

FILE

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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INFORMATION

State Dept. review completed

June 12, 1972

ARMY Review Completed

MORI C05082551

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. KISSINGER

FROM: JOHN D. NEGROPONTE *JDN*

SUBJECT: Visit of Sir Robert Thompson to Saigon *AK*

At our request Sir Robert will visit Vietnam from June 17 through July 1. He will be at CINCPAC on July 2 and plans to arrive in Washington the afternoon of July 4 remaining through July 7. If the President and you intend to be in San Clemente starting the first of July, we can always modify Thompson's return travel plans accordingly.

The cable at Tab A from Thompson lists the points that he and Desmond Palmer intend to cover. They look to me pretty much to be on the mark ranging from an assessment of immediate North Vietnamese and GVN capabilities to the likely situation in September and October as well as DRV strategy and GVN capabilities in the 1973-74 time frame.

Thompson is hesitant to give an assessment now which might prejudice his objectivity during his visit, although we asked him to provide one. He remarks however that he believes the short term prospects to be favorable and he is now trying to work out "what Hanoi might do over the next few months either on the ground or in Paris to help McGovern".

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FM ROBERT THOMPSON LONDON 950
TO THE WHITE HOUSE, FOR HENRY KISSINGER

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PALMER AND I ARE DELIGHTED TO BE ASKED TO GO OUT AT THIS TIME BECAUSE WE MUST HAVE FIRST HAND VIEW OF THIS INVASION PERIOD. WITH REGARD TO ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION I ASSUME THAT YOU WOULD LIKE US TO COVER THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

1. IMMEDIATE NORTH VIETNAMESE CAPABILITY TO RESUME OFFENSIVE OR TO HOLD GAINS, INCLUDING INTERNAL GAINS IN DELTA, BINH DINH AND ELSEWHERE.
2. IMMEDIATE SOUTH VIETNAMESE CAPABILITY TO HOLD FURTHER ASSAULTS AND TO RECOVER GROUND BOTH ON BORDERS AND INTERNALLY.
3. LIKELY MILITARY, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER.
4. LIKELY LEVEL OF REQUIRED U.S. MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT AT THAT TIME.
5. LIKELY NORTH VIETNAMESE DOCTRINE, STRATEGY AND CAPABILITY 1973-74 INCLUDING INTERNAL VIET CONG CAPABILITY.
6. LIKELY SOUTH VIETNAMESE POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH 1973-74 AND WILL TO RESIST.
7. LEVEL OF U.S. SUPPORT 1973-74.
8. PROSPECTS OF SETTLEMENT.

I HESITATE TO GIVE ASSESSMENT NOW WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE OBJECTIVITY DURING VISIT. OBVIOUSLY I WOULD EXPECT POINTS 1 AND 2 ABOVE TO BE FAVORABLE. WITH REGARD TO POINT 3 I AM TRYING TO WORK OUT WHAT HANOI MIGHT DO OVER NEXT FEW MONTHS EITHER ON THE GROUND OR IN PARIS TO HELP MCGOVERN. IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS PLEASE SIGNAL THEM TO ME IN SAIGON TO AWAIT ARRIVAL ON 17TH.

WARM REGARDS.

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