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MEMORANDUM

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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INFORMATION
September 11, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: John H. Holdridge *JH*

AK

SUBJECT: Vietnam Ad Hoc Working Group, September 1, 1970

Attached at Tab A is a memorandum for the files covering the minutes of the Vietnam Ad Hoc Working Group Meeting on September 1, 1970.

Attachment

DP 1.3(a)(4) & (5)

Partially Declassified/Reclassification 12/23/92
under provisions of E.O. 13526
by C. Sorensen, National Security Council

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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

SUBJECT: Vietnam Ad Hoc Working Group Meeting, September 1, 1970

Ambassador Sullivan referred to the President's desire to have Ambassador Bruce back up possible Hanoi violations of the "understandings" at the next Paris meeting. Sullivan said he had reviewed the most recent incidents, and could not find any which constituted real violations. About the only thing which we could take the North Vietnamese to task about was the attack on the Quang Nam Orphanage. However, he would draft a telegram which would be sent to the NSC for clearance.

Sullivan referred to the draft cable he had prepared instructing Ambassador Bunker to raise the issue of ARVN-Cambodian clashes with President Thieu. I informed Sullivan that this issue would be brought up to the Vietnamese through military channels, and that Ambassador Bunker should not be instructed to discuss it with Thieu.

Sullivan referred to an article in the Melbourne Age citing a New York Times' piece alledging that the Australian and New Zealand forces in Vietnam were "mercenaries." The Australians, he said, were going to take up this allegation with the New York Times and point out the true circumstances.

Sullivan asked General Smith about the U. S. casualty toll for the week. General Smith reported that there had been 68 killed, but 28 (note: actually 22) additional would be listed as "missing" until determination of identity could be established for the victims of the helicopter crash. Sullivan felt that this was fudging the figures, and that the full toll should be reported as soon as possible, to which General Smith responded with the information that Pentagon bookkeeping procedures required the helicopter victims to be dealt with in this way.

Sullivan noted that the Rector of Hue University would be coming to the United States, apparently in some capacity as an emissary of Thieu's.

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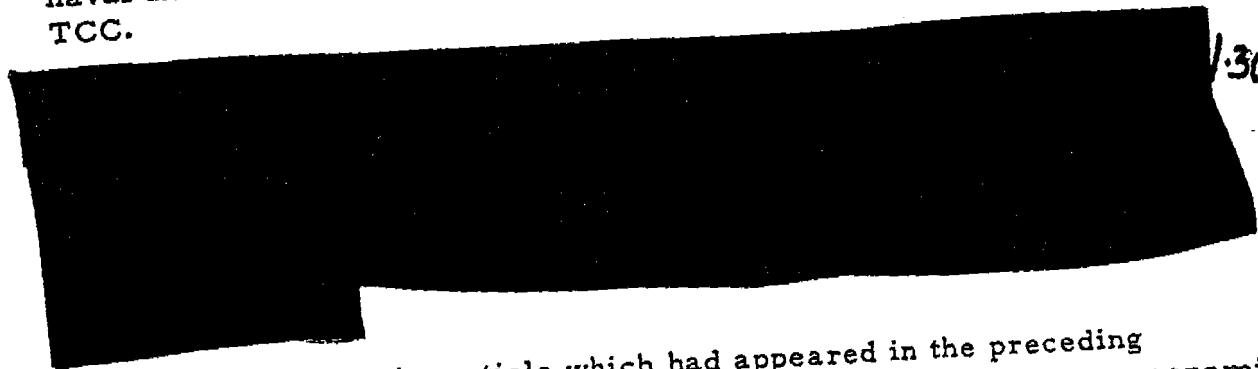
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Sullivan would see him. In addition, some Lower House types were coming, and Sullivan would also see these. Another visitor would be Tran Van Don, who had indicated a desire to see Sullivan and Martin Hartz (the former political counsellor in Saigon). Sullivan would take him also to call on U. Alexis Johnson. Don was no longer being treated at arms length, since he had not run for the Senate again and would be leaving it in October. He had made his peace with Thieu, and might become a Cabinet member. It was suggested that he might call on Warren Nutter in Defense.

Sullivan called attention to the Bartimo Group which had been set up in Defense to look into illegal practices among U. S. forces in Vietnam. Evidently this group was now going to set up shop in Saigon to oversee illegal practices in all of Southeast Asia. Sullivan saw no harm in its doing so, but suggested that the other three posts (Bangkok, Vientiane, and Phnom Penh) should be informed. Mr. Constant agreed to do so.

Sullivan indicated that he was drafting a message to Bunker and Abrams on the Thai residual presence in South Vietnam. As he had done the previous week, he surmised that it would be sufficient for the Thai to keep a small naval and air contingent there in order to maintain their credentials as a TCC.



Sullivan brought up the article which had appeared in the preceding day's Washington Post by Manciewicz and Braden on the Vietnam economic situation and on the AID mission in Saigon. Mr. Nooter said that AID was drafting a rebuttal to the charges in the article which would be sent to the editors of the Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times. The group agreed that it might also be useful for the Department of State's spokesman to distribute copies of the letter to the press at the next day's noon briefing.

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Sullivan reported that he had received a memorandum from Dr. Kissinger forwarding correspondence to the NSC from Secretary Laird on POWs and suggesting that the Ad Hoc Committee look into the whole question of relating the POW issue to the Paris negotiations. Sullivan observed that he "got the message." He would, of course, review our position on POWs and see if Secretary Laird's suggestions could be incorporated for use in a future meeting in Paris. Mr. Constant commented that another strategy memorandum on POWs would be coming over soon from OSD.

Sullivan turned to the question of MACSOG exploitation teams in relation to the position adopted by Secretary Laird on disclosing helicopter missions in Laos. Sullivan was very much afraid that this disclosure policy might call attention to MACSOG operations. He referred to a letter sent by Elliot Richardson on May 29 to Mr. Packard asking for a review of this disclosure policy, and suggesting that if no change could be effected, turning over exploitation operations entirely to the Vietnamese. Sullivan indicated that he still favored getting the U. S. out of exploitation missions.

General Smith reported that a check of Prairie Fire operations suggested that there had been no compromise, as had occurred in connection with Salem House operations.

Mr. Nooter declared that AID had taken a first cut in laying out the FY 72 program. They were suggesting a total package of \$750 million, or the same sum as for FY 71. He wondered, though, whether it would be possible to hold the official piaster purchase rate at 118 to the dollar through FY 72. Pressure on the Hill could force a change, which could cost Defense at least \$130 million than its present outlay for piaster purchases. Looking at all possible sources for funding, AID was still \$250 million short, and if this had to be made up from the total AID budget, the appropriation needed worldwide would be \$685 million.

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