

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff
Shih Yen-hua, PRC Mission to UN

DATE AND TIME: Sunday, April 16, 1972 - 3:00-3:35 p.m.

PLACE: PRC Mission to UN
New York City

On a day when the New York Times had an 8-column, 2-line headline on the U. S. bombing of the Haiphong area, I was received more warmly than on either of my two previous visits -- with three cups of Jasmine tea, plenty of smiles, and 35 minutes of very friendly small talk. This was the first time I had received the tea treatment. My previous visits had been short and perfunctory -- opening pleasantries followed by closing pleasantries.

After the first cup of tea and about ten minutes of small talk, at a lull in the conversation, I offered the note and invited her to read it if she wished. She read it, put it back in the envelope, put it down on the table -- and poured another cup of tea and resumed the conversation with uninterrupted cordiality.

The conversation covered such stirring subjects as the weather, her visit to the Bronx Zoo, the pandas and their dependence on bamboo shoots, the variety of cultural activity at Lincoln Center, her hometown (Shanghai), my hometown (Boston) and its revolutionary past, the teaching of history in American and Chinese secondary schools, pollution in the Great Lakes and the President's Ottawa agreement, and so forth.

Attachment

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*Handed by Return
to Miss Smith 3:00 PM*

4/16/72

The U. S. side wishes to bring up to date the negotiating record on Indochina which it outlined to the Chinese side on April 12, 1972.

On April 15, 1972, the North Vietnamese informed the United States they they were calling off the April 24, 1972 private meeting and made their attendance at a future private meeting conditional on a resumption of the public meetings on April 27, 1972.

The President wishes to emphasize the seriousness and urgency with which he views this new development.

For the information of the Chinese side, the United States side is proposing to the North Vietnamese the following compromise: The United States is prepared to state that it will agree to resumption of the plenary sessions on April 27, 1972 if the North Vietnamese attend the private meeting agreed upon for April 24, 1972. The United States would be willing to announce publicly its agreement to a plenary session on April 27, 1972 as soon as the North Vietnamese indicate that they will attend the private meeting on April 24, 1972.

The cavalier behavior of the North Vietnamese whereby for the third time they have cancelled an agreed upon private meeting after planning arrangements have been completed, is inconsistent with the dignity of the U. S. This has forced the President to take certain limited retaliatory measures. A continuation of the North Vietnamese effort to impose a military solution on the U. S. must have very serious consequences.

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The President wants to reiterate that his fundamental objective remains a rapid end to the war on a basis just for both sides. His strong preference is for a negotiated solution and it is not by his choice that a resurgence of the conflict takes place.