

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

2785

ACTION

March 30, 1972

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MR. KISSINGER

FROM:

JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE *John*

SUBJECT:

Sir Robert Thompson's Report
to the President

State, DOD and CIA have all informally inquired whether or not it would be possible to receive a copy of Sir Robert Thompson's most recent report to the President.

At the Indochina Ad Hoc meeting John Negroponte has acknowledged the existence of such a report, and has also characterized it as containing essentially the same points that Thompson made during his individual calls on the departments concerned. He also agreed, however, to relay their request for access to Sir Robert's report.

Thompson's report is, in fact, very much along the lines of what he told the people at DOD, State and CIA when he saw them. There are a few points of controversy which he raised with them orally and which we may prefer them not to have in writing -- for example, he denigrates the role of ROK forces in Vietnam in quite strong terms. Thompson's position in fact is that the ROK's have become an impediment to pacification because of the restricted access of RF to the Korean TAOR. (Comment: This judgment may be questionable, particularly if the Communists do launch a major offensive, and an added consideration is that Thompson may have been unduly influenced by John Paul Vann who feels very strongly against the ROK presence.)

There are also political aspects of Thompson's report that could be considered sensitive and explosive if leaked -- such as his contention that the reelection of President Thieu and President Nixon are key to the whole Vietnam situation.

The risk of leaks and the prospect of the agencies exploiting the few negative, as opposed to the many positive, aspects of Sir Robert's report lead us to conclude that it may be preferable not to release it to them. There is also the matter of precedent, and, even though this report might be a marginal case, there may be others we would strongly prefer not to circulate outside the White House.

NSS/NSC Review Completed

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Recommendation

That you disapprove the release of Sir Robert's report to the President to State, DOD and CIA.

Do not release

AK

Okay to release

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