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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

19 October 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Walt W. Rostow ✓  
Special Assistant to the President

The Honorable Dean Rusk  
Secretary of State

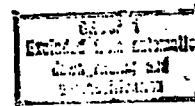
SUBJECT: Special South Vietnamese Cabinet Meeting  
of 16 October 1968 and Vice President Ky's (b)(1)  
Reaction to the Bombing Halt Proposal (b)(3)

1. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

2. [Redacted] Ky said that those present seemed ready (b)(1)  
to endorse the bombing halt until Ky raised the issues of NLF attend- (b)(3)  
ance at the talks and the political need for making public the NVN  
concessions. Ky argued that if the NLF could not be kept out of the  
Paris talks, the GVN should at least insist that the terms of NLF  
participation under Hanoi's sponsorship should be simply and clearly  
spelled out to insure that the NLF did not appear as an equal par-  
ticipant with the GVN. He did not trust the North Vietnamese to  
keep their word, Ky said, and the GVN should press for maximum  
concessions, clearly spelled out, now when its leverage was greatest.  
Ky said that the majority at the meeting, naming specifically Vy,

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Vien, and two assembly speakers, agreed with him and Thieu then agreed to seek adjustments in terms of the bombing halt.

3. Ky feels that the matter of representation on each side at the peace talks was never really settled during the many weekly meetings he and Thieu had with American Embassy officials; the subject was always changed just as decisions or agreement seemed near.

4. [redacted] President Thieu had wired instructions to Ambassadors Bui Diem and Lam to insure that they insist in their talks with American officials on a GVN presence at any future peace talks and that the NLF not be given a status equal to the GVN's. Thieu also instructed his Legislative Liaison Officer Nhuyen Cao Thang on 18 October 1968 to brief bloc leaders in the Assembly on the bombing halt proposal and to line up Assembly support for the GVN's position. A closed-door session of the Assembly is scheduled for 1500 hours 19 October 1968 to review the peace proposals and [redacted] this session would lead to Assembly support of the GVN's ultimate position. (b)(1)  
(b)(3)

5. [redacted] Ky and Ambassador Berger had met at 1700 hours on 18 October 1968 and Ky had described their talk as frank and cordial. Ky had told Berger, in response to Berger's question, that he understood Berger's position clearly but continued to disagree with some of them. Ky tried unsuccessfully to get an appointment with Thieu after his talk with Berger but was told by Thieu's protocol officer that Thieu could not receive him on the 19th. Ky is trying to follow protocol, understands the need for national unity, and will do his part, but believes Thieu must also show some understanding. (b)(1)  
(b)(3)

6. [redacted]

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[redacted] the details of "our side, their side" had been left very vague in discussions with the Embassy and that it had never been clear who would head "our" delegation. [redacted]

(b)(1)  
(b)(3)  
(b)(1)  
(b)(3)

[redacted] Ky did not find the total package unacceptable but felt it best to try to wrap up the loose ends now. For example, even if the NLF could not be excluded, the subject should be fully explored since NLF representation could take a number of forms, each with significant substantive differences.

(b)(1)  
(b)(3)

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