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APR 26 1972

Secret Viet study for Nixon stirs furor

By S. J. Micciche
Globe Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON—President Nixon's war policy in Vietnam might be construed as "malfeasance in office" for ignoring National Security Council (NSC) advice given to him three years ago, Sen. Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) declared yesterday.

Thwarted in his effort to make public all of a 500-page NSC memorandum in his possession since last December, Gravel said that from his study of the documents he believes the United States is pursuing an Indochina policy of a "pitiful giant acting petulantly . . . committing murder and genocide."

Gravel's memorandum is a copy of a study made for President Nixon a month after his inauguration in 1969, and contains high-level government opinions on the situation in Indochina at that time and prospects for the future.

Gravel said in effect that the memorandum showed the Nixon policy of Vietnamization would not work without the continued presence of American forces in Vietnam. The document itself contained estimates of the time required for completion of Vietnamization as from 8.3 to 14.4 years, dating from 1969.

Published excerpts regarding the memorandum requested by Mr. Nixon on the day after his inaugural are "very accurate . . . but the only way for objective analysis is to read it all," said Gravel.

The NSC report contains the responses of the State and Defense departments and the Central Intelligence Agency to 28 questions pre-

pared by Presidential adviser Henry Kissinger on the effect of bombing in Vietnam and the overall Indochina policy.

The advice reflected sharp differences between the military and civilian bureaus, with the pessimists from pessimists in assessing what had

happened in Vietnam up to early 1969 (when the survey was completed).

While some of these differences have become public knowledge—especially with the publication last year of the Pentagon Papers, which carried the war history up to 1968—the newly revealed study reveals how these diverging viewpoints were extended from the Johnson into the Nixon Administration.

Two broad schools of assessments emerged among the policy planners. In the first group, more optimistic and "hawkish," were the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the US military command in Vietnam, the commander in chief of Pacific forces and the American Embassy in Vietnam, headed by Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker.

Often conflicting with the judgment of those advisers was a second group, composed of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The first group, the summary of the study says, generally took "a hopeful view of current and future prospects in Vietnam," with State, Defense and the CIA "decidedly more skeptical about the present and pessimistic about the future."

These are some of the major disclosures in the summary:

—"Sound analysis" of the effectiveness of American B52 bomber strikes against enemy forces was rated "impossible" to achieve; but, "the consensus is that some strikes are very effective, some clearly wasted, and a majority with indeterminate outcome." B52s had been used against targets in South Vietnam during the Johnson Administration; they are currently being conducted for the first time against the heartland of North Vietnam, and under a different strategic rationale.

—In early 1969, the optimists concluded that on the basis of programs then in existence, it would take "8.3 years" more to pacify the remaining contested and Viet Cong-controlled population of South Vietnam. The pessimists estimated it would take "13.4 years" more to

achieve that goal.

—In sharp debate over the validity of the "domino theory"—the consequences of a communist takeover in Vietnam—military strategists generally accepted that principle, but most civilian experts concluded that while Cambodia and Laos might be endangered fairly quickly, the loss of Vietnam "would not necessarily unhinge the rest of Asia."

—On Soviet and Chinese military aid to North Vietnam, the Joint Chiefs and the US military command in Saigon said that "if all imports by sea were denied and land routes through Laos and Cambodia attacked vigorously," North Vietnam "could not obtain enough war supplies to continue." But the CIA and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, "in total disagreement," concluded that "overland routes from China alone" could supply North Vietnam with sustaining war material, "even with an unlimited bombing campaign."

President Nixon's subsequent actions in Vietnam have been more in accord with the assessments reached by the pessimists in this study, although his public explanations of his actions have reflected more of what the optimists were claiming in 1969.

In the process, the President has cut US forces in South Vietnam from over a half million at the time he took office to about 80,000 today.

While the National Security Council memorandum discloses sharp disagreements three years ago on the effectiveness of US bombing of North Vietnam, the current battlefield situation in Vietnam is much different from the situation in early 1969 and US airpower is being applied in different ways.

In contrast to the guerrilla attacks or hit-and-run actions by larger units which have dominated the enemy's strategy in the past, the current communist offensive is much more like a conventional battle, with tanks, artillery and massed troops concentrations standing and fighting.

Thus, it is reasoned officially, bombing now is more important.

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In secret 69 memo

Nixon warned on

By Morton Kondracke
and Thomas B. Ross
Sun-Times Bureau

troop pullout

WASHINGTON--President Nixon was given unanimous advice by his top advisers shortly after taking office in 1969 that South Vietnam could not stand up to the North Vietnamese without the indefinite presence of a large U.S. force.

Secret White House documents, which were made available to The Sun-Times Tuesday, indicate complete agreement among both military and civilian experts that Mr. Nixon's Vietnamization program could not reach the goal of total U.S. withdrawal if North Vietnam re-entered the war in a direct way as it did in its current offensive.

The documents are incorporated in a 500-page National Security Study Memorandum 1 (NSSM 1), compiled by Henry A. Kissinger, the President's national security adviser, in February, 1969, from detailed questions to all the top agencies dealing with the war, including the State Department, the Defense Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Skepticism on Vietnamization

"All agencies agree," the study concluded, "that RVNAF (Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces) could not, either now or even when fully modernized, handle both the VC (Viet Cong) and a sizable level of NVA (North Vietnamese Army) forces with U.S. combat support in the form of air, helicopter, artillery, logistics and some ground forces."

Kissinger's summary asserts that there were "very substantial differences of opinion within the U.S. government on many aspects of the Vietnam situation."

But on the prospects for what later became known as Vietnamization, a careful analysis of the lengthy section on the program showed unanimous skepticism about the South Vietnamese army ever making it totally on its own.

Military appraisal of RVNAF

Top military leaders—the most optimistic of all in dealing with allied prospects in Vietnam — made no declaration that total U.S. withdrawal would ever be possible.

In a top-secret paragraph of its response

to Kissinger's questions, the Pentagon said that "gradual U.S. troop reduction might be possible, given South Vietnam's "gradually improving its capabilities and effectiveness."

The most the military foresaw, however, was withdrawal of one U.S. division during mid-summer 1969. "Reduction of other U.S. forces should be possible," according to the Pentagon. "The numbers and timing depend upon progress of (South Vietnamese) modernization, improvements in effectiveness and a drastic reduction in the . . . desertion rate."

At the time that the response was written, however, the combined opinion of the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, and the commander of the U.S. forces in the Pacific, was as follows:

"The RVNAF (South Vietnamese armed forces), with their present structure and degree of combat readiness, are inadequate to handle a sizeable level of North Vietnamese Army forces.

"The RVNAF simply are not capable of attaining the level of self-sufficiency and overwhelming superiority that would be required to counter combined Viet Cong insurgency and North Vietnamese Army main force offensives."

In response to another question, the military told Kissinger that "by 1972, the planned Phase II (modernized) RVNAF will be adequate to handle the Viet Cong insurgency if the Viet Cong are not re-inforced and supported by the North Vietnamese Army."

Thus the military appeared to be indicating that after three years of modernization, South Vietnam's forces would not be capable of resisting just the kind of North Vietnamese assault that Hanoi launched last month.

Other agencies were less optimistic yet. A State Department response said that "a recent CIA memorandum concluded that it would be at least two years and perhaps longer, before the ARVN (Army of the Re-

public of Vietnam) would become an effective fighting force. The estimate of two years depended on achievement of favorable psychological conditions during that time, an achievement considered unlikely. We believe that the CIA estimate is not overly pessimistic."

South Vietnamese deficiencies

To still another question, the State Department told Kissinger that North Vietnamese involvement would mean providing South Vietnam with "sufficient combat support to make up for its deficiencies until the entire modernization and self-sufficiency program was completed."

Despite generally-gloomy estimates of Saigon's capability, President Nixon decided to gradually withdraw U.S. forces and turn over the fighting to the South Vietnamese. He had promised in the 1968 election campaign that he had a "plan to end the war."

Gradual withdrawal appeared to be working, especially in domestic political terms. Despite some setbacks, notably a North Vietnamese rout of Saigon forces in Laos last year, the President could declare that the ARVN could "hack it."

Then, last month, the President's Vietnamization policy was called into question on just the grounds that his advisers had warned about in 1969—the massive intervention of North Vietnamese troops into South Vietnam.

'Modest impact' of renewed bombing

The President's reaction to the North Vietnamese invasion was the resumption of large-scale bombing of the north that had been discontinued in 1968 by former President Lyndon B. Johnson. Other parts of NSSM 1, as has been previously reported, indicate that bombing had only modest impact on North Vietnamese capabilities.

The CIA's answers to Kissinger's questions raised serious doubts about the willingness of the South Vietnamese army to fight. It esti-

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 APR 26 1972

Excerpts from Kissinger memo

Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON -- Following are excerpts from National Security Study Memorandum 1 (NSSM-1), the secret 1969 Vietnam War document prepared at the request of presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger. The excerpts are drawn from the responses of several agencies to questions drafted by Kissinger.

(1) Question (No.12): To what extent could RVNAF (Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, South Vietnam) — as it is now — handle the VC (Viet Cong (. . . without U.S. combat support . . . if all NVA (North Vietnamese Army) units were withdrawn?

The JCS (American Joint Chiefs of Staff), CINCPAC (Commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific) and COMUSMACV (U.S. Commander in Vietnam) estimate that it is highly probable that Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF), as it exists today, adequately supported by U.S. artillery, engineer, tactical air, helicopter, and naval assets, is capable of handling the Viet Cong.

Without U.S. combat support and when opposing Viet Cong main and local force units, the RVNAF would have to reduce the number of offensive operations and adopt more of a defensive posture. This would result in loss of control by the Government of Vietnam (GVN) over substantial rural areas.

Preconditioned answer

The above response is predicated upon two assumptions: first, there exists an internal environment characterized by a workable economy, a relatively secure civilian populace and a functioning government. Secondly, the North Vietnamese army forces have withdrawn to North Vietnam and terminated external support to Viet Cong forces. Otherwise, if external support from the north were to continue, it is visualized that filler personnel would infiltrate in ever increasing numbers to counter any substantial RVNAF success.

This could result in a prolongation of the conflict unless substantial Free World Military Assistance Force presence were either continued or re-established.

It is highly probable that the RVNAF, as it exists today, adequately supported by U.S. artillery engineer, tactical air, helicopter and naval assets is capable of (1) making substantial progress in the elimination of Viet Cong main and local force units, including those with northern fillers; (2) making sustained progress in a reduction of the Viet Cong threat although elimination would require a prolonged period of time (3) achieving favorable results in a shorter time frame, if northern fillers are withdrawn.

Reduced offense

It is estimated that without U.S. combat support and opposing Viet Cong units the RVNAF would handle the numbers

of offensive operations and adopt a more defensive posture; (2) consolidate some forces and redeploy them within major populated areas (3) lose control over substantial rural areas (4) retain . . . control over major populated areas.

However, OSD (Office of the Secretary of Defense) considers that if all northerners withdraw, the Viet Cong effort in the South may collapse, thus such a complete withdrawal may be unlikely. . . .

RVNAF's capability against VC forces with NVA fillers is closely associated with time. . . .

The impact of . . . expansion and modernization is just now being felt. The second phase of the modernization . . . is to develop a balanced force capable of coping with the internal VC threat, but despite acceleration, goals will not be met before the end of FY 72 (July, 1972). . . .

To what extent could the RVNAF — as it is now — also handle a sizable level of NVA forces?

Could not cope

Today's RVNAF, without full support of U.S. combat forces could not cope with a sizable level of NVA forces.

Should the present RVNAF be reinforced with U.S. air and artillery support, their capability of defense would be improved, but not to the extent of being able to cope with the type and complexity of combat imposed by major NVA involvement.

The posture of the present RVNAF would be further strengthened if . . . backed up by major U.S. ground force elements.

The RVNAF, with their present structure and degree of combat readiness, are inadequate to handle a sizable level of North Vietnamese army forces. The RVNAF are simply not capable of attaining the level of self-sufficiency and overwhelming force superiority that would be required to counter combined Viet Cong insurgency and North Vietnamese army main force offensives. Some of the RVNAF would necessarily have to be redeployed to concentrate defenses in and around critical population centers and installations, thus abdicating a greater extent of rural areas to Viet Cong-NVA control.

Gradual improvement

(Top Secret) Although the question does not consider gradual U.S. troop reduction, the most likely and feasible scenario would be RVNAF gradually improving its capabilities and effectiveness. Associated would be a phased reduction of U.S. forces.

continued

(MACV) could be possible removing one division from South Vietnam during mid-summer 1969. He and U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker discussed this with President Thieu and were met with a favorable response.

(5) Following are excerpts from Kissinger's summary of the agencies' responses to his questions:

In addition, reduction of other U.S. forces should be possible in the near future. The numbers and timing depend upon progress of RVNAF modernization . . . improvements in effectiveness of RVNAF and a drastic reduction in the RVNAF desertion rate.

The JCS, CINCPAC and COMUSMACV consider that by 1972 the planned Phase II RVNAF will be adequate to handle the Viet-Cong insurgency if the Viet Cong are not re-inforced and supported by the North Vietnamese Army. . . .

Reforms needed

Without major reforms within the RVNAF command and selection system however, it is unlikely that the RVNAF as presently organized and led will ever constitute an effective political or military counter to the Viet Cong. Moreover, as the GVN's major presence in the countryside, the RVNAF as presently constituted will only continue to widen the gap . . . between the government and the rural population.

Thus, any program of priority changes must have as its primary purpose the provision of an interval during which maximum pressure can be exerted on the GVN to make the necessary organizational and political changes commensurate with the assumption of a larger role in the political struggle and the war.

(2) Question No. 10a: What differences of opinion exist (between agencies) on RVNAF readiness?

The State Department's reply read:

A recent CIA memorandum concluded that it would be at least two years, and perhaps longer, before the ARVN (Army of South Vietnam) would become an effective fighting force. The estimate of two years depended on achievement of favorable psychological conditions during that time, an achievement considered unlikely.

Not confident

We believe that the CIA estimate is not overly pessimistic. ARVN effectiveness has certainly improved as a result of better training, greater firepower and inspiration provided by the presence of U. S. forces . . . (but) we believe that the more crucial problems — leadership, morale, discipline and training — are long-term and highly complex and we are not confident that significant improvement in all these fields will be accomplished during the next year or so.

(3) Question No. 11: To what extent could RVNAF handle the VC . . . with or without U.S. combat support . . . if all NVA units were withdrawn? The State Department replied:

Assuming all U.S. and NVA forces were withdrawn from South Vietnam, the RVNAF alone should be able to cope with the remaining VC. If NVA personnel remained in VC units as fillers, the relevant balance would be more difficult to assess. Under these circumstances, it would probably be necessary to provide the RVNAF with sufficient U.S. combat support to make up for its deficiencies until the entire modernization and self-sufficiency program was completed.

Dim prospects

(4) The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research added the following remarks to the above answer:

. . . We do not believe that RVNAF will be able to eradicate VC political-military apparatus or to reduce significantly the level of the insurgency. Indeed, these objectives, as well as the resolution of complex and deeply rooted RVNAF deficiencies are realistically possible only in the long-term context.

The presence of substantial numbers of NVA fillers in VC units, in the absence of U.S. combat support, would tend to negate even favorable short-term, not to mention long-term, prospects for the RVNAF.

Vietnam impact on Southeast Asia

THERE CONTINUES to be a sharp debate between and within agencies about the effect of the outcome in Vietnam on other nations. The most recent NIE on this subject (NIE 50-68) tended to downgrade the so-called "domino theory." It states that a settlement which would permit the Communists to take control of the government in South Vietnam, not immediately but within a year or two, would be likely to bring Cambodia and Laos into Hanoi's orbit at a fairly early state, but that that development would not necessarily unhinge the rest of Asia.

The NIE dissenters believe that an unfavorable settlement would stimulate the Communists to become more active elsewhere and that it will be difficult to resist making some accommodation to the pressure than generated. They believe, in contrast to the estimate, these adjustments would be relatively small and insensitive to subsequent U.S. policy.

Both the majority and the dissenters reject the view that an unfavorable settlement in Vietnam will inevitably be followed by Communist takeovers outside Indochina.

Moscow and Peking influence

There is general governmental agreement on this question. Peking opposes negotiations while Moscow prefers an early negotiated settlement on terms as favorable as possible to Hanoi. Neither Peking nor Moscow have exerted heavy pressure on Hanoi and for various reasons they are unlikely to do so, although their military and economic assistance give them important leverage. CIA notes that "in competing for influence Peking and Moscow tend to cancel out each other."

The enemy

(Questions 5-10)

Under current rules of engagement, the enemy's manpower pool and infiltration capabilities can outlast allied attrition efforts indefinitely.

The major issues

If the 1967-1968 pacification rate is sustained, the first interpretation implies that it will take 8.3 years to pacify the 4.15 million contested and VC population of December, 1968; the second view implies pacification success in 13.4 years.

The present situation

No agency clearly forecasts a "victory" over the Communists, and all acknowledge the manifold problems facing the DVN as we withdraw. However, MACV-JCS stress the need for continued U.S. support. OSD and State believe that only a compromise settlement is possible and emphasize GVN self-reliance. CIA states that progress in SVN has been sufficiently slow and fragile that substantial U.S. disengagement in the next few years could jeopardize all recent gains.

Alternative campaign

All agencies agree that Chinese and Soviet aid has provided almost all the war materiel used by Hanoi. However, OSD-CIA and MACV-JCS disagree over whether the flow of aid could be reduced enough to make a difference in South Vietnam. If all imports by sea were denied and land routes through Laos and Cambodia attacked vigorously, the MACV-JCS find that NVN could not obtain enough war supplies to continue. In total disagreement, OSD and CIA believe that the overland routes from China alone could provide NVN enough materiel to carry on, even with an unlimited bombing campaign.

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Gravel Tells New Secrets

BY PHILIP WARDEN

[Chicago Tribune Press Service]

WASHINGTON, April 25 — Sen. Mike Gravel (D., Alaska) today accused President Nixon of possible "malfeasance in office" for not conducting the Viet Nam war the way some advisers recommended.

Gravel defied federal classified document laws and Senate rules to divulge, partly on the Senate floor and partly at a press conference, some of the contents of a 1969 National Security Council study memorandum on Viet Nam.

There were no tears in Gravel's eyes today. On the night last summer when he read portions of the secret Pentagon papers on Viet Nam, Gravel cried.

Senate OK Denied

Gravel first attempted today to induce the Senate to allow him to publish the near-500-page memorandum in the Congressional Record. He asked the unanimous consent of the four senators in the chamber. Sen. Robert P. Griffin (R, Mich.), the acting minority leader, objected.

Gravel then asked unanimous consent to make a speech quoting portions of the secret memorandum. Again Griffin objected. Gravel proceeded to read his speech, including quotations direct from the memorandum. Griffin listened but did not voice new objections.

Gravel told newsmen he obtained the secret document in December. He said it was "classified secret."

Fear of Damage

Asked why he thought Griffin objected to his reading it into the Congressional Record, Gravel replied:

"I think he blocked for very partisan reasons. I think they know—and they've been told by the White House—that this is probably the most damaging piece of evidence and information and facts against Richard Nixon since he's taken office.

"And it shows in my mind—and I think that will be the judgment of the American people to make, but I won't use the word—but I think some could construe this as malfeasance in office."

Gravel charged that the President refused to accept the opinion of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Department that daily bombing of North Vietnamese targets would fail to achieve its objective.

A Strategic Error

The new bombing of the North ordered by the President to stop the current Communist drive into South Viet Nam and breaking off of peace negotiations in Paris, Gravel said, "has forced the offensive now taking place."

"The President had only one concern," Gravel told the Senate. "The one, foremost concern of all was to save face."

Gravel said hundreds of thousands of men have died as a result of the President's desire to save face.

"It is reminiscent of some of the dictators and monarchs of the past," he said.

Gravel has reserved 15 minutes of time in the Senate for Thursday in a new attempt to print the complete text of the 1969 memorandum in the Congressional Record.

Gravel asked Sen. William Fulbright (D., Ark), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, to call a meeting of his committee so Gravel could get the committee to print the document and thereby circumvent Griffin. Fulbright reportedly rejected Gravel's proposal.

Gravel said he would not call his subcommittee on public buildings and grounds into extraordinary session, as he did when he wanted congressional

immunity so he could declassify the Pentagon papers and make them public last summer.

Only Course Open

"I have legal problems," he explained, saying these were mostly his case before the United States Supreme Court connected with the release of the Pentagon papers and his claim to immunity.

Gravel told the press conference that once the President renewed the bombing of North Viet Nam and terminated the Paris peace talks, North Viet Nam had to start a new offensive.

"They could only undertake the offensive because they had nothing to lose," Gravel said. "It would take a fool not to come to the same conclusion."

Altho there was talk of possible censure of Gravel for violating both the classified documents laws and Senate rules, Sen. William B. Saxbe (R., Ohio), an advocate of censure, said he doubted whether such a move would be attempted. He speculated that a censure move would be defeated on a straight party-line vote.

"Gravel is not the most important thing, even tho he might disagree," Saxbe said in an interview. "The most important thing is to get the Senate to police its membership."

At the State Department today, a spokesman said Gravel's criticism of the renewed bombing in North Viet Nam was not valid because the present military situation differs substantially from the situation three years ago when the National Security Council memorandum was prepared.

"What the North Vietnamese Army has faced us with is something quite different from what was essentially small-scale, guerrilla warfare," Charles W. Bray, a State Department press officer said.

Bray also noted that judgments regarding the effectiveness of air bombing in the past have been "mixed and not categorical."

By using more conventional combat devices, including tanks, heavy artillery and ground-to-air anti-aircraft

rockets, the North Vietnamese are now presenting "individual targets which were rarely available in earlier years," Bray said.

The North Vietnamese, he commented, are much more heavily dependent on logistic and re-supply operations, "which by their very nature are accessible to retaliation from the air."

Memo shows Nixon had no peace plan

By TIM WHEELER

WASHINGTON, April 25—Senator Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) defied President Nixon today and read on the U.S. Senate floor portions of a secret White House memo which explodes as a hoax Nixon's so-called "peace plan" that won him election in 1968.

However, Senate minority whip, Robert Griffin (R-Mich) frantically maneuvered to gag Gravel from inserting the full text of the memo in the Congressional Record.

The memo, written by Nixon's adviser, Henry Kissinger, and titled "Responses to National Security Study Memorandum 1" (NSSM-1) was completed in February, 1969.

The memo told Nixon that it would take 8.5 to 13.4 years to complete "pacification" of South Vietnam and that liberation forces were capable of outlasting U.S. aggression indefinitely.

No U.S. victory seen

The report said, in no uncertain terms, that the U.S. could not win a military victory, nor could it win a political victory.

It said that South Vietnamese armed forces "could not either now or even when fully modernized handle both the VC and a sizeable level of NVA (North Vietnamese Army) forces without U.S. combat support in the form of air, helicopters, artillery logistics and some ground forces."

The South Vietnamese faced "severe motivation, leadership and desertion problems" and had an annual desertion rate of 54 percent of their strength, the memo declared.

Press shown memo

Gravel displayed the book length memo to reporters at a Senate press conference but he refrained from releasing the full document, explaining that Nixon supporters are threatening to censure him for his bold action.

He vowed, nevertheless, to release "every stitch of paper I have" so that the American people can judge the facts for themselves.

The memo says that the CIA and Defense Department had told Nixon in 1969 that his Vietnamization policy would never work, that U.S. saturation bombings of civilian populations was futile, that the South Vietnamese population would never be pacified, short of total annihilation carried out over more than a decade, and that the South Vietnamese puppet government is "chancy at best."

The Washington Post devoted two full pages and two columns on its front page to reprinting vast portions of the memo, in defiance of an executive order which establishes the system of government classification of documents.

The Senate floor was all but deserted but the galleries were jammed with citizens, including reporters, as Sen. Griffin, his voice cold with fury, threatened to call the Senate into closed session to keep the American people from learning the contents of the memo.

But Gravel read portions of the document anyway. The people, he charged, "now know that he, President Nixon, never had a plan to end the war. Instead he adopted a policy that would indefinitely maintain the American military presence in Vietnam...and the result is now clear for all to see, with the war raging at a level as intense and as destructive as any time before."

Gravel accused Nixon of "committing genocide in Vietnam."

"The consequences of his policy will be the killing and maiming of hundreds of thousands of human beings," he told reporters.

Nixon intention exposed

Gravel said that a study of the

no time after taking office did Richard Nixon consider seriously getting out of Vietnam or of negotiating with the North Vietnamese for an end to the war."

Instead of accepting the "pessimistic" conclusions of the CIA reported in the memo, Nixon, he said, "ignored NSSM-1's evaluation and persisted in the fundamental policies of his predecessor—propping up our client regime in Saigon.

"In spite of the heaviest bombing campaign in history conducted upon Laos and the Ho Chi Minh trail, the Communist side has been able to mount a massive new offensive..."

Bombing held vain

Gravel quoted a section of the memo in which civilian experts in the Pentagon informed Nixon that "the external supply requirements VC/NVA (Vietcong/North Vietnam Army) forces in South Vietnam are so small... that it is unlikely any air interdiction campaign can reduce it below the required levels...the enemy can continue to push sufficient supplies through."

The State Department intelligence wing is recorded as stating, "Our interdiction efforts in Laos do not appear to have weakened in any major way Communist capabilities to wage an aggressive and protracted campaign in South Vietnam..."

And the CIA added glumly, "Almost four years of air war in North Vietnam have shown—as did the Korean war—that although air strikes will destroy...they cannot successfully interdict the flow of supplies."

The portions of the memo reprinted by the Washington Post reveal that Nixon was told by

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1969 STUDY SHOWS WAR POLICY SPLIT

Joint Chiefs Urged Renewed Bombing but Other Units Doubted Effectiveness

By TAD SZULC

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 25 — Ellsworth Bunker, United States Ambassador in Saigon, predicted in a White House study on Vietnam policy at the outset of the Nixon Administration that North Vietnam's military prospects were so bleak that Hanoi would "make significant concessions" at the Paris peace negotiations.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the same study, unsuccessfully urged the President to resume at once the bombing campaign against the southern part of North Vietnam, which had been halted late in 1968 by the Johnson Administration.

The full text of the study, known as National Security Study Memorandum No. 1 and classified "secret," was obtained by The New York Times today. Its disclosure came as the North Vietnamese were pressing a large-scale offensive in South Vietnam and after the President had ordered a renewed bombing effort against North Vietnam.

In the study, which was compiled early in 1969, the Joint Chiefs said they believed that a determined and immediate resumption of the bombing "would assure almost total interdiction of truck and water-borne movement of supplies into the demilitarized zone and Laos." They contended that the bombing had been effective.

But most of the other Government agencies contributing to the study warned Mr. Nixon that the record of strategic and tactical bombing in Indochina over previous years showed that an air strategy had failed to achieve conclusive results.

Excerpts from the full study, pertaining to the effectiveness of the earlier bombing of North Vietnam, were made public this morning by Senator Mike Gravel, Democrat of Alaska, at the opening of today's Senate session.

The Republican leadership, however, blocked an attempt by Senator Gravel to place 50 pages of the secret study in the Congressional Record. Mr. Gravel said these documents demonstrated that President Nixon "is today pursuing a reckless, futile, and immoral policy which he knows will not work, but which is intended solely to enable him to save face."

The recommendations and conclusions by military, intelligence and foreign affairs agencies and bureaus of the Government contained in the study were in response to 28 questions submitted to them Jan. 21, 1969, the day after President Nixon's inauguration, by Henry A. Kissinger, the White House adviser for national security.

Mr. Nixon had asked Mr. Kissinger for the study, ranging from the effects of the bombing to Hanoi's motives in agreeing to the Paris peace negotiations the previous year. The detailed responses, received within 10 days, became the basis for National Security Study Memorandum No. 1.

Summary Published

A summary of the memorandum relating the agreements and disagreements within the Administration, was published this morning in The Washington Post. Details of the study were also published in this week's issue of Newsweek magazine.

The full text emphasized the depth and the extent of the dissension among the agencies. One such disclosure was that the Joint Chiefs made a strong plea for new bombings in the face of criticism of the earlier air operations by the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department and the civilian office of the Secretary of Defense.

The text of the study also showed the following:

¶ There was general agreement among the Government agencies on the gradual improvement in the South Vietnamese armed forces. They concurred that Saigon's troops probably could cope with an offensive mounted by Vietcong forces, but not if they were substantially reinforced by North Vietnamese army troops.

¶ There was general agreement that it was not out of "weakness" that Hanoi agreed to negotiate with the United States in Paris. The State Department emphasized Soviet efforts to facilitate the negotiations, which began in May, 1968, and said that "the Russians can use leverage upon the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Embassy in Saigon, and takes a

fashion."

¶ The C.I.A. cited the differences in estimates of total enemy strength between itself and the Defense intelligence agency, on the one hand, and the Commander in Chief, Pacific, Adm. John F. McCain Jr., and the United States command in Saigon on the other. The C.I.A. warned that these differences "may become of major political importance if developments in Paris should lead to an agreement on the phased withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops, which intelligence might be required to confirm or monitor."

¶ The United States Embassy in Saigon, in a report signed by Ambassador Bunker, predicted that "once Hanoi is convinced that the new Administration is not going to 'quit' in Vietnam or give the game away for free" at the Paris talks, "we would expect renewal of 'serious' talks."

The embassy report said that, while North Vietnam would try to obtain the best conditions, "we think the prospects on the ground are bleak enough for them so that they will, in the end, make significant concessions (in terms of their own withdrawal) to get us out."

The National Security Study Memorandum No. 1, which consists of 548 pages, was the first of nearly 150 studies that have been conducted during the Nixon Administration under the direction of Mr. Kissinger. Each of the huge memorandums has examined the implications of a major foreign-policy question, such as the relations of the United States with the Communist Market, or with the white regimes of Southern Africa.

Accord and Discord

Although all the memorandums are classified as secret, the nature of the first study, as an exhaustive review of the Vietnam situation, has been previously published.

The summary section of the Vietnam-policy study, reportedly drafted by Mr. Kissinger, said that the responses "show agreement on some matters as well as very substantial differences of opinion within the U.S. Government," including "sharpest differences" in interpreting available data.

The summary said that the disagreements "are reflected in two schools in the Government with generally consistent membership."

The first school, it said, usually includes the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam; Commanders in Chief, Pacific and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Embassy in Saigon, "and takes a

hopeful view of current and future prospects in Vietnam."

The second school, it added usually includes the office of the Secretary of Defense, the C.I.A. and, to a lesser extent, the State Department and "is decidedly more skeptical about the present and pessimistic about the future."

On the question of bombing effectiveness over the Laos infiltration trails and North Vietnam, the summary said that the United States command in Saigon and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the one hand and the State Department, the C.I.A. and the office of the Secretary of Defense on the other, "fundamentally disagree over whether our bombing campaign either prior to or after November (1968) has reduced the enemy's throughput of supplies so that the enemy in South Vietnam receives less than he needs there."

It said that the Saigon command and the chiefs "feel the bombing has succeeded, while

the State Department, the C.I.A. and the Secretary of Defense's office "think it has failed."

The office of the Secretary of Defense is a term used to describe Melvin R. Laird, the Secretary, and his personal staff. The study thus suggested a conflict between Secretary Laird and the uniformed Joint Chiefs of Staff.

While the systematic bombing of North Vietnam was halted in November, 1968, under the "understanding" that led to the new phase of the Paris peace talks, United States aircraft, including B-52 bombers, continued raiding the Laos infiltration trails.

This is why critics of the current bombing of North Vietnam, related to Hanoi's new offensive, believe that the conclusions reached by a majority of the Government agencies in 1969 remain timely.

The State Department, replying to Senator Gravel's remarks, rejected today any attempts to equate the pre-1969 bombings with the present situation.

The department's spokesman, Charles W. Bray 3d, said that "the analysis of the effect of bombings covers a situation at a different time and different circumstances."

"What the North Vietnamese Army has now faced us with," he said, "is something quite different from what was essentially a small-scale and guerrilla warfare. In adopting much

Excerpts From 1969 National Security Study of Vietnam War Requested by Nixon

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 25—Following are excerpts from National Security Study Memorandum 1, the 548-page study of the Vietnam war ordered by Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser on national security, at the request of the President on Jan. 21, 1969. The document was made available to The New York Times, which supplied the headings that appear on the excerpts.

Bombing of North Vietnam

C.I.A.

Almost four years of air war in North Vietnam have shown—as did the Korean war—that, although air strikes will destroy transport facilities, equipment and supplies, they cannot successfully interdict the flow of supplies because much of the damage can frequently be repaired within hours.

The major effects of the bombing of North Vietnam were extensive damage to the transport network, widespread economic disruption, greatly increased manpower requirements and the problems of maintaining the morale of the people in the face of personal hardships and deprivation. Hanoi was able to cope effectively with each of these strains, so that the air war did not seriously affect the flow of men and supplies to Communist forces in Laos and South Vietnam. Nor did it significantly erode North Vietnam's military defense capability or Hanoi's determination to persist in the war. Material losses resulting from the bombing were, for the most part, offset by increased imports from Communist countries.

Communist military and economic aid to North Vietnam to a large extent offset the physical destruction and the disruptive effects of the U.S. bombing and were instrumental in maintaining the morale of the people. Communist countries provided all of the weapons; enough food, consumer goods and materials to compensate for the domestic output, and most of the equipment and materials to maintain the transport system. Without Communist aid, most of it from the Soviet Union and China—particularly given the pressures generated by the bombing—the Vietnamese Communists would have been unable to sustain the war in both South and North Vietnam on anything like the levels actually engaged in during the past three years.

The amount of Communist economic aid delivered annually has grown from a yearly average of less than \$100-million through 1964, to \$150-million in 1965, \$275-million in 1966, \$370-million in 1967 and \$460-million in 1968. The value of Communist military aid increased from an average of less than \$15-million a year during 1954-64 to

\$270-million in 1965, \$455-million in 1966 and \$650-million in 1967. With the restricted bombings of the heavily defended northern part of the country in 1968, military aid deliveries were reduced. At least 75 per cent of total military aid since 1965 has been for air defense.

North Vietnam's air defenses significantly reduced the effectiveness of the U. S. bombing, resulted directly or indirectly in the loss of almost 1,100 U. S. aircraft and provided a psychological boost to morale. Before 1965, the Soviet Union had provided North Vietnam with only ground forces equipment, transport and trainer aircraft and small naval patrol craft, while China had provided MIG-15/17 jet fighters, motor gunboats and ground forces equipment. Since early 1965, the U.S.S.R. has provided North Vietnam with most of its air defense systems, including surface-to-air missiles, jet fighters, a radar network and anti-aircraft artillery. Chinese military aid since 1965, much smaller than that from the U.S.S.R., has been important primarily in building up North Vietnam's ground forces including equipping Communist ground forces in South Vietnam with the AK-47 assault rifle, the 107-mm. rocket and other new weapons.

All of the war-essential imports could be brought into North Vietnam over rail lines or roads from China in the event that imports by sea were successfully denied. The disruption to imports, if sea-borne imports were cut off, would be widespread but temporary. Within two or three months North Vietnam and its allies would be able to implement alternative procedures for maintaining the flow of essential economic and military imports. The uninterrupted capacities of the railroad, highway and river connections with China are about 16,000 tons per day, more than two and a half times the 6,300 tons per day of total imports overland and by sea in 1963, when the volume reached an all-time high.

Two principal rail lines connect Hanoi with Communist China, with a combined capacity of over 9,000 tons a day. Eight primary highway routes cross the China border, having a combined capacity of about 4,000 tons per day. The Red River flows out of China and has a capacity averaging 1,500 tons per

It is generally agreed that a feasible method for analyzing Arc Light effectiveness has not yet been devised. Field commanders are lavish in their praise. COMUSMACV recently stated that Arc Light was his strategic reserve and had the equivalent combat punch of two divisions. No one has been able to quantitatively support such claims (or disprove them). Hard evidence on the effectiveness of the Arc Light program is difficult to find. Certainly some strikes are highly effective. Some are clearly wasted. The majority have an undetermined impact.

The J.C.S. estimate that 41,250 enemy were killed in 1968 by all in-country B-52 strikes. This is an average of 2.5 enemy killed per sortie.

Office of the Secretary of Defense estimates of enemy killed by Arc Light are much lower than those of the J.C.S.

If this average enemy casualty rate is extrapolated to include all B-52 strikes, Arc Light apparently has killed day.

Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that resumption of an interdiction campaign similar to that carried out in Route Package I between July and 1 November 1968 would assure almost total interdiction of truck and waterborne movement of supplies into the demilitarized zone and Laos. Naval blockade offshore and interdiction of Region Package II to Thanhhoa would further enhance this effort.

Commitment of B-52 forces following heavy and unrestricted suppression of defenses by fighters, could reduce the amount of time to accomplish the above.

There is not sufficient data available at this time on either the cost or the effectiveness of an air campaign against these land lines to reach a firm conclusion as to the chances of isolating NVN from her neighbors. Past attempts to cut rail, road and water networks in NVN have met with considerable difficulties. It has been estimated that a minimum of 6,000 attack sorties per month would be required against the two rail lines from China. Even at this level of effort, the North Vietnamese could continue to use the rail lines to shuttle supplies if they were willing to devote sufficient manpower to repair and transshipment operations.

It is not possible to give a definitive amount to the question of how much war-essential imports could come into NVN if sea imports are denied and a strong air campaign is initiated.

The act of sealing off the enemy's Cambodian supply lines must be considered a high priority. It is planned to prevent supplies from reaching enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam.

continued

approximately 17,000 enemy since 1965 (3.9 per cent of the population) will cause 8,000 deaths in 1969.

State Department

There was a good deal more evidence on the nature of the strain produced by the bombing than on their significance. U.S. intelligence indications, including, inter alia, the observations of travelers to North Vietnam, the opinions of the Hanoi diplomatic community (notably the Canadians and British), North Vietnamese public radio broadcasts, aerial photography and the testimony of NVN P.O.W.'s in South Vietnam, of fishermen captured off the coast of North Vietnam and of the Spanish repatriates—all underscored the fact that the U.S. bombing was a matter of concern to the North. This evidence indicated that it was clearly having an impact and was generating strains throughout North Vietnam. The bombing is estimated to have caused North Vietnam economic and military losses totaling just under \$500-million. In addition, there were many additional losses that could not, in the intelligence community's opinion, be assigned any meaningful values.

Unfortunately, the available intelligence indicators were relatively silent about the significance of these strains, i.e., about their cumulative ability to

Withdrawal of U.S. Forces

Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the essential conditions for a cessation of hostilities include an effective cease-fire, verified withdrawal to North Vietnam of all North Vietnamese personnel (including those in Laos and Cambodia), verified cessation of infiltration, substantial reduction in terrorism, repatriation of U.S. prisoners, agreement to re-establish the demilitarized zone with adequate safeguards, no prohibition against U. S. assistance to insure that the RVNAF is capable of coping with the residual security threat and preservation of the sovereignty of the GVN.

It may not be possible for negotiations to achieve agreement in full on all of the essential conditions. However, the degree to which the essential conditions can be achieved as a result of negotiations is crucial to the determination of whether "victory" has been achieved or a strong non-Communist political role assured.

Achievement of the essential conditions for cessation of hostilities is contingent upon continuation of the U.S. effort and improvement of the RVNAF. It is inconceivable that the essential conditions could be realized as a result of an early unilateral reduction of U.S. military effort.

Office of Secretary of Defense

There is a need within the U.S. Government for agreement on the essential conditions for a cessation of hostilities.

deter Hanoi from political and military theory, there was an upper limit to North Vietnam's capacity simultaneously to continue the defense of the North and the big-unit war in the South. The bombing undoubtedly pushed Hanoi closer to that limit, but it was not possible to determine precisely (1) where the limit lay and (2) how far from it Hanoi was at any given time. Hanoi's

decisions to change from protracted war to the Tet offensive and then to negotiations may be seen as indications it was approaching that limit, but it obviously still had considerable reserve capacity at that time.

Glossary

ARC LIGHT—Code name for B-52 bombing
C.I.A.—Central Intelligence Agency
CINCPAC—Commander in Chief, Pacific
COMUSMACV—Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
D.I.A.—Defense Intelligence Agency
DMZ—Demilitarized zone
GUN—Government of South Vietnam
J.C.S.—Joint Chiefs of Staff
N.V.A.—North Vietnamese Army
N.L.F.—National Liberation Front (Vietcong)
NVN—North Vietnam
RVNAF—Republic of (South) Vietnam armed forces
SVN—South Vietnam
U.S./F.W.—United States/Free World forces

Enemy Capabilities

State Department

Should the Communists decide to risk heavy losses, they have the capability to launch large-scale offensives in one or more parts of the country, particularly in III Corps. These offensives could include ground assaults or attacks by fire against any number of secondary provincial centers and allied installations, a general heightening of minor actions and harassment throughout the country, and/or a strong counter effort against the pacification campaign. There may also be some "dramatic" incidents, involving perhaps the infiltration of sapper units and some combat squads into Saigon or other major urban areas, the brief seizing of a section of a provincial capital and a devastating attack against a model pacification area or refugee centers. Such military successes as might be achieved would be only temporary and would not approach the scale of Tet 1968. By a careful choice of targets and tactics, the enemy might be able to hold down

his casualties; any major commitment of troops, however, would cost him dearly.

Joint Chiefs of Staff

The enemy retains a significant capability to launch offensive actions in South Vietnam (SVN) at times of his own choosing and on a broad scale within the next six months. However, it is doubtful that he can successfully carry off a large-scale offensive and achieve "dramatic" results on a par with the Tet offensive of last year.

Again from a purely quantitative standpoint, the enemy could launch an attack through the demilitarized zone (DMZ) with an equivalent strength of two divisions, an attack against Danang by the equivalent of about one division, and an attack against Saigon with a strength of up to four or five divisions.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (J.C.S.) believe that the allies in SVN have the forces and means to defeat an enemy offensive and that this is quite apparent to the Communists.

C.I.A.

The difference in estimates [of total enemy strength between the C.I.A. and D.I.A. on the one hand and CINCPAC/MACV on the other] may become of major political importance if developments in Paris should lead to an agreement on the phased withdrawal of NVA troops which intelligence might be required to confirm or monitor.

continued

Circumstances of Negotiations

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State Department

Hanoi decided to negotiate for a number of reasons related to its estimate of the course of the war and its chances for success. Mainly, it came more and more to realize that it could not win the conflict by continued military and international political pressure, and that it would have to negotiate in order to make the American forces leave. It also sensed that the constitutional structure in South Vietnam, supported by the South Vietnamese Army, was developing a manner which might preclude

South. It wanted to open possibilities for greater emphasis on political warfare, and also to reduce the chance that the U.S. might escalate further.

But Hanoi's concern about its prospects for winning was not accompanied by any feeling that it had lost the war and that it needed to surrender. On the contrary, in fact, the Communist leaders felt distinct cause for pride because North Vietnam and the Vietcong, even with large amounts of Soviet and Chinese aid, had resisted U. S. military pressure for several years and had not been beaten. They also believed that U.S. public opinion was beginning to tire of the war, and they believed that election year politics in the United States offered them an opportunity to profit from this attitude. Although the election is now over, the Hanoi leaders continue to believe that public pressure will force the U. S. Government to end the war. One reason Hanoi is negotiating is because it believes that we will have to look for compromise formulas in the talks, and that its own intransigence, coupled with continued military initiatives, will add to public pressures on the Administration to make such compromises.

However, the North Vietnamese leadership recognizes that such a settlement will not be easy to obtain, and that it may take some time before the U. S. is prepared to grant terms which the Communists now consider acceptable. The leadership therefore hopes to continue to exert military and political pressure against us, and particularly against the South Vietnamese Government, in order to force or persuade us to accept Communist terms. At the same time, the leadership recognizes that its own southern structure may suffer further under continued warfare.

Thus the Communists are negotiating under pressure, just as they think we are negotiating under pressure. Some of the same pressures which drove them to negotiate will also drive them to modify their own terms and conditions over time. The Communists will want to pick the best possible moment for compromise, when we have yielded on the things which they consider vital but before they themselves have had to give up anything of critical importance. This will require delicate and sensitive timing. It is thus not correct to say that the Communists are not negotiating "seriously." They are negotiating seriously, in the sense that negotiations are an important element in their strategy. Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000300350073-4

participation unless the N.L.F. could be negotiated into the picture.

Combined with these realizations was a desire to reduce the scale of the conflict, or at least to end the bombing. North Vietnam was beginning to feel greater pressure toward the middle and latter part of 1967, as the bombing became heavier. The Communist leadership also became worried that it was losing members of the important southern cadre element in its southern structure at a rate which, if continued over a long time, would leave the Vietcong unable to compete effectively in the

required evolution in their position will come slowly.

Although there is strong evidence of constructive Soviet effort over this period, one must balance this appraisal with the observation that the North Vietnamese may at times have employed the Soviets as intermediaries to convey positions upon which they had already decided themselves, so that they would not have to "lose face" by making the concessions directly to us.

Even with this caveat, however, the record would appear to support the conclusion that since May, 1968, the Soviets have employed their influence over Hanoi in a generally constructive direction both as to timing and substance. From all indications they will continue to stake out tough Hanoi bargaining positions, to explore U.S. thinking and, whenever they consider it warranted, to utilize their leverage upon Hanoi in measured, highly selective and carefully timed fashion.

Military Community

(Including the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the American command in Saigon.)

As far as our knowledge of how Hanoi thinks and feels, we see through the glass darkly if at all.

Notwithstanding, all echelons generally agree that the preponderance of evidence indicates that North Vietnam is in Paris because of a decision that it would be less costly to get the bombing stopped and to negotiate the U.S. out of South Vietnam (SVN) than to continue fighting for another 5 to 10 years.

On the basis of intelligence derived from analysis of Hanoi's known diplomatic relations with China and the Soviet Union; reports from third-country diplomats; and continuing study of public and private statements by officials of the three countries, there does not appear to be significant pressure by Moscow or Peking on North Vietnam. Both can be expected, however, to continue their efforts, public and private, to influence North Vietnamese decisions in Paris and in the conduct of the war. At best, the Chinese probably hope to impress on Hanoi that any Paris settlement will not alter China's support for wars of national liberation throughout Southeast Asia, while the Soviets presumably are husbanding their influence in the hope of having decisive impact in the event of a breakthrough in the negotiations.

South Vietnamese Forces

State Department

Assuming that all U.S. forces and all NVA forces—fillers as well as organized units but not regroupees—were withdrawn from South Vietnam, the RVNAF alone should be able to cope with the remaining Vietcong. As the RVNAF modernization and improvement program advances, the ability of the Government forces to make inroads into the VC military-political apparatus and to reduce the level of the insurgency will be enhanced. Even spokesmen for the other side (e.g., Tran Buu Kiem and Wilfred Burchett) have recently made reference to their concern for the fate of the Vietcong if the North Vietnamese troops were pulled out.

If NVA regular units were withdrawn but NVA personnel remained in Vietcong units as fillers, the relative balance would be more difficult to assess. Under these circumstances it would probably be necessary to provide the RVNAF with sufficient U.S. combat support to make up for its deficiencies until the entire modernization and self-sufficiency program were completed.

Under current and foreseeable circumstances, it will probably take a minimum of two years before structural and technical reforms can make any substantial contribution toward RVNAF fighting effectiveness. The more critical deficiencies — motivation, discipline and leadership — are essentially deeper and longer-term problems, some arising out of complex socio-political traditions and others greatly dependent on the prevailing political and military environment. A clearly accelerating favorable military trend highlighted by ARVN battlefield successes could have considerable effect on RVNAF motivation and morale. A stable political situation, and particularly one in which the top military leadership is

united and secure, would favorably affect discipline and lower-level leadership.

Military Community

RVNAF is making fairly rapid strides in improvement and effectiveness and the prognosis for a self-sufficient force designed to hold its own against an internal threat is good. RVNAF will continue to overcome its recognized endemic problems such as lack of leadership, difficulties with the population, etc. The J.C.S. CINCPAC and COMUSMACV are inclined towards this view.

RVNAF is making only limited progress due primarily to recent inputs of U.S. resources, to U.S. combat activity and to a perception that U.S. forces may withdraw. Significant improvement to RVNAF is limited because of constraints of the present military and political systems. RVNAF must take major political and military action, some of which are not now under way, to become an effective force in the near future. D.O.S. is inclined towards this view.

continued

Without major reforms within the RVNAF command and selection system, however, as presently organized and led will ever constitute an effective political or military counter to the Vietcong. Moreover, as the Government of Vietnam's (GVN) major presence in the countryside, the RVNAF as presently constituted will only continue to widen the gap which exists between the Government and the rural population. Thus, any program of priority changes must have as its primary purpose the provision of an interval during which maximum pressure can be exerted in the GVN to make the necessary organizational and political changes commensurate with the assumption of a larger role in the political struggle and the war.

Warfare: Determined Hanoi

Memo Found Foe Stronger in '69 Than '65

By Michael Getler

Washington Post Staff Writer

The military situation in Vietnam outlined to President Nixon by his top military and civilian advisers early in 1969 included a Pentagon assessment that Hanoi could continue to sustain very heavy troop losses for "at least the next several years" in its war against the South.

It also included an assessment that the massive U.S. bombing campaign against North Vietnam during 1965-68, while inflicting a considerable toll on the North, may have actually stiffened the enemy's will and even its capacity to pursue the fight.

The Pentagon's civilian hierarchy was joined in this critical judgment by the Central Intelligence Agency.

The views of these agencies—as well as contrary assessments offered by top U.S. military commanders in Washington, Honolulu and Saigon—are contained in the responses of various arms of government to a government survey on Vietnam conducted by the Nixon administration immediately after taking office.

Yesterday, The Washington Post published a summary of the survey carried out by the President's National Security Council. Additional documents that provide more detail about the specific views of the military, CIA, State and Defense Departments have also been made available.

"The bombing undoubtedly had adverse effects on the people of North Vietnam," the Pentagon response says. "Individual citizens suffered many hardships . . . food was rationed . . . consumer goods were scarce . . . air raid warnings disrupted lives and forced many to leave their homes. Moreover, the report states, "it has been estimated that approximately 52,000 civilians were killed in North Vietnam by U.S. air strikes.

"Still," the document continues, "there is no evidence

to suggest that these hardships reduced to a critical level North Vietnam's willingness or resolve to continue the conflict. On the contrary, the bombing actually may have hardened the attitude of the people and rallied them behind the government's programs."

Ironically, the report says "there is some evidence . . . indicating that morale and support for the war in North Vietnam has declined significantly since the bombing halt" in November, 1968.

It is also noted, however, that "whatever their feelings about the war, the people of North Vietnam have lacked either the will or the means to make any dissatisfaction evident."

Asked for their views on the effects of the bombing on North Vietnam's economy, the Pentagon replied that "while air strikes destroyed about \$770 million worth of capital stock, military facilities and current production, North Vietnam received about \$3 billion worth of economic and military aid from Communist-bloc countries.

"Thus, in terms of total economic and military resources available to support the war," the document states, "North Vietnam is better off today (early 1969) than it was in 1965."

Even though the bombing of the North drained off roughly one-half million people for such things as road and rail repair and 110,000 soldiers for air defense, the report states that "the enemy has access to sufficient manpower to meet his replenishment needs for at least the next several years, even at the high 1968 (annual) loss rate of about 291,000" men.

Hanoi's eligible manpower pool was put at 1.8 million men, though combat losses in the South had caused expansion of the eligible draft age and sending men South with less training than those in the North. On the effectiveness of U.S. bombing against the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos, the

Pentagon cites military estimates of about 95 tons of supplies destroyed each day on the trail between November 1968 and the conclusion of the study.

But, they add, "while this is impressive, it is not really what counts. The critical factor is the amount that reaches South Vietnam . . . and since we have no control over imports to North Vietnam or inputs to Laos, it appears that the enemy can continue to push sufficient supplies through Laos to South Vietnam in spite of relatively heavy losses inflicted by air attacks."

It is not known whether those 1969 assessments are applicable to the Nixon administration and the current bombing in response to Hanoi's invasion across the DMZ. But they are becoming an issue between the President and his critics on U.S. war policy.

Yesterday, Sen. Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) attempted to enter the NSC document into the public record on the Senate floor, charging that the bombing policy which he said had been proven wrong in 1969 was now being reinstated.

Asked to comment on Gravel's charges, State Department spokesman Charles W. Bray III said he didn't think such charges were "fair or accurate criticism."

The earlier analysis of the effects of the bombing, he said, "covers a situation at a different time and under different circumstances. What the North Vietnamese Army has now faced us with is something quite different from what was essentially small scale or guerrilla warfare. In adopting tactics which are more conventional . . . much larger . . . units including tanks and heavy artillery, they offer individual targets which were rarely, if ever, available in earlier years . . . They have made themselves more heavily dependent on logistical and resupply facilities, more accessible to retaliation from the air."

Bray was also asked if he thought another critical judgment made in the 1969 survey "holds true today"; the assessment that "all agencies agree that South Vietnam's armed forces could not, either now or even when fully modernized, handle both the Vietcong and a sizeable level of North Vietnamese Army forces without U.S. combat support in the form of air, helicopters, artillery, logistics and some ground forces."

Bray said "we'll have a clearer idea when the offensive ends . . . the South Vietnamese are better equipped and better able to acquit themselves well on the battlefield now than at that (earlier) time . . . that has been the whole purpose of Vietnamization," including the withdrawal of American ground forces.

There is no plan, however, to withdraw all American air forces from Thailand and Guam or naval forces from offshores.

Wide Differences Noted

As the summary to the huge NSC survey pointed out, the views among the Vietnam specialists within the Federal bureaucracy were "profoundly different" on many key points.

The debate was particularly sharp between the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. Pacific fleet command and the military command in Saigon, on the one hand, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, CIA and the State Department on the other, over the success of the U.S. bombing campaign.

In its entirety, the response of these groups to the White House questions early in 1969 provides probably the most thorough debates over the effectiveness of air power in specific military situations since the controversy over the World War II strategic bombing survey.

On the use of the B-52s—which have now for the first time been used to target deep inside North Vietnam—the Pentagon analysis

The Washington Merry-Go-Round**'69 Study Told of Saigon Weakness****By Jack Anderson**

Government strategists in 1969 delivered a unanimous warning to incoming President Nixon that South Vietnam's armed forces would be no match for North Vietnamese-Viet Cong forces "in the foreseeable future," that the pacification program showed no promise of "complete success" for "several years," and that the Saigon government might not "survive a peaceful competition with the (Communists) for political power in South Vietnam."

This gloomy outlook, contained in a secret, two-inch-thick review known as National Security Study Memorandum 1, has changed only in degree during the past three years.

The President's response has been to do his best to bolster Saigon while extricating the U.S. from the tragic Vietnam war. He has been determined, however, to end the American involvement with dignity. In his private conversations, he has repeated that he won't let the U.S. be "pushed around," "degraded" or "humiliated."

This was the reason he struck back with such fury from the air after the North Vietnamese assault across the Demilitarized Zone.

The secret 1969 study, known simply as NSSM-1 inside the White House, was

compiled by foreign policy czar Henry Kissinger. He sent eight pages of pointed, penetrating questions to all the government agencies involved in the war effort.

Their answers showed considerable confusion over what was happening in Vietnam. The U.S. embassy and military command in Saigon, joined by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, generally took a rosy view. The Defense Secretariat, Central Intelligence Agency and State Department were more skeptical.

Saigon Doomed

Here are highlights from the exhaustive study:

All the experts agreed that the South Vietnamese armed forces, "in the foreseeable future," couldn't fight off the Vietcong and North Vietnamese "without U.S. combat support in the form of air, helicopters, artillery, logistics and some ground forces."

The toughest estimate, surprisingly, came from the Defense Secretary's office, which predicted bluntly: "It is unlikely that the (South Vietnamese, as presently organized and led, will ever constitute an effective political or military counter to the Vietcong."

The South Vietnamese forces, with an annual desertion rate of 34 per cent, were said to be facing "severe motivation, leadership and deser-

tion problems." The total desertions, alleged the study, were "equivalent to losing one ARVN division per month."

Nevertheless, the majority view was that Saigon was making "reasonable progress" toward building a force "able to hold its own against an internal VC threat."

Disagreeing, the Defense Secretary's office doubted "that current expansion and re-equipment programs are sufficient to make (the South Vietnamese) into an effective fighting force."

Although the pacification program couldn't "promise anything close to complete success within several years," the U.S. high command found that Saigon controlled "three-fourths of the population." The Joint Chiefs expected this to rise to 90 per cent by the end of 1969.

Their figures were disputed, however, by the Defense Secretary's office, which suggested "at least 50 per cent of the total rural population is subject to significant VC pressure and influence."

No Victory

South Vietnamese politics, according to the study, were plagued with "pragmatism, expediency, war weariness, a desire to remain unaligned and end up on the winning side," compounded by "family loyalty, corruption, social immo-

bility and clandestine activities."

No U.S. agency would forecast a "victory" over the Communists, but the military still stressed "the need for continued U.S. support."

There was general agreement that "the enemy has been able during the last four years to double his combat forces, double the level of infiltration and increase the scale and intensity of the main force war even while bearing heavy casualties."

It was also agreed that the Communists were recruiting, and infiltrating troops faster, than they could be killed off. The enemy expansion of 300,000 new men each year, the study noted, "requires that the allies inflict losses of 25,000 KIA (killed in action) per month, or 7,000 more than the current rate."

The Saigon embassy's evaluators suggested that "the VC are husbanding their resources to give themselves the option of a 'climaxing' offensive."

The State Department foresaw in 1969 what has now happened. "The Communists," said State, "may feel that a demonstrably strong blow against the pacification program would have wide repercussions particularly at a time of optimistic allied claims about pacification successes."

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Diplomacy: Dual Soviet Role

'69 Memo Cites VC Arms Aid, Help on Talks

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The Soviet Union gave help at "several critical points" in launching the Paris peace talks on Vietnam in 1968-69, but simultaneously plagued the Nixon administration by supplying the bulk of North Vietnam's sophisticated weapons.

That dual Soviet role in the Vietnamese war is officially confirmed for the first time in the National Security Council study of the war, completed in early 1969.

This review reports more explicitly than any other disclosure that the Soviet Union participated in private negotiations in Paris in late 1968 that produced the disputed "understandings"

for the Johnson administration's halt in the bombing of North Vietnam.

The Russian intermediaries were Ambassador Valerian Zorin, and the minister of the Soviet Embassy in Paris, Valentin Oberemko, the study shows. North Vietnam repeatedly has denied there were any "understandings" and has insisted the bombing halt was "unconditional."

This dispute has rebounded into the headlines with the U.S. charge, and the North Vietnamese denial, that the current Communist offensive, launched March 30 across the Demilitarized Zone dividing North and South Vietnam, is a "blatant violation" of the 1968 "understandings."

There is a striking parallel between the situation that existed then and the news of today, illustrated by the secret trip of presidential advisor Henry A. Kissinger to Moscow last weekend, which was disclosed yesterday.

Then and now, the United States was seeking cooperation from the Soviet Union for ending the Vietnamese war. Then and now, or at least up to the time of Kissinger's visit to Moscow last week, U.S. strategists were considering the possibility of posing an air and sea block-

ade on Haiphong harbor, or otherwise cutting the Soviet supply line to North Vietnam.

There is one outstanding difference in the international alignment, however. In 1969, American and Chinese relations were in a state of total hostility. China was adamantly opposed to any negotiations to end the war in Vietnam, and many U.S. strategists concluded that even if the United States did risk the international consequences of interdicting all Soviet supplies for the war, North Vietnam could fight on by relying mainly on Chinese supplies to continue "protracted warfare."

Today, it is the Nixon administration's assessment that China's self-interest, exemplified by the President's ground-breaking talks in Peking in February, and U.S. troop withdrawals from South Vietnam, have helped induce the Chinese to dilute their original commitment to prolonging the Vietnamese conflict.

North Vietnam, however, granted no "veto power" either to the Russians or to the Chinese over Hanoi's decisions in the war, all U.S. intelligence experts agreed in the NSC study. The Central Intelligence agency noted that Hanoi has balanced adroitly between its two chief allies, and "in competing for influence (in Hanoi) Peking and Moscow tend to cancel out each other." A critical question is whether that balance is changeable now, with the shifts of American-Chinese-Soviet relationships since 1969.

In a State Department assessment in the NSC report, dated Feb. 21, 1969 and signed by Secretary of State William P. Rogers, he stated:

"We attribute more significance than does the Embassy (the U.S. Embassy in Saigon) to Soviet efforts to be helpful in moving the negotiations ahead, and we did so is quite clear. What is

not clear is whether it was necessary for them to bring pressure on the North Vietnamese to bring about a compromise."

The State Department said that North Vietnam, retaining "firm control over its own war strategy," may "at times have employed the Soviets as intermediaries to convey positions upon which they had already decided themselves, so that they would not have to 'lose face' by making the concessions directly to us."

Even so, the report said from May 1968 to the date the study was completed, State concluded that the Soviets "employed their influence over Hanoi in generally constructive direction both as to timing and substance." The report said Soviet negotiators often staked out "tough Hanoi bargaining positions, to explore U.S. thinking" or when Moscow wished, it utilized its "leverage" with Hanoi in "highly selective" fashion.

"In dealing with the North Vietnamese," the State Department section of the report said, "the Soviets have experienced the full degree of Hanoi's ideological rigidity and distrust of the West, and on occasion they have privately deplored excessive North Vietnamese stubbornness."

Specific illustrations of Soviet action in helping to launch the Paris talks in 1968-69 were unofficially reported in 1969-1970, and unofficially acknowledged by the Russians. But, publicly, the Soviet Union denied that it had any involvement in one of the most important of those actions—the disputed "understandings" that accompanied the halt in the American bombing of North Vietnam on Nov. 1, 1968.

North Vietnam insisted that the bombing halt was "unconditional." In fact, American officials said, the United States set out its terms for maintaining the bombing halt, and these were clearly understood by

voys. Thus, the euphemistic term "understandings" was used.

Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird testified last week that the language of the "understandings" was actually "negotiated" with the Communists in the secret 1968 meetings in Paris.

The 1969 NSC study reveals, "With the beginning of the Paris talks last May, the Soviets began a new and decidedly more assertive phase of their diplomacy.

"Ambassador Zorin (Valerian Zorin, then Ambassador in Paris) and Minister (Valentin) Oberemko were authorized by Moscow to act as primary Soviet representatives with respect to the talks. At several critical points during the ensuing months one or both of them intervened constructively, acting under both general guidelines and explicit instructions from Moscow.

"Thus, it was Zorin who elaborated on the two-phase concept for stopping the bombing without any ostensible reciprocal action by Hanoi, and indicated Hanoi might be receptive to such an approach.

"When on Oct. 11 the North Vietnamese for the first time gave a clear indication they would accept the GVN (government of South Vietnam) as a participant in the talks, the Soviets thought this move so important they confirmed this position to us on the following day.

"At several points during the culminating phase of these difficult negotiations the Soviets accepted our strong representations about North Vietnamese intransigence and appeared to pass them along to Hanoi to good effect.

"When the two sides were deadlocked on the issue of what terminology to use in a secret minute—a demand later dropped by the DRV (North Vietnam)—the Soviets put forward a formulation which resolved the impasse.

"When the talks on procedural arrangements were deadlocked in January, the Soviets suggested the for-

26 APR 1972

Nixon's War

By way of prelude to almost every speech he has ever made about the Vietnam war, President Nixon has been at pains to remind us, just for the record, of the terrible legacy he inherited from the Democrats: over half a million Americans in a combat role; casualties running at the rate of more than 300 a week killed in action; no plan to "Vietnamize" the war or to bring our military forces home. There is some truth in this, of course; Mr. Nixon did fall heir to a heavy burden not of his making. But the roots of involvement reached back into a Republican administration of which he was a part. There was also a plan to end the war which General William Westmoreland could have furnished the new Nixon administration because he had laid it all out as early as November, 1967. For better or worse, "Vietnamization" was already in the official lexicon. And far more important, the really big, tough decisions had already been made by President Lyndon Johnson when he refused in March of 1968 to go on down the road of "graduated response," and decided instead to end the bombing of the North and to deny for the first time the next big commitment of American troops. In short, the Johnson strategy had failed by January, 1969, and the country had begun to accept the real limits of a limited war.

That lesson was also part of Richard Nixon's legacy if he had chosen to accept it. He was a free agent, in a way that his predecessor had never been, and not just because he was a new President with a mandate to end the war. He was a free man in the most significant sense because he had inherited not a bureaucratic monolith hell-bent on pursuit of a discredited and unworkable policy, but a bureaucracy divided; there were other voices saying sensible and realistic things, other forces at work in the big departments of government which were there for the President to hear and to use in the difficult business of turning the governmental apparatus around on a new course. But President Nixon did not listen to these voices and never told us about them because he did not wish, for his own reasons and out of his own geo-political concepts, to abandon the old goals of our Vietnam mission. He did not want to accept the hard consequences of the lesson other men had learned. Those on the outside could only guess at the division within the government, only hear snatches of the argument, only speculate about the depth of the carefully suppressed reservations which were held by important people in key agencies—until this week when the hard evidence finally became available. That is the real and immensely profound significance of the "Kissinger Papers," the contents of which were re-

vealed in some detail in this newspaper on Tuesday. They tell us little that is directly relevant to the current situation. Rather, they describe an opportunity tragically lost. They tell us that by early 1969 only the very same people who had made most of the miscalculations which carried us up to March of 1968 with a big war and no solution still believed that the war in Vietnam was winnable in any practical sense. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the military command in Vietnam, and the diehards in the Saigon embassy still believed this. But there was a considerable body of opinion that believed otherwise, that was prepared to support and reinforce a new, more realistic and more promising approach to Vietnam. By and large, the Secretary of Defense and the State Department and the CIA believed:

That the North Vietnamese had the will and the resources to carry on the war indefinitely against unlimited bombing;

That the South Vietnamese showed little prospect of ever being able to conduct their end of the war without extensive American military support including the use of air power and combat troops;

That pacification wasn't working and showed little hope of working over the long haul;

That B-52s were a doubtful asset except for close-in tactical support of combat operations;

That there was something to be said for promoting accommodations on the local level, in the districts and villages and provinces, between the government people and the Viet Cong;

That neither this country's standing in the world nor the fate of Southeast Asia, hinged on the outcome of the Vietnamese struggle.

But Mr. Nixon ignored the best part of this counsel and so here we are, having dropped more bombs in the last three years than in all of the five years of the Johnson administration and having suffered more than one-third of all the American casualties that have been suffered in this war—and still with no solution. So it is no longer enough—now that we have seen the Kissinger Papers—to be told that this is not Mr. Nixon's fault because he didn't lead us into it. That's true; he didn't. But he had a running room in early 1969 — much more than we knew. And because he didn't use it, Mr. Nixon cannot be pictured any longer as the hapless prisoner of past policy. The message from the Kissinger Papers is plain. Just as the responsibility for the early Vietnam involvement and the later build-up may have been, progressively, Dwight D. Eisenhower's and John F. Kennedy's and Lyndon B. Johnson's, what we are now confronted with, for better or worse, is Richard M. Nixon's war.