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INFORMATION

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October 7, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE FILES

SUBJECT:

Vietnam Ad Hoc Working Group Meeting,  
October 1, 1971

MORI C05099576

OSD, DPMO, DOS, Review Completed

The Cease-fire Paper

Ambassador Sullivan remarked that the Department of State's position on the cease-fire paper is that it is not in suitable form for submission to the President. Ambassador Sullivan expressed the belief that the present cease-fire paper should be held in limbo and retained as a reference document which might be used in the future to develop negotiating scenarios.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

The Situation on Capitol Hill

Ambassador Sullivan remarked that he had spent much of his time recently on the Hill meeting with various Senators. His own prognosis was that the Defense Procurement Bill was not in any real trouble because the Mansfield Amendment would be disposed of in conference. Sullivan added, however, that many legislators plan to hang everything on the foreign aid legislation. There is therefore the possibility of a deadlock in foreign aid, with no bill at all. It would then become a matter of obtaining a continuing resolution. Senator Griffin has told Ambassador Sullivan that the progress of much of this legislation may depend on what is contained in the President's November 15 speech.

ROK Forces in South Vietnam

Sullivan said that at Dr. Kissinger's request a cable was being sent to the field stating our policy that two ROK divisions should be retained in South Vietnam through calendar year 1972 and that the United States is prepared to fund this arrangement.

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CORDS

Sullivan said that based on conversations after General Haig's return from Saigon, it appeared that there would be a more rapid drawdown of CORDS personnel levels than was previously anticipated. In light of this, Sullivan said, the State Department has no institutional objection to assigning General Weyand over-all supervisory responsibility for CORDS. Mr. Bennett observed that the U.S. Mission appears to be thinking in terms of phasing out CORDS by the end of 1972. He expressed the view that one of the problems facing the Mission would be the sagging morale within CORDS because it has not shrunk fast enough.

Both Ambassador Sullivan and Mr. Bennett agreed, however, that just because CORDS is currently overstuffed we should not swing to the other extreme; there may be CORDS-type functions which will be required for some time to come.

General Karhohs remarked that Secretary Laird has approved the assumption of CORDS supervisory responsibilities by General Weyand and added that Weyand would of course retain his functions as deputy commander of U.S. forces and as the U.S. representative in the tri-partite liaison arrangement with Cambodia and South Vietnam.

Prisoners of War

Ambassador Sullivan noted that the Department has just received word of a RVNAF-JGS plan for reclassifying many POWs held in South Vietnam. The basic purpose of this reclassification would be to reduce the number of captives in the POW category. Sullivan said that the U.S. must weigh in on this issue to insure that whatever the GVN does is consistent with the Geneva Prisoner of War Conventions.

The Situation on the Cambodian Border

General Karhohs noted that because our military had been incorrect in its reporting on the situation at Snoul earlier this year, the press had now over-reacted with wildly exaggerated stories about the current situation on the Cambodian border. In fact, said Karhohs, there are no more than

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two enemy units involved. They are engaged in some stand-off shelling and the ARVN has had contact with only a couple of enemy battalions. Karhohs added that sustained enemy activity in the area would indicate that they have solved some of their logistical problems, but Karhohs did not believe that this would prove to be the case.

Laird Visit to SVN

General Karhohs noted that Secretary Laird would be visiting Saigon on the 2nd of November for 2 1/2 days.

The Situation in Saigon

Mr. Carver noted that there had been a wrap-up of the political situation from the station chief in Saigon. The wrap-up concluded that unless there was some unfortunate bounce of the ball, the GVN has the situation under control (Note: The wrap-up referred to by Mr. Carver has been briefed and submitted separately to Dr. Kissinger).

Letter to President Thieu

After the Ad Hoc Group meeting had ended, Ambassador Sullivan asked Mr. Negroonte and Mr. Bennett to stay behind. He said that he had been giving some thought to what kind of letter of congratulations President Nixon might send to President Thieu after his re-election. Sullivan said he was thinking in terms of suggesting a letter which pats Thieu on the back but then goes on to point out in firm though general terms some of the areas in which Thieu will have to move if he is to enhance the image and effectiveness of his administration during his second term. Ambassador Sullivan said he would be preparing a draft for consideration by Dr. Kissinger. He added that he would be bringing the draft along with him to the cease-fire meeting scheduled for that afternoon.

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