North Vietnamese officials have, however, made it emphatically clear to visitors that they do not intend to let any foreign agency plan or execute their reconstruction.

They are a closed group, so jealous of their sovereignty that they would rather forego foreign aid than permit intrusion.

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF third countries have advised Washington that the North Vietnamese would regard an American contribution as "reparations." What they want is a check direct from the U.S., but no AID mission, and no experts or advisers.

Not do the North Vietnamese have much use for the United Nations, which did nothing for them during the long war; nor for the World Bank, which they consider to be dominated by the United States; nor for the Asian Reconstruction Bank, which they consider to be dominated by Japan.

They would like to avoid a financial consortium of aid givers and to deal with each donor or lender bilaterally.

SCHMIDT BELIEVES THAT in any reconstruction plan the questions to be asked must include: How much damage was done? What is the potential for reconstruction?

North Vietnam is a country devastated by a deluge of a half million tons of bombs.

Its devastation differs, however, from that of South Vietnam, which has been ravaged by an even larger tonnage of explosives.

Whereas the bombing in South Vietnam has been characterized by tactical support of the American and South Vietnamese armies, and carpet bombing and defoliation in the countryside where North Vietnamese and Viet Cong were presumed to be taking cover, in the North the bombing has been "strategic," aimed especially at industries, power plants, supply dumps, and communication centers which were more often than not in or near towns.

CONSEQUENTLY, NOT A single city has been spared. Some cities, like Vinh, a communications center on the way to South Vietnam, have been obliterated once, partly reconstructed during the three-year bombing pause after 1968, and then obliterated again.

Almost all are one-half or more in ruins. All large bridges, all large oil-storage facilities, and all major electric-power plants have been hit.

NORTH VIETNAM IS, at present, a society devoid of amenities.

The people work mainly with what is shipped in from China (small arms, essential rice, and other food) and from the Soviet Union (heavy weapons and aircraft).

It is a country where it is impossible to purchase a paper clip or any but the roughest clothing, where school children have been taught to wash and dry copy paper so it can be used again.

YET, INCREDIBLY, the North is still a vital, vigorous land capable of resisting the strongest military power in the world, and of supporting expeditionary forces in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

To know how North Vietnam has accomplished this is to grasp the country's potential for reconstruction.

Apart from ideological dedication and native tenacity and discipline, the key is, in a word, decentralization.

We'll continue with Dana Adams Schmidt's discussion tomorrow.

HERE AND THERE -- "Citizen's Complaint" is the title of these lines by Louise J. Panni:

To do my civic duty as a juror I did try,
But it nearly drove me crazy.
Please let me tell you why.
The judge and the two lawyers seemed to thrive upon delays;
It seemed "recess," "adjourn," "retire" was all I heard for days
And when at length the jury reached a verdict, in rapport—
They called us back and told us they had settled out of court.

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STATINTL

Kissinger's 'kiss of death' for spy chief

NEW YORK: Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's top foreign policy adviser, is reported to have given the 'kiss of death' to Richard Helms as head of America's powerful Central Intelligence Agency.

Yesterday, in a telephone conversation with Mr Nixon before he left for the latest round of Vietnam peace talks in Paris, Mr Kissinger was said to have urged that Mr Helms should be replaced as head of the super spy agency.

He was reported to have lobbied for Mr Helms to be dropped since the CIA failed

to give adequate advance warning of a big North Vietnamese offensive last spring.

Nixon Administration aides, who confirmed that Mr Helms was leaving, apparently were trying to talk a reluctant James Schlesinger into taking the tricky CIA job even though he insisted that he preferred to stay as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Mr Helms, originally named CIA chief by ex-President Johnson, is expected to be given a new job in the changes being made at Cabinet level or just below for the second Nixon Administration which begins on January 20.

CIA chief to be replaced after clash

By Our Washington Staff

PRESIDENT NIXON has decided to replace Mr Richard Helms, 59, as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, it was learnt in Washington yesterday.

He is expected to be replaced by Mr James Schlesinger, 43, head of the Atomic Energy Commission.

It has been reported that the CIA has had differences with Dr Kissinger's staff in intelligence analysis in recent months.

Some reports say that Dr Kissinger considered that the spy agency had failed to give adequate advance warning of Hanoi's intention to stage its outright invasion of South Vietnam when the Communists opened their Easter offensive earlier this year.

CIA dispute

The CIA is also reported to have been at odds with other intelligence services over the timing and subsequent handling of the Indo-Pakistani conflict in Bangladesh last year.

Mr Nixon has let it be known that he plans to cut the White House staff by half to improved efficiency. He has long pressed for a similar streamlining of America's intelligence agencies.

Dr Kissinger is to remain as the President's special adviser on national security affairs.

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STATINTL

Nixon plan to replace head of CIA reported

Chicago (AP)—The Chicago *Sun-Times* reports President Nixon plans to name James R. Schlesinger, the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, as head of the Central Intelligence Agency, replacing Richard M. Helms.

The *Washington Post* also carried a similar report in its Sunday editions.

The *Sun-Times* said Saturday that the appointment will be made early in the President's second term.

Kissinger displeased

Quoting reliable sources, the report said the replacement was prompted in part by Henry A. Kissinger's displeasure with Mr. Helms' performance as CIA head.

Mr. Schlesinger, 43, took over as head of the Atomic Energy Commission in July, 1971, and the newspaper reported he has asked to be retained in that capacity.

But Dr. Kissinger, President Nixon's national security adviser, the newspaper reports, has persuaded the President

that Mr. Helms has failed in some instances as CIA chief. In particular, the newspaper says, Dr. Kissinger felt Mr. Helms and the agency failed to give adequate advance warning of the massive North Vietnamese offensive last spring.

The newspaper said CIA officials implied that Mr. Helms' departure would be voluntary, should it occur at all.

Mr. Schlesinger, of New York, served as assistant director of the Office of Management and the Budget. In that capacity he served under George Shultz, who was reappointed Friday as Secretary of the Treasury in the Nixon Cabinet.