

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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July 26, 1971

State Dept. review completed

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE FILES

SUBJECT: Vietnam Ad Hoc Working Group Meeting,
July 13, 1971

OSD Review Completed

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

Ambassador Sullivan opened the meeting by discussing current press reports on U.S. Ambassadorial changes at the Paris Talks and in South Korea, South Vietnam, and Thailand. He confirmed that Ambassador Bruce would be replaced by Ambassador Porter, probably in August, while Ambassador Habib would be going to Seoul to replace Porter. Sullivan also noted that press speculation about Ambassador Colby's replacement centered on Messrs. Jacobson and Mendenhall. Sullivan said that he was not sure that any firm decision had been made, but that these two men seemed to be the likely candidates. Mr. Whitehouse noted that the field seemed to be favoring Jacobson. When asked about press reports that he would be soon replacing Ambassador Unger in Bangkok, Sullivan only smiled.

ARMY review completed.

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Sullivan announced that Secretary Rogers would be conferring with the President in San Clemente later in the day on Madame Binh's seven point proposal. In any event, Sullivan said, the U.S. delegation in Paris would simply tread water at the next meeting on July 15. In passing, Sullivan noted that both the Soviets and the French were characterizing the seven point proposal as a "very serious offer" in conversations with U.S. officials.

Ambassador Sullivan then turned to the oil exploration issue. He confirmed the speculation voiced by Mr. Bennett at the previous meeting that U.S. oil companies were indeed pressing us to have the GVN postpone the project. He underlined the obvious problems that would develop if the U.S. Government became embroiled in the issue at this point. He also stated that he had persuaded Secretary Rogers first to ask for Ambassador Bunker's views on a GVN postponement, rather than requesting Bunker to take the issue directly to the GVN.

Ambassador Sullivan then asked Mr. Constant if MACV's final views on a reduction in the CORDS organization had been received. Mr. Constant replied that there had been a delay in sending out the cable, but that an answer was

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expected soon. Ambassador Colby's replacement was again discussed briefly. Sullivan said that no decision had yet been made, although Ambassador Bunker had been asked for his views. Sullivan voiced the opinion that should Jacobson (Colby's former deputy) be selected, an "outsider", rather than someone now in CORDS, should then be named as Jacobson's deputy in order to minimize any clannish tendency within CORDS. Sullivan also noted that Frank Shakespeare is attempting to dissolve JUSPAO and to withdraw USIA officers at the province level from CORDS. Sullivan announced that Ambassador Bunker is strongly opposed to both of these proposals.

Mr. Whitehouse then reported further on his Indochina trip. He said that he had discussed the narcotics problem with Souvanna. Souvanna had pledged to do what he could to help, but had responded with an air of aggrieved helplessness when reminded of official Lao complicity in the heroin traffic. Mr. Whitehouse found the current atmosphere in Phnom Penh "incredible." Life continued at a very leisurely pace, government offices closed at noon and most major decisions related to planning dinner menus. Mr. Whitehouse observed that most Khmer still retained a child-like belief that their sense of nationalism would somehow ward off the Communist threat. He emphasized that few Khmer yet recognized that hard work and organization as well as faith were needed. In Tam had expressed a few vague ideas about a pacification apparatus and the need to strengthen links between the government and the countryside, but he was virtually alone. Mr. Whitehouse concluded that very few Khmer even yet admitted the presence of indigenous Khmer Communists in the countryside.

General Karhohs announced that DOD was preparing a memorandum proposing that the ARVN be given its own herbicide capability. He said that it would be sent to Secretary Rogers for his views as soon as Secretary Laird returned from his Asian tour.

Ambassador Sullivan asked Mr. Carver about the status of the North Vietnamese road being constructed south through the DMZ. Carver replied photography showed the road to be motorable through the DMZ to the Khe Sanh area. Carver added, however, that there were no signs of movement on the road as yet. A general discussion then ensued about the North Vietnamese ability to move armor rapidly along this route. General Karhohs felt that a tank column could probably reach Khe Sanh from North Vietnam within thirty-six hours if it had to transport its own POL, but that the move could easily be made over night if POL were prepositioned. Carver wondered whether this NVA road building activity should be raised as a violation at the Paris talks. Sullivan agreed that it deserved consideration.

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Discussion then turned to the de-classification of the Pentagon Papers being supervised by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Henkin. The working level review was just about complete and Henkin was now correlating the deletions suggested by State, CIA, and DOD. Sullivan announced that although State had participated as requested, it was opposed to releasing a de-classified version. Sullivan said a memorandum to that effect would be sent to Mr. Henkin. Mr. Carver agreed with State, and that CIA would send a similar memorandum to Mr. Henkin. Sullivan emphasized that an official release of the Pentagon study by DOD would bear the unmistakable imprimatur of the Executive Branch no matter what caveats were devised. He also wondered how such a release would effect the work of the Justice Department in prosecuting Ellsberg, and possibly the Times, Post, and Globe as well.

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