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E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NSC/Soubers to Smith 09/06/2002

By GA Date 02/13/07

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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April 1, 1969

National Security Decision Memorandum 9

TO: The Vice President
 The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense
 The Director of Central Intelligence
 The Director, Office of Emergency
 Preparedness

SUBJECT: Vietnam

As a result of the National Security Council meeting on March 28, 1969, I have made the following decisions on the issues listed below:

The Issue of De-escalation

1. There will be no de-escalation except as an outgrowth of mutual troop withdrawal.
2. The U.S. side will not initiate any de-escalation proposals in the Paris negotiations.
3. If the DRV raise the issue of de-escalation, the U.S. side will listen but only discuss it in the context of mutual withdrawal.

The Issue of U.S. Forces Subject to Withdrawal

On the definition of U.S. Forces subject to withdrawal, I have decided that we should be prepared to withdraw all combat forces from South Vietnam if Hanoi meets specific conditions of a mutual withdrawal agreement. These conditions should include provisions for:

1. Verification and supervision of withdrawal.

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2. The withdrawal of North Vietnamese Forces from Laos and Cambodia, as well as from South Vietnam.
3. Guarantees to maintain the agreement.

The Issue of a Timetable for Completion of U.S. Withdrawal

There will be no public repudiation of the former U.S. position that we would complete our withdrawal within six months of the completion of Hanoi's withdrawal. This position will be adopted with the recognition that, in practice, the U.S. will be in a position to control the timing of the completion of our withdrawal, since we can determine if Hanoi has fully met the conditions of the mutual withdrawal agreement. The key point will not be the timetable but rather getting Hanoi to comply with the conditions for withdrawal.

The draft papers considered by the National Security Council on March 28, 1969, are approved with modifications reflecting the above decisions.

I have also directed that the following studies be undertaken for which appropriate NSSMs will be forthcoming:

1. Specific plan timetable for Vietnamizing the war.
2. Phased withdrawal under conditions of:
 - a. Mutual withdrawal, or
 - b. Vietnamizing the war.
3. Verification for mutual withdrawal.
4. Detailed political settlement for SVN.
5. International guarantees for above.

cc: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

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