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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

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SUBJECT: Briefing of Dr. Kissinger by General Pauley
and Colonel Carlson of the Joint Staff
April 18, 1972, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:25 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS: General Pauley
Colonel Carlson
Dr. Kissinger
Colonel Kennedy
Commander Howe

General Pauley began the briefing by showing Dr. Kissinger photographs of the recent strikes against Hanoi and Haiphong. Concluding this, he began his regular briefing.

General Pauley: The weather remains good in all areas of North and South Vietnam.

North of the DMZ, naval ships conducted strikes near Than Hoa, Tho Vinh, Ha Tinh and Dong Hoi. The targets consisted of boat yards, warehouses, barracks, PT boat bases, POL storage areas, bridges and SAM sites. During this period 2,396 rounds were expended.

65 of the 66 scheduled ARC LIGHT sorties were flown. There were 14 in MR-1, 14 in MR-2 and 27 in MR-3. In MR-3 they began to target on the 5th and 9th Divisions which are moving away from the An Loc area.

Dr. Kissinger: Which Division is over in the area where they're moving?

Colonel Carlson: The 25th Division.

Dr. Kissinger: Are they any good?

Colonel Carlson: They are the strongest in MR-3

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Dr. Kissinger: How about the 21st Division?

Colonel Carlson: There are two types of terrain involved. The folks in the delta are used to fighting in very wet areas. Those in MR-3 are trained to fight on hard ground and in the rubber plantation areas.

General Pauley: DIA feels that the 5th and 9th Divisions will move into the area in style (between An Loc and Tay Ninh).

Dr. Kissinger: Is there anyone left around An Loc?

General Pauley: The 7th is now committed but it looks like the 5th and perhaps part of the 9th are pulling out of the area.

Dr. Kissinger: Where is the 21st Division now?

General Pauley: They are stopped on the way to An Loc.

Dr. Kissinger: Then it is probably a good idea that they stop.

General Pauley: That is right. They are in better position now.

Dr. Kissinger: Then there were no major attacks in the An Loc area?

General Pauley: There were primarily probes and attacks by fire. Turning to tactical error, there were a total of 460 U.S. TacAir strikes throughout South Vietnam and 168 VNAF. The only tactical air strikes in the North were just to the north of the DMZ around Quang Lang where MIG and SAM sites were attacked.

Dr. Kissinger: Why are they not attacking the North?

General Pauley: They are trying to make up for the sorties down in South Vietnam that were lost due to the air strikes on Haiphong and Hanoi. They have higher priority targets in the South. Admiral Moorer has talked to General Vogt and hopefully they will be back up North tomorrow.

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In MR-1, we are seeing the first activity associated with General Lam's move to the west. In one engagement 33 of the enemy were killed.

Dr. Kissinger: If General Lam behaves like he did in the Lam Son operation, he will move slowly and deliberately. His movement will be imperceptible.

General Pauley: It is true that in Lam Son he moved half way and then stopped. We have some intelligence indicating that there is a tank unit around Cam Lo and this may be why he is moving cautiously.

Dr. Kissinger: Are the B-52's getting in there?

Colonel Carlson: Yes sir. (He showed the map of B-52 strikes in MR-1.)

General Pauley: The greatest activity was in the area around Fire Base Bastogne. Yesterday a relief force got through and linked up with the defenders. The body count so far indicates 369 enemy soldiers killed in two contacts and 79 weapons seized.

Dr. Kissinger: And I suppose two ARVN air lost?

General Pauley: ARVN casualties were reported to be light. Just after this, elements of the 1st ARVN Regiment on a search operation killed 320 of the enemy and captured 70 weapons. Three hours later in the same vicinity the 1st ARVN Regiment killed 49 of the enemy.

In the 2nd ARVN Division area, 450 of the enemy were killed (briefing notes say 196). In all of these actions 1,250 of the enemy were KIA.

In MR-2, Route 19 remains closed but Korean forces are attempting to clear it and have reported seizing some key positions. In two ground operations the ARVN reported killing 50 of the enemy.

In MR-3, there has been a shift in the location of enemy forces. This has been previously shown. At the end of

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the day there had been two mortar and rocket attacks. ARVN had been attempting to expand their perimeter to the north and northwest. The Airborne is also expanding its perimeter and has been engaged in two fire fights.

Commander Howe: There were some reports this morning that a portion of the town had been reoccupied by the enemy. Is that verified by your information?

General Pauley: The enemy is around the edge of the town to the north and there is still some clearing to do. I have seen some conflicting reports.

You will recall that in the area of Loc Lang several weeks ago, an ARVN unit was ambushed and lost quite a bit of equipment. The ARVN has now gotten back into the area and recovered much of the equipment including four 155mm howitzers, two 105mm howitzers and two armored personnel carriers. There were also small attacks around the area of Lai Que.

In MR-4, the attacks have been small although there has been a recent series of sapper attacks. The ARVN unit in Kompong Trach is still surrounded but tactical air is being utilized effectively and a relief column is only a couple of kilometers away. 184 of the enemy have been reported KIA in the last 48 hours.

These are the most significant reports for the morning.

Dr. Kissinger: Thank you.

Attached at Tab A are the notes used by the briefer.

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