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IV. B. 1.

EVOLUTION OF THE WAR

THE KENNEDY PROGRAM AND COMMITMENTS

1961

#280



UNITED STATES - VIETNAM RELATIONS

1945 - 1967

IV.B.1.

EVOLUTION OF THE WAR

THE KENNEDY PROGRAM AND COMMITMENTS: 1961

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER I

1. NIE 63-59, 26 May 1959, "Prospects for North and South Vietnam"
2. Durbrow (Saigon) message to State (61)
3. NIE 63.1-60, 23 August 1960, "Short Term Trends in South Vietnam"
4. Brig. Gen Lansdale Report to Secretary of Defense, 17 January 1961
5. CINCPAC Command History, 1960, p. 142
6. NIE 63.1-60, 23 August 1960
7. Young Memorandum to Diem (copy attached to Young Letter to Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric, 24 April)
8. Saigon message to State 1656, 4 December 1960
9. CAS message (Lodge) to White House (65)
10. Coolidge Commission Report, January 1960 (Item 1, Recommendations)

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER II

1. DEPTTEL 1054 to Saigon, 3 February 1961
2. Saigon message 276, 4 January 1961
3. Charles von Luttichau of Office, Chief of Army History, "U.S. Army Role in the Conflict in Vietnam," 1964, Chapter 5 (TS). For detail on the chain of command problem, see page 7ff; for the dispute on an operations plan, see page 15ff.
4. Saigon message 276, 4 January 1961.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Memorandum, Lansdale to Secretary of Defense, 17 January 1961. Tab 1, R. L. Gilpatric Task Force File.
9. Hilsman, Roger, To Move a Nation (Doubleday), p. 419
10. State message 1054, op. cit.
11. Ibid.
12. Saigon message 1444, 8 March 1961
13. Saigon message 1466, 16 March 1961
14. DEPTTEL 1218 to Saigon, 23 March 1961
15. Saigon message 1650, 3 May 1961

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER III

1. Secretary of Defense Memorandum to the Deputy Secretary of Defense, 20 April 1961, confirmed by Secretary of Defense Memorandum for the President, 20 April 1961
2. NIE 50-61, "Outlook in Mainland Southeast Asia" 28 March 1961; Lansdale Memorandum to Secretary of Defense, 17 January 1961; Saigon message to State 1656, 3 May 1961; Draft Report of Task Force on Vietnam, 26 April 1961
3. NIE 50-61
4. Gilpatric Task Force File, handwritten note among drafts on impact on Vietnam of Laos, at Tab 20.
5. Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1961, p. 261
6. Ibid., p. 306
7. W. W. Rostow Memorandum to the President in Secretary of Defense files (File Copy). Lansdale's Memorandum describing it is found at Tab 2, Gilpatric Task Force file. Copy of 26 April Draft of Task Force Report in Gilpatric Task Force file.
8. The "implementing agent" language is from an SWIE dated 5 October on Bloc support for the Viet Cong. But similar formulations are commonplace throughout the record. See, for example, the opening section of the Taylor Mission Report, or the opening section of the Rusk/McNamara Memorandum for the President dated 11 November 1961.
9. Lansdale Memorandum to Richard Bissell (CIA), Gilpatric Task Force, Tab 19
10. NSAM 52, 11 May 1961
11. Gilpatric Task Force file, Tab 13
12. Ibid., Tab 20
- 12.a. Schlesinger, Arthur, A Thousand Days (Houghton Mifflin), p. 337
13. Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1961, p. 340
14. Gilpatric Task Force file, Tab 23
15. Ibid., Tab 26

16. Ibid., Tab 29
17. Ibid., Tab 28
18. Ibid., Tab 29 (Line-in/Line-out draft from State which shows both the Defense draft and the State-proposed revisions). The changes cited are from the section headed "Political and Economic Objectives."
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., Tab 31. (Copies of the summary section only were distributed as attachments to NSAM 52.)
21. Gilpatric Task Force, op. cit.
22. Political Annex to May 6 (Final) Draft
23. Papers of the Presidents, op. cit., p. 356
24. President Kennedy's Letter to Ngo Dinh Diem, 8 May 1961
25. Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum to Chairman, JCS, 8 May 1961, Subject: "Vietnam."
26. Gilpatric Task Force Draft, May 6, Military Recommendations
27. JCSM 320-61, 10 May 1961
28. NSAM 52, 11 May 1961
29. Ibid.
30. Gilpatric Task Force Drafts, Political and Economic Section
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. OSD Task Force (Vietnam) files - Dr. D. Ellsberg Paper
34. Ibid.
35. Deputy Secretary of Defense files. Among other things, states that Vice President Johnson will find Diem "as interested in cattle as any Texan, and as interested in freedom as Sam Houston." Concludes "Here is our toughest ally in Asia...a 60-year old bachelor who gave up romance with his sweetheart to devote his life to his country."

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER IV

1. Saigon message 421, 1 October 1961
2. Saigon message 1743, 15 May 1961
3. Vice President Johnson Memorandum for the President, 23 May 1961
4. Lansdale Memorandum for Gilpatric, 18 May 1961, Subject: "Vietnam."
5. President Diem Letter to President Kennedy, 9 June 1961
6. Joint Action Program Proposed by the Vietnam-United States Special Financial Groups, undated, but submitted to President Kennedy approximately July 25.
7. NSAM 65, 11 August 1961
8. Lansdale Memorandum for Gilpatric, 18 May 1961, Subject: "Vietnam."
9. According to notes in the Task Force files. We do not have citations for the JCS Memorandum or McGarr's messages. Lansdale's Memorandum to Gilpatric also alludes to such proposals.
10. Saigon message 1803, 27 May 1961
11. Diem Letter to Kennedy, 9 June 1961
12. Sorenson, Kennedy (Harper & Rowe), p. 736
13. Note found in Secretary of Defense files.
14. NIE 14.3/53-61, 15 August 1961, "Prospects for North and South Vietnam."
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. State Department, "First 12-Month Report," 1 September 1961
18. Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 544
19. Saigon message, 29 September 1961
20. Quoted from an untitled, mimeographed paper in Secretary of Defense's files. The only marking on the paper is the usual note "Secretary of Defense has seen." Probably it was a product of a Laos, or South-east Asia working group.
21. Ibid.

22. NIE 14.3/53-61

23. New York Times, 23 September 1961

24. New York Times, 27 September 1961, Editorial Page, Reston Column

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER V

1. JCSM 717-61
2. Ibid.
3. "Concept of Intervention in South Vietnam," considered at an NSC Meeting, 11 October.
4. SNIE 53-2-61, "Bloc Support of the Communist Effort Against the Government of SVN," 5 October 1961
5. Washington Post, 10 April 1968
6. SNIE 10-3-61, "Probable Communist Response to Certain SEATO Undertakings in SEA."
7. Supplemental Note 2, 11 October 1961, to "Concept of Intervention in Vietnam," 10 October 1961.
8. William Bundy Memorandum for Secretary McNamara, 10 October 1961.
9. Gilpatric Memorandum for the Record, 11 October 1961.
10. New York Times, 12 October 1961, p. 1. Transcript of Press Conference at p. 20.
11. New York Times, 13 October 1961, p. 16
12. New York Times, 14 October 1961, p. 14
13. Saigon message 488, 13 October 1961
14. New York Times, 15 October 1961, p. 1
15. CINCPAC message to JCS, 20 October 1961, Subject: "Pros and Cons of Introducing U.S. Combat Forces Into South Vietnam."
16. Saigon message 516, 20 October 1961
- 16a. CHMAAG Saigon message to JCS, 23 October 1961
17. Saigon message 536, 25 October 1961
18. Saigon message 537, 25 October 1961
19. BAGUIO message 0005, 1 November 1961
20. BAGUIO message 0006, EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT, 1 November 1961

21. Summary Section, Taylor Mission Report, p. 8
22. Ibid., p. 24
23. Ibid., pp 8, 9
24. Ibid., p. 11
25. Ibid., p. 14
26. Appendix C, Taylor Report, pp 2, 3
27. Summary, Taylor Report, p. 8
28. Appendix A, Section III, Taylor Report
29. Summary, Taylor Report, p. 7
30. Appendix B, Taylor Report, p. 1
31. Ibid., p. 2
32. Ibid., p. 1
33. Ibid., p. 1
34. Summary, Taylor Report, p. 5
35. Ibid., p. 19
36. Ibid., p. 25
37. General Maxwell Taylor's Letter to the President, transmittal of Taylor Mission Report
38. Summary, Taylor Report, p. 5
39. Ibid., p. 6
40. Ibid., p. 11
41. Saigon message 545, 25 October 1961
42. ChMAAG Saigon message to JCS, 24 October 1961
43. Saigon message 541, 25 October 1961
44. ChMAAG Saigon Letter to Secretary of Defense, 11 November 1961

45. Saigon message 541, 25 October 1961

46. Ibid.

47. Saigon message 536, 25 October 1961

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER VI

1. New York Times, 4 November 1961, p. 1
2. New York Times, 29 October 1961, p. 28
3. New York Times, 21 October 1961, p. 1
4. New York Times, 5 November 1961, p. 1
5. Ibid.
6. DEPTTEL 545 to Saigon, 4 November 1961. The language cited in the footnote is the only completely unambiguous indication of how far the U.S. hoped to go in putting Americans into a direct position of influence in the Vietnamese government and army. But there is plenty of language in the Taylor Mission Report that suggests as much and there is a rather blunt statement, quoted at the end of Section II of this chapter, which Nolting was told to pass on to Diem in explaining the U.S. offer.
7. Sorenson, op. cit., p. 737, says senior advisers "on Vietnam," which presumably did not include someone like George Ball, then Undersecretary of State, who has been widely reported to have opposed any combat troop commitments.

As we will see, Galbraith is also on record against troops. Rusk is on record as deferring combat troops in a joint McNamara/Rusk memorandum which appears to have been drafted after the President had made his decision (it contradicts a memorandum McNamara signed only three days earlier). We do not know whether Rusk, like McNamara was reversing his position.

8. Saigon message 437, 25 October 1961
9. BAGUIO message 0006, 1 November 1961, EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT
10. USDEL Hakone to State, Section 6, 1 November 1961
11. Saigon message 575, 31 October 1961
12. Staff memoranda, 2 and 6 November 1961, by Colonel Kent, OSD(ISA)
13. Summary, Taylor Report, p. 1
14. SNIE 10-4-61, 5 November 1961, "Probable Communist Reactions to Certain U.S. Actions in South Vietnam," 5 November 1961
15. Ibid.

16. Memorandum for the President from McNamara, Gilpatric, JCS, 8 November 1961 (TS)
17. Rusk/McNamara Memorandum for the President, 11 November 1961 (TS)
18. NSAM 111, 22 November 1961
19. Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 547
20. DEPTTEL 618 to Saigon, 14 November 1961
- 20.a. DEPTTEL 619 to Saigon, 14 November 1961
21. Ibid.
22. Saigon message 678, 18 November 1961
23. Saigon message 687, 22 November 1961
24. Bangkok message, Galbraith to the President, 20 November 1961
25. New Delhi (Galbraith) message 9941 for the President, 21 November 1961
26. Reuters dispatch from Saigon in The Washington Post, 25 November 1961
27. Saigon message 708, 25 November 1961
28. DEPTTEL 619 to Saigon, 14 November 1961
29. DEPTTEL 693 to Saigon, 7 November 1961
30. New York Times, 12 December 1961
31. New York Times, 13 December 1961
32. Ibid.