

Mandatory Review

Case # NLJ 91-286

Document # 87a

87a



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

WORLD-WIDE REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S
31 MARCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

COVERAGE 1700 2 APRIL TO 0500 3 APRIL

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
15 JUL 1992

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SELECTED WORLD REACTIONS TO
THE PRESIDENT'S 31 MARCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

North Vietnam: The Vietnamese News Agency in Hanoi on 3 April sent a service message to Moscow asking its representative there to "send home promptly the text of Johnson's speech both in English and French by air. You do not have to send it by cable. Make sure to cable home fully and promptly reactions of world public opinion on this speech."

Soviet Union: Soviet Premier Kosygin, speaking in Tehran, said the time has come for the US to understand the only way it can escape from Vietnam is to "cease its aggression." In Paris, Soviet Ambassador Zorin said, "The Americans are still bombing North Vietnam; they've just picked different target areas."

United Nations: Delegates from India, Nepal, and the United Kingdom, Canada, Malaysia, Pakistan, Denmark and Japan expressed surprise and disappointment at reports of air strikes over 200 miles north of the demilitarized zone. They wondered whether this was a departure from what they understood the President said about the bombing reduction. Eastern European newsmen and members of the Soviet, Hungarian and Bulgarian delegations said the air attacks not only made unlikely a positive reaction from North Vietnam but also provided grounds for a negative reaction.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~FAR EAST

Communist China: According to Radio Press, a Japanese agency which monitors Chinese broadcasts, Peking Radio on 3 April quoted from the editorial in the North Vietnamese army newspaper Quan Doi Nhan Dan. Japanese newsmen based in Peking said on 2 April that Chinese newspapers and radio stations had not reported President Johnson's announcement.

Japan: The newspaper Nishi Nippon Shinbun described the President's announcement as a desirable step toward peace but said it meant the US was yielding ground. The newspaper also foresaw a major change in US Asian policy in the direction of weakening its commitment, predicted widespread uneasiness among the neighbors of Vietnam, and concluded that Japan must reappraise its role in Asia.

Thailand: The Bangkok World, in a report on a Thai Cabinet meeting of 2 April, said Prime Minister Kittikhachon told his ministers he believed the US President genuinely desired peace in Vietnam. High Thai military officers, meanwhile, were reported "surprised" at the bombing reduction order. They felt that the Communists merely took advantage of such American concessions in the past.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

South Korea: Seoul Hapdong reported that President Pak Chong-hui plans to hold an extraordinary strategy meeting regarding Vietnam. The newspaper quoted government sources as saying the bombing reduction was shocking, and it described the government position as favoring continued bombing until the Communists show sincerely they want to end the war.

Hong Kong: An editorial in the South China Morning Post speculated that many in Southeast Asia "will view this as the first step in an ultimate American withdrawal from the Asian mainland." The Hong Kong Standard editor asked: "Does America want to get out at any cost, or is this merely a move by Johnson to try to show the world that the North Vietnamese do not really want peace?"

Australia: Former Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies said he thought President Johnson "has been wickedly misrepresented" in the Vietnam War controversy "but throughout all this has demonstrated his clear and unselfish patriotism."

New Zealand: The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization council of ministers, in a communique on 3 April, called the President's decision "bold and generous." The council said the pause is an opportunity of critical importance for the opening of negotiations to end the war. Several newspaper edit-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

orials praised the President's self-sacrificing determination to find peace in Vietnam and agreed that the onus is now on Hanoi.

Indonesia: Newspapers welcomed the bombing reduction. Nusantara said it offers North Vietnam an opportunity to take a peace move without losing face. The armed forces' newspaper Angkata Bersendajat speculated that Vietnam might be united under a Tito-type Communist regime.

India: Deputy Prime Minister Morarji Desai said he welcomed President Johnson's decision. "The other people (North Vietnam) will be put to the test," he said.

The Philippines: A government spokesman said the shift of US policy may have ultimate bearing on the traditional "American presence" in Asia.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WESTERN EUROPE

UK: Vietnam remains the main topic in the press, with the Times, the Guardian, and the Sun expressing reservations and misgivings that the bombing limitation is "less dramatic" than initially imagined. The Telegraph, on the other hand, notes that continuation of bombing "deep into North Vietnam" ~~restores~~ confidence that the President's offer was not made in preparation for "an American retreat from Vietnam."

West Germany: Media reflect a widespread awareness that the President's speech represents a momentous development, the consequences of which are not immediately discernible. There has not yet been enough time for any serious analysis to develop.

Italy: Press reaction has been overwhelmingly favorable, except for Communist journals. The Christian Democratic organ, Il Popolo, headlined its editorial "The Voice of Reason," the independent but conservative Stampa said, "Now it's Hanoi's turn." In general, editorials tended to slur over any distinction between partial reduction and complete suspension of bombing.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Austria: FBIS has picked up an official government broadcast that the government has taken note of The President's declaration "with great interest" and hopes that this step will lead to "prompt, concrete talks."

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Chile: The initial favorable response to the President's declaration on the bombing pause is rapidly being dissipated by a realization of its limitations. On the afternoon of 2 April, tabloids La Tarde (Christian Democratic) and Ultima Hora (Socialist) both carried banner headlines: "Bombardments Continue," noting Hanoi's claim that "LBJ deceives world."

Brazil: According to the embassy, press coverage has been heavy--"extraordinary" in the northeast area--and generally favorable. A recurrent theme is the "importance of the (changed) US attitude," together with either hope or skepticism as to the resultant effect in Hanoi and Moscow. Stories, especially in the northeast, lean heavily on generally favorable comments by officials and notables. There is a wide spectrum of reaction to The President's decision not to run, and apparently little particular notice of the limitations of the bombing pause.

Mexico: The President's speech dominates all media. According to incomplete initial reports, with reaction to the bombing pause favorable and a mixed response to his withdrawal of candidacy.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Panama: FBIS has picked up a national television station comment praising The President's withdrawal of candidacy as "a tremendous example of greatness and public responsibility," and the "suspension of the air raids" as opening "the way for...peace negotiations."

Elsewhere in Latin America: The embassy in San Salvador notes that local news media are slow reacting, which seems to sum up the scattering of reports received so far from Central America, the Caribbean area, and smaller countries in South America. Such reports as are available as of 5:00 AM, 3 April, suggest that public response has been a mixture of surprise, curiosity, and general sympathy for the President's objectives. Many reactions have focused more on US domestic political aspects and the possible local effect.

Canada: Two French-language newspapers reacted editorially on 3 April. Le Devoir notes that The President's decision to withdraw "gives more importance to the bombing pause," but warns that "immediate peace should not be expected." The tabloid Montreal Matin calls the President's dual declaration a "gesture for which the entire world has long been waiting," and concludes that the "important thing is that the good will of America was affirmed in striking manner."

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FBIS 34 FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

VNA SERVICE MESSAGE

FOR YOUR INFORMATION B/X

HANOI VNA IN VIETNAMESE TO MOSCOW AT 0738 GMT ON 3 APRIL CARRIES THE FOLLOWING SERVICE MESSAGE:

"HEADQUARTERS TO NGO MINH, (MOSCOW--ED)

"1--KHA IS SICK AND STILL MUST TAKE A REST. WHEN HE LEAVES WE WILL INFORM YOU.

"2--SEND HOME PROMPTLY THE TEXT OF JOHNSON'S SPEECH BOTH IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH BY AIR. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SEND IT BY CABLE. MAKE SURE TO CABLE HOME FULLY AND PROMPTLY REACTIONS OF WORLD PUBLIC OPINION ON THIS SPEECH.

"(SIGNED) LAM."

3 APR 0825Z [REDACTED]

1.3(a)(4)

FBI 10

SEATO SESSION

MOSCOW DOMESTIC SERVICE IN RUSSIAN 1900 GMT 2 APR 68 L

(TEXT) A SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE MILITARY AGGRESSIVE SEATO BLOC OPENED IN WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND, TODAY. FOR THREE HOURS THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THIS BLOC CONFERRED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. ACCORDING TO AN AP CORRESPONDENT, WHO REFERS TO WELL-INFORMED SOURCES, THE MAIN TOPIC DISCUSSED BY THE MINISTERS WAS THE VIETNAM WAR.

THE UNITED STATES, OUR OBSERVER NOTES, INTENDS TO USE THE PRESENT CONFERENCE ABOVE ALL IN ORDER TO GET ITS ALLIES TO INCREASE THEIR MILITARY CONTRIBUTION TO THE VIETNAM ADVENTURE. IT IS NOT BY ACCIDENT THAT THE MEETING OF THE SEATO MINISTERS WAS PRECEDED BY A CONFERENCE OF MILITARY ADVISERS OF THIS MILITARY AGGRESSIVE PACT; AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SESSION A MEETING OF COUNTRIES TAKING PART IN THE WAR IN VIETNAM ON WASHINGTON'S SIDE WILL BE HELD.

THE WESTERN PRESS FORECASTS THAT IN SPITE OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S STATEMENT ABOUT HIS STRIVING FOR PEACE IN VIETNAM, THE SESSION OF THE SEATO COUNCIL WILL GIVE IMPETUS TO FURTHER ESCALATION OF THE AGGRESSION.

3 APR 0240Z

1.3(a)(4)

A066

yyxyyx

Soviet-Johnson Roundup NL

MOSCOW AP - A Radio Moscow commentator said Tuesday night President Johnson's announced decision not to seek re-election was an "acknowledgment of the failure of his foreign and domestic policies."

News analyst Valentine Zorin declared on an evening broadcast the development showed that American policies have "suffered one of their biggest military and political defeats in several years."

About the same time, Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin, speaking in Tehran, Iran, said the time has come for the United States to understand the only way it can escape from Vietnam is to "cease its aggression."

In Paris, Soviet Ambassador Valerian Zorin said, "The Americans are still bombing North Vietnam, they've just picked different target areas."

The Soviet ambassador spoke to newsmen at the opening of a new press center in a Paris hotel. French Premier Georges Pompidou was also there and he turned to an American reporter and said: "Stop the bombings and everyone will be happy."

zr750pes apr 2

Secret press

Secret officials

139

KOSYGIN

TEHRAN, IRAN (AP)-SOVIET PREMIER ALEXEI KOSYGIN SAID TONIGHT THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE UNITED STATES TO UNDERSTAND THE ONLY WAY IT CAN ESCAPE FROM VIETNAM IS TO "CEASE ITS AGGRESSION."

KOSYGIN SPOKE AT A BANQUET IN HIS HONOR.

THE COMMENT WAS HIS FIRST ON THE VIETNAM SITUATION SINCE PRESIDENT JOHNSON ORDERED CURTAILMENT OF BOMBINGS ON NORTH VIETNAM.

THE SOVIET LEADER MADE NO REFERENCE IN HIS SPEECH TO JOHNSON'S MOVE OR TO THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION NOT TO RUN FOR REELECTION.

HE DECLINED TO COMMENT WHEN ASKED BY NEWSMEN FOR HIS VIEWS ON JOHNSON'S DECISIONS.

KOSYGIN SAID AT THE BANQUET, "THE INTERESTS OF ALL PEACE-LOVING NATIONS REQUIRES A BONE-CRUSHING ANSWER TO THE FORCES OF WAR..."

HE SAID "THE POLICY OF IMPERIALISM PREVENTS A DE-ESCALATION OF INTERNATIONAL CRISES."

WE445PES APRIL 2

ADD KOSYGIN (139)

"IF IN VIETNAM THE FOREIGN MILITARY INTERFERENCE CONTINUES, AND IF THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE WIPED OUT, ALL THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS SITUATION RESTS WITH THE IMPERIALIST CIRCLES WHICH HAVE CREATED THIS WAR AND, WITH THE USE OF ARMAMENTS, WANT TO DEPRIVE THE HEROIC NATION OF VIETNAM OF ITS RIGHTS TO RESOLVE ITS OWN AFFAIRS WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE," KOSYGIN SAID.

"THOSE WHO AT THIS TIME THINK OF FORCING THEIR WILL UPON ANOTHER NATION ARE BITTERLY MISTAKEN."

"DESPITE THE SAVAGE AND LONG WAR THAT CONTINUES IN VIETNAM, ALL THE ENDEAVORS OF THOSE WHO INTERFERE TO ACHIEVE THEIR AIMS HAVE FAILED. THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS. THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM ARE DEFENDING THEIR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE."

"NOW THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE AGGRESSOR TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE ONLY WAY IT CAN ESCAPE IS TO CEASE THE AGGRESSION IT COMMITS AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM."

WE522PES APRIL 2

148

TEHRAN--ADD KOSYGIN (147)

KOSYGIN DID NOT MENTION THE UNITED STATES BY NAME BUT THE REFERENCE WAS CLEAR.

KOSYGIN SAID THAT IN THE MIDDLE EAST THERE IS A "REAL DANGER OF MILITARY CONFLICT" AND IF ISRAEL CONTINUES TO OCCUPY ARAB LANDS "THIS IS BECAUSE THE RULING CLIQUE IN ISRAEL AND THOSE WHO STAND BEHIND THEM FOLLOW THE POLICY OF IMPERIALISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST."

HE SAID ISRAEL'S POLICY AMOUNTED TO "OVER WAR-MONGERING" AND REPRESENTED AN OPEN CHALLENGE TO THE DECISIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

"IT MUST BE STATED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES FROM ARAB LANDS IS THE ONLY CONDITION FOR SOLVING THE CONFLICT."

"THE NOVEMBER RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AIMS AT THIS, AND ISRAELI EXPANSIONIST CIRCLES ARE BITTERLY MISTAKEN IF THEY BELIEVE THEY ARE CAPABLE OF EVADING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS RESOLUTION," HE DECLARED.

EG524PES APRIL 2

INDONESIAN PRESS ON LBJ'S DECISION

SINGAPORE AFP IN ENGLISH 0633 GMT 3 APR 68 B

(TEXT) DJAKARTA--INDONESIAN PAPERS TODAY WELCOMED PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S DECISIONS NOT TO RUN FOR THE PRESIDENCY AND TO HALT PARTIALLY THE BOMBINGS OF NORTH VIETNAM.

THE OUTSPOKEN ANTICOMMUNIST PAPER, NUSANTARA, SAID THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S DECISIONS WERE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR NORTH VIETNAM TO TAKE A PEACE MOVE WITHOUT LOSING FACE.

MR JOHNSON, WHO DISPLAYED GREAT QUALITY BY PUTTING WORLD PEACE ABOVE PERSONAL INTERESTS, MIGHT BE PRESSED BY HIS PARTY TO REVISE HIS DECISION NOT TO RUN FOR THE PRESIDENCY AGAIN, THE PAPER SAID.

THE ARMED FORCES PAPER, ANGKATAN BERSENDAJAT, SAID THE WILLINGNESS SHOWN BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON TO START NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD MAKE US HAPPY. EVERY EFFORT TO SETTLE THE VIETNAM WAR SHOULD BE WELCOMED BY ALL PEACE-LOVING COUNTRIES, IT SAID. SPECULATING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF VIETNAM, THE PAPER PAID SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE THEORY THAT VIETNAM MIGHT BE UNITED UNDER A TITO-TYPE COMMUNIST REGIME.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PAPER, KOMPAS, SAID PUBLIC PRESSURE IN THE UNITED STATES HAS LED TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S LATEST MOVE. THESE DRAMATIC CHANGES MIGHT, PERHAPS, TURN THE EXISTING ANTI-PATHY TOWARD HIM INTO SYMPATHY, IT ADDED.

3 APR 0801Z [REDACTED]

1.3(a)(4)

282A

CHINA 4/2 NX

TOKYO (UPI)--COMMUNIST CHINA BROADCAST A NORTH VIETNAMESE EDITORIAL ON PRESIDENT JOHNSON WEDNESDAY BUT WITHHELD ANY PEKING COMMENT ON THE LATEST WHITE HOUSE PEACE MOVES.

RADIO PRESS, A JAPANESE AGENCY WHICH MONITORS CHINESE RADIO BROADCASTS, SAID PEKING AS OF MIDDORNING WEDNESDAY HAD MADE NO COMMENT OF ITS OWN ON JOHNSON'S DECISION NOT TO RUN AGAIN OR HIS PARTIAL HALT OF AMERICAN BOMBING AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM.

IT SAID PEKING RADIO, IN A NATIONWIDE BROADCAST WEDNESDAY MORNING DID QUOTE FROM AN EDITORIAL PUBLISHED IN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY NEWSPAPER, QUAN DOI NHAN DAN.

~~THE EDITORIAL SAID JOHNSON ANNOUNCED A CHANGE IN WAR STRATEGY BUT IS STILL LOOKING FOR WAYS AND MEANS OF MISLEADING PUBLIC OPINION AND DOES NOT AGREE TO STOP THE BOMBING AND OTHER MILITARY ACTIONS FINALLY AND UNCONDITIONALLY. ...~~

JAPANESE NEWSMEN BASED IN PEKING SAID TUESDAY THAT CHINESE NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO STATIONS HAD NOT REPORTED PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

HG852PES..

FBI 31 FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ON U.S. POLICY

SINGAPORE AFP IN ENGLISH 0556 GMT 3 APR 68 B

(TEXT) MANILA--THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT SAID LAST NIGHT THE SHIFT OF THE U.S. POLICY IN VIETNAM AS ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON MAY HAVE ULTIMATE BEARING UPON THE TRADITIONAL "AMERICAN PRESENCE" IN ASIA

THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS WAS CONSEQUENTLY MEETING WITH HIS FOREIGN POLICY AND SECURITY ADVISERS IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE SHORT- AND LONG-RANGE IMPACT OF WASHINGTON'S DECISION NOT ONLY ON VIETNAM BUT ON GENERAL ASIAN AFFAIRS.

THE OFFICIAL BELIEF HERE IS THAT U.S. PRESENCE IN ASIA IS VITAL UNTIL SUCH TIME THAT THE SMALL, DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF THE REGION CAN STABILIZE THEIR RESPECTIVE ECONOMIES, MOST PARTICULARLY THROUGH JOINT REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

3 APR 0755Z [REDACTED]

13(a)(4)

170

LBJ-AUSSIE

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA (AP)-FORMER PRIME MINISTER SIR ROBERT MENZIES SAID TODAY HE THOUGHT PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAD BEEN "WICKEDLY MISREPRESENTED" BUT HAD ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS AN UNSELFISH PATRIOT.

IN A COMMENT ON JOHNSON'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT SEEK THE PRESIDENCY FOR A SECOND TERM, MENZIES SAID "IT WAS MY GOVERNMENT WHICH SENT AUSTRALIAN FORCES INTO VIETNAM AND WHICH CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED THE PRESIDENT IN HIS POLICIES.

"IN MORE RECENT TIMES HE HAS BEEN WOUNDED IN THE HOUSE OF HIS FRIENDS. HE HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF BITTER ATTACK BY ASPIRING LEADERS IN HIS OWN PARTY. HIS HEALTH HAS CLEARLY SUFFERED.

"HE HAS BEEN WICKEDLY MISREPRESENTED BUT THROUGHOUT ALL THIS HAS DEMONSTRATED HIS CLEAR AND UNSELFISH PATRIOTISM."

GG705P 2

LONDON WORLD SERVICE IN ENGLISH 0150 GMT 3 APR 68 C

(PRESS REVIEW)

(EXCERPTS) VIETNAM IS ONCE AGAIN THE MAIN TOPIC. THE TIMES SAYS THE PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S BOMBING PAUSE BEGINS TO LOOK LESS DRAMATIC AND GENEROUS THAN WHAT HE MADE IT. THE AREA NORTH OF THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE STILL OPEN TO ATTACK IS GREATER THAN ANYONE WOULD IMAGINE. THE TIMES ASKS: WAS THE BOMBING STOPPED BECAUSE ITS MILITARY VALUE WAS DOUBTED AND NOT AS A CONCESSION TO MEET NORTH VIETNAMESE CONDITIONS FOR PEACE? IF THIS WERE THE REASON, THEN IT WAS NATURAL TO EXTRACT AS MUCH POLITICAL ADVANTAGE AS POSSIBLE FROM THE PAUSE. THIS INTERPRETATION MAY BE QUITE UNJUST. THE IDEA MUST HAVE BEEN THAT WORLD OPINION WOULD SEE THE GESTURE AS ONE HANOI SHOULD NOT IGNORE. THERE ARE REASONS OTHER THAN PRIDE, (AND THE) NORTH VIETNAMESE MAY CHOOSE TO IGNORE IT. NEVERTHELESS, THE GESTURE HAS BEEN MADE. HANOI SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THE BIG CHANGE IN THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION. HIS WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS GIVES HIM FAR MORE FREEDOM OF ACTION. THIS TRANSFORMATION OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCENE OFFERS MANY OPENINGS IF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARE DISPOSED TO EXPLOIT THEM.

THE GUARDIAN ACCEPTS THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAS CONSIDERABLY SCALED DOWN THE WAR BUT THE PITY IS THAT ITS IMPACT SHOULD BE ALMOST IMMEDIATELY LOST IN BOMBING RAIDS MUCH FURTHER NORTH THAN ANYONE EVER EXPECTED. THE PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE BEEN WISER TO UNDERSHILL RATHER THAN OVERSELL HIS CHANGE OF POLICY. IF HANOI GAVE SIGNS OF KEEPING ITS INFILTRATION DOWN TO RECENT LEVELS, THE AMERICANS WOULD, ACCORDING TO THE OFFERS THEY PUT ON RECORD, STOP THE BOMBINGS ALTOGETHER; BUT PSYCHOLOGICALLY THE PRESIDENT HAS PLAYED INTO THE HANDS OF (WORD INDISTINCT) IN HANOI WHO DO NOT WANT NEGOTIATIONS NOW, IF AT ALL.

THE SUN WRITES THAT IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY IF THE HEART-WARMING VALUE OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S INITIATIVE IS PUT IN JEOPARDY BECAUSE HANOI IS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DENOUNCE IT AS (WORD INDISTINCT). THE CHANCES OF RUSSIA COOPERATING (FOR A SETTLEMENT) WOULD BE GREATLY REDUCED. THE PRESIDENT HAS STAKED EVERYTHING ON THE (MOVE) FOR PEACE IN VIETNAM. HE HAS MADE THE SACRIFICE OF HIS OWN CONTINUANCE IN OFFICE. THIS IS NOT THE COMEBACK OF A MAN WHO DOES NOT GENUINELY MEAN WHAT HE SAYS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT MR JOHNSON'S NO-BOMBING OFFER SHOULD BE STRICTLY DEFINED AND ADHERED TO.

HIS PEACE OFFER, MANY PEOPLE WERE REPORTED TO BE PREPARING FOR AN AMERICAN (RETREAT) FROM VIETNAM. THE PAPER WRITES: MUCH WILL BE DONE TO REMOVE (WORD INDISTINCT) AND TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE ON THE DEMOCRATIC SIDE AND TO DESTROY ILLUSIONS ON THE COMMUNIST SIDE ABOUT THE FACT THAT HEAVY ATTACKS ON IMMEDIATE MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS HAVE CONTINUED DEEP INTO NORTH VIETNAM. WITH MAJOR BATTLES PENDING, PRESIDENT JOHNSON OWES THIS TO THE AMERICAN AND ALLIED TROOPS. WHATEVER INTERPRETATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN PUT ON HIS DEESCALATION ANNOUNCEMENT, THESE ATTACKS ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS STATEMENTS THAT 90 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING THE MAIN POPULATION CENTERS AND FOOD PRODUCING AREAS, WOULD (BE IMMUNE). NO DOUBT NOW (WORD INDISTINCT) TO HAVE SERVED THE COMMUNIST CAUSE SO WELL BY THE HIGHLY ORGANIZED HARRASSING, HUNTING, AND (WORD INDISTINCT) OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON WILL CONTINUE THEIR CAMPAIGN FOR UNCINDITIONAL AMERICAN SURRENDER. PERHAPS NOW FAIR-MINDED PUBLIC OPINION WILL BE LESS TOLERANT OF THEIR METHODS AND (WORD INDISTINCT).

THE COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER THE MORNING STAR WRITES: THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT MILLIONS WHO SAW THE PRESIDENT ON TELEVISION AND HEARD HIM ANNOUNCE THE ESSENTIAL DEESCALATION OF THE MILITARY EFFORT TO GET TALKS STARTED WILL BE DISAPPOINTED THAT THE BOMBINGS ARE CONTINUING ON SUCH AN EXTENSIVE SCALE. THOSE WHO PAID (WORD INDISTINCT) TRIBUTE TO THE PRESIDENT'S MOVE ARE MADE TO LOOK RATHER SILLY AND NO ONE COULD BLAME HANOI IF IT DID NOT CONSIDER THAT MR JOHNSON'S OFFER WAS SINCERE.

3 APR 0656Z [REDACTED]

1.3(a)(4)

FBIS 18

VIENNA DOMESTIC SERVICE IN GERMAN 1800 GMT 2 APR 68 A

(TEXT) THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT HAS WITH GREAT INTEREST TAKEN COGNIZANCE OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT'S DECLARATION ON THE DISCONTINUATION OF AIR RAIDS ON THE MAJOR PART OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TERRITORY. THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT HOPES THAT THIS STEP WILL RESULT IN THE CESSATION OF ALL COMBAT ACTIONS AND IN PROMPT, CONCRETE TALKS WITH THE AIM OF SETTLING THE VIETNAM PROBLEM ON THE BASIS OF THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS OF 1954.

3 APR 0436Z [REDACTED]

1.3(a)(4)

-1
FBIS 15

PANAMA COMMENTARY ON JOHNSON

PANAMA CITY TELEVISORA NACIONAL NETWORK IN SPANISH 2330 GMT 2 APR 68 P
(STATION COMMENTARY)

(TEXT) PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAS GIVEN HIS PEOPLE AND THE WORLD A TREMENDOUS EXAMPLE OF GREATNESS AND PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY. AWARE THAT HIS PRESENCE ON THE POLITICAL SCENE WOULD CONSTITUTE A DISTURBING FACTOR THAT WOULD ENDANGER NOT ONLY THE UNITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, BUT THE UNITY OF THE NATION ITSELF, PRESIDENT JOHNSON STEPPED OUT IN AN ACT OF GREAT GENEROSITY, THUS ENDING 37 YEARS IN POLITICS.

INTERNATIONALLY, THE DECISION OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON MAY BE INTERPRETED AS ADMITTING THE FAILURE OF HIS POLICY IN VIETNAM. NEVERTHELESS, IT CONVEYS GREAT COURAGE ON HIS PART TO RECOGNIZE HIS ERROR, AND OPENS THE WAY FOR A FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR PEACE NEGOTIATION THROUGH HIS ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SUSPENSION OF THE AIR RAIDS.

THE ATTITUDE OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON IS PRAISEWORTHY. HE THUS GIVES A LESSON TO THE WORLD BY PLACING HIS COUNTRY AND HIS PARTY'S INTERESTS ABOVE HIS PERSONAL INTERESTS, HOWEVER LEGITIMATE THEY MAY BE

CONVINCED THAT HIS ASPIRATIONS FOR REELECTION COULD PROVOKE A SCHISM IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THAT HIS OWN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY DID NOT OFFER THE BEST ASSURANCES FOR SUCCESS, MR JOHNSON, DISPLAYING A HIGH SENSE OF HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY WORTHY OF THE HIGHEST PRAISE, RELINQUISHED HIS DESIRES TO LEAVE THE FIELD OPEN FOR A POSSIBLE FORMULA THAT WILL PRESERVE THE UNITY OF HIS PARTY AND THE NATION.

BEING THE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL NATION, HAVING THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT AND PARTY AT HIS DISPOSAL, AND BEING ENDOWED WITH UNDENIABLE POLITICAL ABILITY, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASY FOR MR LYNDON JOHNSON TO IMPOSE HIS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY AND INSIST ON HIS STRATEGY IN VIETNAM. MR JOHNSON, HOWEVER, IS NEITHER AN OBSTINATE NOR A SELF-WORSHIPPING MAN DESPERATELY SEEKING POWER. HE IS INDEED A CONSCIENTIOUS AND RESPONSIBLE STATESMAN WITH A NOBLE VOCATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE WHO THINKS ABOVE ALL OF THE PERMANENCE OF HIS COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS, OF THE FATE OF HIS PARTY, OF THE UNITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, AND OF THE CAUSE OF WORLD PEACE. THOSE ARE THE OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES TO WHICH HE HAS RENDERED A GREAT SERVICE BY RENOUNCING HIS REELECTION.

3 APR 0400Z [REDACTED]

1.3(a)(4)