

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTION

01469

~~SECRET / SENSITIVE~~

February 11, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MR. KISSINGER

FROM:

JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE

SUBJECT:

Paris Negotiating Tactics

*Handwritten notes:*  
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I am not  
disappointed  
gmp  
dutton  
HK

On February 7, State sent Ambassador Porter a telegram (Tab B) instructing him to focus on the separability issue in order to get the other side to state specifically whether in their latest formulation point one (military) could be discussed and implemented separately from point two (political). The telegram suggested that Porter concentrate on military issues and let the GVN spokesman take the lead in addressing political issues.

The telegram was intended to initiate a systematic probing of the other side's new "two point" proposal -- as opposed to attacking it at this time. This approach is consistent with that outlined in our February 5 memo to you.

At the February 10 meeting, Ambassador Porter disregarded these instructions. He did not press the other side on the separability issue and, in fact, raised such political issues as elections and self determination. Apparently, Porter was convinced that a formulation in the PRG opening statement inseparably linked the two points; therefore, there was no point in pressing this issue. The PRG formulation in question does not seem to us to be that categorical on the separability issue, and we believe a probing of their positions in the Paris forum is still in order. We do not believe we should leave ourselves exposed to charges that we have failed to explore even the slightest ambiguity in the other side's position at Kleber.

Ambassador Porter has been most skillful in exposing and denouncing the flaws in the other side's arguments and proposals. We feel, however, that we should presently engage in a dispassionate probing exercise. This probing may well determine that the latest Communist elaboration is the most unreasonable one to date -- then we can return to the attack.

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DOS, NSS reviews completed.

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Ambassador Porter might believe that White House approval of his excellent performance to date gives him a mandate to ignore the kind of State guidance sent to him last Monday with our concurrence.

It would, therefore, be useful for you to tell him that you personally concur in State's latest instructions. A back-channel to this effect has been prepared for your review and approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you send the telegram at Tab A to Ambassador Porter.

Approve \_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

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TO: USDEL FRANCE EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR PORTER

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

1. I believe it would be useful at the next plenary session to have the other side clarify the ambiguous parts of their new proposal -- especially the issue of whether or not point one can be negotiated separated from point two.
2. In this connection, State's 021826 of February 7 had our full concurrence and even though we share your view that points one and two are no doubt inseparably linked, we think it important that this be established for the record in the plenary forum. In so doing at an early stage, we will avoid any risk of charges that we have failed to explore textual ambiguities in the other side's position.
3. Meanwhile, of course, we fully support your approach of keeping our own proposals in the forefront and countering the other side's distorted appraisals of both the diplomatic and military situations.
4. Warm regards.

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO RUFNCR/USDEL FRANCE IMMEDIATE 7492  
INFO RUMJIR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 1308  
BT  
SECRET STATE 021826

CONTROL: 0 0 1 7 9 5Q  
RECD: 7FEB '72 852PM

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PARIS MEETINGS

SUBJ: PLANS FOR 144TH PLENARY SESSION, FEBRUARY 10, 1972

REF: USDEL FRANCE 2283

1. CONCUR IN PLANS CONVEYED REFTEL FOR MAINTAINING FOCUS ON EIGHT POINTS AS WELL AS OTHER PROPOSALS PUT FORTH BY OUR SIDE.
2. IN ADDITION, WE WISH TO PURSUE OUR EFFORTS TO PIN THE OTHER SIDE DOWN TO EXTENT POSSIBLE ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THEIR FEBRUARY 3 ELABORATION WHICH REMAIN AMBIGUOUS. BELIEVE THIS MIGHT BE BEST DONE BY CONTINUING TACTIC YOU EMPLOYED LAST WEEK OF CALLING FOR SPECIFIC ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED DURING REBUTTAL PERIOD. IN DOING SO, SUGGEST YOU CONCENTRATE ON MILITARY ISSUES AS OPPOSED TO POLITICAL, WHICH WE HOPE GVN WOULD TAKE LEAD IN ADDRESSING. THIS APPROACH WOULD SERVE TO UNDERSCORE VIEW THAT SVN POLITICAL SOLUTION IS PRIMARILY MATTER FOR VIETNAMESE TO WORK OUT AND WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH OUR GENERAL EFFORT TO PLACE GVN IN MORE PROMINENT NEGOTIATING ROLE.
3. AMONG POINTS IN OTHER SIDE'S POSITION, WE WISH TO FOCUS FIRST ON ISSUE OF SEPARABILITY. DESPITE THEIR RECENT STATEMENTS TO MEDIA INDICATING THEY CONTINUE TO VIEW MILITARY AND POLITICAL ISSUES AS INSEPARABLE, THIS HAS NOT BEEN EXPLICITLY CONFIRMED IN NEGOTIATING FORUM SINCE ELABORATION PRESENTED. WE WOULD LIKE OTHER SIDE TO STATE SPECIFICALLY WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN ANY CHANGE IN THEIR POSITION ON THIS ISSUE, I.E. WHETHER IN LATEST FORMULATION POINT ONE COULD BE DISCUSSED AND IMPLEMENTED SEPARATELY FROM POINT TWO.

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TELEGRAM

-2- STATE 021826, FEB 07, 1972

4. RE POLITICAL ISSUES, OTHER SIDE'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS, INCLUDING THEIR BROAD DEFINITION OF "MACHINE OF OPPRESSION AND CONSTRAINT" THAT IT INSISTS BE DISBANDED, WOULD SEEM TO PROVIDE AMPLE BASIS FOR GVN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS.

5. FOR SAIGON; QUESTION OF TACTICS VIS-A-VIS VERSAILLES CONFERENCE WILL BE SUBJECT SEPTEL. ROGERS

BT

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DRAFTED BY: EA: WLCutler  
APPROVED BY: EA - William H. Sullivan  
WHITE HOUSE - General Haig  
DOD/ISA - Mr. Constant  
S/S - O - CTMagee

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