

INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

STE-HK-AD5023

A-12

State Dept. review completed

MORI/CDF
C03322141

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

EYES ONLY

72 MAY 15 AM 9:40

WHITE HOUSE
SITING ROOM

1972 MAY 15 13 39

T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 151202Z MAY 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0092 IMMEDIATE
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER
REF: WHS 2069

1. I DISCUSSED SUBJECT OF REFTEL WITH THIEU INDICATING OUR VIEW THAT WE SHOULD NOT GO TO THE PLENARY SESSIONS WITHOUT KNOWING THROUGH PRIOR PRIVATE MEETING PRECISELY WHAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ATTITUDE MAY BE.

2. THIEU EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT WHEN THE PRESIDENT MEETS WITH SOVIET LEADERS, HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF HANOI'S THINKING AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT RETURN TO THE PLENARY SESSIONS IF INDICATIONS ARE THAT HANOI IS GOING TO STICK TO ITS PRESENT INTRANSIGENT POSITION. HE, THEREFORE, BELIEVES OPTION 2 TO BE PREFERABLE SINCE THE PRESIDENT WILL THEN GO TO THE SUMMIT WITH AT LEAST SOME INDICATION OF HANOI'S ATTITUDE. THIEU ALSO FEELS THAT IF WE GO TO THE PLENARY SESSION WITHOUT SOME ASSURANCE OR AT LEAST INDICATION OF A CHANGE IN HANOI'S POSITION IT WILL PUT US IN A DIS-ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION SINCE IT WILL APPEAR THAT WE HAVE BEEN FORCED TO RETURN TO THE MEETINGS. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE CAN SAY TO THE SOVIET LEADERS THAT WE ARE READY TO PURSUE THE MEETINGS IF THERE IS SOME INDICATION THAT CONCRETE PRACTICAL RESULTS WILL ENSURE.

3. I AGREE WITH YOUR VIEW THAT DELAYING THE PRIVATE MEETING UNTIL AFTER THE SUMMIT WILL MAKE IT LOOK AS THOUGH ACTION WAS TAKEN IN AGREEMENT OR COLLUSION WITH THE SOVIETS AND THERE WILL BE SUSPICION THAT SOME DEAL WAS STRUCK. AS YOU KNOW, RUMORS AND

~~RUMORS~~ SUSPICIONS HAVE

ARISEN HERE FROM TIME TO TIME THAT A DEAL HAS BEEN MADE BY THE SOVIETS AND OURSELVES SUCH AS CESSION OF THE TWO NORTHERN PROVINCES OR A CEASE-FIRE IN PLACE. SUCH SUSPICIONS ARE LIKELY TO ARISE AGAIN AND IF THEY BECOME PREVALENT I THINK IT WILL TEND TO WEAKEN THE RESOLVE OF THE VIETNAMESE TO PROSECUTE THE WAR WHICH THEY MAY WELL HAVE TO DO.

4. WARM REGARDS.

EYES ONLY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

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