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By AN NARA Date 3-14-08~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
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TALKING POINTS - NSC MEETING

April 16, 1969

KOREA

- I. At this meeting I would like to have a discussion for perhaps one hour of what our specific options and alternatives are.
- II. We might begin with the briefings that have been requested:
 - A. A briefing by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the EC121 operation (5 minutes).
 - B. A briefing by the Director of Central Intelligence on the enemy situation (5 minutes).
 - C. A briefing by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the full range of available military options (15 minutes).
 - D. A briefing by the Secretary of State on political considerations and options (15 minutes).
- III. Call on Dr. Kissinger to open the discussion.

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the pros and cons of the alternatives which Gen. Wheeler has also discussed. It also presents a package of diplomatic actions which could accompany various levels of force and discusses the purposes of diplomatic action.

A. Should we engage in a military show of force, the purposes of diplomacy would be:

1. To underline seriousness with which we view North Korean action.
2. To demonstrate responsibility and restraint of U. S. reaction.
3. To establish legal basis for U. S. position.
4. To promote international acceptance of U. S. military action.
5. To secure domestic support for U. S. military action.

B. If we engage in single strikes or broader military action, the purposes of diplomacy would be:

1. To establish the legal basis for the U. S. action.
2. To neutralize international criticism and censure and to develop a modicum of international support for the action.
3. To seek public support for the U. S. action in Korea and for continued U. S. commitments elsewhere in Asia, particularly in Vietnam.

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- V. The first options presented assume no military action and considered two basic alternative diplomatic postures.
- A. A high posture designed to seek a maximum of publicity and to mobilize public opinion.
 - B. A low posture of working behind the scenes to achieve some accommodation.
- VI. With a high or low posture we could seek to convey privately our genuine determination to react militarily to any future provocation.
- A. Diplomatic steps might include one or more of such objectives as:
 - 1. Conveying an explicit warning that the next incident would be responded to militarily.
 - 2. Conveying a maximum warning for deterrent purposes without being precise on military action ensuing.
 - 3. Demanding compensation for the lives of the men involved and for the plane.
 - 4. Maximizing international opprobrium against North Korea for its action.
 - 5. Seeking to reduce the level of international tension by treating the matter in relatively calm form (having already decided not to react militarily).

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The paper also considered options with regard to the following:

A. Talks at Panmunjom

1. Accept the North Korean call for April 18 meeting, listen to their complaint, present our own position in a few sentences and then walk out. This has the advantage of maintaining the Panmunjom forum while walking out implies that we will not continue to accept Panmunjom as a forum for propaganda. It has the disadvantage of putting us in the apparent position of coming to hear North Korean charges.
2. Call our own meeting for an earlier date. This has the advantage of making us the plaintiff and having us speak first. The North Koreans would probably press their claim to convene the meeting and a procedural hassle could ensue.
3. Call for a closed meeting on the Pueblo model. This has the advantage of a forum for making a serious warning. However, it is not necessary and the ROK public would probably be angered.
4. Boycott Panmunjom. This has the advantage of being dramatic and denying the North Koreans a propaganda forum. But the disadvantages are that we would lose our only channel for direct contact.

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B. UN Options

1. Calling a Security Council Meeting. This would gain maximum publicity but we could not obtain any action and we would force the Soviets to defend the North Koreans.
2. Present a letter to the Security Council. This gets our position on the record but with little publicity and appears perfunctory.

C. Approach to the Soviets. We could approach the Soviets in a more pressing fashion, depending on their apparent interest in avoiding a military conflict. However, the Soviets are unlikely to press Pyongyang very hard on this situation.

VII. Perhaps we should first discuss the overall pros and cons of taking any military action and then consider the diplomacy which we might pursue in the absence of military action and then in support of alternate courses of military action.

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