

MEMORANDUM

*Memos to
Pres. file*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Al Haig - write back up
with magazine
(1977)*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

January 15, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: Al Haig *Al Haig*
SUBJECT: Bombing Halt Study

*I agree but
don't urge just
short-note
my*

The attached memorandum from Bob Haldeman enclosing a memorandum from Tom Huston points out the difficulties that Huston has run into in trying to piece together the history of the bombing halt. As you know his point of departure was the information we had assembled over a long period last spring.

I have talked to Huston and he believes that the studies done by Davidson and Moor were biased and loaded in favor of the Democratic Administration. I could not but agree. Nevertheless, he has had the same difficulty they had in trying to get the information necessary to make a real hard judgment. Since there were so many people around who were obfuscating the true facts, I doubt they will ever be known and frankly believe that Huston should write his piece on what he now has to a degree he can do so. I watched Phil Habib do the most delicate dance in the history of an NSC meeting last winter when the President asked him if there was a bombing halt agreement and a complete understanding by both sides that one existed. I do not think Phil could ever be more forthcoming than he was on the grill in front of the President and with the pressures working on him at that moment I doubt that Huston or anyone else could gin up any more. Consequently, I think this now becomes a sterile exercise unless they want Huston to make a career of it. Frankly, the only reason for which this document will be employed in the near future will be to present this Administration's view of the problem. It will, therefore, probably be subjected to the same kind of judgment that the Davidson/Moor studies were and thus serves the purpose for which the President is seeking.

I recommend that you tell Haldeman that Huston should be told to proceed with what he now has, to make it an interpretive document (which would be of political value and to give up on the well digging.

Attachment

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ARMY, NSS,
review
completed.

87
Jim
HUSTON
December 19, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR TOM HUSTON

You are correct in assuming that the President wants a complete and comprehensive review of all the material at hand with regard to the bombing halt, Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem Murder. A re-write job such as you've indicated would not be adequate. While I realize that your taking on this assignment independently while maintaining your other duties may not be feasible, I would still like you to devote a substantial amount of time on this in conjunction with the appropriate members of Henry Kissinger's staff.

Please proceed with this project as quickly as possible and provide for the President, a brief status report on where the project stands. In addition you may want to include a statement of any of the problems that you're presently having on the project and your suggestion of how we can solve them to make sure that this project is completed in a reasonable amount of time.


H. R. HALDEMAN

HRH:LH:pm

cc: Henry Kissinger ✓
Jim Keogh

Ed

CONFIDENTIAL

January 14, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL A. M. HAIG

FROM: Jon Howe

SUBJECT: Huston's Memorandum re Bombing Halt

At Tab B is Huston's request for information on the availability of material relating to events leading to the 1968 bombing halt. At Tab A are three memoranda for your signature per your request.

Attachments

JTH:feg:1/13/70

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

January 14, 1970

EO

MEMORANDUM FOR



Executive Secretary
Department of State

25X1

A member of the White House staff is preparing a report for the President on the availability of material relating to events leading to the 1968 halt of the bombing of North Vietnam. Would you please have a check made of your files for memoranda, reports or other pertinent information and provide a brief descriptive list.

191

Alexander M. Haig
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Military Assistant

AMH:JTH:feg:1/13/70

CONFIDENTIAL

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January 14, 1970

EO

MEMORANDUM FOR



25X'25X1

Special Assistant to the Director
of Central Intelligence
Washington, D. C.

A member of the White House staff is preparing a report for the President on the availability of material relating to events leading to the 1968 halt of the bombing of North Vietnam. Would you please have a check made of your files for memoranda, reports or other pertinent information and provide a brief descriptive list.

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Alexander M. Haig
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Military Assistant

AMH:JTH:feg:1/13/70

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January 14, 1970

EO

MEMORANDUM FOR

Colonel Robert Pursley
Military Assistant
Office of the Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon

A member of the White House staff is preparing a report for the President on the availability of material relating to events leading to the 1968 halt of the bombing of North Vietnam. Would you please have a check made of your files for memoranda, reports or other pertinent information and provide a brief descriptive list.

191

Alexander M. Haig
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Military Assistant

AMH:JTH:feg:1/13/70

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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January 14, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL A. M. HAIG

FROM: Jon Howe

SUBJECT: Huston's Memorandum re Bombing Halt

At Tab B is Huston's request for information on the availability of material relating to events leading to the 1968 bombing halt. At Tab A are three memoranda for your signature per your request.

Attachments

*Jim I need
directions answered
to this & must
ask for me*

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 13, 1970

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL HAIG

RE: The Bombing Halt

In order to make the record clear, should the President inquire, I would like to have from the State Department a formal statement that they do not presently have in their files, in either the office of the Secretary, Under Secretary, or Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs, any memoranda, reports, or other material relating to the events leading to the 1968 bombing Halt.

While it is my understanding that the only record they have is the cable traffic, I would like to satisfy myself completely that this is the case.

I intend to make a notation of the result of this inquiry in my report to the President.

It would also be helpful if a similar inquiry were officially directed to CIA and OSD.

TOM CHARLES HUSTON

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Personal

January 10, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR HENRY KISSINGER

SUBJECT : Bombing Halt Study

Without raising any stir or pointing any fingers, I would appreciate your reaction to the attached memorandum from Tom Huston. It appears to me that Tom, once again, has raised some vital points. On the other hand, the depth of digging that he is suggesting may in fact, not be appropriate or necessary. What I need to know is your feeling on the situation. If you do not agree with Huston, it would probably be best for us to establish a position on this project and present that position to the President so that we can either proceed or forget it.


H. R. HALDEMAN

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 9, 1970

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR H. R. HALDEMAN

From: Tom Charles Huston

Subject: Bombing Halt Study

After an extensive effort to resolve the question of whether the President wishes a detailed historical summary of the negotiations leading to a Bombing Halt or a detailed analysis from a political perspective, I have concluded that no one is quite certain. Alex Butterfield advised that you thought the President wanted the former; General Haig thought he wanted the latter. I will attempt to give him both.

The written manuscript which I have completed to date, has reached such a length that I can't spare my secretary's time to count the pages, and I still have a way to go. I have found a rather significant gap in the NSC cable file and they have had to go back to State to get the missing materials. I should have these on Monday. I will then be in a position to complete the narrative history.

I doubt if anyone will want to wade through my historical narrative by virtue of its length and detail, but it has served a useful purpose for me in that it has enabled me to get a firm grip on the problem, to identify the crucial issues and junctures during the negotiating period, and to understand the relative positions of the various individuals intimately involved in the negotiations. Once the narrative is complete, it will be possible to locate the significant gaps and formulate the crucial questions to which answers are lacking in the present record.

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Assuming you will grant me the time to do so, I intend to do a much shorter ~~analytical~~ analysis of the ebb and flow of the negotiating process and the implications of the decisions which were taken at each crucial step along the way. This may be what Dr. Kissinger had in mind when he referred to a "politically oriented" document.

The final step which I plan to take is to put on paper each of the important unanswered questions which require answers if a complete understanding of what took place is to be achieved. I will also identify possible sources for this information and possible steps which could be taken to acquire it, along with the risks involved, i. e., the "ripples" that might be created.

If this plan of work is not satisfactory, or if you think part of it is unnecessary, please let me know. I can call it quits after completing the detailed historical record.

There are certain problems which I have encountered which should be seriously considered before I proceed to examine the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem Murder. The three subjects which I have been assigned are among the five messiest foreign policy problems of the past eight years (excepting only the Laos Accords of 1962 and the Bay of Pigs.) Each of them constituted a "crisis" during the Democratic Administrations and they all smell once you strip away the facade of perfume which the JFK-LBJ propaganda squads sprayed over them. The point which must be remembered is that the culprits made a determined effort to cover their tracks. The written records which really tell the story are at Cambridge or Austin and the people involved are not talking. A cursory examination of the public record will not tell the President anything he doesn't already know and a fear of causing some ripples may preclude the type of digging and investigation which would be necessary to get at the juicy facts.

There is also the problem of having the mandate, latitude, and resources to do the type of job necessary to ferret out the facts. I am sure my difficulties in getting cooperation have not been due to the unwillingness of people to help, but to the fact that they simply

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don't have time to mess with it and don't much understand or care what it is I am about. And I don't feel free to go very far on my own initiative for fear of intruding into someone's domain without a proper authorization.

I have been reluctant to raise these problems for fear that it would appear I was either presumptuous or self-serving, or both. But I have concluded as a result of working on the Bombing Halt that there is no sense trying to maintain the fiction that I am adequately handling the assignment which I have been given.

To do the job effectively, I think it should be handled at a higher level so that some latitude is available on determining what information to seek and from whom to seek it. Also, the services of more than one person is required ... assuming that what the President really wants to know is what LBJ and JFK made such an effort to conceal. My suggestion is that several highly trained investigators from the FBI and the intelligence services of the Army and Navy, along with perhaps one CIA man, be detailed to the White House for this type of work. These people would have to be carefully screened and selected for political reliability as well as professional competence, but they would provide the capability to do the extensive digging and interviewing, under appropriate covers, that is necessary. With a little effort one can locate a great number of profitable leads, but they are worthless unless you can follow up on them.

Moreover, there are a number of people still in the government who have first hand knowledge of many of the events which we are interested in. We ought to make an effort to get this information from them while they are still around. Many would be reluctant to talk if directly approached, but if approached under a suitable pretext, might give us some important information. Others should be required to give us the information we seek. For example, I fail to understand why Phillip Habib should occupy such an important position in this Administration and yet be unwilling to give us some of the information we seek about what took place in Paris during 1968.

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I have not gone into detail about the myriad measures that could be employed to gather this type of information since it is unnecessary if the fundamental approach appears to you to be an over-reaction to the problem. I don't know the priority the President attaches to this type of information. I only know what would be required to get it if he really wanted to have it available.

I suspect that this type of operation will strike you as highly irregular as well, perhaps, as totally unnecessary. I will grant the former and only you can judge the latter. However, I believe that there are probably a great number of areas beside the three assigned to me where the President would like to have sensitive information which is currently unavailable because we don't have the resources available to gather it without a direct, public effort. If this is true, such an operation as that which I am suggesting could have value beyond the scope of the three projects which I am working on.

Tom

TOM CHARLES HUSTON

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 19, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR TOM HUSTON

You are correct in assuming that the President wants a complete and comprehensive review of all the material at hand with regard to the bombing halt, Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem Murder. A re-write job such as you've indicated would not be adequate. While I realize that your taking on this assignment independently while maintaining your other duties may not be feasible, I would still like you to devote a substantial amount of time on this in conjunction with the appropriate members of Henry Kissinger's staff.

Please proceed with this project as quickly as possible and provide for the President, a brief status report on where the project stands. In addition you may want to include a statement of any of the problems that you're presently having on the project and your suggestion of how we can solve them to make sure that this project is completed in a reasonable amount of time.


H. R. HALDEMAN

cc: Henry Kissinger
Jim Keogh

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 3, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE STAFF SECRETARY

I have received from Dr. Kissinger's staff a rough draft memorandum relating the sequence of events which led to the bombing halt in November of 1968. I have not received any material on the Cuban Missile Crisis or the Diem Murder, although I have asked for this.

It was my understanding that the President wanted as complete a record as possible of each of these three events. I assumed that implicit in my assignment was the responsibility for determining whether the material at hand was an adequate record. However, it may be that all that I am expected to do is to rewrite the memorandum prepared by the NSC staff.

If what the President wants is a simple rewrite job, I can have that done by the first of next week. However, based on my study of the materials at hand, it is my opinion that the final result would be a polished but incomplete report. I believe that someone should go back over the original cable traffic and make an independent assessment of the facts contained in the NSC draft memorandum and determine whether there are not gaps in the record which should and could be filled. This would be a time-consuming job and for me to do it in conjunction with my other duties would require several weeks minimum. Someone else could conceivably do the task in a shorter period.

Since I have been unable to secure any material on the other two items which I was to look into, I cannot make an assessment of the time required to do either a rewrite or an independent analysis.

I would appreciate it if you would advise whether a rewrite of the NSC memorandum on the Bombing Halt will meet the President's requirement, or whether something more substantial is required.


TOM CHARLES HUSTON

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 20, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR KEN COLE

I met today with Colonel Haig to discuss the reports the President requested on the Bomb Halt, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem Murder. Colonel Haig has agreed to provide me with the information the NSC presently has available on these subjects. I will review this material and determine whether additional information is required.

I will submit another interim report on my progress after I have had an opportunity to review this material.



TOM CHARLES HUSTON

October 16, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR TOM HUSTON

Would you please get together with the appropriate member of Henry Kissinger's staff in regard to working out a report for the President on the bombing halt plus some additional assignments on the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem murder. Henry received a memorandum from the President requesting that he develop a report on these subjects and in turn, that Tom Huston be assigned to work with Henry's staff on developing the report.


I believe Henry's staff has already done some work on this issue so it may be a question of organizing the data into the most usable form for the President.

Thank you very much.



H. R. HALDEMAN

HRH:LH:pm
bc: Jim Keogh



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

October 13, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR BOB HALDEMAN

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: President's Request that You Assign a Staff Member to Develop a Report on the Bomb Halt, Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem Murder

By memorandum of September 22, 1969, the President asked for a complete report on the bomb halt from all vantage points, as well as whatever data we could get on the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder.

Attached is the correspondence on this matter, together with your covering note in which you recommend that Tom Huston be used for this purpose. You should be aware that we completed for the President a thorough research of all the records dealing with the bombing halt. They are available if you decide to put Tom Huston on this job. I fear we will have somewhat more difficulty with the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder, but I would like to designate a member of my staff to work with Huston in:

a. Converting the research data already completed on the bomb halt to a more politically oriented document responsive to the President's desire.

b. Obtaining from State, Defense and CIA that data which is available on the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder.

If you would ask Huston to contact me, I will insure that the project gets started in response to the President's directive.

CONFIDENTIAL

E2
Robert

OCT 13 1969

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR BOB HALDEMAN

FROM:

Henry A. Kissinger

(Signed) HK

SUBJECT:

President's Request that You Assign a Staff Member to Develop a Report on the Bomb Halt, Cuban Missile Crisis and the Diem Murder

By memorandum of September 22, 1969, the President asked for a complete report on the bomb halt from all vantage points, as well as whatever data we could get on the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder.

Attached is the correspondence on this matter, together with your covering note in which you recommend that Tom Huston be used for this purpose. You should be aware that we completed for the President a thorough research of all the records dealing with the bombing halt. They are available if you decide to put Tom Huston on this job. I fear we will have somewhat more difficulty with the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder, but I would like to designate a member of my staff to work with Huston in:

a. Converting the research data already completed on the bomb halt to a more politically oriented document responsive to the President's desire.

b. Obtaining from State, Defense and CIA that data which is available on the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder.

If you would ask Huston to contact me, I will insure that the project gets started in response to the President's directive.

T:10/10/69

CONFIDENTIAL

Date: Tues. September 23, 1969

Time: 12:00 P.M.

FOR ACTION: Dr. Kissinger

cc (for information):

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: Sat. September 27, 1969

Time: 2:00 P.M.

SUBJECT:

President's request that you assign a staff member to develop a report on the Bomb Halt, Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder.

ACTION REQUESTED:

- For Necessary Action
- For Your Recommendations
- Prepare Agenda and Brief
- Draft Reply
- For Your Comments
- Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

Please submit an interim report on what action will be taken to comply with the attached request.

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

JRB
K. R. COLE, JR.
For the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 22, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. KISSINGER

FROM: THE PRESIDENT

With no urgency but as a continuing assignment, you will recall that I want as complete a report as we can possibly get on the Bomb Halt from all vantage points what we learned in the campaign, what we heard during the campaign, what the records show, the conversations of Rusk, etc. I know that much of the information is not available, but I want to be sure that we have this record as complete as we possibly can get it. The same goes for the Cuban missile crisis and the Diem murder; the latter two I realize are ancient history, but someone on your staff should be able to dig up information on these subjects. Perhaps Tom Huston might be a good candidate or Clark Mollenhoff, although I realize we do not want to risk too much publicity.

DATE _____

TO: *Kissinger*
FROM: BOB HALDEMAN

FYI PLEASE HANDLE _____

PLEASE REVIEW AND SEE ME _____

OTHER:

*I would recommend
Hastor for this.*

*I do not know ^HHastor
but do not object
to it.
V. Hall*