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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

State Dept. review completed

INFORMATION

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

August 20, 1971

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

USAID, OSD reviews
completed

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE FILES

SUBJECT:

Vietnam Ad Hoc Working Group Meeting,
August 6, 1971

JCS completed review for PACOM

The South Vietnamese Election

Sullivan said there was a lot of speculation resulting from the President's press conference remark about the South Vietnamese election. The Washington Post thinks the President is thinking of dumping Thieu and the New York Times speaks of strains between Bunker and Thieu. Bunker's return will feed speculation. State will tell the press that he is coming back for consultation.

The Election Observer Commission

Sullivan says it looks as if the President has made a decision not to send a Presidential Election Observer Commission. This leaves open the possibility of sending a Congressional delegation. Perhaps we should say that we see no objection. Smyser said he thought we should indicate we did see objections to a Congressional delegation but not to individual Congressional travel.

Private Election Observers

Sullivan said that Mr. Gullion and his group will go to observe the South Vietnamese election. So will Mrs. Lord, Congressman Wolff, and Senator Stevenson. Kerr's group may go if they get money. It is uncertain whether Minh will pull out but he may do so. The Embassy thinks Thieu will win but the Communists are encouraging people to vote for Minh.

POW Release

Sullivan said that he was directing a study of prisoner release and repatriation (Tab A), to be completed by the beginning of September. CINCPAC and MACV are also looking into this.

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The Thompson Report

Sullivan asked when the White House would give an answer on releasing the Thompson report to the Hill. Smyser said he would again ask about this. Arthur said he was worried that Congress would try to attack the AID program on the basis of any information withheld from the Hill. He said Congress is trying to get separate accountability for CORDS.

25X1

Civilian Casualties

Sullivan said that civilian casualties were climbing again, although we had expected them to go down and Sullivan had told Kennedy they would go down. The big increase is apparently in I Corps, according to the military.

25X1

Weapons for the South Vietnamese

Karhohs said the meeting at CINCPAC about weapons for the South Vietnamese had been completed. It had been decided to give them M-48 tanks and heavy (8 inch) artillery. This, along with other items, would lead to a large turnover in the next few months, which would be hard to conceal. He said no decision had yet been made on helicopters, but it is apparent that Thieu expects more and has been given a commitment for more. Smyser said that this was correct, and that the helicopter program should be reviewed to leave as many helicopters as possible among the remaining U. S. forces and among the Vietnamese.

Exchange Rate Review

Mr. Arthur said another AID Bill amendment had been added in the Congress, calling for the President to review our exchange rates in South Vietnam every three months and to make a determination. He said this might not be to bad.

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Per NSC CRT

August 5, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. SIEVERTS, U/PW

Subject: Prisoner Release and Repatriation

The proposals made by President Nixon on October 7, 1970 include "the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of war held by both sides". The Seven Point Program recently tabled by the communists in Paris involves ambiguous proposals on this same subject. The category of prisoners described under Point One seems to embrace essentially the same persons covered by the President in his proposal. The category of prisoners involved in Point Two seems to go well beyond the issue of prisoners of war and to embrace those in prison for criminal actions as well as acts of political subversion.

It is desirable to determine the actions which may be involved in addressing the question of prisoner release and repatriation in the context of negotiations with respect to Viet-Nam and with respect to Laos and Cambodia. Since we are currently engaged in meetings in Paris with specific reference to Viet-Nam this has to be the framework of our initial consideration. However, since the President's proposals embrace all of Indochina and since we are seeking the return of all United States prisoners in the entire Indochina conflict, the ultimate framework of our concern should encompass an Indochina scope for our actions.

The Ad Hoc Group on Viet-Nam has agreed to designate you as Chairman of an Interdepartmental Study Panel which would prepare papers on this subject. You should work with appropriate representatives from the Department of Defense and from those other Departments and Agencies which have an interest in this subject. You should prepare studies for the Ad Hoc Group and provide that Group with recommendations which can ultimately be processed through the National Security Council machinery.

Your studies should address themselves to proposed

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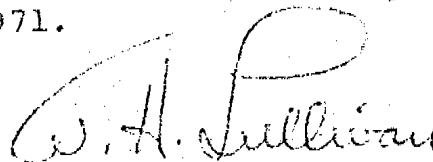
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strategies for negotiations, definitions and criteria for prisoners of war and other prisoners, the issue of non-forcible repatriation, the question of possible third country internment, and the physical and security factors which would be involved in release and repatriation.

It is requested that you assemble an appropriate panel, devise an outline of the studies that panel would recommend, and propose a schedule for the resultant reports to the Ad Hoc Group. Please send me your proposals on September 3, 1971.



William H. Sullivan
Chairman
Ad Hoc Group on Viet-Nam

- ccs: ISA - General Karhohs
- JCS - General Burrows
- CIA - Mr. Carver
- NSC - Mr. Holdridge
- AID - Mr. Nooter
- EA - Mr. Cutler
- EA/VN - Mr. Bennett

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