

Madman Theory – Biden Is Not Mad

By Matthias Chang – Future Fast-Forward

The entire world has been subjected to an unprecedented and elaborate disinformation and propaganda scam.

Biden has been portrayed as being demented and or suffering from alzheimer's disease. This is total BS. Biden is very sane and his mental faculties are in full play.

I have been **watching this scam for a long time** but decided to expose the **scam now** because I want to ensure that Biden would be prosecuted for his war crimes and **not be excused** for being medically unfit to stand trial.

And that is why President Putin, in my opinion, **is correct in not responding** to the extreme provocations to unleash a nuclear war but instead has countered that any wars – nuclear or other-wise **has been or will be started by Biden and the US, UK and NATO military.**

How do I know that this is propaganda theatre and a scam???

The Special Prosecutor has said that Biden would not be prosecuted because of his age and he is unsound mentally. The Specially Prosecutor did not cite any medical evidence at all but came to the conclusion solely on the conduct of Biden when he was interviewed. Ridiculous!

But, the official White House medical officer and an experienced doctor who is responsible for the health of a US President, after a thorough examination concluded, that Biden is fit to discharge his duties as President of the USA and that there is **no basis under the Constitution to remove Biden on medical grounds at all.**

In a court of law in any jurisdiction, such expert evidence will be deemed conclusive and **until today no evidence has been submitted to the contrary even by President Trump and the entire Republican party.**

The reason thus far is to ensure politically, that the US cannot be held responsible for the war crimes in Ukraine and in Gaza because, as falsely alleged, the US is **not “directly involved”** in the two wars, notwithstanding the US supplied weapons and advisers (as in Vietnam) and have **“boots on the ground”**. **Russia has all the military Intel and Putin has declared that the US is the enemy and is fighting against the entire Western Axis powers.**

All G7 leaders and the entire Global Deep state continue this false narrative. Biden should be awarded the Oscar for best actor for the years 2021 to 2024 and continuing.

Biden had extensive and long Summit meetings with Russia and China, and both Putin and Xi did not complain that Biden was incoherent and of unsound mind when discussing issues of war and peace!

How convenient that the world and the entire US establishment want us to forget the US invented theory - the **“Madman’s Theory”**.

The madman theory is a political theory commonly associated with the foreign policy of U.S. President Richard Nixon and his administration, **who tried to make the leaders of hostile Communist Bloc nations think Nixon was irrational and volatile so that they would avoid provoking the U.S. in fear of an unpredictable response.**

I am supported by the following documentary evidence from the **US National Security Archives**:

- **Washington, D.C., March 24, 2023** - On Tuesday, March 28, 2023, PBS’s “American Experience” program premieres **“The Movement and the ‘Madman.’”** a documentary that tells the story of how the intensity of the U.S. anti-Vietnam War movement forced President Richard Nixon to abandon plans to escalate the conflict in the fall of 1969 and instead **implement his “madman” theory**, approving a secret alert of U.S. nuclear forces around the world to project the idea that he was **“crazy” and force adversaries to back down**. Directed by Stephen Talbot, “The Movement and the ‘Madman’” draws on contemporary footage and **interviews** with former government officials and antiwar activists, including **former Henry Kissinger aides Morton Halperin and Anthony Lake; former RAND analyst Daniel Ellsberg**; Sam Brown, one of the organizers of the 15 October Moratorium; and Susan Miller-Coulter, a coordinator of the March Against Death in Washington, D.C.

The filmmakers also interviewed a number of researchers and historians, including National Security Archive senior analyst William Burr, whose book, co-written with Jeffrey Kimball, ***Nixon’s Nuclear Specter: The Secret Alert of 1969, Madman Diplomacy, and the Vietnam War* (published by the University Press of Kansas in 2015) is a key source** for the documentary. Through declassification requests and archival research, **Burr and Kimball found new evidence confirming Nixon’s interest in using threats of military force to make U.S. adversaries believe that the president was crazy and capable of doing anything**. Today’s posting is an update of a previous briefing book that includes some of the evidence that Burr and Kimball drew upon in writing their book.

- **Washington, D.C., May 29, 2015** - President Richard Nixon and his national security adviser Henry Kissinger believed they could compel "the other side" to back down during crises in the Middle East and Vietnam by "pushing so many chips into the pot" that Nixon would seem 'crazy' enough to "go much further," according to newly declassified documents published today by the **National Security Archive**. The documents include a 1972 Kissinger memorandum of conversation **published today for the first time** in which

Kissinger explains to Defense Department official Gardner Tucker that **Nixon's strategy was to make "the other side ... think we might be 'crazy' and might really go much further"** — Nixon's Madman Theory notion of intimidating adversaries such as North Vietnam and the Soviet Union to bend them to Washington's will in diplomatic negotiations. Nixon and Kissinger's Madman strategy during the Vietnam War included veiled nuclear threats intended to intimidate Hanoi and its patrons in Moscow.

- The story is recounted in a new book, ***Nixon's Nuclear Specter: The Secret Alert of 1969, Madman Diplomacy, and the Vietnam War***, co-authored by Jeffrey Kimball, Miami University professor emeritus, and William Burr, who directs the Archive's Nuclear History Documentation Project. Research for the book, which uncovers the inside story of White House Vietnam policymaking during Nixon's first year in office, **drew on hundreds of formerly top secret and secret records obtained by the authors as well as interviews with former government officials.**

With Madman diplomacy, Nixon and Kissinger strove to end the Vietnam War on the most favourable terms possible and in the **shortest period of time practicable, an effort that culminated in a secret global nuclear alert in October of that year.** *Nixon's Nuclear Specter* provides the most comprehensive account to date of the origins, inception, policy context, and execution of the "JCS Readiness Test"—the equivalent of a worldwide nuclear alert that was intended to signal Washington's anger at Moscow's support of North Vietnam and to jar the Soviet leadership into using their leverage to induce Hanoi to make diplomatic concessions. **Carried out between 13 and 30 October 1969, it involved military operations around the world, the continental United States, Western Europe, the Middle East, the Atlantic, Pacific, and the Sea of Japan.** The operations included strategic bombers, tactical air, and a variety of naval operations, from movements of aircraft carriers and ballistic missile submarines to the shadowing of Soviet merchant ships heading toward Haiphong.

- The thematic focus of *Nixon's Nuclear Specter* is Madman Theory threat making, which culminated in the secret, global nuclear alert. **But as the Kissinger statement to Dobrynin cited above suggested, a core element in Nixon's and Kissinger's overall Vietnam War strategy and diplomacy was the concept of a "decent interval" between the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Vietnam and the possible collapse or defeat of the Saigon regime.** In private conversations Kissinger routinely used phrases such as "decent interval," "healthy interval," "reasonable interval," and "suitable interval" as code for a war-exiting scenario by which the period of time would be sufficiently long that when the fall of Saigon came—if it came—**it would serve to mask the role that U.S. policy had played in South Vietnam's collapse.**

In 1969, the Nixon administration's long-term goal was to provide President Nguyen Van Thieu's government in Saigon with a decent chance of surviving for a reasonable interval of two to five years following the sought-after mutual exit of US and North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam. They would have preferred that President Thieu and South Vietnam survive

indefinitely and they would do what they could to maintain South Vietnam as a separate political entity. But they were realistic enough to appreciate that such a goal was unlikely and beyond their power to achieve by a military victory on the ground or from the air in Vietnam.

Giving Thieu a decent chance to survive, even for just a decent interval, however, rested primarily on persuading Hanoi to withdraw its troops from the South or, if that failed, prolonging the war in order to give time for Vietnamization to take hold in order to enable Thieu to fight the war on his own for a reasonable period of time after the US exited Indochina. **In 1969, Nixon and Kissinger hoped that their Madman threat strategy, coupled with linkage diplomacy, could persuade Hanoi to agree to mutual withdrawal at the negotiating table or lever Moscow's cooperation in persuading Hanoi to do so.** In this respect, *Nixon's Nuclear Specter* is an attempt to contribute to better understanding of Nixon and Kissinger's Vietnam diplomacy as a whole.

See all the secret documents in the End Notes that supports the above discussions.

I HATE TO SAY THIS - I am the only one in Malaysia that dug so deep to support what I am writing - hours and hours of intense research. So where are the f#@ked up advisers in Malaysia???

Now examine the man who advises Biden:

Michael C. Donilon (born December 25, 1958) is an American attorney and campaign consultant who is a longtime advisor to U.S. President Joe Biden. He was the chief strategist of Biden's 2020 presidential campaign and currently serves in the same capacity in the 2024 presidential campaign. He was a senior advisor to Biden during the first three years of his presidency. Prior, Donilon was working as a partner at AKPD Message and Media. Between 2009 and 2013, he served as Counselor to Vice President Biden in the Obama administration. Prior to his White House appointment, Donilon worked with the vice-presidential candidate to help him prepare for the debates and also as a traveling advisor.

Donilon has been an advisor and consultant to President Biden since 1981. As his longtime advisor, Mike Donilon held significant influence over Joe Biden's successful 2020 campaign for president. ***He has been described as Biden's "conscience, alter ego and shared brain"*** by the Washington Post.

Donilon has advised candidates and worked on their campaigns in numerous important races including Douglas Wilder's historic campaign and election as Governor of Virginia (1989), Harris Wofford's upset victory over Dick Thornburgh to become Senator for the state of Pennsylvania, and Bill Clinton's successful run for the White House in 1992.

Donilon has also worked on campaigns for Governor Jon Corzine (D-New Jersey), Senator Bill Nelson (D-Florida), Senator Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island),

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-Rhode Island), Senator Joe Lieberman (I-Connecticut), Representative Dick Gephardt (D-Missouri), Senator Chris Dodd (D-Connecticut), Senator John Edwards (D-North Carolina), Vice President Al Gore (D-Tennessee), Senator John Kerry (D-Massachusetts), and former Senator Mark Dayton (D-Minnesota).

Donilon was a managing member of MCD Strategies, a media consulting firm, for which he received compensation of at least \$4 million.

Donilon's brothers are BlackRock Investment Institute chair Tom Donilon, who was chief of staff in former President Bill Clinton's State Department and is a former National security adviser to Barack Obama, and Terry Donilon, Communications Director for Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley of the Archdiocese of Boston. His sister-in-law is Catherine M. Russell.

What New York Times (NYT) has to say:

“Mike is a brilliant message strategist with a deep understanding of, and loyalty to, Joe Biden,” said David Axelrod, who served in a similar role for President Barack Obama. “His inspiration from the beginning about framing the race as one about character proved out. And he shepherded it with great skill, discipline and even poetry.”

Mr. Axelrod said it was indispensable for someone like Mr. Donilon to have the trust of the president. “Mike has that with Biden,” he said. “He will be the keeper of the narrative.” In addition to being by Mr. Biden’s side for years, Mr. Donilon has been at the center of Democratic politics for decades. He has worked on six presidential campaigns, and transition officials said he was part of more than 25 winning campaigns for Senate, House, governor and mayor.

Mr. Donilon is also an ad-maker and message guru who worked for AKPD, the firm founded by Mr. Axelrod and three others, including David Plouffe, a key strategist for Mr. Obama. His creation of independent ads for former Senator Claire McCaskill of Missouri helped her win her seat.

When Mr. Biden became vice president in 2009, Mr. Donilon became one of his top aides. A graduate of Georgetown University and Georgetown University Law Center, Mr. Donilon had been the managing director of the Biden Institute and an assistant professor at the University of Delaware. He is also one of three brothers who have spent years in the public eye.

Tom Donilon, a veteran diplomat and national security expert, was a key confidant to Mr. Obama and served for several years as his national security adviser. He was also the chief of staff at the State Department and could join his brother in some role in the Biden administration.

So, don't ever believe the BS about Biden. This man is a serial war criminal and must be held accountable for his crimes.

Public Relations companies and media consultants are most proficient in spreading lies and propaganda. I have personal experience and observed at close quarters how politicians wield power on the worlds' stage!

See reference below:

END NOTES

THE DOCUMENTS

Document 1A-B: Eisenhower on How the U.S. Ended the Korean War



Document 1A

Lt. General A. J. Goodpaster, " Memorandum of Meeting with the President 17 February 1965," 17 February 1965, Top Secret

Feb 17, 1965

Source

Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, Meeting Notes File, box 1, "[February 17, 1965-10:00AM Meeting with General Eisenhower and Others.]"



Document 1B

Memo, Benjamin Read to Dean Rusk, subj: Threat of the Use of Nuclear Weapons Against China in Korean War, 4 March 1965, Top Secret

Mar 4, 1965

Source

National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59 [RG 59], Formerly Top Secret Foreign Policy Files, 1964-1966, box 5, Def 12 US.

Nixon's Madman Theory—the principle of threatening excessive or extraordinary force—had its origins the brinkmanship of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, under whom Nixon had served as vice president, and Eisenhower's secretary of state, John Foster Dulles. Claims about how nuclear diplomacy had brought the Korean War to an end against an obstinate Chinese foe became part of Republican Party lore and eventually the conventional wisdom in the United States. Nixon, in particular, would take the lesson to heart.

In 1955 Admiral C. Turner Joy contended that the Communist side had made concessions at the negotiating table in response to the Eisenhower government's nuclear threats against China in May of 1953. In 1956, *Life*, the mass-market magazine, published a supporting story in which Secretary of State Dulles claimed to have delivered an unmistakable and effective nuclear warning to Beijing on Eisenhower's behalf in 1953. As the story goes, when Dulles traveled to New Delhi, India in May, he told Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru that if the armistice negotiations failed the United States "would probably make stronger . . . military exertions and that this might well extend the conflict," and if the fighting became more intense, "it is difficult to know what [the] end might be." To underline this veiled threat, Washington apparently sent secret messages to Beijing through other intermediaries to the effect that failure to reach an armistice would lead Washington to remove constraints on types of weapons and targets.

On 17 February 1965, almost a decade later, Eisenhower repeated the story about the Dulles-Nehru meeting to then President Lyndon B. Johnson, who had invited him to the White House to hear his "thinking concerning the situation in South Vietnam." As summarized by State Department Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, Eisenhower told Johnson and the others in attendance that "he had sent a message to Nehru in 1953, warning that we would use nuclear

weapons against China if the Korean War continued, and that he believed this warning played a decisive part in terminating the Korean War."

Secretary of State Rusk—probably at Johnson's or McGeorge Bundy's request—tasked Read to investigate the claim. But Read and his staff could "find no documentary support in such specific terms," except for "messages which indicate that certain signals were passed both to Nehru and to [Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav] Molotov, which could conceivably have been so interpreted." According to Dulles' notes, he had told Nehru in New Delhi on 21 May 1953 that if the armistice negotiations failed, the "U.S. would probably make stronger, rather than lesser, military exertion and that this might well extend area conflict (I [Secretary Dulles] assumed this would be relayed to Chinese)."

Even if Molotov or Nehru told Chinese leaders about the Eisenhower administration's signals and interpreted them in the way the administration wanted them to be understood, the warnings were probably not critically important in ending the war. Other considerations were far more relevant to Mao Zedong's decisions. Nevertheless, Eisenhower's belief that his threats were relevant had an impact on the thinking of his vice president, Richard M. Nixon, who believed that threats could change the conduct of adversaries.



Document 2

Memorandum from Al Haig to Henry Kissinger, "Memorandum from Secretary Laird Enclosing Preliminary Draft of Potential Military Actions re Vietnam," 2 March 1969, enclosing a memorandum from Secretary of Defense Laird to Kissinger, 21 February 1969, and report [excerpts] from Joint Staff, Top Secret/Sensitive, with Kissinger's Memo Reply to Laird, 3 March 1969, Top Secret

Mar 3, 1969

Source

NSCF, box 1007, Haig Vietnam Files, Vol. 1 (Jan - March 1969)

From the first weeks of 1969 through much of the rest of the year, Nixon and Kissinger considered how they could apply "maximum pressure" on North Vietnam and the VC/NLF in South Vietnam, which would have the goal of altering the military situation in their favor, enable them to bargain from a position of strength, and persuade the other side to concede key terms to the U.S. and RVN in negotiations.

The subject of military pressure came up early in the new administration at a 27 January late luncheon meeting in the Pentagon between the president, Kissinger, JCS Chairman General Earl Wheeler, and Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird. During the discussion, someone—probably Nixon or Kissinger—brought up "the possibility of working out a program of potential military actions which might jar the North Vietnamese into being more forthcoming at the Paris talks." The Joint Staff of the JCS soon set about the task of preparing a set of "*indicator actions*" designed "to create fear in the Hanoi leadership that the United States is preparing to undertake new highly damaging military actions against North Vietnamese territory, installations, and interests."

On 21 February, Laird sent a "working copy" of the Joint Staff's proposed "dramatic steps," which could take the form of either actual or feigned operations—"each developed over an adequate period of time to be picked up by the communists":

1. A combined airborne/amphibious operation against several objectives in NVN.
2. Punitive airborne/airmobile expeditions against enemy lines of communications (LOC) and base areas in Laos and Cambodia.

3. Renewed and expanded air and naval operations against NVN to include closure of Haiphong and the blockade of NVN.
4. Subversion of the population and preparation for active resistance by the people against the Hanoi regime.
5. A *technical* escalation.

Each of the proposed military measures was "keyed" to political and diplomatic maneuvers designed to increase the potential for a jarring impact. The proposal for a "technical escalation," the most startling of them all, amounted to a threat to use atomic and/or biological or chemical weapons and included a "visit" by chemical-biological-radiological weapons experts to the Far East. Haig's paraphrase of that option, however, focused on a *nuclear* escalation: "A plan for actual or feigned technical escalation or war against [the] North (nuclear)." The visit by weapons experts would be accompanied by political moves such as a U.S. diplomatic "hint" of a "possible technical escalation of the war" and a statement by a senior military official that the "Pentagon periodically examines moves by which new and more modern weapons" could be introduced into the Vietnam conflict.

Laird dutifully passed on the Joint Staff's proposals to Kissinger, but he disassociated himself from them in his cover memorandum. Not only was this paper "preliminary," but General Wheeler and other members of the Joint Chiefs had not reviewed it; nor had Laird's staff. Laird suggested his own skepticism when he wrote that "I must confess to you being more impressed . . . with the potential disadvantages of the proposals than with the possibility of achieving movement in Paris by such means.



Document 3

Henry A. Kissinger to the President, Subj: Vietnam Papers, 22 March 1969, with memorandum from Kissinger to the President, subj: Vietnam Situation and Options, [3/20] attached, Top Secret

Mar 22, 1969

Source

Lyndon B. Johnson Library, Morton A. Halperin Papers, box 10, Vietnam

In this wide ranging discussion of Vietnam strategy, probably drafted by NSC staffer Morton Halperin, the central role of the Soviet Union in White House thinking about a diplomatic solution to the war is evident, and so are ideas closely related to linkage and the Madman Theory. According to Kissinger/Halperin, "There is no question that the Soviets could play a major role in bringing the war to an end if they decide to put pressure on Hanoi." To accomplish that, it was necessary to "change the current Soviet calculation of gains and risks" associated with pressuring their Vietnamese allies. One way to do that would be for the Soviets to see risks in not helping Washington: "Within Vietnam we must worry the Soviets about the possibility that we are losing our patience and may get out of control." Escalatory measures might be "considered in this light."



Document 4

Memorandum from Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird to Dr. Henry Kissinger, 11 April 1969, enclosing memorandum to Laird from JCS Chairman Wheeler, 11 April 1969, and paper, subj: Plan for a Mining Feint of Haiphong Harbor, n.d., Top Secret
Apr 11, 1969

Source

Department of Defense MDR Release

Disappointed by the lack of substantive movement in the Paris negotiations and Moscow's unwillingness or inability to persuade Hanoi to compromise on U.S. terms, Nixon and Kissinger initiated another secret military scheme in hopes of leveraging Moscow's cooperation or Hanoi's acquiescence; that is, one beyond the secret bombing of enemy base areas in Cambodia, which had been launched in March. On Kissinger's suggestion, Nixon ordered the U.S. Navy to carry out mine-laying exercises in the Philippines and the Tonkin Gulf, hoping this ruse would lead Hanoi to believe that the Washington was preparing to mine and blockade Haiphong and other coastal ports along the South China Sea, thus driving them to enter into high-level negotiations.

Secretary Laird forwarded the plan that Kissinger had wanted and had been working on with Navy personnel, led by Captain Rembrandt Robinson, one of the JCS Chairman's liaison officers at the White House. In the spirit of the "indicator actions," the plan was designed to create a "state of indecision" in the North Vietnamese leadership by "creat[ing] the impression" that Washington was preparing to launch mining operations against North Vietnam. The mining feint plan included detailed step by step "sequential actions" beginning with an inventory of Pacific Command mining assets in Step 1. JCS Chairman Wheeler gave it a tepid endorsement, while Laird wrote that he had "serious reservations." Nevertheless, Nixon and Kissinger insisted that the plan go forward because they wanted to find ways to induce the North Vietnamese leadership to acquiesce in U.S. diplomacy.



Document 5

Message from Commander Task Force 7 to Commander Task Force 7.4, Subj: Mine Warfare Readiness, 13 May 1969, Secret

Dec 31, 1969

Source

U.S. Navy History and Archives Division, Seventh Fleet Records, box 117, Misc. May 1969

Consistent with the "mining feint" approved by the White House in April 1969, the Seventh Fleet began mining exercises—"mine delivery training"—in Subic Bay, in the Philippines. One of the first such exercises involved the U.S.S. Enterprise. A-6 and A-7 aircraft stationed on the Enterprise would conduct mining runs in specially designated areas of Subic Bay so they could "practice military tactics."



Document 6

Memorandum of Conversation, Kissinger and Dobrynin, 14 May 1969, [excerpts] *Soviet-American Relations: The Détente Years, 1969-1972*, ed. David C. Geyer, Douglas E. Selva, and Edward C. Keefer (Washington, DC, 2007), doc. 22, pp. 59-62

May 14, 1969

During his secret meetings with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, Kissinger began putting across the concept of a "decent interval" as part of the Nixon White House's long-term diplomatic strategy. For example, just before Nixon gave a major speech on Vietnam policy, on 14 May 1969, Kissinger told Dobrynin that "Nixon is even prepared to accept any political system in South Vietnam, 'provided there is a fairly *reasonable interval* between conclusion of an agreement and [the establishment of] such a system."



Document 7

Letters, Admiral Moorer to Laird, 21 July 1969, and Laird to Kissinger, n.d. enclosing: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, DUCK HOOK, 20 July 1969, Top Secret

Jul 20, 1969

Source

MDR release

The failure of the mining feint to intimidate North Vietnam led Nixon and Kissinger to consider the launching of an actual mining operation against Haiphong. In response to White House requests, senior Navy officers, including White House liaison officer Captain Rembrandt Robinson prepared a mining plan, code-named DUCK HOOK. (A separate plan provided for the blockade of Sihanoukville, Cambodia, to keep supplies from reaching guerillas in the South). Although Kissinger wanted to keep the Defense Department, especially Secretary of Defense Laird, out of the picture, military protocol dictated otherwise, and it was Laird who handed off the plan to Kissinger.

The detailed 50-page document was divided into a summary, an intelligence appraisal, mining plan concepts and options, rules of engagement, an optimistic assessment of potential world reactions, and implications for international law (no problem, according to the Navy planners). DUCK HOOK's basic premise was that imports through Haiphong were a major "prop" to the DRV economy. The closing of the Haiphong port complex, the authors argued, "will have a major effect on the North Vietnam economy and the ability of the North Vietnamese to support the war in the south." The mining operation against Hanoi included three options. Option Alfa involved three aircraft carriers, Bravo two, and Charlie one. With each option, the purpose was to block large merchant ships from access to Haiphong Harbor as well as to "disrupt" any attempts by Hanoi to use smaller, lighterage craft to offload merchant ships anchored past the minefields.

During the following months, the character of the DUCK HOOK planning would change as Kissinger and his aides decided that mining by itself would not be enough. By early [October 1969](#) DUCK HOOK would include options for bombing of urban and industrial targets in North Vietnam.



Document 8

Jean Sainteny, Memorandum for President Nixon, n.d., with cover memorandum by Tony Lake, July 16, 1969, Top Secret

Jul 16, 1969

Source

Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library [RPNL], Henry A. Kissinger Office File, box 106, folder: Mister "S," Vol. 1 (1 of 2).

DDUCK HOOK was accompanied by dire threats communicated by Nixon and Kissinger directly and indirectly, warning Hanoi that unless they responded positively to US negotiating demands by November 1, "measures of great consequence and force" would be taken against North Vietnam.

On Kissinger's recommendation, and consistent with their post-*Sequoia* intention to escalate threat making, President Nixon met with Jean Sainteny on 15 July to ask him to undertake a mission to Hanoi. An essential task for Sainteny was to deliver an *unwritten* warning from Nixon, which incorporated an indirect reference to the mining and blockading operation Nixon and Kissinger were then considering:

He has decided to hope for a positive outcome from the conversations at Paris by 1 November, and he is prepared to show good will by some humanitarian gestures, which Mr. Kissinger will be prepared to discuss in detail. But if, however, by this date—the anniversary of the [Johnson] bombing halt—no valid solution has been reached, he will regretfully find himself obliged to have recourse to *measures of great consequence and force*. . . . *He will resort to any means necessary.*



Document 9

U.S. Embassy Philippines telegram 8452 to State Department, subj: Pincus/Paul Visit, 8 August 1969, Top Secret, excised copy

Aug 8, 1969

Source

Defense Department MDR release

Walter Pincus, a former (and future) *Washington Post* reporter, and Norman Paul, a Washington DC lawyer, created a flap when they learned about the mining readiness test. In early August 1969 they were looking into U.S. military activities in the western Pacific at the direction of Senator Stuart Symington (D-Mo), chairman of the National Security Commitments Abroad, a subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations. While in Japan, they learned about the shipment of 1,000 mines to Subic Bay. Pursuing the matter at Subic, they found that the chief of the naval magazine was unable to explain the purpose of the shipment or why the mine inventory was larger than usual. On visiting the *USS Oriskany*, Paul learned from its commanding officer that his pilots were engaged in training exercises. Asked about the nature of the training, the officer told Paul that it was an "aerial mine-laying exercise." Pincus and Paul then interviewed the captain in charge of the Mine Readiness Test Team, who explained that the Navy's Service Force Command had directed the mine shipments, that his team was at Subic to conduct an "annual inspection on a surprise basis," and, misleadingly, that the mines were in "normal configuration 'Charlie.'" He assured them that the exercise was routine: the training of the carrier crews was "not unusual" and was taking place in connection with programs for the "general improvement in mine warfare readiness."

Unconvinced, Pincus and Paul "repeatedly demonstrated" their concern to a U.S. Embassy officer about the possibility of "military actions that could increase our ... level of involvement in Vietnam." As if to lend credence to their concerns, Pincus and Paul noted that during the presidential campaign Nixon had discussed the mining of North Vietnamese ports, especially Haiphong Harbor, as a means of wringing concessions from Hanoi. Soon, Pincus and Paul reported their findings and concern to Committee chairman Senator J. William Fulbright (D-Ark), who soon raised the danger of escalating the war in communications with Secretary Laird.

Besides the mining readiness issue, Pincus and Paul were investigating U.S. nuclear weapons deployments in the Philippines; hence the excisions and the "Formerly Restricted Data" classification of this message.



Document 10

Memo, Henry Kissinger to Nixon, n.d., subj: Conceptual Plan for Implementation of Operation DUCK HOOK, Top Secret

Jul - Aug 1969

Source

NARA, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 218 [RG 218], JCS Chairman Files (Earle Wheeler), box 169, folder: White House Memos (1969)

In late July or early August, Kissinger presented Nixon with a memorandum outlining a "conceptual plan for implementation of operation DUCK HOOK," which placed the mining operation into a broader context of force, diplomacy, and politics and may have been prepared by his own staff. The operation, Kissinger began, "would not be approached as a purely military action but instead as a combined military and diplomatic operation intended to produce both military and political results with minimum adverse reactions at home and abroad."

In addition to several recommended military measures, one amounted to a nuclear readiness alert: U.S. forces would *"assume a heightened PACOM and SAC alert posture militarily to show our resolve and to respond to whatever contingencies arise."*

Documents 11A-B: Duck Hook Operational Concept



Document 11A

Report, "Vietnam Contingency Planning: Concept of Operations," 13 September 1969, Top Secret

Sep 13, 1969

Source

RNPL, NSCF, box 74, Vietnam Subject Files, folder: Vietnam (General Files) Sep 69-Nov 69 (2 of 2)



Document 11B

Memorandum, Tony Lake to Kissinger, 17 September 1969 subj: Initial Comments on Concept of Operations, with attachment: "Vietnam Contingency Planning," 16 September 1969, Top Secret

Sep 16, 1969

Source

RNPL, Lake Chronological Files, box 1048, folder 2

A "concept of operations" paper prepared in mid-September is a clear example of putting "all options on the table." Besides possible ground action against North Vietnam, including an amphibious operation, the planners considered nuclear-use options, perhaps the only time that Nixon White House planners put nuclear options on paper. Decision point four consisted of two elements. One incorporated "major air strikes against high value target systems," such as electric power and air defenses. The other was a "*clean nuclear interdiction of three NVN-Laos passes.*" What was meant by "clean" was very likely was a nuclear weapon that did not have dirty, fallout-producing effects. The aide or aides who drafted the concept of operations—Robinson perhaps—may simply have had in mind an airburst of a low-yield tactical nuclear weapon. In any event, the concept of a so-called clean nuclear weapon was partly designed to reduce the political opprobrium of using nuclear weapons, but that was probably wishful thinking. Decision point five included another nuclear option, the "nuclear interdiction" of two railroad lines that connected North Vietnam with China; it did not specify "clean" weapons.

Presumably all of the specific decision points and proposed actions, including the nuclear use proposals, were discussed at least at one of Kissinger's meetings with this "trusted group" of aides, but the records of discussion are closed in Henry Kissinger's papers at the Library of Congress. On 17 September, however, a few days after the "Concept of Operations" paper was finalized, Anthony Lake offered his initial comments. For example, he cautioned that the initial attack would have to "be as tough as possible to gain as much psychological effect as it can" because the reception on the homefront to "each 'package' of attacks will be politically more difficult." He questioned the efficacy and wisdom of three of the proposed actions: ground incursions into North Vietnam; the bombing of dikes; and a "permissive channel" into Sihanoukville—that is, allowing only those ships with a U.S.-issued Certificate of Clearance to enter the port. Ground operations into North Vietnam, he argued, would run the risk of a Chinese response and, moreover, could not be carried out "on a scale which would pose much threat to Hanoi."

Referring to the nuclear attack recommendations, as well as on the overall operation itself, Lake raised questions that signaled danger but would also have a bearing on the strategic alert measures Nixon and Kissinger launched in mid-October:

- What would be our concurrent movements of ships to the area, our state of strategic readiness, our posture in Korea and Berlin?
- If we go as far as the interdiction measures in (4) and (5) [the nuclear measures], what other actions would we take at this very high level of escalation once the precedent is established?
- What would we do if these actions fail?
- What counter-actions should we take in various contingencies?

By "state of *strategic* readiness" Lake meant the alert posture of U.S. nuclear forces and the extent to which they were poised to signal determination and be ready for rapid use in a crisis. By "precedent," Lake may have been referring to the first military use of nuclear weapons since 1945 with all of its implications for the "nuclear taboo" that had contributed to restrained U.S. nuclear use practices for decades.



Document 12

Message, Rear Admiral Frederic A. Bardshar to JCS Chairman Wheeler, 15 September 1969, subj: PRUNING KNIFE Status Report No. 1, Top Secret

Sep 15, 1969

Source

U.S. Army Military History Research Collection (USAMHRC), Carlisle Barracks PA., Creighton Abrams Papers, box: 1969-1970

On White House orders—and as members of Kissinger's staff began working on a concept for what some unofficially called DUCK HOOK—General Wheeler ordered the formation of a military "planning group" composed of members drawn from MACV, the Seventh Air Force, and the Seventh Fleet to rendezvous at the MACV compound in Saigon for the purpose of designing an operational plan for attacks against North Vietnam. Their plan was supposed to be based on the White House DUCK HOOK concept of a sharp and sudden blow over a limited period of time for the purpose of mainly achieving diplomatic and political ends. But group members favored what they thought of as a "sound military concept"—that is, one designed to achieve primarily military ends. This decision put the JCS group at odds with the White House concept of an offensive that would have both military and political/diplomatic purposes. The JCS plan-in-the-making was codenamed PRUNING KNIFE.



Document 13

Telcon [Telephone Conversation Transcript], The President Mr. Kissinger 4:40 p.m. September 27[1969]

Sep 27, 1969

Source

RPNL, Henry Kissinger Telephone Conversation Transcripts, box 2, September 19-30, 1969; [also published in [Foreign Relations of the United States](#), 1969-1976, Volume 6, Document 126]

Antiwar demonstrations scheduled for mid-October and mid-November 1969 cast a pall over Nixon's planning and helped shape his decision to cancel the prospective military operation against North Vietnam. The forthcoming 15 October Moratorium and the 13-15 November Moratorium and New Mobilization made Nixon worry about the signal that would be sent to Hanoi by the coincidental timing of the bombing-and-mining operation scheduled to begin soon after 1 November. In a 29 September telephone conversation with Kissinger, Nixon explained that "he doesn't want to appear to be making the tough move after the 15th just because of the rioting at home"—that is, the Moratorium. Although Nixon believed that Secretary of Defense Laird might have been right in predicting that about three months after the operation began "it will have relatively high public support," Nixon said he "would like to nip it before the first demonstration, because there will be another one on 15 November." He believed there was a possibility that the days following the launching of the military operation in early November and leading up to the second Moratorium and New Mobe in mid November, "horrible results" might be produced by the buildup of "a massive adverse reaction" among demonstrators.

Nixon asked Kissinger whether "in his planning, he could pick this up so that we make the tough move before the 15th of October?" Kissinger answered "yes. But he cautioned that if the D-day for the operation were moved up to a time before 15 October, it would "confuse" the North Vietnamese and "look as if we tricked them." He recommended that the president might instead consider holding a press conference or giving a television report in which he criticized the demonstrators for "dividing the country and making it impossible to settle the problem [of Vietnam] on a reasonable basis."



Document 14

Memorandum to the President from Secretary of Defense Laird, Subj: Air and Naval Operations Against North Vietnam, 8 October 1969, with memorandum from Acting JCS Chairman Thomas Moorer to Secretary of Defense on same subject, 1 October 1969, Top Secret

Oct 1, 1969

Source

Department of Defense MDR release

While Nixon was making up his mind whether to escalate the war, Melvin Laird presented him with a severe critique of the Joint Chief's PRUNING KNIFE plan which took into account both military and domestic political concerns. Kissinger later signed off on a critique of Laird's memorandum, but the arguments in the latter very likely had an impact on Nixon. Although Laird probably never saw the most recent October DUCK HOOK plans, many of his criticisms of PRUNING KNIFE applied to them. Besides arguing that the Chiefs had failed to demonstrate that PRUNING KNIFE would produce "conclusive" or "decisive results," Laird cited the CIA's analysis, which pointed to a number of difficulties. For example, the plans for blockading North Vietnam would only produce a "temporary" disruption; and that Hanoi could sustain its economy by "drawing down present reserves and maintaining present imports overland." Moreover, a mining-bombing campaign carried potentially "significant liabilities"; foreign ships could be damaged or sunk and "create new risks of a Soviet-U.S. confrontation." If Hanoi became more dependent on Chinese supply lines, that could strengthen "Chinese political influence."

Laird pointed to other problems, including the possible loss of over 100 bomber aircraft within five days; "high" civilian casualties in North Vietnam; the risk of stepped-up DRV attacks in the South; and North Vietnam's development of "sanctuary air bases" in China for its aircraft. Moreover, Laird argued, once the campaign began, the U.S. military command might want to escalate further by requesting additional "operating authorities," such as a quarantine or blockade of Cambodia; "ground incursions into Cambodia, Laos, and NVN"; and "B-52 raids into NVN," which presumably would be mass-scale attacks. Sensitive to the domestic U.S. implications, Laird anticipated a "devastating" public reaction if U.S. casualties grew. In any event, "demonstrations would have to be expected" around the world and at home. This would be all the more the case if Washington could point to no "provocative" North Vietnamese action to justify an attack.



Document 15

Col. William E. Lemnitzer to JCS Chairman Wheeler, 9 October 1969, with memoranda attached (handwritten note from Lemnitzer ["L"], memorandum from Robert Pursley, and Wheeler directive to Joint Staff)

Oct 9, 1969

Source

NARA, RG 218, JCS Chairman's Files (Wheeler), box 109, 381 World-Wide Increased Readiness Posture (October 69)

This paper on presidential decisions to implement the alert provides evidence of the linkage between the purpose of the alert and Vietnam policy (note the 1 November reference). Haig's

phone calls to the Pentagon brought the JCS into planning for the alert on 9 October. William Lemnitzer, one of the Joint Staff liaison officers to the White House and a member of the DUCK HOOK group, sent Colonel Robert Pursley's list of measures to Wheeler, telling him that the president had approved "five major actions" and that Laird had approved "execution as directed by the White House." What Kissinger wanted, Wheeler learned, was:

an integrated plan of military actions to demonstrate convincingly to the Soviet Union that the United States is getting ready for any eventuality on or about 1 November 1969. Rather than threatening a confrontation (which may or may not occur), the objective of these actions would be a demonstration of improving or confirming readiness to react should a confrontation occur.

Lemnitzer presented Wheeler with a directive authorizing the Joint Staff to prepare plans based on the approved five actions so they could be sent to the White House by the close of business, 10 October. The handwritten cover memorandum from Lemnitzer indicates that Laird had seen the memorandum and "approves Execution as directed by the White House."



Document 16

Secretary of Defense Laird, Memorandum to the President, Subj: Test of U.S. Military Readiness, 11 October 1969, Top Secret

Oct 11, 1969

Source

RNPL, NSCF. Box 123, Vietnam Operation Pruning Knife [2 of 2]

On the basis of earlier discussion at the Pentagon and Laird's approval, JCS Chairman Wheeler sent out messages to the various CINCS instructing them to take approved readiness measures, including stand-downs of air operations to facilitate a higher state of alert, so they would be in a position to "respond to a possible confrontation with the USSR." To avoid complications, there was to be no change in the DEFCON status. The directed actions should be "discernible to the Soviets but should not be threatening." The next day Laird sent to President Nixon copies of the telegrams along with an "Outline Plan for Testing Military Readiness" and a public affairs plan.



Document 17

Memorandum from G. C. Brown, Defense Intelligence Agency, to Director, J-3 (Operations), 11 October 1969, with memorandum from Col. C.H. Change, General Operations Division (J-3) [Joint Staff], "Background Paper for the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, for a Meeting with the Secretary of Defense, subj: Impact of Exercise HIGH HEELS on Plan for Increased Readiness Posture," 13 October 1969, Top Secret, excised copy

Oct 13, 1969

Source

MDR release

Well before Nixon ordered the readiness test, the Defense Department had scheduled an annual strategic command post exercise, HIGH HEELS, which gave decision-makers and senior officials a chance to familiarize themselves with nuclear war plans and nuclear use

procedures in a war game context. HIGH HEELS was a world-wide exercise that involved all of the military commanders-in-chiefs, at home and overseas, and planning for it was already advanced. It was this consideration which made Secretary of Defense Laird want to postpone the readiness test, but Kissinger would not hear of that. At the same time, intelligence officials were concerned that the simultaneous operation of the readiness test and HIGH HEELS could be potentially dangerous because exercise operational messages that called for nuclear weapons use in a particular contingency might be detected by the Soviet adversary and linked to actual on-going readiness and alert operations around the world. As a Defense Intelligence Agency official put it, "an incident involving a message containing threatening material, along with Soviet observations of actual U.S. movements, radio silence, and stand-down activities, could cause a hazardous situation." Moreover, the increased volume of HIGH HEEL message traffic could cause delays in the receipt of "critical non-exercise" messages about Soviet reactions to U.S. military moves.

In light of these problems, Kissinger's objections, and Joint Chiefs of Staff recommendations, Laird agree to strip back HIGH HEELS so that it involved only officials in the Washington, D.C. area, leaving out the CINCS altogether.



Document 18

Secretary of Defense Laird to National Security Adviser Kissinger, enclosing memorandum from JCS Chairman Wheeler to Secretary of Defense, subj: "Additional Actions for US Military Readiness Tests – Worldwide," 16 October 1969, Top Secret, excised copy

Oct 16, 1969

Source

Department of Defense MDR release

To get Moscow's attention but without unduly worrying it, the Nixon White House wanted the Pentagon to take as many actions as possible. Consistent with this, JCS Chairman Wheeler asked the CINCs for proposals and after receiving suggestions, the Joint Staff reviewed them and prepared a master list for top officials. In his memorandum to Laird, Wheeler noted that the proposed actions "would reflect an increase in intensity of signals received by the Soviets." With the involvement of the naval, air, and other forces of eight unified and specified commands, the proposed actions would occur on a world-wide basis, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, ranging from movements of aircraft carriers in the Atlantic and of destroyers in the Gulf of Aden to SAC airborne alert and the surveillance of Soviet merchant ships heading toward Haiphong Harbor.

This same document appears in the State Department's historical series, *Foreign Relations of the United States* in the volume on national security policy, 1969-1972 (document 82). But there are interesting differences in the sections on Pacific Command and Strategic Air Command. For example: that PACOM would "enhance SIOP Naval Forces at Sea" is exempted from *FRUS*, and keeping MACE missiles on alert is excised from the release to the National Security Archive. A crucial point—that SAC B-52 airborne alert bombers would carry nuclear weapons—was withheld from the *FRUS*, but released to the Archive.

Documents 19A-B: Shadowing Soviet Merchant Ships



Document 19A

Message, Comseventhflt [Commander, 7th Fleet], to CTG [Commander Task Group] 70.8, Subj: Surveillance of Sov Mership, 20 October 1969, Secret

Oct 20, 1969

Source

U.S. Navy History and Archives Division, Seventh Fleet Records, box 128, Soviet Fleet Operations October 1969



Document 19B

U.S.S. Orleck, to CTG [Commander Task Group] 7.0, Subj: Surveillance of Sov Mership, 22 October 1969, Secret

Oct 22, 1969

Source

U.S. Navy History and Archives Division, Seventh Fleet Records, box 128, Soviet Fleet Operations October 1969

Consistent with the White House's objective of sending signals Moscow over the state of the Vietnam negotiations, a proposal to surveil Soviet ships heading toward Haiphong Harbor had been on Robert Pursley's list of possible operations for the readiness test (see document 12). For economy reasons, JCS Chairman Wheeler dropped the proposal until Kissinger and Haig pressed to reinstate it, and it was duly included in the package of additional measures that Laird sent Kissinger on 16 October. Not all of the relevant messages are available, but Seventh Fleet archival records include the Commander's directive and a report on the successful interception and shadowing of the *Svirsk* by the *U.S.S. Orleck* on 20 October 1969. The reference to "Snoopy Video Tape" in document B is to a small helicopter-type drone used for photographic intelligence collection, in this instance, photography of the Soviet crew as it took notice of the shadowing activity.



Document 20

U.S. Strategic Air Command, *History of Strategic Air Command FY 1970*, Historical Study No. 117 (Offutt Air Force Base: Strategic Air Command, 1971), excerpt: chapter section on "Special JCS Readiness Test," Top Secret, excised copy

Jan 1, 1971

Source

Air Force FOIA release

This chapter excerpt provides a detailed overview of the phases of SAC nuclear operations during the readiness test: (1) the initial stand-down and higher ground alert beginning 12 October, (2) the resumption of flying activities on 18 October, (3) the return to stand-down during 25-30 October, and (4) the "Giant Lance" nuclear-armed airborne alert operation during 27-30 October.

As noted in this account, the readiness test did not include the SAC ICBM force which was always on a high state of alert; by contrast, the bomber force could more easily be alerted in order to make a "show of force."

After reviewing Wheeler's instructions to take "discernible" actions to raise the readiness of U.S. forces, the SAC historian noted that the Command received no information about the "origin or purpose" of the readiness test. Nevertheless, SAC officers speculated at the time that it was related to the Vietnam negotiations and to Nixon's forthcoming speech on 3 November speech, which had been announced on 13 October, early in the readiness test.

Documents 21A-B: Looking for Soviet Reactions



Document 21A

Central Intelligence Memorandum, subj: Possible Communist Reactions to US Military Readiness Tests, 27 October 1969, Top Secret, excised copy, under appeal at ISCAP

Oct 27, 1969

Source

MDR release, under appeal at ISCAP



Document 21B

Defense Intelligence Agency, Special Intelligence Report, Summary of Soviet Reactions to US Operations, #9, 28 October 1969, Top Secret, excised copy, under appeal

Oct 28, 1969

Source

RPNL, NSF, box 123, Vietnam – Operation Pruning Knife [2 of 2]

Early in the secret alert, Kissinger tasked the intelligence community to keep its antennae up to detect any Soviet reactions to the heightened readiness posture. As the activities began to draw to a close, the CIA prepared for Kissinger (which he initialed) a short report which listed "noteworthy Communist" military measures and the degree to which they may have been responsive to the readiness test. Because so much information in the report was derived from communications intelligence (COMINT, classified as "Top Secret Umbra"), only one activity—the reverse course by Soviet ships in the Red Sea on 21 October—has been declassified. The Soviet activities that Washington espied were then secret and how much the intelligence community knew about them remains a secret. This document has been published in the State Department's historical series, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (Document 89), but the version published here has more information: a reference to the Chinese alert and details on Soviet naval activities of 21 October.

As part of the intelligence watch, the Defense Intelligence Agency prepared regular reports on what it saw as Soviet reactions to the readiness test activities. The document dated 28 October (also initialed "HK") is representative of the series. Like the CIA memorandum, the report has been massively excised because so much of it is based on COMINT. It is worth noting that this document and others in the "Special Intelligence" series is located in the Vietnam files at the Nixon Library, further evidence of the readiness test's connection to the White House's Vietnam strategy.

So far no evidence has shown up from the Soviet side (for example, in the memoir literature: (Gromyko, Dobrynin, etc.) of awareness of the alert. Whether the Soviets even saw a connection with Vietnam or not is so far unknown and cCertainly, the alert had no impact on Moscow's Vietnam policy or on Hanoi's position in the Paris negotiations.



NEW

Document 22

Memorandum, "Kissinger," from files of Gardner Tucker, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis, 10 August 1972, Top Secret Source: Mandatory Declassification Review request to Defense Department; released in full (2017) through appeal to Interagency Security Classification Panel

Aug 10, 1972

Source

MDR to Defense Department; released in full (2017) through appeal to Interagency Security Classification Panel

During 1972, a secret Department of Defense panel led by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering John S. Foster prepared a special review of "employment policy" for the use of nuclear weapons. The purpose was to give U.S. presidents credible alternatives to the massive apocalyptic use of nuclear weapons through the construction of more limited and more carefully defined options. As Kissinger observed during a conversation with Assistant Secretary of Defense Gardner Tucker, "no President," not even Nixon, would "want to use any of the present SIOP [Single Integrated Operational Plan] options," implicitly because they were so catastrophic. But the president would want a set of credible nuclear threats to use in a crisis to present "the other side with tough choices."

During the conversation, Kissinger touched upon the Madman Theory, a topic rarely mentioned in other discussions that have come to light. Distancing himself a little from Nixon, Kissinger said the "President's strategy has been (in the mid-East crisis, in Vietnam, etc.) to 'push so many chips into the pot' that the other side will think we might be 'crazy' and might really go much further." Nevertheless, in Nixon's absence, Kissinger followed the Madman strategy during the October War (1973).



Document 23

Memorandum, "Kissinger," from files of Gardner Tucker, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis, 10 August 1972, Top Secret, excised copy

Aug 10, 1972

Source

Defense Department MDR release, under appeal

Previously released excised version of document 22



Document 24

Memorandum of Conversation, Graham Martin, Lawrence Eagleburger, W.R. Smyser, Kissinger, 19 July 1974, subj: [situation in South Vietnam]

Jul 19, 1974

Source

RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, 1973-1977, box 9: July 1974 NODIS Memcons.

The decent interval concept remained central to Kissinger's thinking about the U.S. exit from the Vietnam War after 1969. For example, on 3 August 1972, Kissinger reminded Nixon of the outcome they were aiming for: "We've got to find some [negotiated] formula that holds the thing together a year or two, after which—after a year, Mr. President, Vietnam will be a backwater. If we settle it, say, this October, by January '74 no one will give a damn" (Oval Office Conversation 760-6, Nixon and Kissinger, 3 August 1972, Nixon White House Tapes, Nixon Library). On 23 October 1972, at the time Kissinger had struck a deal with Le Duc Tho and was trying to win Thieu's approval for the agreement, Nixon told his hawkish aide Alexander Haig, who was skeptical of Kissinger's negotiations: "Call it cosmetics or whatever you want. This has got to be done in a way that will give South Vietnam a chance to survive. It doesn't have to survive forever. It's got to survive for a reasonable time. Then everybody can say 'goddamn we did our part.' . . . I don't know that South Vietnam can survive forever." (EOB Conversation no. 371-19, Nixon and Haig, 23 October 1972, White House Tapes, Nixon Library).

In July 1974—a year and a half after the Paris agreement and five months before VC and NVA fighting would begin to build up to the 1975 Spring Offensive that would overrun South Vietnam by April 1975—Ambassador to Saigon Graham Martin told Kissinger and his aides, Lawrence Eagleburger and W. R. Smyser: "Militarily, they [the South Vietnamese] are holding. Politically, they are more solid than I had the right to hope." Kissinger replied: "When I made the [January 1973] agreement, I thought it might be a two-year thing."