

felt must be conveyed. With that introduction, he stated that he viewed the Paris negotiating team as in a complete state of disarray. It was split wide open on the issue of the U.S. conduct of negotiations and members of the negotiating team were actively involved in a disloyal campaign to “save the President from himself” by indulging in a “poison pen campaign” with elements in the United States who favor the termination of the war under “any” conditions. He stated that he was aware that correspondence was being carried on by members of the staff with elements in the United States which had already come out in direct opposition to President Nixon’s policies. He also stated that many in the negotiating team were devoid of loyalty or discipline and that members of the staff were indulging in frequent and direct conversations with other embassies, with the other side, and with the press, and that these contacts were being conducted without the cognizance of the head of the U.S. negotiating team.

---

**58. National Security Study Memorandum 36<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 10, 1969.

TO

The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense  
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Vietnamizing the War

The President has directed the preparation of a specific timetable for Vietnamizing the war. He has asked that the Secretary of Defense be responsible for the overall planning and implementation of this process, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence.

The plan should cover all aspects of US military, para-military, and civilian involvement in Vietnam, including combat and combat support forces, advisory personnel, and all forms of equipment. The plan can draw on current studies, including those for T-Day planning and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 365, Subject Files, NSSMs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. Initialed by Haig. A copy was sent to General Wheeler.

RVNAF modernization and improvement. However, this timetable will be directed toward the progressive transfer to the South Vietnamese of the fighting effort with the US and other TCCs increasingly in support roles, assuming that the war continues and that North Vietnamese as well as Vietcong forces are in South Vietnam.

Assumptions for this timetable will include:

- a starting date of July 1, 1969;
- current North Vietnamese and Vietcong force levels, (i.e., we are not able to achieve mutual withdrawals); these levels should be continually adjusted in future months to ongoing intelligence estimates;
- current projections of RVNAF force levels;
- no deescalation in allied military efforts, except that resulting from phased withdrawals of US and other TCC forces which are not fully compensated for by the South Vietnamese;
- the highest national priorities for the equipping and training of South Vietnamese forces.

Based on these assumptions, timetables should be drawn up for the transfer of the combat role to the GVN and restriction of the US role to combat support and advisory missions only, with alternative completion dates of December 31, 1970, June 30, 1971, December 31, 1971, and December 31, 1972. For each alternative schedule the plan should identify the degradation in combat capability, if any, which would result, and the implications for the per cent of population under relatively secure GVN control. Each schedule should also estimate the budget and BOP implications.

Continual study, refinement and reevaluation of these problems will be necessary as the Vietnamization process proceeds. The President has requested by June 1 an initial overall report outline, as well as specific recommendations, with alternatives, for the first six months (July 1 to December 31, 1969), and a complete report by September 1. Further studies, recommendations, and progress reports will be requested subsequently.

**Henry A. Kissinger**