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Dr. Henry
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

20 September 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

SUBJECT : Plans of the War Crimes Commission of the
Stockholm Conference on Vietnam and Swedish
Media for Propaganda Exploitation of Released
American Prisoners of War

1. The press and other media in Sweden have recently
carried extensive coverage of the North Vietnamese Government's
release of the three American prisoners of war. This coverage
has included reports that the three Americans will return to
the United States via Moscow and Stockholm, with a layover in
Stockholm on 24 September.

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3.4(b)(1)

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2. An Aeroflot plane has been chartered by the War Crimes
Commission (WCC) of the Stockholm Conference for departure from
Hanoi on Saturday, 23 September 1972, at about 1500 hours. The
plane is to transport the three American prisoners of war to

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Classified by ~~_____~~. Exempt from General Declassification
Schedule of E.O. 11652 Exemption Category ~~_____~~ (2). Impossible
to Determine Date of Automatic Declassification.

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Moscow and possibly on to Stockholm, Sweden, if no convenient commercial flight is available. The possibility exists of a stop en route in Vientiane, Laos, although the planners prefer to by-pass Vientiane. The stop in Moscow is intended by the planners to be held to a minimum length with press coverage to be avoided if possible. From Moscow, the preferred route will be directly to Stockholm where the planners expect to arrive on 24 September at the latest, but possibly as early as late on 23 September.

3. The Swedish planners hope to keep the three Americans in Stockholm for at least 24 hours in order to carry out extensive media coverage of their presence and their statements. The former prisoners are being encouraged by members of the WCC to speak out extensively while in Stockholm. The WCC members are telling the American prisoners that they might achieve a form of insurance against their being taken to the United States and secreted away from their families for long periods of debriefing. The prisoners are being told that the rationale behind such "insurance" is that if everything has been said in Stockholm, then the Pentagon cannot justify secreting the men away and classifying all that they have to report. The men are further being advised by the WCC that if they go to the United States and make remarks critical of U.S. Vietnam policy there, they will be accused by the United States military of being mentally unbalanced, thus prompting ridicule and possibly an additional long and uncomfortable confinement. Stockholm, on the other hand, is considered to be an appropriate "neutral ground" where the Americans will be encouraged and may be willing to speak out, thus leaving the world media with little basis for accusing any participants in the publicity effort of having gotten biased statements from the men in a climate of duress.

4. The arrival in Stockholm is planned to be a quiet and very short affair with little or no press conference activity. It is hoped that the Americans can later be made available to press and media people in a private home or possibly in a hotel.

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5. In conjunction with the presence in Stockholm of the three former prisoners, Hans Goran Franck, Chairman of the WCC, and Jean-Christophe Oberg, Swedish Ambassador to North Vietnam, are attempting to arrange a visit by Senator Edward F. Kennedy to Stockholm. The two hope to have Senator Kennedy in the city at the same time as the three prisoners in order to attempt to arrange a press conference or similar public activity including the Senator and the three former prisoners. Ambassador Oberg and Franck have been in touch with Senator Kennedy and have said they believe that they have a fairly good chance of having him present. The WCC expects that Ramsey Clark will be in Stockholm at the time of the arrival and media coverage of the former prisoners. It is through him that the WCC hopes to draw Senator Kennedy into public involvement in the prisoner exploitation.

6. The above-described flight travel routing remains flexible, since the WCC organizers of the Western media coverage seek the best available surroundings for the event. Thus Paris is considered as an alternate locale for the media exposure of the three Americans. In this connection, Ambassador Oberg is now in Paris laying plans for possible activity there. Oberg, who has recently been in Stockholm for several weeks, has been a key figure in the planning due to his good North Vietnamese contacts in Paris and Hanoi. Swedish radio and television personnel are also being sent to Paris as well as to Hanoi for assurance of the best possible coverage of the events. Should the media exposure take place in Paris, Oberg and Franck will attempt to get Senator Kennedy to visit Paris instead of Stockholm.

7. Ramsey Clark first proposed to the North Vietnamese, while on his recent trip to Hanoi, a system of choosing the three prisoners to be released. Clark's proposal was to have a drawing of lots (among how many prisoners is not known) in front of cameras. Thus it was hoped to prove that the choice was not one dictated by the North Vietnamese. When the plan was rejected, Clark proposed a second which specified that one prisoner from each of three phases of the war be chosen. The latter plan was accepted by the North Vietnamese and hence one prisoner is of the period of the earliest United States bombing of North Vietnam; one from the period of former

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President Johnson's buildup of United States participation in Vietnam; and the third from the latest renewal of the bombing of North Vietnam. Clark proposed this system of choice in order to have former prisoners who could report on conditions faced by all the prisoners in North Vietnam and to prove that treatment had not become worse in the face of continued American bombings.

8. Members of the WCC hope to achieve an impact on American public opinion through publicity of the release of the prisoners and by tying the release to North Vietnamese willingness to deal with the Democratic Party. The WCC members hope in this way to convince the American public that, if the Democratic Party wins the coming Presidential election, all the prisoners can be brought home safely.

9. The only other recipients of this information are Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird.


Richard Helms
Director


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