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By JE NARA Date 9-7-6

Mr. Kent

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1 February 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR CONVERSATION

1. The Director wants us to think ahead to the possibility that the US will use nuclear weapons in the context of the war in Vietnam.

2. Assume a situation like this: the Chinese elect to broaden the conflict. Chinese combat units come into the DRV. They may also appear in Laos and Thailand. There is a massing of Chinese and PAVN forces in the southern reaches of MR-4. The DMZ is violated. American forces find themselves unevenly matched north and south of the DMZ. Large numbers of Chinese are on the way to re-enforce the Communist side in this fighting. Things look bad for our side. We use nuclear weapons. It may be that the first ones are low-yield tactical weapons employed in the above combat area. Going on from there, the US might use tactical nuclear weapons on airfields in the DRV and south China. Then with no sign of Chinese retreat, the US drops larger-yield weapons on targets deep in China. These might be the nuclear installations as a starter.

3. What has happened as the US goes up this road? Obviously the reactions of the USSR are the most important to speculate about.

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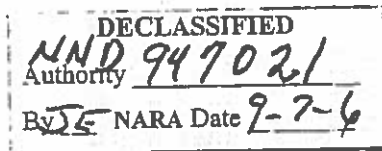
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