

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

September 10, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: AL HAIG 

At Tab A is a copy of the Jackson speech. It is not quite as "defectorish" as Lehman indicated and for this reason is all the more troublesome and effective.

I discussed with David Abshire last night the probable agenda for senatorial business with respect to the procurement bill. He stated that the bill will be introduced today and that deliberations, debate, etc., will probably run through next week. He believes we will have at least a few days, maybe until next Wednesday, before any votes will be possible. He also states that it may be that the procurement bill will be set aside and that the Senate will move to the Draft bill. However, his discussion yesterday with Braswell confirmed the intent to proceed with the procurement bill, get it out of the way and then proceed to the Draft bill in the anticipation of a filibuster.

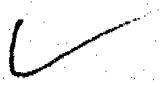
At Tab B is a directive to the Departments designed to eliminate initial panic or breast-beating as a result of Jackson's speech.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the directive at Tab B.

Approve _____

Disapprove OR E

Attachments 

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DOS, NSS, Review Completed.

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DRAFTED BY: EA/VN: JWBENNETT
APPROVED BY: EA: MR SULLIVAN
H: MR ABSHIRE (SUBS)

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FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SPEECH SENATOR HENRY JACKSON WILL
DELIVER ON FLOOR OF SENATE AFTERNOON OF FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
WASHINGTON TIME. SPEECH IS EMBARGOED UNTIL THAT TIME.

BEGIN TEXT:

LIKE SO MANY AMERICANS, I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE
ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THE ADMINISTRATION
SHOULD NOT SANCTION THE ONE-MAN REFERENDUM PRESIDENT THIEUX
WISHES TO HOLD IN OCTOBER. IF NECESSARY TO ASSURE A
GENUINE CONTEST, THE OCTOBER "ELECTION" SHOULD BE POST-
PONED.

THE UNITED STATES STILL HAS A STRONG PRESENCE AND SIG-
NIFICANT INFLUENCE IN VIETNAM THAT SHOULD BE USED TO PERMIT
THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE A CHOICE IN A MEANINGFUL PRESI-
DENTIAL ELECTION. IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR TO PRESIDENT
THIEU THAT THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN
TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM -- TO "GIVE THE SOUTH
VIETNAMESE PEOPLE A CHANCE TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE"
AS FOUR PRESIDENTS FROM EISENHOWER TO NIXON HAVE PLEDGED --
AND NOT TO PRESIDENT THIEU OR TO ANY OTHER PARTICULAR
POLITICIAN.

I CONSIDER THE FAILURE TO HAVE A COMPETITIVE PRESIDENTIAL

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ELECTION IN VIETNAM A SERIOUS AND FUNDAMENTAL MATTER. SHOULD SUCH AN ELECTION FAIL TO TAKE PLACE, I MUST RE-SERVE MY POSITION REGARDING FUTURE U.S. MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT.

IT IS IRONIC THAT THE SABOTAGE OF THIS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IS NOT BY THE VIET CONG -- WHO NO LONGER SEEM ABLE TO DO IT -- BUT BY THE THIEU REGIME ITSELF.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT ONLY ALLOWED THE ELECTION SITUATION TO DETERIORATE, IT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE DETERIORATION.

OVER THE LAST YEAR THE ADMINISTRATION COULD HAVE ACTED ON THE BASIS OF OUR STILL SIGNIFICANT PRESENCE IN VIETNAM. INSTEAD IT MAINTAINED THE FACADE OF A "HANDS OFF" POLICY, WHICH COULD ONLY BE CONSTRUED INITIALLY AS AN ENDORSEMENT OF PRESIDENT THIEU, AND MORE RECENTLY HIS METHODS.

THE ADMINISTRATION COULD HAVE PUBLICIZED WIDELY A DIRECTIVE TO ALL U.S. REPRESENTATIVES, ADVISERS AND PERSONNEL THROUGHOUT VIETNAM, STATING OUR FIRST AND FOREMOST COMMITMENT IS SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A FAIR CAMPAIGN AND VOTING PROCEDURES, ACCOMPANYING SUCH A DECLARATION BY A PROGRAM ASSURING THE CITIZENRY THAT THE U.S. SUPPORTS NO CANDIDATE BUT ONLY THE RIGHTS OF ALL CANDIDATES TO CAMPAIGN FREELY AND OF ALL VOTERS TO BE FREE OF COERCION AND PRESSURE. INSTEAD THE ADMINISTRATION ALLOWED OUR EMBASSY TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT THIEU WAS REALLY "OUR MAN."

AND WHEN IT BECAME OBVIOUS TO ALL THAT PRESIDENT THIEU WAS INTENT ON A ONE-MAN REFERENDUM, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD HAVE SAID PUBLICLY THAT THIS IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH; AND IT SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT OUR INFLUENCE TO BEAR UPON PRESIDENT THIEU TO FIND WAYS (AS HE HAS DONE BEFORE) TO UNLOCK THE SITUATION AND ASSURE A BONA FIDE CONTEST THAT INCLUDES GENERAL MINH, VICE PRESIDENT KY, AND ANY OTHER LEGITIMATE CANDIDATE. INSTEAD THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ISSUED RATIONALIZATIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR THE SITUATION, GETTING PRESIDENT THIEU "OFF THE HOOK", AND IN EFFECT SANCTIONING THE ONE-MAN REFERENDUM.

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IT IS A TRAGEDY THAT AFTER YEARS OF VIETNAMESE AND AMERICAN SACRIFICES, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOW LAPSED INTO A MOOD OF CYNICISM ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR POSITIVE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM.

THE ONE GROUP THAT IS NOT CYNICAL IS THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM. THEY TURNED OUT IN RECORD NUMBERS DURING THE RECENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THEY IGNORED VIET CONG THREATS, INTIMIDATION AND TERRORISM. OVER 5.5 MILLION PEOPLE WENT TO THE POLLS - THAT IS 78.5 PERCENT OF THE ELIGIBLE VOTERS. OF THE 159 SEATS TO BE FILLED 84 WENT TO PRO-THIEU CANDIDATES, 60 TO OPPOSITION CANDIDATES AND 15 TO INDEPENDENTS. NO DOUBT THERE WERE ABUSES. NO DOUBT SOME OF THE OPPOSITION WERE SUBJECTED, AT THE POLLS, TO QUESTIONABLE TACTICS. BUT THE INCREASED SECURITY, COUPLED WITH A HEALTHY ANTAGONISM BETWEEN PRO AND ANTI-THIEU FORCES, AROUSED PUBLIC INTEREST AND BROUGHT THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE INTO THE SYSTEM AT 7,000 POLLING SITES. THEIR VOTE DID MAKE A DIFFERENCE. AND THE PEOPLE SENSED IT. AND THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY.

BUT THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL REFERENDUM IS NO ELECTION.

A CONTEST WHERE THE MAN IN POWER MANIPULATES THE LAWS AND INTIMIDATES THE COURTS IS NOT AN ELECTION.

A CONTEST WHERE POTENTIAL OPPONENTS HAVE GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THEY WILL BE DENIED ACCESS TO THE PEOPLE IS NOT AN ELECTION.

A CONTEST WHERE THE PEOPLE CAN VOTE ONLY TO APPROVE OF THE ACTS OF AN ADMINISTRATION BUT ARE OFFERED NO WAY TO EXPRESS THEIR DISAPPROVAL IS NOT AN ELECTION.

A CONTEST WHERE THE ADVERSARY SYSTEM OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICS IS SCRAPPED IN FAVOR OF A ONE-MAN REFERENDUM IS NOT AN ELECTION.

I AM NOT SUGGESTING, OF COURSE, THAT THE VIETNAMESE MUST HAVE A SYSTEM WHICH IS THE MIRROR IMAGE OF OUR OWN -- OR ANY OTHER. BUT A NON-ELECTION PLAYS INTO THE HANDS OF

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THOSE WHO WISH TO SEE THE FUTURE OF VIETNAM SETTLED BY AN ARMED STRUGGLE. THE RENEWED TALK OF COUPS, THE POLARIZATION AND THE FRUSTRATION HARDEN ATTITUDES AND ENCOURAGE VIOLENCE, RATHER THAN A POLITICAL SOLUTION. MOREOVER, THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SENSE OF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE AMONG THE VIETNAMESE IS AN IMPORTANT WAY OF INSURING THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR AND DEFEND THEIR SO COSTLY INDEPENDENCE.

VARIOUS WAYS STILL EXIST TO RESTORE THE THREE-WAY RACE THAT WAS EXPECTED FOR A PERIOD OF TIME, AND ALSO OPEN IT TO OTHER CANDIDATES:

-- THE SUPREME COURT IN SOUTH VIETNAM CAN REOPEN THE LIST OF CANDIDATES, AND CAN POSTPONE THE OCTOBER ELECTION FOR 33 TO 90 DAYS TO PROVIDE THE TIME NECESSARY IN WHICH TO ORGANIZE A GENUINE AND OPEN ELECTION.

-- THE NEWLY ELECTED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN VIETNAM CAN BE CALLED IN SPECIAL SESSION TO AMEND THE ELECTORAL LAW TO PROMOTE A MEANINGFUL ELECTION, AND IF NECESSARY, TO VOTE TO POSTPONE THE ELECTION.

THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD STOP PRETENDING TO BE HELPLESS, SAYING THERE IS NOTHING MORE TO BE DONE. THE UNITED STATES STILL HAS SUFFICIENT INFLUENCE IN VIETNAM TO SEE THAT A POINTLESS REFERENDUM IS TRANSFORMED INTO A MEANINGFUL POLITICAL CONTEST -- IF NECESSARY, AT A LATER DATE.

END TEXT.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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September 10, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

The President has directed that until further notice there be no comment or speculation, either on the record or on a background basis, concerning the speech to be delivered by Senator Jackson on the Senate Floor on the afternoon of September 10, 1971.

Henry A. Kissinger

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