

MEMORANDUM

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

January 7, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: John H. Holdridge

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Inter-Agency Ad Hoc Group on Laos,  
January 6

The Laos Group held a somewhat truncated meeting on Tuesday in order to comply with your instruction that all major policy matters be handled exclusively by the 303 Group.

The Laos Group did agree to draft a short statement of the assumptions as to US policy on which it would base its thinking in specific cases. This will of course come up to the 303 Committee or whatever group takes over responsibility for major decisions on Laos.

The Group also agreed to draft the terms for a SNIE on Communist intentions and interpretations of our motives. It was agreed that the issue will be put to you as to whether to request such a SNIE.

There was an intelligence briefing which brought out the following points of interest:

-- Enemy Capabilities. It is assumed that the enemy can take the Plaine des Jarres. It was also noted that if he chooses, he can probably wear down Vang Pao's guerrilla forces through attrition, since there are only 8,000 Meo under arms and they have already tapped young boys down to 13-15 years of age.

-- The Chinese Road. There is no surveying beyond Muong Houn, and no sign that the Chinese plan to carry the road to the Mekong in the immediate future. Souvanna has twice mentioned privately that he is not much concerned if the road stops at Muong Houn. The Chinese are keeping a very "low profile" in north Laos, and are not engaged in the administration as are the North Vietnamese. CIA thinks that the insurgency in north and northeast Thailand would not really

*only on  
intelligence  
matters*

NSS Review Completed.

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