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WITHDRAWAL ID 010588

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL . . . . National security restriction  
TYPE OF MATERIAL . . . . . Memorandum of Conversation  
CREATOR'S NAME . . . . . Nixon/Haldeman/Agnew et.al.  
  
CREATION DATE . . . . . 02/10/1973  
VOLUME . . . . . 10 pages  
COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 036600044  
COLLECTION TITLE . . . . . NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER. MEORANDA OF  
CONVERSATIONS  
BOX NUMBER . . . . . 1  
FOLDER TITLE . . . . . February 10, 1973 - Nixon, Vice  
President Agnew  
  
DATE WITHDRAWN . . . . . 01/31/2000  
WITHDRAWING ARCHIVIST . . . . LET

*Sanitized 12/16/03*

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

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E.O. 12958 Sec. 1.5 (c)

MR 03-03 # 36; CIA Ltr 6/17/03, Re Ltr 12/16/03

By dal NARA Date 2/6/04

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Nixon  
Vice President Agnew  
H. R. Haldeman, Assistant to the President  
General Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President  
For National Security Affairs  
Ronald L. Ziegler, Press Secretary of the President

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, February 10, 1973

PLACE: Western White House  
San Clemente

SUBJECT: Vice President's Trip to Southeast Asia

President: We'll make a statement to the press to divert the press so the Vice President won't be confronted by the press afterwards.

Vice President: We ignored the press everywhere we went. Some Vice Presidents didn't get the press.

President: You got some, especially at first! Why don't you run down everything.

I know Souvanna is worried about himself.

The Thais are worried about themselves. They are concerned.

Lee Kuan Yew had the most balanced appraisal.

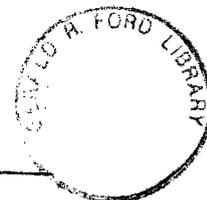
When we return to Washington -- everyone is out of town now; Congress will be back the middle of next week -- we will have a Cabinet meeting and an NSC meeting and a meeting with the Bipartisan Leaders.

Vice President: To save time, I have written an overview.

President: This is the whole trip?

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Vice President: Yes.

I'll start with South Vietnam. Thieu is in the best attitude I've ever seen him. Bunker spoke with me privately. I had told Thieu some things to improve his image. Like a memorial in Saigon, a wreath laying in Washington.

Thieu is good on television. He was interested in these.

Thieu is interested in holding elections as soon as possible. He thought the Communists should get a fair shake.

President: Not too fair a shake.

Vice President: A couple of seats. Thieu said they have to wait until the commission is in place so that it can be verified.

President: Bunker must be relieved -- let him go out on top.

Vice President: Let's let him stay six months or so.

President: Get his evaluation of how long he should stay.

Say the President had spoken with the Vice President and seeks his views.

Vice President: How about Mac Godley?

President: I'm thinking of him for Marshall Green. We need a strong man.

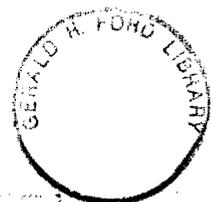
Vice President: Our people think the Communists couldn't get more than 15% in the elections.

Thieu now has some dedicated technocrats. They work closely with us and understand what must be done.

Everyone is fearful of economic aid.

President: I noticed that.

Vice President: The MAP pipeline gets clogged and deliveries are now very late.



Laos, Souvanna is talking with Phoumi. There is some chance they will get a ceasefire. He wants the '62 Accords.

The President: What is the latest?

Scowcroft: Within 48 hours.

Vice President: Have you met with Sonny?

Scowcroft: Not yet.

Vice President: He wants the '62 Accords and he wants the ICC beefed up.

Things are bad in Cambodia. Factionalism. Lon Nol is fairly feeble. He's making efforts to broaden his base, but he didn't let Lon Nol get near the place. Two-thirds of the country is Communist.

(Mr. Haldeman came in.)

The President: What is the situation on getting a de facto ceasefire?

Vice President: We have had to give them some support.

The President: We can't guarantee any government in Cambodia. Sihanouk will be running around, the Chinese, etc. We can't keep giving them B-52s.

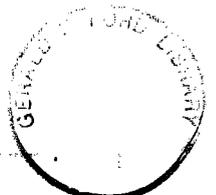
Vice President: Lee says the Communists won't take Cambodia, because it is a drain on us to keep it propped up.

The only way for a consensus would be to restore Sihanouk as some sort of figurehead.

Thanom in Thailand: I've never seen him more nervous. He is on the line as friendly to the U. S. and he's afraid we will leave him. He's concerned at movements within his government. Praphot didn't show up. Praphot is on the middle of a tetter totter, ready to jump either way. \_\_\_\_\_ wants us out. The U. S. in there has been a disaster.

Thanom needs our support. He's worried about degree of our drawdown. After the Nixon years, what? What if the doves get into control?

Lee says if Thailand goes, all Southeast Asia goes. He's worried about Indonesia. There's some corruption in the regime. Mrs. Suharto apparently is getting a rake off. Aid dollars in Thailand erode about half of those in Indonesia.



Thailand is defensible and the insurgency is containable. People stick together except for the hills. Thailand is worth a fight, and help from us will get them off dead center.

The President: Like what? More aid?

Vice President: Yes, especially if Cambodia and Laos end up Communist-dominated.

In Malaysia, I was impressed. They have a good land reform program going.

The big problem is between Malaysia and the Philippines. I have a file on this. The NSC should get involved. There are plans against the Philippines. Americans are involved. Khadaffi is involved with a \$7 million bank draft to stir up problems with the Muslims.

The President: We should send it to the CIA also.

Vice President: I will give it to Scowcroft.

MAP is causing problems. In the pipeline Indonesia is getting less than half what was promised.

The President: What about Marcos? Is he aware we have been nervous about his authoritarian role?

Vice President: He is aware and didn't raise it. He's worried about insurrection. Malaysia, stronger extradition. I got a friendly reception.

The President: Because of Romulo?

Vice President: Yes. People were lining the streets all the way. Marcos wanted us to know the people are pro-American. He called in TV and the press at lunch and talked for 20 minutes. The toast was very good and played all the stops. I responded at length.

The President: You should have to be proper.

Vice President: Then we had private talks. Our diplomatic representation was good everywhere but the Philippines. Change Hamilton in Indonesia. He's pompous, he talks down to Marcos.



The President: Look into this. Let's move him out discreetly. We are thinking of sending Sullivan to the Philippines.

Vice President: Lee said your courage on the bombing in May saved Southeast Asia.

The President: What do you think about South Vietnam? Can it survive?

Vice President: I think so. I've had doubts before, but I think now he is on the right track. He has good people around him, a good idea on elections; he knows he has a public relations problem. He speaks good English; he has a good personal image. He should have a TV appearance when he's here.

The President: Ron, we need to have some planning for his visit now. We need to have Q&As so you won't get trapped. Ron, get with the Vice President.

The problem about his going to Washington is, he would have to go before the Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees.

Vice President: I think he should do it.

The President: I will consider it.

Vice President: If he met with you here, he could then go on his own to Washington for a wreath laying, and go to POW hospital.

The President: Good. No Meet the Press. Prime time only. If the press wants him, prime time only.

We must think this out -- in relation to North Vietnam, the ceasefire.

There should be a private dinner here, in Los Angeles with the Vice President, for 200.

Vice President: Behind Thieu is nothing but technocrats. Middle level people are nonexistent. Huang is old.

The President: It's true of many countries, even the U.S. There's little middle leadership in Congress. Ford is in the league but Mansfield, Scott, etc. are not like Taft, Rayburn, etc.



Vice President: There are good people in Malaysia, but Vietnam and Thailand are poor. Suharto said things I had to respond to sharply. He said "We would like eventual neutralism." I said "You have domestic problems, but you must be careful about that."

The President: You did right.

Vice President: Malik is a nothing as far as we are concerned. Malik told the Australian Ambassador that the U.S. ought to get out of Asia. State strokes Malik but I think he is an enemy.

The President: He is opposed to Suharto. State likes him because he speaks English, etc.

Vice President: He was late for my meeting; he was unprepared. He is a lemon.

Suharto has good economic backup. The military team gave me a briefing which indicated they need a lot of help.

The President: We must realize democracy is hard. It took the British 500 years.

Look at the Philippines. It's relatively advanced, but if he needs to crack down, he should. We have enough problems, but in a less sophisticated land, democracy would blast them right out of the water. Look at Africa -- the liberals like it. They don't have anything like we force on South Vietnam. That's okay, but the press raises hell with our friends in South Vietnam, Brazil, the Philippines, but not a word about Africa. Like Burundi, where they killed 200,000; there was not a word in the New York Times.

I am not criticizing that. The point is we can't force our friends to democracy. It's their foreign policy we are interested in. We want a democracy and we will encourage it, but the attitude toward the US is important. Sweden is an example.

Vice President: I told Razak that if we withdraw from Southeast Asia, it would be very hard to return. The Communists are much closer than the US.

Everywhere there is the realization that the US presence in Southeast Asia is essential.



The President: I want to make these points:

- Don't do anything now but the Lincoln Day speech.
- Maybe a week from Sunday you can do something.

Getting aid for South Vietnam will be hard; even worse on North Vietnam. The aid is lower on North Vietnam; they can use China and the USSR also. Mills and the Congress are so frustrated that we got a peace that they will fight aid. All the old Marshall Plan supporters. We have to fight hard -- we must talk about reconstruction for Southeast Asia. Mills said we can cut the budget, but we can't do it.

We must play it tough.

On amnesty: Lincoln gave amnesty to the enemy. He shot deserters. We want the opposition to go out on a limb on amnesty.

The policy is: those who desert must pay. We cannot grant amnesty without accepting his contention that what he did was right and what 2.5 million did was wrong. Nobody wants war but...

The President will not change his mind. Individual cases will be treated like any other criminal case.

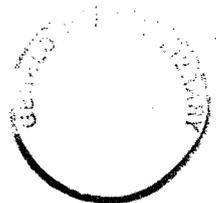
Vice President: In the campaign I said there must be a stigma.

The President: I want a report on cutting out the Peace Corps. I ordered it done away with. It's a poor use of money. It doesn't serve a foreign policy interest.

It's nice for kids to be in the Peace Corps, but it should be private, not government.

Vice President: Due to Marshall Green, we have gone overboard on aid to Indonesia. In this international group (1/3, 1/3, 1/3) our level is about \$250 million. We can't give Thailand and South Vietnam what they need. Indonesia is playing both sides; they're playing footsie with the Japanese. Their oil company is causing havoc in the international community.

I think we should give MAP to Suharto, but we could cut some economic aid if we need more for Thailand and South Vietnam.



The President: I have thought we should give Indonesia more MAP and let the others do more economic aid.

Vice President: Exactly. The Japanese give the same as us, but get more credit. They're giving a lot of preferential trade deals with the Japanese.

Indonesia is Green's baby. If we lose the Indochina peninsula, you can forget Indonesia.

Corruption is rampant in Indonesia. Fifty percent of our aid is lost.

Suharto says in any dispute both must be wrong, so we criticize both. I said that is wrong.

Suharto laid out the red carpet for me, but the Japanese are out-maneuvering us.

The President: I agree with all these observations. It's too bad Lee can't run the whole area. Marcos is doing all right? I will defend him strongly.

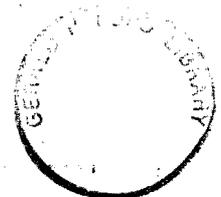
I am not satisfied with the Bureau of the Budget and HEW on aid to higher education.

1. What is the total aid, direct and indirect, in all the departments in aid to higher education. Defense, AEC, NSF, HEW, subsidies, student loans.
2. How much has the amount in '74 budget been cut? I asked for 50%.
3. What they are doing, especially in DOD, to cut down on aid to institutions like MIT where those doing research are opposed to our policy.

A page and a half. I want it within 48 hours.

Inform Weinberger.

1. How much is it overall?
2. How much is the cut? By individual institutions
3. A list of the top 20 institutions and how much they get.



I want flat-out answers. We will cut them off. I am totally dissatisfied. By tonight, or Sunday. I want to discuss it with Weinberger on his swearing-in (confirmation).

Vice President: This file contains a plot on Marcos' life. A U.S. citizen is involved.

The President: This file -- give it to CIA. Have [REDACTED] analyze it. Don't circulate it to State and the NSC staff. We can't have leaks. Hold it tight.

Brent, don't you think the CIA should handle?

Scowcroft: Yes. Then we can see where we go from there.

Vice President: (Reads from the file.)

The President: Check carefully on any American citizens involved. Do they have U.S. Embassy contacts, etc.?

Vice President: (Read more details.) It shows Marcos has a right to be edgy about assassination. This was the only thing he took up.

The President: We must realize we can't take up the whole world's problems or blames. Take the Middle East; some kook can do anything. People always ask "What did the US do" when anything happens.

Vice President: There is one other issue. The Spratley Islands. It's a Chinese Nationalist title, and the PRC claim it.

The President: We will look into them.

You could reiterate amnesty in your Lincoln Day speech.

Ziegler: Yes.

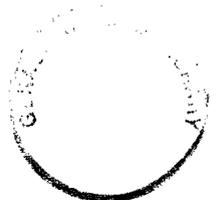
The President: It's appropriate to do it on Lincoln Day. The policy of Lincoln was amnesty for the South, but not deserters in the north -- they were shot or jailed. One more point you should make: If you give amnesty for deserters and draft dodgers, because of their claim to a higher morality, it reduces those who served to a lower-level morality.

Vice President: Lincoln Day is closed to the press.

The President: Put it in your release. Link it with the POW return. Not because we are not compassionate, but it's a betrayal of those who served.

Vice President: I don't understand it.

The President: This time it's because this war is immoral and they all "deserve" amnesty.



## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/XGDSMEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Nixon  
 Vice President Agnew  
 Brigadier General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy  
 Assistant to the President for National  
 Security Affairs  
 Ronald L. Ziegler, Press Secretary

DATE & TIME: February 10, 1973  
 10:05 - 11:30 a.m.

PLACE: President's Office  
 Western White House

SUBJECT: Vice President Agnew's Return from his  
 Southeast Asian Trip

The President greeted the Vice President at the helicopter pad at 10:00 a.m. and they proceeded together to the President's office. Following a picture taking session, the President spoke briefly to the press. He stated that there would not be a separate press statement because the Vice President's report would have to be assessed by the NSC. The President said that the Vice President's trip served a very important purpose in terms of building a structure of peace in Southeast Asia. The Vice President said that the layout of the trip was especially good because, having gone to the Indo-China countries first, he was able to answer questions for the leaders of the other countries which he visited. At that point, the press departed.

The President said he had decided to make those remarks to the press in order that the Vice President would not be confronted by the press following the meeting. The Vice President observed that he had ignored the press everywhere he went and that consequently, he got very little press coverage of his trip. The President replied that he had received quite a bit of press coverage, especially during the earlier portion of his trip.

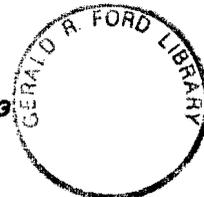
The President then suggested that the Vice President give him a quick rundown of the trip. The President said he was under the impression that Prince Souvanna had been mostly worried about himself and his immediate situation, that the Thai

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were concerned not only about present conditions, but about the future role of the U. S., and that Prime Minister Lee had the most balanced appraisal of the whole situation in Southeast Asia. The President pointed out that Washington right now was very quiet. He said that when he returns to Washington, he proposes to have a Cabinet/NSC meeting and a meeting with the bi-partisan leaders which would deal both with the trip of the Vice President and that of Dr. Kissinger to North Vietnam and China.

The Vice President noted that he had written a trip report, but that he would give the President a brief oral report, beginning with South Vietnam. He found President Thieu in the best attitude he had ever seen him. He said he had suggested several things to Thieu which might help him improve his image, for example, that build some sort of memorial to American soldiers in Saigon or lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington. Thieu had made a good impression. Thieu said he was interested in holding elections as quickly as possible. He thought that the Communists should be allowed to get a fair shake in the elections. The President interjected that he hoped not too fair a shake. The Vice President quoted Thieu as saying that elections would have to wait until the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord was organized in order to ensure that elections would be considered fair by all parties.

[Mr. Ziegler entered at this point.]

The President suggested that Ambassador Bunker, who had done a great job, ought to be relieved now so that he could go out on top. The Vice President suggested that it might be wise to leave him for six more months or so. The President asked General Scowcroft to get Bunker's evaluation of how long he should stay.

The Vice President said that our people in Saigon believed the Communists could not get more than 15% of the vote in an election. He felt that Thieu now had some very good people around him, adequate technocrats who worked closely with their American counterparts and understood what must be done. He observed that governments in all the countries he visited were fearful about the prospects for continued economic aid.

The Vice President felt that things were bad in Cambodia. There was much factionalism, both in the government and within the Communist groups. He thought that Lon Nol was quite feeble physically but appeared to be making efforts to broaden his base and to curb Lon Non.



[At this point, the President called in Mr. Haldeman to tell him to call Secretary Shultz to get any further word regarding the status of monetary discussions.]

The President stated that we could not guarantee any government in Cambodia and that Lon Nol must understand that. Sihanouk would have his manipulations, the Chinese would be involved and so forth. We could not indefinitely keep on providing air support. The Vice President said that Prime Minister Lee felt that the Communists would not try to take over Cambodia because in its present state it constituted such a drain on us to keep the government propped up. He felt that the only way for any consensus in Cambodia to emerge would be to restore Sihanouk as some sort of figurehead.

The Vice President said he had never seen Thai Premier Thanom more nervous. He had openly committed himself as a friend of the United States and was afraid that we may leave him. He was also concerned at movements within his government and needed our support. Thanom was concerned about the degree to which we would draw down our forces in Thailand, and about the longer term of what would happen after the Nixon years, -- for example, what if the doves get into control.

In Singapore, Lee told the Vice President that if Thailand went, all of Southeast Asia was gone. Lee was worried about Indonesia. Corruption was rampant and aid dollars in Indonesia eroded about twice as much as in Thailand. Lee felt that Thailand was defensible and the insurgency containable. Thailand was definitely worth our efforts.

The Vice President was impressed with the situation in Malaysia. They seemed to be doing well and had a good land reform program going. There was a big problem between Malaysia and the Philippines involving attempts to stir up Muslims against Marcos and to assassinate him. The Vice President said he had a file on the issue.

According to the Vice President, MAP details were causing substantial problems, stemming from delays in the MAP pipeline. Indonesia he said had received less than half of what had been promised.

The President asked whether Marcos was aware that we had been silent about his moves toward authoritarian rule. The Vice President replied that he was aware of it and did not raise the subject. He said Marcos gave him an extremely warm reception, with people lining the streets all along his travel route. Marcos called in TV cameras and press at lunch and gave a 20-minute very much pro-American toast.



The Vice President observed that our diplomatic representation was good in all the countries he visited except the Philippines. Chargé Hamilton was very bad--pompous, self-important, and he talked down to Marcos. The President asked General Scowcroft to look into this and move him out discreetly. He told the Vice President that we were thinking of sending Ambassador Sullivan to the Philippines.

Prime Minister Lee had observed, the Vice President recalled, that President Nixon's courage in resuming the bombing and instituting a blockade last May had saved Southeast Asia.

Next the President asked about the chances of survival in South Vietnam. The Vice President said he had had doubts before but he now thought Thieu was on the right track. He had good people around him, he had sound ideas on the elections, and realized he had a public relations problem. He spoke good English and presented a good personal image, and the Vice President therefore thought he should have a television appearance while he is in the United States. The President asked Mr. Ziegler to begin planning for Thieu's visit now. If Thieu went before the press, we would have to provide questions and answers so that he would not get trapped. He was also concerned about Thieu going to Washington, and felt that if he did so, he would have to go before the Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees. The Vice President thought that Thieu should go to Washington, and the President said he would consider it. The Vice President felt that Thieu could meet with the President here in San Clemente, then go on his own to Washington for things such as a wreath-laying ceremony and visit to a hospital to see POW's. The President thought that might be a good idea, but that there should be no appearance like Meet the Press. If Thieu was to go on television, it should be prime time only. The President concluded by saying that we needed to think this out in relation to North Vietnam, a ceasefire, etc. For example, should he give Thieu a private dinner at San Clemente? Or should the Vice President give a large banquet for him in Los Angeles?

The Vice President observed that there was very little middle level competence in South Vietnam behind Thieu and a thin layer of technocrats. The President said that that was true of many countries, even the United States. We had poor middle leaders here also. Congressman Ford was good, but Mansfield, Scott and Albert, and so on, were not like their predecessors Rayburn, Taft and Johnson. The Vice President thought there were a number of good people in Malaysia but that Vietnam and Thailand were poor in that respect.

President Suharto had made comments about eventual neutrality in Southeast Asia, to which the Vice President said he had had to give a sharp response. He told Suharto that he realized he had to speak to his democratic audience,



but that it was not helpful to take positions such as that. The President agreed. The Vice President felt that Foreign Minister Malik was a nothing as far as the U.S. was concerned. He had reportedly told the Australian Ambassador that the U.S. ought to get out of Asia. The State Department thinks highly of Malik but the Vice President thought that he was an enemy. The President felt that Malik was opposed to Suharto and State likes him because he speaks good English and was a gentleman.

The President pointed out that we should realize that democracy is hard to institute and that it had taken the British 500 years to develop it. The Philippines, for example, were relatively advanced in democracy in Asia, but if Marcos felt he had to crack down to preserve the country, he should be able to. We had enough problems with democracy in this country but in less sophisticated lands, democracy could destroy them. The President observed that the African countries were all turning toward harsh authoritarianism but since the liberals like Africa, they make no comment about it. The press bitterly criticizes the state of democracy in countries which are friends, like South Vietnam, Brazil, and the Philippines, but not a critical word about Africa, such as in Burundi where 200,000 were killed without a harsh word about it in the New York Times. The President said he was not criticizing the lack of democracy in Africa but the point was that we should not try to force democracy on our friends. It was their foreign policies which we were interested in. We wanted democracy and would encourage democracy, but their attitude toward the U.S. was what was most important. He mentioned Sweden as an example of democracy with whom we had substantial foreign policy differences.

The Vice President said that he had found everywhere the realization that the American presence in Southeast Asia was essential. He said he had pointed out to Prime Minister Razak that if we withdrew from Southeast Asia, it would be very difficult for us to return, and that the Communist overt and covert enemies were much closer than the American ones it withdrew.

The President then said he wanted to make several points. He did not wish the Vice President to make any public speech except for his Lincoln Day speech, but that perhaps something could be done a week from Sunday. He pointed out that getting aid for South Vietnam would be very difficult, and even worse for North Vietnam. Aid would be a principal lever on North Vietnam, and perhaps the Chinese and the USSR would also be of help. He felt that many in Congress were so frustrated that we were able to get a decent peace that they would fight an aid program -- ironically even the old Marshall Plan supporters. The President said we must play it tough and fight hard for a reconstruction program for Southeast Asia.



Next, the President turned to amnesty. He pointed out that Lincoln gave amnesty only to the South, whereas he shot and jailed dissenters in the north. The President hoped the opposition would go way out on a limb on the amnesty issue. His policy was that those who deserted or evaded their responsibilities must pay. He could not grant amnesty without accepting the contention of the deserters and evaders that what they did was right and what 2-1/2 million loyal citizens had done was wrong. Nobody wants war but it is everyone's duty to serve when the need arises. The President said he would not change his mind and that individual hardship cases would be treated as would any other ordinary criminal hardship case.

The President then asked for a report on eliminating the Peace Corps. He observed that he had ordered it done away with. He didn't think it serves our foreign policy and he thought it was a poor use of government money. He felt it a useful challenge for American youth, but thought it should be a private and not a government program.

The Vice President thought that due to Marshall Green, we had gone over-board on aid to Indonesia. Indonesia was getting more than it needed, while we were unable to give Thailand and South Vietnam what they required. He felt that we should give military assistance to Suharto but we could cut economic aid if more was required for Thailand and South Vietnam. The President agreed that we should give Indonesia plenty of military assistance but should let others do more in the economic aid field. The Vice President concurred, and said that while the Japanese give the same amount of aid as we do, they get much more credit and were getting a lot of preferential trade deals with Indonesia. The Vice President thought that Indonesia was Marshall Green's "baby," and that if we lost the Indochina Peninsula, we could forget Indonesia. While Suharto had laid out the red carpet for him, the Vice President thought the Japanese were out-maneuvering us in Indonesia and that corruption was rampant. The President agreed with all of these observations and said that it was too bad Lee could not run the whole area. He asked if Marcos was doing all right. He pointed out that he would defend him strongly.

The President then turned to economic aid to higher education. He said he was not satisfied with the way that OMB and HEW were responding to his orders to cut such assistance. He said that within 48 hours he wanted a paper which would do the following:

1. List the total direct and indirect aid to higher education in all departments and agencies in the federal government.



2. List how much aid to higher education was cut in the FY74 budget. He said he had asked for a 50% cut.
3. Describe what was being done, especially in DOD, to cut down all aid to institutions like MIT where those doing the research were opposed to his foreign policy goals. In that regard he wanted a list of the top 20 institutions receiving aid and how much each got. He stated he wanted the facts in the matter and expected Weinberger to be prepared to discuss them when he came out Monday for the swearing-in ceremony.

The Vice President then handed me the file which he had described, which he said contained a description of a plot on Marcos' life in which American citizens were involved. The President said that the file should be given to the CIA for analysis; it should not be circulated to State or the NSC staff in order to ensure against leaks. He said that we should check carefully on the involvement of any American citizens and whether or not they had contacts in our embassy in Manila, etc.

The Vice President observed that this file shows Marcos had a right to be edgy about assassination and that this was the only subject that Marcos had really taken up with him.

The President observed that we must realize that we could not take upon ourselves all the world's problems nor should we be blamed for everything which goes wrong. In the Middle East, for example, any number of unstable characters could start something, and whenever something happened people always asked what the US has done.

The Vice President then remembered that Marcos had mentioned one other issue -- the Spratley Islands. He was concerned about the PRC's claim to them and its impact on Southeast Asia. The President agreed that we should look into this matter.

He then suggested that the Vice President reiterate our amnesty position in his Lincoln Day speech. He felt it would be particularly appropriate to do it Lincoln Day since Lincoln had given amnesty only for the South but had shot and jailed deserters in the north. Amnesty for deserters and draft dodgers would seem to vindicate their claim of a higher morality and reduce those who had loyally served our country to a lower morality. When the Vice President pointed out that his speech was closed to the press, the President suggested that he could perhaps put the amnesty matter in his press release,

and link it with the POW return. He should point out that our position on amnesty was not because we're not compassionate, but because it would be a betrayal of those who had served. When the Vice President said he did not understand the position of supporters of amnesty, the President said they took their position because they felt this war was immoral and that desertion and draft dodging were therefore a proper and moral course of action to take.



