THE COUNTRY TEAM IN OPERATION

14 November 1963

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NOTICE

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INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Washington, D. C.

Honorable U. Alexis Johnson, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, was born at Falun, Kansas, 17 October 1908. He received a bachelor's degree from Occidental College in 1931 and attended Georgetown University School of Foreign Service the following year. In 1957 he was awarded an LL. D. by Occidental. Mr. Johnson joined the Foreign Service in 1935 and was assigned to Tokyo as a Japanese language officer, transferred to Seoul two years later and to Tientsin in 1939, was transferred the next year to Mukden and was interned at the outbreak of war in 1941, was exchanged in the summer of 1942 and assigned to Rio de Janeiro. In 1944 he was assigned to the Army Civil Affairs Training School Program and, immediately following the fall of Manila was assigned in March 1945 as Consul in that city. Following this he joined General MacArthur's staff and served in Japan and Korea. In October, 1945 he became American Consul at Yokohama and was named Consul General in 1947. In 1949 he became Deputy Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, Department of State and subsequently became Director. In 1951 he was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, and during this period served as a member of the U. S. Delegation to the Japanese Peace Treaty Conference at San Francisco. He was appointed Ambassador to Czechoslovakia in 1953, and the following year was detailed as Coordinator of the U. S. Delegation to the Geneva Conference on Korea and Indochina, and in 1955 was designated U. S. Representative to the ambassadorial-level talks with Communist China at Geneva. Mr. Johnson was named Ambassador to Thailand and U. S. SEATO Council Representative in 1958. He assumed his present position in 1961. Mr. Johnson receive the Medal of Freedom for his work with General MacArthur's headquarters in connection with the repatriation of prisoners of war and civilian internees from the Philippines, Japan and Korea. This is Mr. Johnson's second lecture at the Industrial College.

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MR. FREERS: Gentlemen: I figured that I shaved about seven seconds of that operation this time.

Our speaker this morning needs no introduction. He has already talked to us about some of the problems involved in the conduct of our foreign relations.

The subject this morning is "The Country Team in Operation." As Ambassador to Thailand our speaker directed a country team in the field. As one of his special duties here in Washington he has been heading the team that directs all U. S. special operations abroad.

It is a pleasure to introduce the Honorable U. Alexis Johnson, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

MR. JOHNSON: Thanks Ed. Do not let this manuscript I have here put you off. I find that at 8:30 or so in the morning it is a little help to have a few notes along with me. I am an individual who does not begin to really function until around 10 o'clock. I do not know why all these colleges get you talking this early in the morning. Nevertheless, they do, and I find that it helps to put down some of my thoughts ahead of time.

I find that this subject that you have asked me to discuss this morning--that is, the country team in the field of insurgency--is related to your counterinsurgency course. The reason that Ed was hesitating was that I was saying that I had somewhat of an aversion to the term. My own feeling is that a much better term on this--and you will notice it is a term that is used in the Doctrine paper that I notice is on your required reading list--is "internal defense." I think this term is a broader and better definition of the subject.

However, as I was also saying before we came in, there is one man who still likes to use the term, and it just happens that this man is very important in this country, so we continue to use the term.

Country teams are not like the Washington Redskins nor the Cardinals in that you have a fixed number of players and a rule book which provides for all contingencies. The concept of the country team, the composition of the country team, is very flexible. I want this morning to give you a little bit of the background of the development of the concept as well as how we conceive it is operating now.

Of course, any time in the past in which you had various members of a diplomatic mission get together to talk about something, you could call it a country team, although the term did not come into common use until recent years.

As a matter of fact, when I first went to Thailand from Czechoslovakia, I naturally got together with the various elements of the mission and I think that only after I had been there a little while I realized that what I was doing was having meetings of the country team. It was just the natural thing to do, and we did not necessarily, at least initially, think of it at that time in a country team context.

What I will have to say this morning applies not only to insurgency situations but also to the organization of our missions around the world in various areas where we have various components to our missions, because essentially we operate the same, whether it be in Thailand, Vietnam, Afghanistan, or India, or wherever it may be. While the emphasis will differ, of course, in a situation such as that in South Vietnam, the general concept is applicable everywhere in all our operations abroad, and the makeup, composition, and operating aspects--the way the country team operates--of course will be determined by each Ambassador in each country for itself.

The effectiveness of the country team, of course, will always be determined in actual fact by the degree to which the Ambassador chooses to use this mechanism and the kind of a response that he is able to evoke from his use of it.

I want just very briefly to state what may well be some obvious things to you, but I think it is useful to review them as a background for this discussion. That is the degree to which the United States interests and activities abroad have evolved. Unless you appreciate how wide and how far-reaching and vastly different our interests are today from what they were in yesteryear, particularly prior to World War II, I do not think that you can have a full appreciation of the complexities now of our operations abroad.

The difference between what has been called the new diplomacy and the conduct of foreign affairs before World War II is not easy to express in quantitative terms. I tried to have some of my staff look into this some time ago to see whether or not I could get a good illustration in concrete, quantitative terms of the difference between our operations, say, prior to World War II and our operations in the postwar period.

For those of you who have long memories and who served abroad prior to World War II, perhaps the scope and extent of the change may be gauged in terms of our inner feelings as a country and a people as well as in our outside activities. The illustration I tried to develop was that of the Spanish Civil War and the Congo operation.

In 1936, you will recall, Spain occupied a very key position in Western Europe. The conflagration that began there involved an indirect but an obvious confrontation by the great powers and major ideologies. And yet, important though that struggle was in Spain, the United States Government at that time, you will recall, studiously avoided any involvement in it whatsoever. Our main concern, going back to the history of that period, was to enforce our arms control feature of our Neutrality Act.

As far as my research was able to determine, it seems that the impact that the Spanish Civil War had on American operations--State Department, Defense, and everybody else in American operations abroad--was that two years after the conflict began four officers were added to the Arms Control Section of the Department of State. Otherwise it seemed to have had no impact upon this Government.

Yet when we turn to the Congo, we had in a much more remote area this conflict that began 25 years later. We had over a period of months and years and in fact continuing up to the present an involvement by hundreds of United States personnel in our State Department, in our diplomatic missions, in our military services, and the involvement of our military themselves in the logistic lift into the Congo. We had hundreds of people involved over a long period of years in this very much more remote and probably in some ways less vital and less important area to us as compared with Spain. Hundreds of people were involved over a long period of time on this.

I tried to quantify this in some way, and whereas I found this impossible to do, I think it is fair to say that the number of people in the United States Government involved in the Congo affair since it started exceeds the total number of people in the Department of State and all our diplomatic establishment at the beginning of World War II.

Now, it would be possible to offer other evidence and to cite other striking examples of our rapid emergence from our cocoon of isolation to the total global responsibility and detailed involvement in which we now find ourselves engaged around the world.

Unlike Spain in 1936, foreign affairs today include not only the traditional functions of diplomacy--that is, observation, reporting, and negotiation--but also a high degree of expertise in such various fields as economics, commerce, defense relationships, defense problems, banking, investment, public relations, agriculture, labor relations, public health, sanitation, law, mineralogy, education, journalism, intelligence, public administration, science, sociology, art, and you can go on down the list. Even in a place like Thailand we will find all these fields covered in one way or the other or a requirement on us to cover them.

Our foreign affairs establishment now includes more than a score of different departments and agencies of the Federal Government in addition to the Department of State. The geographical and functional specialists employed by these various agencies in Washington and in more than 120 foreign countries and dependencies abroad possess and exercise almost all the specialized skills now known to man.

This is compounded by the increasingly multilateral character of planning, contacts, decisions, and actions of what has been called the new diplomacy. If I were to try to characterize the change in two words I would use the terms passive and interventionist. Prior to World War II our diplomacy was essentially passive, in the sense that we were observing and reporting on events but we were not entering into events. Of course, our diplomacy represented the posture and desires of this country at that time. At the present time there is scarcely an event any place in the world in which the United States is not called upon to intervene to some extent or other.

We might use the terms passive and activist maybe as being more descriptive of the contrast between the former situation and that which now exists.

The variety and the breadth of the totality of modern foreign affairs in today's world environment lead to a staggering burden of coordination that sometimes baffles those of us who are engaging in trying to carry out this coordination. This is, of course, simply a reflection of the profound degree to which we are now involved in world affairs. This phrase, "our role of world leadership," is far more than just a phrase and a slogan. It means, for example, that our military officers and our civilian officers are required to take each day at hundreds of thousands of places around the world thousands of decisions and actions that affect the position of this country around the world. It means that these military and civilian officers are required to work directly and intimately with each other as well as with foreign governments and peoples in such matters as establishing new systems of government in these new countries, for example, helping to allocate their natural resources, exploring their mines, improving their crops, retooling their factories, assisting in improving their health, educating their children, and training their armies.

Our officers must work energetically to protect American civilians and property, to discover and create new opportunities for American trade and investment, to assure consumers and producers adequate sources of supply, to safeguard our balance-of-payments, and so on, down the line.

They must seek to settle disputes and conflicts, avoid violence and strife, and use their ingenuity in the protection and furtherance of our U. S. national interests abroad. They must seek agreements with other countries on thousands of conflicting issues. They must repeatedly explain American policy, attitudes, and interests, and they must be constantly aware of every interest, trend, or event in other countries that could significantly influence that country's independence and progress.

I might say in a figurative sense that no sparrow that falls can escape, or should escape, their notice.

Now, in the face of these vast increases in American concerns and activities in overseas areas, it has only been natural that the interests and capabilities of other agencies be focused on these new problem areas, in addition to those of the Department of State. As I said earlier, more than a score of U. S. departments and agencies are now engaged in foreign operations of one kind or another.

As a consequence, there is a greater need for a concerted effort to insure that our representatives overseas pull together and work harmoniously in trying to serve the overall U. S. interest. As it has sometimes been expressed, the important thing is to plot or chart the road down which the United States is seeking to go with respect to any particular area or country, then to make sure that all the various departments' and agencies' individuals operating abroad seek to go down the same road and seek to help each other in pulling aside the roadblocks that may exist or filling in the potholes that will be found along the way.

It seems only natural that under this situation the concept and terminology of the country team has evolved. Nevertheless, as I mentioned previously, this concept has not been with us very long, or at least the term has not been with us very long. There are too many examples in the immediate postwar period of what could happen to our effort abroad when we do not have the proper coordination and team work of all the participants.

One example, and probably a good one, is that of Greece, about 15 years ago, when our own early efforts were to help the Greeks, who were under Communist attack. You will recall that at that time, in a precedent-establishing move, we came to the aid of Greece with both military advice and economic assistance. Our original programs of military and economic aid to Greece, after the proclamation of the Truman doctrine in March 1947, presented really serious problems in effecting a coordinated and balanced effort in both Greece and Turkey.

The approach in the two countries varied. In Turkey the Ambassador was given control of the program, but because of the peculiar situation existing in Greece, this pattern was not followed in Greece. In Greece, in 1947 and 1948, we had what amounted to three separate United States missions to that country--a diplomatic mission, an economic aid mission, and a military mission, each under the leadership of a senior, able, and experienced man, all of whom were determined to carry out their respective missions, and each of whom was inevitably looking at the problem more or less or largely from the standpoint of his own point of view.

Unfortunately, our lack of experience in these matters resulted in our failure to appreciate the intricate interrelationships that were involved and which had to be successfully managed if we were going

to be successful in Greece. Of course we had in Greece an Ambassador who was accorded all the rights and privileges due to an Ambassador. He was regarded as nominally having primacy in the American community, but this primacy was recognized only on paper and largely by the Department of State.

This led to a situation where at one time you found the Ambassador and the Embassy staff doing all they could to strengthen the political group that was running the government, while the chief of the Economic Aid Mission was doing his best to aid the build-up of the opposition party.

This problem of the successful management and direction of all our activities and programs became more critical with the establishment of the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) and the Military Assistance Advisory Groups (MAAGS) in Europe and other parts of the world to administer our economic and military programs. Needless to say, time and strife gradually produced a realization that something had to be done to pull the strings together.

Interestingly enough, the question was finally really precipitated by the issue of the responsibility at the country level for the defense production problems in Europe. This was after the formation of ECA and the establishment of our military assistance programs in Europe.

The effort to resolve this problem resulted in the Memorandum of Understanding of 15 February 1951, between the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the ECA. This document provided for the formation of a team of U. S. representatives at the country level under the leadership of the ambassador to coordinate all programs of the three agencies in each of the countries concerned. It can be said that here the concept of the country team with the Ambassador at its head really was initiated for the first time.

This trend to focus responsibility at the country level was similarly reflected in the provisions of the mutual security legislation of 1951 which required that the administration of economic and military aid be coordinated with our foreign policy.

Further steps in this direction were taken by President Eisenhower. In the present Administration the team concept under the Ambassador's leadership has been further recognized and continues

to be refined in various instructions and policy papers covering our activities overseas.

The most significant of these is the President's letter of 29 May 1961 to the Ambassadors abroad. Although these more recent documents such as the President's letter have sometimes used the phrase "country team," nowhere has any attempt been made in this Government exactly to define the composition of a country team or exactly to define its use. What I am really saying here is that the country team is not something that has been legislated or directed, nor can it realistically ever be. In actuality it is the product of trial and error, commonsense, and practical reaction by pragmatic people to practical situations.

I believe that Ambassador Winthrop Brown, over at the National War College, stated it very well some time ago when he said, "The country team does not appear in any formal constituting document. It is not defined in any NSC directive. It is like the British Constitution, unwritten, yet nonetheless real."

The key element in a country team, of course, is the Ambassador. Since the country team can be only what the Ambassador wants to make of it, its composition will vary widely as between countries. The scope of a country team operation in Iran, for example, will differ very greatly from that in Afghanistan, next door. Similarly, the scope of our operations in Thailand varies greatly in comparison, say, with those in Cambodia, next door.

Now a word on the Ambassador. As the personal representative of the President he, of course, is the senior representative in the foreign country to which he is accredited. This is so for a number of reasons. First of all, someone, of course, has to be the top man. Long established diplomatic practice has accustomed peoples and governments to the role of the Ambassador as the spokesman and representative of his own chief of state, whether it be a king, a president, emperor, or what.

In the classical concept the Ambassador is regarded as the alter ego of his sovereign and entitled to all the respect and privileges that the sovereign would normally have been accorded. Today the U. S. Ambassador is the only official in a foreign country who represents the whole of the American Government. He not only represents the President and the Secretary of State but in a very real sense he also represents every department and agency of the United States Government. Consequently, he must be responsive to the needs of all these agencies and not just to the Department of State.

This concept is also embodied in our Foreign Service. I like often to point out to our Foreign Service officers, to those who are interested in the Service, that our Foreign Service is not the Foreign Service of the Department of State; it is the Foreign Service of the United States. This phrase was carefully chosen. It was established in 1924 under the organic act that established the Foreign Service. The concept very deliberately was at that time that Foreign Service officers of the United States abroad were serving in a very real sense the whole of the Government and were responsible to the whole of the Government.

Whereas Foreign Service officers, of course, are administered by and report to the Department of State, their responsibilities are not and should not be conceived in any narrow sense as being solely those of the Department of State.

It is only natural that, in the light of the established diplomatic practice and the overall nature of his authority, the ambassador is the individual to whom the host government looks for authoritative information on the policies, actions, and attitudes of the United States Government. In the same vein, it is the Ambassador to whom the foreign country conveys its views, requests, complaints, and so on.

Finally, of course, the Ambassador is the boss because the President says he is.

As outlined in President Kennedy's letter to all chiefs of missions, to which I referred earlier, he told each Ambassador explicitly:

> You are in charge of the entire United States diplomatic mission and I shall expect you to supervise all of its operations. The mission includes not only the personnel of the Department of State and the Foreign Service but also the representatives of all other U. S. agencies which have programs in [the country to which you are accredited.] I shall give you full support and backing in carrying out this assignment.

The President goes on to say, "If in your judgment individual members of the mission are not functioning effectively, you should take whatever action you feel may be required."

Without reading the President's letter in its entirety (I do recommend that you read it), the Ambassador's responsibilities and authority are very broad. Clearly, the President has given our Ambassadors full authority to do their jobs and holds them responsible if the jobs are not done. Naturally, any Ambassador worth his salt will use this authority with tact and discretion. Like any other

organization, the trick lies in leading people rather than seeking to use his authority to push people. In most cases I think you will find that able Ambassadors will operate in this manner.

There is one exception to the command authority of the Ambassador in the field, and that applies to his relationship with the officer commanding American troops stationed and operating in the country in which he is accredited. On this matter the President's letter states

> As you know, the U. S. diplomatic mission includes service attachés, military assistance advisory groups, and other military components attached to the mission. It does not, however, include U. S. military forces operating in the field, where such forces are under the command of a U. S. area military commander. The line of authority to these forces runs from me to the Secretary of Defense, to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, and to the area commander in the field. Although this means that the chief of the American diplomatic mission is not in the line of military command, nevertheless, as Chief of Mission, you should work closely with the appropriate area military commander to assure the full exchange of information. If it is your opinion that activities by U. S. forces may adversely affect our overall relations with the government or people of [the country to which you are accredited,] you should promptly discuss the matter with the military commander and if necessary request a decision by higher authority.

Thus, I think we have defined the range of the Ambassador's authority. Now let us review very briefly what an Ambassador's responsibilities are and what he is supposed to accomplish with the authority that is given him. First, and above all--and I always think that we oldtimers think that it is important--he should establish effective working relationships with the government of the country to which he is accredited. He has many other responsibilities. Sometimes I think that he is supposed to be all things to all men. But, if he is not able to establish effective relations with the government to which he is accredited, no matter how good he may be in everything else, it will have little value. This doesn't necessarily mean that he will have friendly relations. You can have effective relations even with countries with which you do have hostility. For example, Ambassador Thompson and now Ambassador Kohler in Moscow have both enjoyed very effective relations with the Soviet

government, and, in spite of the difficulties which we have with the Soviet Union, each of them obviously has enjoyed the respect of the government to which he was accredited. This is the first and the foremost task of any Ambassador.

In addition to this, he must oversee the normal conduct of trade and personal exchanges. The real tasks for the Ambassador are almost unending. The only way I can put this in simple terms is that he must work to achieve all of the U. S. national security goals while at the same time attempting to create a favorable image of the United States and himself as its representative.

As opposed to his representational activities, he must keep his government completely informed on all aspects of the life and developments in the country to which he is accredited. While I use the personal pronoun here, that is, "he," meaning the Ambassador, naturally he accomplishes this work through his staff to a very heavy degree. The effectiveness of it will depend upon the guidance and direction that he himself gives to it.

The Ambassador should know and understand a wide spectrum of specific actions and measures involving the United States in its relationships with the country to which he is accredited. In internal defense or counterinsurgency situations, he of course needs to know the social, political, economic, and security problems faced by the country in which he is serving. He has to be aware of the courses of action open to the United States. He has to be aware of and be able to use the assets and resources of all of the United States Government in meeting those situations.

Apropos of the old adage that a stitch in time will save nine, it is very heavily up to the Ambassador to apply the knowledge of the country which he and the United States Government have to prevent insurgency situations from arising, rather than to seek to deal with them after they have reached a serious peak.

In the underdeveloped countries of the world, and especially those threatened by subversion or insurgency, the Ambassador must also guide, direct, and coordinate the various tools of development and internal defense which are employed to safeguard the integrity of such nations.

To do all this, the Ambassador uses his authority not only to supervise and administer the establishment known as the American

mission or the diplomatic mission, but to manage and direct all U. S. Government programs in the country. This may involve programs ranging in size from fewer than a score of Americans up to as many as a thousand or more, and budgets running from a few hundred thousand dollars to hundreds of millions or more annually.

Obviously, the Ambassador is supposed to be the paragon of all virtues. Obviously, no Ambassador ever is a paragon of all virtues. But these are the requirements placed upon him, and each Ambassador, of course, will meet them in accordance with his own personal capabilities.

As I have indicated, the country team to which we are now coming is essentially an undefined institution. When it was originally conceived in 1951--at that time the agreement was entered into by ECA, State, and Defense--its membership was thought of as being that of the Ambassador, the Agency for International Development (AID) mission chief, and the MAAG chief. However, as Ambassadors found that this provided an excellent tool for managing the activities in the country, they began to use it for the direction of many other programs as well.

While the composition of a country team will vary from country to country, today one normally finds that country teams will include not only the original three elements--that is, the Ambassador, the MAAG, and the AID or economic mission--but also U. S. military major force commanders in the country, representatives of the U. S. Information Agency (USIA) chiefs--that is, public affairs officers--military attachés, and so on. In the last analysis, the composition of a country team is the function of the U. S. programs and activities in the countries concerned.

In Thailand, for example, I normally considered the Deputy Chief of Mission, the head of the Political Section, the head of my Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) Section, which you might call my political-military section, the head of the Economic Section, the attachés, the Director of USIA, AID, and MAAG as members of the country team. Our normal practice was to all meet together at least once a week as a group. On the one hand I would at that time seek to explain to them what I was up to, and what we were seeking to do, and in turn, of course, in the normal course of events, I invited their comments and suggestions, and learned what their problems were. We had a general exchange.

We would, as problems arose, such as when we had concrete things like the submission of the AID program or the USIA program--specific programs being submitted to Washington--or when other specific problems came up, normally use an agenda and we circulated papers ahead of time, and I sought their views on these problems as they arose.

My own experience was that over a period of time, with conscientious people, it was possible to develop an effective country team and a sense of teamwork. However, my experience also was, for example, that with people in MAAGS coming out from commands without any previous experience abroad--experience in this type of activity abroad, I should say--and AID personnel coming from business backgrounds, and USIA personnel possibly coming from the public press and publicity backgrounds of one kind of another, each would come to the country with his own approach, naturally, and with his own concept of his job, and would look at the situation very much in the light of his job, and his responsibilities back to his organization at home.

Over a period of time this could be overcome. Over a period of time you can weld people together. However, this takes time, and it was out of this conviction that there developed this concept of the country team seminar, which you now are familiar with, which is now being given in the Foreign Service Institute facilities, but which is actually an interdepartmental effort. I'll come back to this later.

This was an attempt on our part, on the part of the Government here in Washington, to inculcate and give that perspective, a broad perspective, and that commonsense purpose to people who were going to occupy senior positions abroad, and to begin this process before they went to the field, as a means of, you might say, hastening the breaking-in process after they had gone to the field. I'll come back to this later. I think it has been very successful.

To go back again to my own experience, in Bangkok, in addition to the formal country team meetings, we, of course, were in touch with each other--the MAAG Chief, the AID Chief, the USIA Chief, and so on--a half-dozen times a day, either individually or by phone.

Another thing we did there that fitted into the concept was exchanging personnel as far as staff meetings were concerned. The officer in the Embassy who was primarily following MAAG matters would sit in on the MAAG staff meeting. The Economic Counselor

would sit in on the AID staff meetings. The Director of AID would sit in on the Economic Section staff meetings. We tried to work in a great deal of cross-fertilization.

My own experience has been that cooperation is relatively easy to achieve at the senior level, but what becomes more difficult is permeating this sense of cooperation and teamwork on down into respective organizations. I think this still needs a great deal of work. It will, of course, always be a natural problem in any large organization which tends to break up into its component parts, since each component part tends to look at the question largely from its own point of view.

The central task of any country team in the field is, of course, the preparation of an overall U. S. program with respect to the country in which it is located. This concept, at the time I was serving in the field, was not too well developed. We had papers which supposedly set forth the programs, but actually they had little in the way of direct, operational impact. I would say that, as far as my own experience was concerned, the program was largely unwritten. I do not mean by this that we did not have a program. I think that I and the members of the country team did have a pretty fair concept and program in our minds, but we never sought to set it out in detailed, operational form.

One of the early things that we did in this counterinsurgency special group here was to call on the field for the preparation of internal defense plans. These have been called for from a number of critical countries. I am sure that you have probably been briefed on this. We have found this a very useful device for, you might say, requiring and forcing people in the field--not that they are necessarily reluctant--all elements of the country team, to focus on putting down on paper an operational concept and an operational program--not just vague terms, but rather a translation of the concept into a specific program for each of the agencies concerned. This can be a very strong cohesive force in country team operations.

Out of this has grown a concept of not only internal defense plans but the establishment of operational plans and studies with respect to all the countries in which we are operating. At the present time the planning section of the Department, the Policy Planning Office, has arrived at an agreement with not only the sections inside the Department itself--and this is no mean feat--but also Defense, the Joint Chiefs, AID, and USIA, for a series of single planning studies with respect to each country in which we are operating.

Let me say a couple of words on what a country team is not. It is not a board of directors. It is not a place where you take a vote as a committee and decisions are taken by majority vote. The decision of the Ambassador not contingent upon a majority vote of the country team or the vote of anybody, as a matter of fact. It is advisory to the Ambassador, but the Ambassador must be the one who makes the decisions. An effective Ambassador will not seek to run the team in such a way as to compromise disagreements between members but rather to make decisions. It is up to other members of the team, of course, to accept these decisions, as long as they are within the framework of broad policy.

My own practice, and I think the practice of most Ambassadors is, that if on a matter of strong concern of a particular agency and involving a particular agency there is dissent, to state that dissent to Washington, but not through the back door. My own practice was to send a telegram to Washington on a particular subject in which there was dissent by any individual involved, and to invite that individual to state his dissent in his own terms in the same message. I think this is the way to deal with these things, in a straightforward manner.

Let me say that, as far as my own experience was concerned, I can recall to mind only one instance in which dissent was taken by a member of the country team. It happened to be the MAAG Chief, as I recall it. It was on a matter on which differences of opinion were certainly possible and on which honest men could have differences of opinion. As I recall it, Washington upheld me at the time. I do not recall any other dissent that I had. I did not try to operate by cracking the whip, because honest men, faced with the same set of facts and seeking the same ends, will usually come out with the same set of answers.

I have spoken of the interdepartmental seminar and the contribution that I think it can make to our country team operations abroad. I think the functions of the Special Group and its activities have already been discussed with you here. One of its earliest activities was the writing of this Doctrine paper which I am glad to note is on your required reading list.

If that paper states the obvious, I am very pleased, because it is often important that the obvious be stated. But you would be surprised how hard it is around this town to get the obvious stated. However, for the first time, in that Doctrine paper, we have what you in the military would call a clear definition of roles and functions

as between the various agencies of the Government, and this has been a very valuable tool, particularly at the working level.

As far as the Special Group is concerned, I have always been impressed with its importance simply by the fact that it exists, and not so much by what it does. I find that it acts--and my colleagues in other departments find that it acts--as a marvelous spur to action when something is placed on the Special Group agenda. It is amazing the degree to which, you might say, other levels, working levels of various departments and agencies, will struggle to get something resolved so that it can be taken off the Special Group agenda. Thus, its very existence acts as a spur to action within the Government, and I think it has achieved much in the way of spurring action.

I will not talk now about the various coordinating agencies, other than the Special Group, which we have in the Government. We have the Latin American Policy Committee, dealing with Latin American affairs. We have the Cuba Coordinating Committee. We also have the African Policy Coordinating Committee. There has been a whole growth of institutions not established along formal bureaucratic lines but rather practical institutions taking a pragmatic approach to the problems that exist.

I may say that the country team concept has developed much further abroad and developed quicker abroad than it has developed here in Washington, and the success of the country team concept in the field has acted as a spur toward the development here in Washington of a similar approach to these problems. Although we do not call them country teams, the concept is increasingly growing here in Washington of interagency cooperation being carried out along the lines of country team operations in the field.

Perhaps what I have said this morning has seemed so obvious to you that it is hardly worth saying, like perhaps some aspects of the Doctrine paper on internal defense. However, if that is the case I will be pleased and reassured rather than disturbed, for I think it demonstrates that, if it is obvious to you, you already have that country team spirit which will assure you of successful operations abroad.

Perhaps during the question period we can cover some of the fields that we have left uncovered thus far.

DR. SANDERS: Secretary Johnson is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: Sir, Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia yesterday was reported to have said, "I'll be glad when United States economic aid is through in my country so we will then become free," in essence. If you were Ambassador what would you and the country team do in this case?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: A good question. Let me say we are wrestling with this this morning in Washington. My own instinct on this would be to do just what we did in Burma in 1950. I would go to him and say:

> We are here only because we thought you wanted us here. We obviously can be of help to you only as long as you want us to be of help. If you want us to withdraw, we will do so very cheerfully, with no hard feelings. Just give me the word. What do you want us to do? If you do ask us to withdraw, I assure you that we will do so very cheerfully. I'll start it tomorrow.

I think that's the only way we can deal with a situation like that. We did that with Burma in 1950, and I think it was a very wise decision and it worked out well at that time. Things have not gone well in Burma since then, but for other reasons.

QUESTION: Sir, would you compare Lenin's Institute and the interdepartmental seminar on the basis of students, faculty, and so forth?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: I am sorry, I cannot. Maybe you had better ask Ed Freers here about the Lenin Institute. I can tell you about the interdepartmental seminar. I have never drawn a parallel in my mind between them. I just, frankly, do not know enough about the Lenin Institute to try to draw a comparison.

QUESTION: In each major overseas staff we have had several attachés--Air, Navy, and Army. In this day of efficiency, when we are consolidating things, I have read of the possibility of having only one attaché, representing the Department of Defense. Do you believe this to be a step backward or a step forward in giving advice that is important to the Ambassador?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: The concept has not been just one attaché. I presume that you mean that. The concept has been to have an attaché, let's say a Defense attaché office, in which you

would have your Army, Air, and Navy components, as required, with a senior officer in charge. You will recall that several years ago here the move in this direction was made on the administrative side. Whichever was the largest attaché office took over the administration of the other offices, thus reducing the amount of administration.

As far as the concept of a single attaché office with necessary components is concerned, I would be in favor of it. I think it would be very helpful to have a single, senior attaché with his various component attachés. For local reasons I would continue to call them--and I think it is important that they be called--the Navy attaché, the Air attaché, and the Army attaché, but as far as the administration of the office and their relationships with the Ambassador and the embassy are concerned, I think it would be helpful if there were a single man to whom the Ambassador could turn.

My own experience has been that I have never had any real difficulty between an attaché and the other elements of the embassy or myself. Very naturally, many of you have undoubtedly been attachés abroad. Your responsibilities are back to your intelligence organizations here in Washington. Your record, your performance, and your future depend very heavily on the kind of record you make with them, and naturally you are conscientious in trying to make this record. Inherent in this is a certain amount of pulling and hauling between you and the other attachés. The difficulties that I have had have been in mediating between the attachés, with the Navy attaché claiming that the Army attaché is getting off into his field, and the Air attaché saying that the Army attaché is treading on his toes. Then you also, of course, have the problem of the relationship between the attachés and the MAAG's, where you have MAAG's. This sets up certain inherent frictions which need not be serious between men of good will, but they are inherent.

On the whole, I think most Ambassadors--I know I would myself--would welcome a single Defense figure, if you will, to whom we could turn and whom we could hold responsible, you might say, for all the Defense activities or military activities in the country.

QUESTION: Sir, what criterion is used to determine whether or not an Ambassador is doing a good job, and who makes the judgment?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: The President in the last analysis. May I say that as far as this President is concerned, he very much

does so. He has a very close feel for what is going on abroad. He pays very close attention to what is going on abroad, and he very much reaches his own judgment on what he thinks of the performance of any particular group or Ambassador in any special country. This goes from the President, of course, to the Secretary of State and from the Secretary of State to the Assistant Secretary for the Geographic Bureau. The Assistant Secretary for the Geographic Bureau concerned is naturally the one who is closest to the Ambassador and follows most closely the work that is being accomplished abroad.

So, going up the line, I would say that the judgment is first that of the Assistant Secretary responsible for the Geographic Bureau concerned, next the Secretary of State, and next the President. I assure you that this is not just on paper. This is very real. Ambassadors get discussed very freely by these individuals. After all, the president is the one who has to be satisfied, as the Ambassador is his representative.

QUESTION: Could you comment on any recent specific cases of action taken by the Special Group, (CI), to illustrate exactly what role they play?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: This gives me an opportunity to say something that I did not get to say in my speech. Prior to this Administration--again, if you will pardon the personal--when I was in Bangkok, I was groping for--I didn't know the proper words to use, as the concept really hadn't been developed--much of what we now call "civic action." There were things that I saw that I wanted to get done, which would involve both the military and the economic side. I saw opportunities, say, for the Thai military to do certain things, but I could not use Military Assistance Program (MAP) or MAAG money, and when I would turn to AID they would say, "That's military. We can't touch it." This wasn't just by local AID people. This was reflected back in Washington. AID was aid, that is, economic assistance was economic assistance, and military assistance was military assistance--and "never the twain shall meet."

For example, the Thai border police, which were a paramilitary organization in the broad sense of the term, were under the Ministry of Interior, and thus came within the police program of AID. However, they had a strong military character, and a very strong military mission to perform.

Throughout the time I was there, we were completely frustrated in trying to get, you might say, military equipment, or in getting

help from MAAG. I am not saying this in criticism of the local MAAG. It was a reflection of the philosophy that went clear back here to Washington. We were trying to get some help on the MAAG side for the border police. We were frustrated in doing so.

Another illustration--Admiral Felt was very interested--Commander in Chief, Pacific--was very interested in the construction of a bypass road around Bangkok so that in case of necessity you could land at Sattahip and move to the northeast without going through the city of Bangkok. We knew exactly where we wanted the road. We knew what was required to build it. However, its economic justification was very low, and we were unable to justify putting it in the economic priorities for roads. Between Admiral Felt and myself we finally came up with a concept shortly before I left there of having this road built by an Army engineer group working with Thai Army engineers, thus training the Thais in road construction and the Army personnel in road construction techniques. However this cost money, and you could not get that kind of money out of MAP funds, and AID would have nothing to do with it because it was not an economic project.

These are two cases which we in the Special Group, inside of 30 minutes, were able to settle very quickly. We were able to get an agreement out of Defense that they would put the engineer battalion in there to do the job, and we were able to get an agreement out of AID that they would contribute so much in the way of funds for the purchase of materials to do the job. That job is being done now. This bypass road from Chachoengsao, which will give a direct route to the northeast, is now being built.

The question of equipment for the border police was solved in 15 minutes by the Special Group. Defense said, "We'll pick this up." AID said, "We'll pick this up." We said, "O. K. Let's go and do it."

That type of thing is being done and has been done, I think, very effectively by the Special Group, and this has given a whole new range of tools, you might say, to the people in the field with which to work.

QUESTION: Newspaper reports coming out of Latin America right now are rather gloomy. What possibility of success do you give Mr. Harriman on his current mission to Latin America?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: I do not know. How do you define

success? His current mission is simply to attend the IAECASOC meeting at Sao Paulo. Let us say on Latin America that we are going to continue to have problems there. There is no easy answer or solution to them, and there will not be. I may say that about all this whole business of foreign affairs. We always think that somehow or other we can always press the proper button and that somehow or other we will get the right answer, and that things will come out the way we would like to see them come out. This is no more true of foreign relations than it is of our own domestic relations or any human relationship. There is not any magic button to press that will solve the integration problem in this country or that will solve the problem of juvenile delinquency, or that will solve the problem of traffic. No more in foreign relations is there any magic button that can be pressed that will solve our foreign relations problems, so that we can all go away and live happily ever after.

This is a complicated, diverse world. We represent only 6 percent of the population of this world. We are very actively involved in this world. As long as we remain actively involved in this world we are going to be faced with problems that try our souls, and they are going to continue to try our souls. I think it is important to recognize this and not get impatient or frustrated.

There is no alternative except to withdraw, you might say, back into Fortress America and isolate ourselves from the world, which also is no longer practical. So we are going to have to learn to live with and in this world and with the problems that we are going to continue to have with it.

QUESTION: How much toward the degree of action does the Ambassador have to make decisions on his own without first referring the problem back to the Department of State for advice on its importance?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: That's why we pay Ambassadors. It is up to them to guess and guess right. There is just no easy answer to this at all. It depends very heavily on the personal equation of the Ambassador's feel for how much Washington will take--if you want to put it in those terms--Washington's feel for how confident it is in the Ambassador how much confidence it has in the Ambassador and there is just no way of putting this down in the books.

My own theory of thought is that often Washington does not want to have to be faced with the decision. You tell them what you are

doing or what you propose to do, or preferably what you have already done, and let Washington say, 'Nay,'' or, ''We think you did the wrong thing.'' This is a little harder, but not quite as hard as it is to put a problem to them and ask them for the answer.

In the first place, any Ambassador worth his salt will never put a problem to Washington without recommending the answer. You recommend the answer and, depending on your own relations, your own feel of the situation, you either act or do not act, according to what you think, or, let me say, what you can get away with.

Some Ambassadors enjoy a wide range of autonomy and some enjoy somewhat less, of course. Improved communications, of course, are a mixed blessing in some of these situations.

QUESTION: Sir, under the Eisenhower Administration, most of the coordination of overseas affairs was done through the National Security Council, I believe. I wonder if you would kind of give an overview of how the present Administration integrates our overseas activities, involving coordination committees, special groups, (CI), and so on. What is the general framework of how we conduct these things now?

SECRETARY JOHNSON: Let me say that it is done on a more ad hoc, pragmatic basis than it was in the previous Administration.

The NSC tended to be a formalistic mechanism under the previous Administration. We spent hours and hours and hours on semantics, I thought, compromising out the language so that the language meant all things to all people, and the problem continued to exist as if you had never written the document in the first place.

The present Administration operates on a much more ad hoc basis. In the sense that I mentioned, as far as Latin America is concerned, you have, for example, the Latin American Policy Committee, with Ed Martin, the Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs. The Committee meets once a week and includes Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Staff, the Treasury, AID, USIA, and everybody having anything to do about Latin American affairs. They deal with practical problems. What are we going to do tomorrow? What are we going to do with this aid program or this MAAG program, or in assisting this radio station in Venezuela? They deal with practical things and come up with practical recommendations.

In effect, this is being operated pretty much as a country team. Ed Martin asks for advice, and of course when he is spending somebody else's money he has to get their agreement for spending that money. But he calls things pretty well as he sees them. Let me say that the White House normally would be represented on that committee too, in the auditing staff capacity. Thus the President will be very closely kept abreast of what is going on.

We also will establish task forces for special things, for example, in Vietnam there is a task force of all the agencies involved. During the last few weeks it was meeting several times a day and in turn reporting back to its respective secretaries of Defense and State and meeting with the President at least once a day.

You have a President who takes a very active interest in things, a very informed interest, and who deals with things on a very pragmatic basis rather than in terms of formal organization. Let me say in the family here that the President is not a bureaucrat. He likes to deal on a pragmatic basis. He will go to whoever he thinks knows the answer to the problem.

On the other hand, McGeorge Bundy in the White House has a very good sense of how this Government operates and how the machinery of government operates, and how you make decisions effective. McGeorge Bundy, in the role that he plays there, plays a perfectly invaluable role and he is a very valuable complement to the President, in the sense of getting the President's wishes, desires, and decisions translated into action documents, if you will, that this great bureaucracy of ours knows how to cope with, and with which this great bureaucracy is comfortable.

DR. SANDERS: Secretary Johnson, you have given us a deeper understanding of the country teams in operation as well as some idea of what happens here in Washington. Thank you very much, sir.

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