

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE
Incorporated

DES
BED
MAY 13 1969
Quaker Vigil in Wash.
5/5/69 (Dorinda Sawyer)
Mtg. w/ Kissinger

To: Regional Executive Secretaries
Regional Finance Secretaries
Division Secretaries
QIARS
William Huntington
Colin Bell
Tartt Bell

May 12, 1969

cc: Louis Schneider ✓
Stephen Cary
Earle Edwards

From: Bronson Clark

Subject: Meeting of the AFSC Board Delegation with Dr. Henry A. Kissinger at the
White House on May 5, 1969

While a fuller report on the successful vigil led by the AFSC Board in Washington on May 5-6 is undoubtedly in order, I want to write up the interview with Dr. Henry A. Kissinger while it is fresh in my mind. Since this will be rather complete the confidential aspects of it should be observed, although the main position that he enumerated with respect to the Administration's posture on the war in Vietnam is of course not confidential.

Our delegation was led by Gilbert White with three other Board members--Joe Elder, George Sawyer and Norval Reece--and myself. We were escorted through the White House gate down to the West office building into the basement level offices where we waited for a few moments in the lobby. At ten minutes after three we were escorted into the outer office where the thunderous silence of the three secretaries led me to believe that these particular toilers did not know what to expect from a delegation of some 1,400 people who were surrounding various buildings outside. Joining us with Dr. Kissinger was his appointment secretary Lawrence Eagleburger. Dr. Kissinger seemed somewhat ill at ease and I would say that his posture during the hour and five minutes that we were there was quite defensive. Taking our cue from Gilbert White the rest of us in the delegation allowed Dr. Kissinger to do considerable talking so that I feel that in terms of time he probably held the floor for at least fifty or sixty per cent of the time.

Looking around us with a somewhat uneasy glance, as though searching for a friendly face, he said that he welcomed a chance to talk to the group, that he had read our statement with interest. We noticed that he had a xeroxed copy of our statement which had been underlined in certain places and some tabs put along the edge. It appeared that someone perhaps had gone through it and noted the main points and perhaps had given him some sort of summary of it. It was obvious in certain instances that he had not really mastered the statement although he was well aware of its general thrust. He indicated that he had some differences with respect to the section which dealt with the figures indicating escalation of the war. He stated that the United States had not escalated the war, that the coming of the Tet offensive made it necessary for the United States to take certain initiatives in response to the escalation, and that any increase in our activity was the direct responsibility of the North Vietnamese. He never seemed to mention the NLF, said the North Vietnamese would stage an offensive, that they would "move their supplies forward" and then fight into their supplies. He indicated their ability to do this was of course somewhat a reflection on our military capabilities. He spent considerable time, therefore, saying that we would be irresponsible if we did not take military initiatives in the face of a pending offensive.

Members of our delegation took considerable exception to some of this. We mentioned that the 30,000 to 40,000 North Vietnamese pull back, mentioned on page 8 of our White Paper, was an evidence of an intention on the part of the North Vietnamese to respond to our bombing halt. Dr. Kissinger replied that their withdrawals were not really withdrawals, that they went into Cambodia for rest and regroupment and he could not accept this as a withdrawal. He did mention that the differences between the American way of negotiating and the Vietnamese way made it extremely difficult to know what they intended when they took some action. He stated that they were politically sophisticated and quite subtle and this made it difficult even in the dealings with the Saigon government. He said, however, that the United States was not pressing the war particularly. We referred to operation Bold Mariner and the movement of 12,000 refugees into the Quang Ngai area. Dr. Kissinger said he was not familiar with this operation but would "look into it." We referred to footnote 14 on page 8, which appeared in the New York Times and which indicated continuing maximum American military pressure. We pointed out the figures in the White Paper which indicated a steady increase in the bombing month by month. Dr. Kissinger asked where we obtained our figures and seemed surprised when we replied, "The Pentagon." "I'll have to check them out," was his comment.

Dr. Kissinger made a rather long statement on his general agreement and the President's agreement that the war must be ended and that the United States must withdraw. He said it was unwinnable militarily and that mutual withdrawal is earnestly being sought after by the United States. He said that if the war isn't over by 1972 President Nixon wouldn't be around for an additional term. He bridled a bit when I said that if they were so anxious to negotiate why was it that those forces in South Vietnam which also wanted a negotiated settlement to the war were being so vigorously put in jail, such as the Buddhists, newspaper editors, Saigon intellectuals, and so forth. He said we are not putting them in jail, and I replied by pointing out that we pay the salary of the man who holds the key. He gave rather vigorous denial to the fact that the Saigon Government was wholly manageable and indicated that they had been pushing for the release of some of these prisoners. We really did not get into the whole issue of whether or not the Saigon Government existed primarily because of the support of the United States, although of course our statement was very clear on that point.

We brought up the subject of the havoc that was being wrought among the Vietnamese civilians by the escalation of the war, at which point Dr. Kissinger said "we are not indifferent to the civilian casualties." We pointed out however that we could only classify it as indifference when one considered that the three hospitals promised in I Corp had in fact never been built, that there was at best very minimal support for civilian wounded by the Americans, and that if he could see the masses of wounded inundating these hospitals he could only come to our conclusion about the responsibility for civilian casualties. Dr. Kissinger denied that the United States was "deliberately inflicting civilian casualties." We reported on the incident described by our Quang Ngai team when they stood on the roof of the hostel and watched the Jelly Green Giants with their rapid fire machine guns spraying in a random fashion in the general area in and on the edge and outside the town. We told him these were Quaker eyewitness accounts of the shooting of civilians and that the large influx of civilian wounded in the hospitals was the final evidence. He indicated that he would "investigate" the shooting of civilians by helicopters.

Dr. Kissinger said that this Administration needs time to work its way out of the Vietnam war. He said that we "inherited a shambles" with no dialogue going, and by this I presume that he meant a dialogue in terms of negotiations between North Vietnam and the U.S. He said the previous Administration acted in a "frenzy" with

no plan or program and that he felt the new Administration had slowed down this random activity and that there were no belicose statements being issued by the White House these days. He said that demonstrations such as ours were a handicap in that it put pressure on them to act precipitously and that the political repercussions in the United States to a failure in Vietnam would not mean the ascendancy of good people like us but the taking over the country of the far right.

We asked, if you cannot win militarily and if you plan to withdraw anyway, why do you continue to prosecute the war? He said that it is a question of time, that events in Paris were moving exceedingly slowly, that maybe he would have something good to report in six or even three months. He asked us to come back in three months and meet again. Gilbert White said that during the conference he had not given what the Bible called "a sign" with which to take to our people. Dr. Kissinger said well, in three months he might have some "sign" and invited us again. Since this was the third time he had invited us to return, our delegation suggested that we come back in two months and Dr. Kissinger then agreed. Gilbert White pointed out to Dr. Kissinger that Joe Elder was on special assignment for AFSC and would be making a survey of the current situation in Southeast Asia, with particular emphasis on reconstruction possibilities, and that this could be announced at this time to the press and that the occasion of mid-term report would coincide with our meeting with him on July 7.

We left in a somewhat somber mood. As Gilbert said, it was rather "chilling" to have a person in Dr. Kissinger's situation give verbal expression to such despair as he seemed to do in his discussion of the difficulty of negotiations and the problems of precipitate withdrawal. One sensed a man who did not have much confidence that any efforts in any direction would work. He certainly did not seem to have any coherent program that he could articulate or that he had much belief in the ability of the Administration to produce a workable formula.

The other matter which has stayed with me since this interview is some wonder at how much real control the civilians in the White House exercise over the enormous bureaucracy of the military. The problems in stopping the war by having the military "trying to win" and still to act as though we seriously intend to negotiate our withdrawal seems to delay the inevitable confrontation with our military lobby. Mr. DeGaulle could give us a few pointers here about the struggle in getting a military machine under control.

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE
Incorporated

File (circled)

OES
US Govt
Meeting w.
Kissinger

To: Regional Executive Secretaries
Regional Peace Secretaries
Division Heads
QIARS
QUNP
Davis House
Washington Seminars
Members of Board Vietnam Committee

July 9, 1969

CONFIDENTIAL

(A)

From: Bronson Clark

Subject: Summary of a meeting held July 7 in the White House with Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Foreign Affairs Advisor to the President, and the AFSC Board Delegation, consisting of Gilbert F. White, Joseph Elder, Norval Reece, George Sawyer, and Bronson Clark

This meeting, unlike our first one, was not held in Dr. Kissinger's office but took place in a small conference room just beside the "situation room." Our delegation sat around a conference table and were joined by John Holdridge, a foreign service officer and specialist on China who was starting his first day on assignment as a member of Dr. Kissinger's staff. John Holdridge I knew from having chaired a Washington Seminar at which he was present, and he is therefore well known to Tartt Bell. We were joined in a minute or two by Dr. Kissinger who asked us to make any opening statement we wished. In accordance with our previously arrived plan, Gilbert called on Joe Elder to report on his trip to Stockholm, Paris and Southeast Asia.

Joe Elder reported that he had been very well received in North Vietnam, that he had met with the Ministries of Health and Education, and that he was successful in obtaining a list of cardiac surgical equipment which we propose to ship to North Vietnam. He mentioned that we were in consultation with the Department of State concerning the obtaining of a license from Treasury. I mentioned that Marshall Green, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, had indicated to us he would recommend to Treasury the granting of the license. Dr. Kissinger stated at this point that if we had any trouble in this matter to please let him know, thereby implying that he would see that the license was granted.

Joe Elder described his conversation with the Foreign Minister of the DRV and said the most significant point was that the Foreign Minister had said, "You tell Dr. Kissinger that the formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government was not a mere playing with names but was a most significant development in that it implied a willingness to consider some type of coalition government in South Vietnam." Joe Elder mentioned that the North Vietnamese were anxious to receive not only members of the American peace movement but other Americans, such as educators, businessmen, and perhaps political figures such as some of the members of the United States Senate. One or two of us on the delegation then asked Dr. Kissinger what he thought of this proposal, and Dr. Kissinger indicated he had never considered anything quite like it and suggested that we telephone him in a week if we wanted his reaction on the matter.

Joe Elder then mentioned that he had an interview with Ambassador Bunker in Saigon. He reported that Bunker was the only American he had talked to who seemed to be completely out of touch with the realities of the situation in South Vietnam. Joe Elder

said that all the Vietnamese and Americans he had talked to came to diametrically opposed conclusions as to the morale of the Saigon troops, the state of the pacification program, and the progress of the war generally. He gave Dr. Kissinger an example of incorrect information at the collection point which probably was a sample of why Ambassador Bunker was so misinformed. Joe told of a village that he had heard about near An Khe in which a survey had been taken which showed a certain per cent of the population favoring the PRG, a certain per cent favoring the Saigon Government, and another per cent uncommitted. The Saigon official had simply lowered the population of the town down to the number of NLF sympathizers and thereby declared the town pacified!

Joe Elder also reported on the opinion of a leading Buddhist in Saigon who said, "Tell Dr. Kissinger the present administration policy will produce a united communist Indo-China consisting of Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia."

Gilbert White then mentioned his conversations in Paris with members of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and stressed his conviction that the main obstacle to significant negotiation was the continued vigorous prosecution of the war by the United States, the increase in military pressure, the continuing high level of combat operations, casualties, bombing missions, and so forth. Gilbert mentioned "Operation Phoenix" which the NLF finds particularly offensive inasmuch as it involves the political assassination of civilians on a wide scale. Dr. Kissinger interrupted to say that he was not acquainted with "Operation Phoenix" and asked John Holdridge if he was. Holdridge, who was busily taking notes, looked up in some surprise and shook his head. I said that it had been reported in the New York Times some months ago and was surely well known to any who were reasonably informed on Vietnam. Dr. Kissinger said, "I'm going to look into that."

Dr. Kissinger then made his main presentation, but he inquired, "Is this to be off the record, and am I to talk in a candid fashion, and in what way is this meeting to be reported?" Gilbert White turned the question around and asked Dr. Kissinger in what way did he want the meeting to be reported. After some brief discussion Gilbert said, "In the previous meeting we said to the press what we had said to you, but we did not quote you directly." Dr. Kissinger replied that we could proceed on that basis.

He started by saying that all of the initiatives for private talks which have been held in Paris were made by the American side. He said this Administration had scrapped the Johnson Manila formula under which the North Vietnamese would have to withdraw all their troops before we essentially started to withdraw ours. He said that the Administration had secured an agreement by Thieu to agree to elections and while he, Dr. Kissinger, was aware that elections, and honest elections, would be a severe problem in South Vietnam and difficult to run, at least this was a concession. He referred to Nixon's May 14 speech in which Nixon said that "we do not seek a military victory," which he said was a substantial change from the Johnson Administration. He also said in effect that cease fire could be arranged if the other side wanted. He noted that while we have withdrawn or are in the process of withdrawing 25,000 troops that this is four per cent of the troops but actually ten per cent of the combat troops. He said that the war is essentially one where two forces claim to represent the people and that the United States position is now that there should be a mutual withdrawal so that Vietnamese in the South could make the decision, perhaps by an election under some kind of international supervision. He said that the NLF is unrealistic in asking us to in effect disband the Thieu-Ky government. He said, "We have problems too, and we have to bring people along." He wondered if the

Administration would ever satisfy well-meaning people. He wondered if the anti-war groups would be satisfied even with significant concessions. He said that the Administration proposes to reconsider more troop withdrawals in August.

The conference then went into a quite free and easy exchange and represented quite a change from the first meeting. A number of us strongly pressed the point that the United States holds up progress by continuing to stress mutual withdrawal when in fact the United States has the "foreign troops." We also hit particularly hard on the position of a "war by proxy" in which we are training the South Vietnamese army to take over from us. We stressed that this could only be interpreted by the Provisional Revolutionary Government and DRV as an attempt to set up a client government in South Vietnam. We mentioned that the Administration stresses Nixon's eight points but doesn't say much about the NLF ten points. Dr. Kissinger interrupted this expression to vigorously assert that U. S. representatives had told the other side several times that we would sit down and discuss their ten points if they would discuss our eight points. We have always been willing to do this, but the other side is "trying to break this President." This is a tragic mistake, Dr. Kissinger said. He is a President who will be in four years and he has the authority to make a generous settlement. He said, "we have problems, and the other side has problems." He said that it's hard for this Administration to change the status quo, and probably hard for the DRV to change the status quo as well. He said that most of the proposals which the U. S. had made were quite simple in order to get something moving; that in an extremely difficult and complex situation he felt complex proposals would not work but maybe simple proposals would work.

Once again various members of the delegation responded to what seemed to be a sense of frustration and lack of progress which had been evident in Dr. Kissinger's remarks, by saying that we felt a very substantial reduction in the level of violence was absolutely imperative if they were to convince the PRG and the DRV of any kind of serious intention to get out. Dr. Kissinger mentioned that while it is true that battalion sized operations were at a high level there were more ARVN operations and less American ones. He said that we have moved the battleship New Jersey away and that we probably have not done enough, and maybe if the delegation would be willing to return in two months and at successive intervals of two months thereafter we might be able to report more progress.

There was a discussion of the fact that Joe Elder would be returning to Hanoi with medical supplies around August 1. Dr. Kissinger said that we were one of the very few groups who were dealing with the PRG and the DRV on an informal basis and that he encouraged us to continue. He said he was anxious to continue seeing us as this informal contact was important. He said to tell the other side to get serious in their negotiations. He said to tell them every time we make a concession like a willingness to retreat to certain base areas they make it sound like a neo-colonialist move. He said basically that they have made no real concessions that he could work with.

He made a closing statement on the problems and complexities of a cease fire. He said, "Whatever we agree to, I have to think, what are the orders to the commanders in the field? Who can they shoot and who not, and under what conditions?" He said that if the North Vietnamese withdraw there will be physical disengagement and this will automatically create a cease fire.

Kissinger suggested that inasmuch as Joe Elder was returning to Hanoi that he return to the White House on July 21 and that in the meanwhile he would be thinking of any further word that he might like to give to Joe Elder. It was agreed that I would

accompany Joe Elder to the July 21 White House meeting. The next meeting of the delegation with Dr. Kissinger was set for Thursday, September 11 at 4:00 p.m.

Prior to emerging from the White House to face a press conference we agreed that Joe Elder, Norval Reece and George Sawyer would report to the 70 or so Friends who were holding a meeting for worship in support of the delegation in front of the White House, and that Gilbert White and I would meet with representatives of the press at the gate. We decided not to use Joe Elder on this occasion with the press inasmuch as he was to have a press conference of his own on July 8 at 11:00 a.m.

In general our posture with the press was that we viewed the negotiations as totally stalemated, that the prospects for peace were less than they were two months ago, that the increased American military pressure prohibited any real serious negotiations, and that given the present American intensity of the war and operations like "Phoenix" we could only see additional American and Vietnamese casualties in the months ahead.

Memorandum

American Friends Service Committee
160 North 15th Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

OES
U.S. Dept. of State
A
Kissinger Meeting

CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR QUOTATION, PLEASE

October 8, 1969

To: Regional Executive Secretaries
Regional Peace Secretaries
Division Secretaries and Department Heads
QIARS
QUNP
Davis House
Washington Seminars
Members of Board of Directors

From: Bronson P. Clark

Subject: Summary of the Third Meeting held October 6, 1969 at the White House
with Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Foreign Affairs Advisor to the President.

The AFSC Delegation had two new members in attendance substituting for Gilbert F. White who was abroad and Joseph Elder who was en route to Phnom Penh and Hanoi to deliver the AFSC medical gift to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The two new members were Louis Schneider who will be going to Hanoi as a member of a five-man international delegation sometime in December and Wallace Collett, Chairman of the Board's Vietnam Committee.

For the second time the meeting was held in the "situation room" which is a modest sized conference room in the basement of the White House alongside the office area occupied by Dr. Kissinger and his staff. Mr. John H. Holdridge who is currently on the National Security Council staff and assigned to Dr. Kissinger greeted us. We talked with John Holdridge briefly before Dr. Kissinger came in about our hope that Joe Elder would be able to make some progress while visiting Hanoi in securing a list of prisoners. We stressed with John Holdridge that we had absolutely no indication that such a list would be forthcoming. Dr. Kissinger came in at 8 minutes after 5 and I introduced Wallace Collett and Louis Schneider explaining to Dr. Kissinger their connection with Vietnam and informing him of the current status of Joe Elder's mission to Hanoi. In the process of describing our current medical efforts I expressed to him on behalf of AFSC our appreciation for the export license we had been given by the United States Government. In accordance with a previously agreed plan of procedure with the AFSC delegation I then informed Dr. Kissinger that it was our hope that while discussions such as the one we had just had on the subject of prisoners of war or on AFSC's trips to Hanoi could be and were expected to be off the record, our delegation felt that we needed to report to the Press what transpired in our conversations when we discussed the main issues surrounding the war in Vietnam. Dr. Kissinger replied that we could not change the ground rules from previous meetings and he could not be quoted directly. He pointed out that he never granted interviews, that he had never had a Press conference, that he assumed we wanted a dialogue and this could only be done if he were not to be regarded as a spokesman for the government. He said that if the AFSC wanted to talk with a spokesman for the Administration they should meet with Under Secretary of State, Eliot Richardson or someone similar.

For the next 25 minutes the conversation centered on the ground rules for continuing the meeting. We felt that Dr. Kissinger had a good point in refusing to be quoted and that his suggestion that we see Eliot Richardson was quite proper. I was prepared to let the conference terminate. However, my fellow colleagues in the delegation felt that we should not press our point, that a continuing meeting with Dr. Kissinger on the issues would be of value even though we could not perhaps deal as frankly with the Press as we had previously announced.* After considerable discussion, we agreed to revert to the original ground rules on which the first two meetings were held.

Norval Reece then opened the substantive phase of the meeting by saying that there is no real indication from the Administration that they seriously want to get out of the war, that the country now has a majority opinion against the war and that this dissent can only find expression by increased public pressure on the Administration and the Congress. Norval Reece reminded Dr. Kissinger that he had told us we should wait for three months for real progress and that if the end of the war was not in sight after six months we could "tear the White House gates down." Norval pointed out that we were now entering the sixth month.

Dr. Kissinger replied that it would appear that we regard the withdrawal of 60,000 troops as no progress and a mere "token". If we moved 50,000 troops in however it would not be called "token". He said the war in Vietnam was not a question of good versus evil, that only history could judge the Administration, that Vietnam is a tragedy any way you look at it and that unfortunately this Administration is inheriting an attitude which is frozen on the part of the people -- frozen from the previous Johnson Administration. The protest against the war is not appropriate to Nixon inasmuch as this Administration desires peace. He said the country was divided into two groups -- those who wanted to end the war on any terms and those who wanted to end the war on reasonable terms. He indicated that pacifists wanted to end it on any terms, that he did not agree with pacifists, that he did not agree with withdrawal without regard for the consequences.

Lou Schneider inquired what consequences? George Sawyer added that he wondered if the administration was interested in domestic consequences. Dr. Kissinger replied that the precipitate withdrawal of Americans from Vietnam would bring about a complete collapse of the Saigon Government, that the extremist elements within the communist world would be strengthened; and that there would be serious consequences in many countries. He said that as a college professor, he did not hold the position of liberals who do not take radicals seriously. Dr. Kissinger said that he takes radicals seriously and that the continual drive for confrontation would only mean a strengthening of the right in the United States. Hasty withdrawal from Vietnam would strengthen the "rightists" who might "take over".

George Sawyer indicated that as a Legal Director of OEO Services in Indiana he could only say that the country is falling apart, that the present consequences of prosecuting the war represent the most serious domestic turmoil that could only increase in the future. Dr. Kissinger said the administration wants peace but the terms of Hanoi are unreasonable whereas we are willing to accept reasonable

*It should be recalled that in discussions with the Vietnam Committee and within the AFSC staff there was agreement that the Nixon Administration was continuing the war with some modest withdrawals to allay public protest and that in view of this AFSC's posture should be one whereby we made a forthright presentation of what transpired in our meeting with Dr. Kissinger to our AFSC committees and to the Press.

terms. I then inquired what is unreasonable about United States withdrawing support from the Thieu-Ky government and allowing the political forces in South Vietnam to seek their own level as dictated by their relative strength and to give those elements who are driving for an end of the war a chance to form a government? Kissinger replied, "I won't take time to answer that now. It perhaps depends upon whether you believe in a philosophy of prophetic vision or whether you look upon pragmatic steps as being important actions for peace. We cannot get Hanoi to compromise. We have done a lot more than we have gotten credit for. For example, the 36 hour bombing halt was intended to show that the issue of the bombing was negotiable. Unfortunately, we did not want to embarrass the North Vietnamese by announcing the bombing halt ahead of time feeling that if we simply halted it without an announcement that it would make it easier for them to read our willingness to negotiate further reductions in bombing. Unfortunately, we forgot that in our Press conferences in Saigon we did not always report the B-52 raids. On that particular day we did not report any news about the B-52's which gave the thing away to an alert newsman. However, Hanoi understands it fully enough that we are prepared to negotiate a reduced scale of B-52 bombings. This administration will be in office for seven years at the longest. We do not want to produce a disaster by our actions and Thieu-Ky is not the problem in Vietnam. The problem is that we are interested in peace but the other side is not."

At this point Wallace Collett inquired as to this not being in essence Lyndon Johnson's policy. Kissinger then indicated that if he were on the outside looking in, as we were, perhaps it would look like the same policy but it is quite a different policy. "We have induced Thieu to agree to elections and if the NLF is so strong in the South why don't they agree to elections supervised by mixed election commission?" I then inquired as to how an election could be held when the Thieu-Ky government is continuously locking up any individual who might have a moderate or neutralist viewpoint -- let alone a pro-NLF one. George Sawyer inquired as to why the United States Government did not bring pressure on Thieu-Ky government to release prisoners. I pointed out to Dr. Kissinger that elections were discussed in the NLF ten points.

Dr. Kissinger replied that Nixon's United Nations speech insisted on the right of self determination for South Vietnam and that while everything else was negotiable by the United States government the right of self determination was not negotiable. Lou Schneider then asked Dr. Kissinger the following question. Would you comment on whether or not you think there should be a coalition government before or after the work of an electoral commission? Norval Reece added that this really was the main problem. If an election were held under the Thieu-Ky government the results were predictable. Whereas if they were held after the formation of a coalition in which representative forces could hold an election that would give an opportunity for all elements to be heard from this was another matter. Dr. Kissinger responded that Hanoi has concluded it need not respond to any proposals being made by the United States. "They want us to withdraw and on our way out to overthrow the Thieu-Ky government." I then said that this whole thesis was based on the notion that American military expeditionary forces can exist on the mainland of Asia and by their existence attempt to dictate what kinds of government shall come about in these Asian countries. I said that this policy had failed in the past and would fail in the future.

Kissinger's comment on this was to delineate the position of mutual withdrawal. He said if they want us out they should withdraw and we could withdraw and there would be no American troops there. I responded to this by indicating that this was a violation of the Geneva agreement. It was based on the divided Vietnam concept and it avoided the central issue about United States attempts to create a client government in South Vietnam.

Dr. Kissinger then stressed that there were two propositions open. Either Hanoi negotiates or the alternative to negotiations shall be "Vietnamization." Norval Reece inquired whether these two alternatives were known to the public. Dr. Kissinger indicated that this was set forth in the May 14 speech of the President. He said we indicated in that speech that everything is negotiable except self determination. At one time, he went on, we thought we had some indication that some progress had been made because of that speech but we are not so sure now. Norval Reece said that Senator Hugh Scott had recently been quoted in the Press as saying within 90 days there would be some major action. Could this be a cease fire that is being planned? Dr. Kissinger replied that we have mentioned the matter of a cease fire with Hanoi. "They are not bashful. If they think a cease fire is workable they would say so. We get no response from them on this so we are changing the pattern of the operation." George Sawyer interjected that he sees photographs of gun ships shooting Vietnamese and this does not seem to be a change of pattern. Dr. Kissinger said that the pattern has changed. "I know that you have your views. This is a tragic war. It is too bad that we are to be confronted with October demonstrations as this Administration does not need the demonstrations. They are going to be tough for us." Norval Reece asked if Dr. Kissinger thought that they would be counterproductive. Kissinger replied, "if you want my personal opinion, I think they will be counterproductive but I am not complaining and I have no particular hard feelings about it."

Wallace Collett then made a statement that while he had not been in the previous two meetings it was his impression from listening to the position set forth by Dr. Kissinger that the Administration's plan was not adequate to achieve peace and further that the Administration seemed to be caught in some tragedy syndrome like King Lear or Othello in which we blindly go forward toward complete disaster. We badly need leadership, that we were promised leadership on ending the war and we are not given that leadership. Norval Reece mentioned that it was ironic that at a time when several thousand young men were either in prison or facing prison because of conscientious scruples with respect to the Vietnam war that the 8 Green Berets had been released. I then added that it highlighted the moral and spiritual decline in values that the continued prosecution of the war was bringing to the American scene. Dr. Kissinger gave a sigh and said, "sometime after the war I will tell you about the Green Berets!" He indicated that because the meeting was already half an hour overtime he must of necessity call it to a close. I inquired whether or not he would like to see us upon the return of Joe Elder from Hanoi and he replied that he very much would. It was agreed that I would call John Holdridge after Joe Elder's return.

I then handed to Dr. Kissinger and John Holdridge the "Staff Memorandum on the War in Vietnam". This memorandum was prepared by Stewart Meacham utilizing suggestions which had been made by Holmes Brown of the Service Committee's Washington 90-Day Special Effort Program and suggestions by Ken Kirkpatrick, one of the two peace secretaries who had been on the AFSC-Paris Mission to the peace talks. The memorandum had been used by the delegation in their working papers prior to the

meeting. I left it behind as it was my feeling that it had been difficult to get a sequence of logical discussion with Dr. Kissinger. He tends to dominate the conversation and to engage in philosophical ramblings off the point. I was quite sure that at least John Holdridge would study it. In the process of passing it over, John Holdridge called my attention to a paper he had in front of him which turned out to be a petition from the AFSC's San Clemente Vigil which had been presented at the gate on the occasion of their vigil in August. We left at 6:30 p.m. to meet the Press waiting at the Roger Smith Hotel.

In summary it was the feeling of the delegation that we felt extremely pessimistic about the rigid posture of the administration. We no longer have the indication from Dr. Kissinger that if we only wait things will get better. While Dr. Kissinger personally looked well and appeared to be enjoying his job enormously one did have the sense that somehow or other this clever man in the long run expected some kind of a disaster. At one point he had mentioned that if things didn't go right you know who would be teaching at Arizona State. This is a reference to what happened to his predecessor but indicates a cast of mind without too much hope that what is being attempted will succeed.

I think one of the most significant elements of the interview was the stress that Dr. Kissinger laid on the consequences of withdrawal. This was a restatement of the domino theory and in a way indicated that the administration was very much in support of the military's position that withdrawal would only lead to Communist take overs -- not only in Vietnam but in other countries nearby as well. It means that the administration does not propose to alter United States determination to utilize military might to hold down what it regards as undesirable revolutions in Southeast Asia or the creation of governments not to its liking. The administration appeared to us to have a rigidity which makes it unable to respond creatively to the growing public clamor against the war. This does not bode well for an early end of the war or the avoidance of confrontations here in the United States.