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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER
SUBJECT: My May 16 Meeting with the Chinese

I met with Chinese Ambassador Huang Hua in New York for an hour in the evening, on May 16, to outline for his Government the prospects for the Moscow Summit. We also discussed the Indochina situation, in a somber but restrained fashion. The full transcript is at Tab 1, and highlights follow.

The Moscow Summit

Noting that we were not giving this information to any other government, I proceeded to outline for the Ambassador the major agreements and issues that we expected in Moscow:

-- First, I handed a paper summarizing the various bilateral agreements we expect to sign in Moscow, such as SALT, space cooperation, environmental cooperation, etc. (Tab A)

-- Then, I verbally outlined the statement of principles on US-Soviet relations which we are in the process of drafting. (Talking points on these principles at Tab B.) I pointed out that in some respects these principles were similar to those in the Shanghai Communique and I added that we had inserted a couple of points which were designed to prevent implications for third countries and counter the Brezhnev Doctrine.

-- In response to a Soviet suggestion for a bilateral nuclear non-aggression pact, I said that we would not agree to their formulation which could be interpreted as sanctifying nuclear weapons against third countries, and said that any agreement in this area would express a general attitude on nuclear weapons rather than specific obligations.

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-- I reaffirmed the enormous importance we placed in our relations with the PRC. We would sign no agreements knowingly that would be against their interests, were prepared to conclude any agreements with Peking that we did with Moscow, and welcomed their comments on negotiations that caused them concern.

Comment: The Ambassador, as usual, listened impassively to this presentation. I think that discussion, on top of all the previous briefings we have given them, should prepare the Chinese for the impressive set of agreements we will sign in Moscow.

Indochina

In addition to Europe, I cited Indochina as a logical agenda item for your talks with the Soviet leaders. I informed the Ambassador about the proposal from "various sources" (i. e., the Russians) that we resume the Paris plenary sessions. I said that we believed a private meeting was necessary first in order to determine whether there would be progress, and that we had proposed a secret meeting in Paris on May 21. There followed a brief, moderate exchange on Indochina along the following lines:

-- Referring to press reports that day of Chou's saying that we had strayed from the Shanghai Communique with our military actions, I reminded the Ambassador that we had warned the PRC a half-dozen times since your Peking trip about our intention to react strongly if Hanoi attempted to impose a military solution. In any event, we had kept, and would keep, all the promises we made, whether in the Shanghai Communique or informally.

-- Ambassador Huang referred to the PRC public statement a few days ago as the authoritative Chinese position. He added that the Chinese would support the Vietnamese people against our aggression and for national salvation until the end.

-- He then asked whether we had any more facts about the alleged damage done by US forces to Chinese merchant ships earlier this month. I told him that an investigation was underway but that preliminary reports indicated that US forces had inadvertently caused damage to

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Chinese ships while attacking North Vietnamese barges. I expressed regrets on your behalf and said that if they would give us an estimate of damage, we would look into the question of compensation. (We had already conveyed this position to the Chinese as soon as they published their protest so as to forestall any heightening of the rhetoric.)

-- I then made a general pitch on Indochina along familiar lines, underlining that we did not represent the long-term threat in the region and that it served no country's interests for Hanoi to attempt to solve the question by force.

Comment: The Ambassador, though he seemed somewhat more solemn than usual, was restrained on Indochina and seemed to go through the motions. This was still further evidence of moderate Chinese response to your military actions.

Miscellaneous

Other topics included:

-- I told the Ambassador that Senators Mansfield and Scott had come back with a positive report to you on their trip.

-- I proposed that my June 21-25 trip to the PRC be announced June 13 and gave the Ambassador a suggested text (Tab C).

-- I informed him that I would probably be going to Japan in early June.

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