Ambassador David Bruce and 'LBJ's War': Vietnam viewed from London, 1963-68

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In recent decades there has been a growing historical interest in 'second rank' officials who, while they do not play a leading role in government or political movements, can influence the way decisions are shaped and executed. At the same time, the interest of scholars in American policy during the Vietnam War shows no signs of abating. This essay investigates experience of one second rank official during the war, David Bruce, who was Ambassador to London during 1961-69. Making particular use of Bruce's extensive diaries, it traces his shifting views on the war, looks at the extent to which he shared the outlook of other officials and asks what influence, if any, he had on events. It argues that, while he always remained loyal to his own government and often mirrored the outlook of the Johnson administration, Bruce had his own perspective on events, was consistently critical of US tactics on the ground and in the Spring of 1967, influenced by Robert McNamara, became an early advocate of retrenchment.

In recent decades there has been a growing historical interest in what might be called 'second rank' officials who, while they do not play a leading role in government or political movements, can nonetheless influence the way decisions are shaped and executed.[1] Where the Vietnam war is concerned there is a large number of officials whose role in proceedings might usefully be investigated, one of whom was David Bruce. He had only a peripheral role in United States decision-making on the Vietnam War, at

least until 1970, when he was named by President Richard Nixon to head the American team at the Paris peace negotiations.[2] Although extracts from Bruce's diary serve to enliven the State Department's volumes of published documents on the conflict[3], he attended key meetings in Washington only intermittently during Lyndon Johnson's Presidency, his main role being to serve as Ambassador to London. It is quite possible to write a detailed account of the descent into the Vietnam quagmire without mentioning him.[4] Nonetheless, his outlook on the war serves to illuminate US policy. He was a long-standing member of the country's foreign policy hierarchy during the first decades of the Cold War, having taken a leading role in administering the Marshall Plan, before becoming ambassador to Paris, Bonn and, in 1961, London. He had long known key figures like George Ball, Dean Rusk and Averell Harriman, who played a more prominent role in the Vietnam proceedings. Furthermore, although his experience focused on Western Europe, he was in Paris during France's bitter colonial war in Indochina, which gave him an insight into the problems of fighting Ho Chi Minh's nationalist-communist forces. Earlier than that, wartime service in the Office of Strategic Services had given him an appreciation of unconventional warfare techniques, which he later believed the US army should focus upon in Vietnam.

This essay investigates what Bruce's experience, as one of the 'second rank' of officials, can shed on 'Lyndon Johnson's War.' It traces his shifting views on the war, looks at the extent to which he shared the outlook of other officials and asks what influence, if any, he had on events. The essay particularly exploits the evidence to be found in Bruce's diary, which includes far more than could ever be reflected in *Foreign*

Relations of the United States. Typed up at length, on an almost daily basis, it gives a remarkably detailed insight into the life of a twentieth century ambassador and includes numerous references to Vietnam – beginning with a conversation with Averell Harriman in October 1961, when the situation in South Vietnam was already described as 'critical'.[5]

Bruce's sources

Although he made only intermittent visits Washington during his London ambassadorship, Bruce had numerous sources that could keep him informed about Vietnam. These arguably gave him a broader, more detached view than was possible in the US capital. Of course, he was better versed than any other American on British views of the war.[6] Aside from meetings with the British government, and sometimes with their experts on Vietnam[7], he became all too aware of the popular dislike of the carnage in Southeast Asia. As early as July 1964 the philosopher Bertrand Russell led a delegation of the Movement for Colonial Freedom to the embassy, delivering what Bruce called 'a well stated, but unconvincing diatribe against US policy in South Vietnam.'[8] Anti-war demonstrations outside the embassy building became a regular event from early 1965. True, there were elements in British politics who strongly supported the Americans, not least the right-wing Conservative Party. When Bruce talked to their Foreign Affairs Committee at the House of Commons in February 1965, their chief worry seemed to be a communist take-over in Saigon.[9] Furthermore, Bruce never believed that Harold Wilson, Labour Prime Minister after October 1964, would be tempted to make political capital out of Vietnam at US expense. Nonetheless, the Ambassador warned Washington in mid-

1965 that the war was a sensitive issue for the British. ‘They are very much aware of the increased troop commitment and our expanded combat mission [and] of the dangers of the air war in North Vietnam…’ This made the Ambassador eager to keep them ‘fully and currently informed of our thinking and of our plans in Vietnam.’[10]

Though he spent most of his time in London, the ambassador also had plenty of information on thinking within his own government. He made quite frequent if irregular visits to Washington, sometimes several times per year, and participated in some of President Johnson’s discussions about Vietnam. There were written instructions from Washington, of course, which made the ambassador himself part of the war effort. In July 1965, for example, he personally delivered a telegram from Johnson to Wilson explaining the need to double US troop levels in Vietnam.[11] Bruce did not just muster *British* support. In July 1964, when Commonwealth leaders met in London, he was asked to encourage the Australian and New Zealand premiers (already well-disposed to the US on Vietnam) to tackle Pakistani President Ayub Khan about the importance of the war in Vietnam and of the ‘more flags’ campaign, designed to get allied troops committed on the ground.[12] He also met numerous US officials when they visited London, a regular destination for high-level visitors. One, in May 1964, was William Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, who came over as part of a broader tour and talked to British ministers about Southeast Asia. Bruce felt that his colleague delivered a ‘brilliant exposition of American thinking’, warning the British that, ‘We cannot afford any longer to be considered a “paper tiger”… The President is considering this weekend whether the Administration is prepared, if necessary, to use American

forces' in Vietnam and Laos.[13] Four months later, the US Ambassador to Saigon, Cabot Lodge, was over to ask the British for help with training the South Vietnamese police. Lodge also gave Bruce an insight into the problems in dealing with the South's leader, General Nguyen Khanh, who was 'currently immobilized at Dalat, suffering from haemorrhoids and high blood pressure. He treats lackadaisically pleas to return to the capital.'[14]

Bruce had links to other governments with a close interest in Vietnam. One was the South Vietnamese ambassador in London. In 1961 this was Ngo Dinh Luyen, youngest brother of the President, Ngo Dinh Diem. Calling on him for the first time in October 1961, Bruce found that he shared 'the general political philosophy of his family – feeling a benevolent, paternalistic but authoritarian government most appropriate for Vietnam in its present state of political immaturity.'[15] The American seems to have been more favourably impressed by one of Luyen's successors, Le Ngoc Chan, a former opponent of Diem but a convineced anti-communist. In April 1967 he talked 'sensibly and restrainedly' to Bruce about 'the many difficulties' in South Vietnam. But Chan was rather less realistic when it came to dealing with the British public. In July 1967, with anti-Vietnam war protests at their height, he suggested to Bruce that they might hire a thousand-seater hall for a conference that would attack the Viet Cong and North Vietnam. Bruce was aghast, predicting that anti-war organisations 'would sweep us away and attendant demonstrations precipitate a riot.'[16] Other information could be gleaned from foreign dignitaries who visited London. In October 1963, for example, Prince Souvanna Phouma of Laos told the ambassador of his interest in French President Charles de

Gaulle's call for a united Vietnam as part of a process leading to the neutralisation of Indochina.[17] There was readier access, of course, to European politicians including, for example, Jean Monnet, the architect of European integration and an old friend of Bruce. In one of their conversations in May 1964, Monnet advised that it was worth the US trying to get the USSR sympathetic to its policies, something that might be possible given the current Soviet fear of China.[18] This interesting suggestion was ahead of its time: in the mid-60s, the Soviets tended to compete with China for North Vietnamese favour and war in Southeast Asia helped sour hopes of détente.

Bruce and Escalation, 1963-65

These varied sources of information and opinion, as well as his deep experience of international affairs, allowed Bruce to draw his own conclusions about developments. Often during 1963-4, at least in the privacy of his diary, he tended to view events in a negative light. In August 1963, for example, he considered the situation 'deeply disturbing', commenting that Diem and his family were 'behaving like idiots in oppressing the Buddhists, who comprise 90% of the population.' A few months later, reflecting on his conversation with Souvanna Phouma, Bruce was sceptical about the idea that Vietnam could be neutralised – fearing that Ho Chi Minh was sure to 'gobble up' the whole country if a deal on unity and neutralisation were attempted. But he also commented: 'I do, however, question the assumption of our military that the South Vietnamese will win the war within the next eighteen months. I heard the same sort of optimism expressed by the French for years about Indo-China.'[19] Towards the end of the year, in the wake of the assassinations of both Diem and President John F. Kennedy, and

having heard rumours of strife between the US Ambassador to Saigon, Cabot Lodge, and the head of the US Military Assistance Command, General Paul Harkins, Bruce was equally despondent: 'in spite of the optimism breathed by many American officers… I doubt the ability within a reasonable time of inspiring the Vietnamese under United States tutelage to the efficiency and drill of warfare, which is demanded in order to meet the infiltration of the Viet Cong'.[20] In August 1964 he still considered the situation in Vietnam 'chaotic' and after the Gulf of Tonkin resolution was passed, paving the way for the Johnson administration to fight in Vietnam, Bruce was soon aware that it might all be based on an illusion. He feared that the supposed torpedo-boat attack on US vessels, which had led to the resolution, might not have occurred at all. Looking over reports the Ambassador speculated 'that if there were any whales in the Gulf, perhaps they had been mistaken for ships' by the Americans.[21] It is a statement curiously reminiscent of Johnson's comment that 'those dumb stupid sailors were firing at flying fish.'[22]

Yet, whatever doubts he had about US policy, Bruce was very much a patriot and a firm anti-communist, suspicious of any course that might lead to an American retreat. In May 1964 he wrote that:

> Neutralization of the former Indo-China states is probably, in the long run, the only solution. But negotiation now, when the Laotians and South Vietnamese are on the run, will not be fruitful. The situation must be stabilized before a final solution is attempted, so that the Chinese, Ho Chi Minh and the rest realize they cannot gain full control of the area.[23]

Some days later, after learning from William Bundy that the President was looking at military intervention, Bruce 'hoped, if we are determined as an ultimate resort to use American armed forces, that once our enemies realize the implications of such action they will cease aggression and there may be some peaceful, if not wholly satisfactory, compromise.'[24] When he visited Washington in November 1964 he met Defense Secretary Robert McNamara's and agreed with him 'that we must either abandon our policy of protecting that part of the world against Communism, or else intervene more vigorously to assure its integrity. The first alternative is unacceptable, the second necessary, though hazardous.'[25] Like so many other US officials, despite his grave doubts about defeating the Viet Cong, Bruce could neither contemplate withdrawal from Southeast Asia nor see how neutralization could work, leaving greater US involvement as the only option.

Having returned to London, Bruce heard more arguments in favour of neutralisation, this time from a respected American, Robert Blum of the Council on Foreign Relations. 'He feels', Bruce noted, that 'the situation has probably deteriorated there to such a point that we can scarcely expect to redress it considerably within a reasonable period of time, since so many of the South Vietnamese are disaffected.' Yet Blum added that, in order to enforce any settlement, the US would at least have to *threaten* the use of force against North Vietnam.[26] Such arguments were revealing of the complex problem the administration faced and, when the Ambassador was back in America in December he 'found opinions acrimoniously divided over our present policy in Vietnam.' Bruce's view was that there was 'considerable merit' in the argument that,

with no easy solution apparent, the US must doggedly resist communist pressure.[27] This was in line with administration policy. For, with Johnson now elected President in his own right following the November election, and with key advisers like McNamara and the National Security Adviser, McGeorge Bundy, arguing that the situation in South Vietnam could no longer be allowed to drift, the administration was about to escalate its involvement dramatically.

Until now, of course, the US had not committed its own forces to the war, other than in an advisory role or through the short-lived, punitive bombing raids that had followed the Gulf of Tonkin incident. However, continued attacks on US servicemen, culminating in one at a helicopter base at Pleiku on 6 February 1965, led Johnson to adopt a more sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnam. When the ambassador arrived in Washington shortly afterwards he found that, 'The threatening situation in Vietnam overshadows all other foreign problems.'[28] Meeting the President in Washington on the 10th, Bruce had expected to be quizzed about relations with Britain, but found his host obsessed with Vietnam. The Ambassador tried to plead ignorance of the issue, but Johnson 'insisted on my expressing an opinion on certain contingencies.' Bruce 'told him I hoped American ground troops would not be used in North Vietnam in the absence of massive attack by Chinese soldiers; but that we would be able to attain our objectives by air strikes.' Such views fitted neatly with the majority of the administration at this point, which opted for a bombing campaign, Operation Rolling Thunder, instead of a commitment of ground troops.[29] A few days later, Bruce attended a meeting in the White

House at which Johnson confirmed the preference for a bombing campaign against military targets in North Vietnam, which would 'cease when aggression stops.'[30]

Until now Bruce's need to consider Vietnam had been quite sporadic, but the launch of Rolling Thunder made it a consistent concern. Prime Minister Wilson had already pledged his sympathy US policy on Vietnam[31] and, when Rolling Thunder began, Bruce rightly predicted a 'good deal of adverse newspaper comment… but support by Government.'[32] Nonetheless, Wilson, facing opposition to US policy from within his own party and concerned that the war could escalate further, was keen to be kept informed of US thinking. He had hopes of playing a mediatory role in its resolution, building on Britain's role as co-chair of the Geneva conference, which had first met in 1954 to try to resolve Vietnam's future.[33] For its part, Washington was keen to influence what Wilson said in public about the war and Johnson personally became resentful of what he saw as a lack of co-operation from the Prime Minister.[34] This put Bruce in an awkward position, not helped by a visit from the British Foreign Secretary to Washington, in March, when he publicly criticized the Americans after gas was used in South Vietnam. Fortunately, Johnson, though upset by Stewart's action, decided not to make a transatlantic crisis of it. Instead he explained to Bruce how he saw himself as a moderate voice on Vietnam:

> Some favored abandonment of all our commitments in the East, and retreat to Hawaii. Others wanted to bomb the hell out of China. Others would kill all the civilians, as well as military, in the Hanoi district. He intended to continue to make measured responses to aggression from North Vietnam until it ceased. We

> had obligated ourselves under three Presidents to assist the South Vietnamese to preserve their liberties, and that commitment would be carried out.[35]

The ambassador, too, preferred a moderate approach. Yet, while he loyally supported the President, Bruce's diary reveals continuing, private doubts about aspects of the war. For one thing, he was despondent about the continuing political instability in Saigon and Washington's apparent inability to end it. In late February 1965, as he awaited news on the latest spat between Khanh and his fellow generals, Bruce even wrote: 'Washington's lid of secrecy is clamped tight; of course, it is possible they know little more of what is happening in Saigon than they read in the newspapers. Our intelligence people there seem woefully ineffective in discovering incipient rebellions.'[36] Coming from a former OSS officer, it was a damning indictment. He was also keen to keep the bombing campaign within certain bounds. When McNamara visited London in May and asked the Ambassador's view on hitting Soviet-supplied aircraft and surface-to-air missile sites, Bruce responded that 'it was unwise to do so unless the build-up became considerably greater than now indicated; I believe we should immediately approach the Russians, through diplomatic channels, to apprise them of our familiarity with what they are doing…' Later, he warned McNamara that, 'if we bomb Hanoi, or even Haiphong, and civilians are killed, any Government here would have to express disapproval.'[37] In June the Ambassador recognised 'unease in UK political circles based on feeling that… authorization to use US troops for combat in Vietnam represents a new phase in escalating the conflict, which will place additional strains on Wilson's ability to maintain support for US actions…'.[38] The first US ground troops had landed at Da Nang in

March, but their numbers were about to increase significantly. The need to manage British public opinion was such that Bruce asked the administration to send an eminent speaker to make the US case during a ‘teach-in’ at Oxford University. The choice eventually fell on Cabot Lodge, but he got a rough handling from the audience, which a despairing Bruce felt ‘reflects nothing but discredit on the famous British sense of sportsmanship and fair play.’[39] It was a sign of greater bitterness to come.

An American War

As US forces took on the brunt of fighting the communists in Vietnam, Bruce loyally continued to back the official line on the war in public. In October 1965, speaking to the Embassy wives group, he argued that the communists had made no progress in recent months, that the US army could not be defeated and that bombing was both strengthening South Vietnamese morale and increasing defections from the Viet Cong. He set out what was at stake in stark terms: ‘The issue is whether the world is to have peace, permitting people and countries to develop in their own way undisturbed by external aggression committed in this instance under the guise of a War of National Liberation.’[40] In the early months of large-scale US involvement there was room for optimism, as large-scale battles claimed considerable Viet Cong losses. In November, the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, gave Bruce an upbeat assessment of the war when the Ambassador was in Washington. However, Rusk also admitted that, despite its losses, Hanoi showed no inclination to enter peace talks.[41] A similar sense of doubt crept into a conversation between Bruce and McNamara, when the latter visited London later that month: McNamara was ‘aware of no indications reflecting a wish by the Hanoi Government to

meet us at a conference table.' This was disturbing because he also believed 'there will have to be a large increase in the number of American troops in South Vietnam, perhaps to the extent of having 350,000 troops stationed there.'[42] The Defense Secretary's worries were reflected in a memorandum to the President at the end of the month which warned that 'the odds are even that we will be faced in early 1967 with a "no-decision" at an even higher level' of US deaths.[43] Some influential Americans were already deeply troubled about the long-term implications. Scotty Reston of the *New York Times*, for one, was 'gloomy about our prospects in Vietnam.' He warned Bruce in December that 'the present strong support for our policy there will diminish as casualties rise, either inducing greater demands for our withdrawal or, contrariwise, pressures to escalate it further, at least to the point of bombing Hanoi and Haiphong.'[44]

When Bruce made his usual trip back home for Christmas he explored ideas with his Washington-based colleagues on how to escape the Vietnam imbroglio. A particular theme that grew in his thinking was the need to involve the Soviet Union in bringing about the elusive peace talks. The ambassador spoke with McNamara on two occasions about sending the veteran Democratic foreign policy expert, Averell Harriman – envoy to Joseph Stalin during the Second World War – to Moscow, to try to 'explain frankly the different courses of action we might be forced to take in Vietnam unless a conference is soon arranged.'[45] Without a peace conference, McNamara feared that US force numbers in Vietnam could climb above 400,000 by the end of 1966 and that potentially dangerous steps might be taken to break the deadlock, such as mining the chief North Vietnamese harbour at Haiphong, which carried the risk of sinking Soviet ships. Bruce based his

approach on two arguments. First, that it was ‘impracticable at present for us to approach directly either the Chinese or North Vietnamese Government, although we should encourage others to do so. But we can enlarge our discourse with the Soviets,’ who might be induced to work for a conference. Second, Dean Rusk, was ‘unlikely to make progress with [Soviet foreign minister, Andrei] Gromyko, since Gromyko is merely a hack mouthpiece. The President should somehow establish contact’ with premier Alexei Kosygin, who, in a dual leadership with Communist party chief Leonid Brezhnev, handled relations with non-communist states. Bruce feared that special mission by Harriman to Moscow would attract too much media interest, but that he might be appointed Ambassador to Moscow for a time. In what may have been another throwback to the Second World War, Bruce also suggested that President Johnson ‘could also supplement such activity by personal correspondence.’[46] The Ambassador saw his old friend Harriman during this visit, too, finding him fearful of the results of any negotiation over Vietnam but also believing this ‘preferable to a continuance of war’, while a talk with Dean Rusk, who wanted to dwell on past American decisions on Vietnam, left Bruce philosophical: ‘it is futile to dwell upon a hypothetical past. We cannot, and should not, throw in our hand; yet to play it to a point where it might involve us and others in a big time war would be a grave error… Steadfast patience is our hope, but this is difficult for our impatient people to stomach.’[47]

It was at this point that the full scale of the US dilemma in Vietnam really seems to have dawned on Bruce. Concern about the persistence of the enemy was again a major factor in his thinking:

> A Westerner might well conclude there was no profit for the North Vietnamese in continuing a struggle against the most powerful nation in the world. Yet, they defeated the French, they are infiltrated and indoctrinated under press control, by stories of defeatism and division in the United States; the Chinese spur them on...

The Ambassador even felt that Hanoi might adopt negotiation as a trap, in which 'almost every nation will attempt to persuade us to make unwise concessions.' He shared the fear that, as McNamara and Reston argued, 'American opinion, now in majority favoring our present policy will, as casualties mount, become more critical, demanding withdrawal or rash adventures through escalation.' And he recognized, too, the tragedy that the war represented for Lyndon Johnson, writing that 'The President is in a terrifying position. The bright prospects of his imaginative Great Society are already dimmed by the mounting costs of our involvement in Vietnam, his inherited scourge.'[48]

Nothing came of diplomatic efforts to end the war at this point. The US government did try to entice Hanoi into talks by announcing a pause in the bombing campaign in December, but there was no response from the communists. The Ambassador found himself on the periphery of the debate over abandoning it, which was eventually resolved in favour of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who argued that the lull in bombing merely allowed the enemy to regroup.[49] Towards the end of this debate he returned to London where he was dismayed to find that, on Vietnam, even pro-American politicians 'felt the US position there is deteriorating, and expected the same to be true in time of President Johnson's popularity at home.'[50] Renewed instability within Vietnam during the Spring of 1966, with Buddhist demonstrations against the pro-American

regime, added to the difficulties and Bruce concluded that, 'If a neutralist Government should ever be installed in Saigon, it would probably be replaced before long by a Communist one.'[51] There were also predictions that, aside from the probable decline in Johnson's popularity as military success remained elusive, the war would have a detrimental effect on the US economy, pushing up inflation and creating balance of payments problems, while the danger loomed larger of American bombing of sensitive targets in North Vietnam, around Hanoi and Haiphong.[52] Returning to Washington in May, Bruce found the President under increasing pressure to bomb oil installations near the North's biggest cities. 'The present political atmosphere in Washington is one of unhappiness, frustration and irritation', noted Bruce, 'This, I fear, will persist as long as the Vietnam War lasts.'[53] When the bombing of oil installations went forward in June it caused less civilian deaths than feared, but still led the British government to the unprecedented step of publicly dissociating itself from the US action and provoked further demonstrations outside the embassy.[54] As to Bruce's hopes of using the Soviets to draw the North into peace negotiations, Harold Wilson raised the issue on a trip to Moscow in July but found them unwilling to help. Instead, they confidently predicted a growing rift between Johnson and the American people over the conflict.[55] Towards the end of the year, Bruce had to admit that there was little hope of a diplomatic solution. 'In spite of all our efforts our Government has made to induce the North Vietnamese to enter into some sort of peaceful agreement with us, there is no sign of an inclination on their part to do so.'[56]

As 1967 dawned, there seemed no respite in the conflict and the Ambassador remained privately critical of aspects of American policy. One concern was the failure of the country's propaganda effort to win over its critics. 'Our public affairs people in Washington and Saigon seem to have no feel whatever for presenting our Government's case', he wrote in January. He was appalled when 'one of our officials in Saigon took it upon himself to inform [a British *Daily Telegraph*] reporter that for the first time defections from the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Forces rose in 1965 proportionately above the South Vietnamese army desertion rate', a statement that could only draw attention to the high rate of such desertions. The Ambassador also recognized the problems created by uncontrolled television access in Vietnam, as evidenced by a BBC programme that 'showed a young American soldier, clearly under strain, who told the interviewer that he would shoot Viet Cong children because if he did not, they would grow up and shoot him.'[57] Bruce himself had little time for what he considered the one-sided reporting on Vietnam by the British media. It was unjust, he thought, to condemn the deaths caused by American bombing and play down 'the calculated use of terror by the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.'[58] This, however, only confirmed the point that Washington was losing the propaganda war.

In February 1967 Bruce was deeply involved in the so-called 'Sunflower' talks, when Soviet premier Kosygin visited London and discussed possible routes towards a peace settlement with Harold Wilson. Behind the scenes US officials, including the CIA's Chester Cooper and Bruce, advised the British Prime Minister on tactics. The talks coincided with another 'bombing halt.' Bruce's account betrays little of his personal view

on events, and no criticism of the US decision, at a delicate point, to alter its negotiating position – an action which arguably doomed the talks to failure and made Wilson livid.[59] However, in the midst of the talks Bruce did 'express a personal opinion on the adverse political effects of a renewal of bombing before Kosygin left London', and this helped secure an extension of the halt.[60] A subsequent attempt to extend the halt even further led to 'some rather angry interchanges with Walt Rostow', who had succeeded MacGeorge Bundy as National Security Adviser, before the initiative completely broke down.[61] Eighteen months later Bruce was less restrained in his comments and confided in his diary that Rostow 'behaved almost hysterically' during Sunflower.[62]

Retrenchment

With the latest, and perhaps most promising attempt at a diplomatic settlement of the war having failed, Bruce's attention turned to ways of minimizing the costs of the war to the US. Although the point does not emerge clearly from the diary, his thoughts were probably influenced by the discussion that followed a request, on 10 March 1967, by the US commander, General William Westmoreland, for 200,000 extra troops. The request, backed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was greeted with scepticism by McNamara. The Defense Secretary, the former 'hawk' who had pressed Johnson to escalate in 1964-65, had become increasingly dismayed by the failure to make progress in an increasingly-destructive conflict. There followed what has been called 'the most ferocious debate of the war' in Washington,[63] in which Bruce showed his sympathies were with McNamara. Several weeks into the debate, in a conversation with William Porter (former deputy US ambassador in Saigon) about the failure to train the South Vietnamese army in guerrilla

warfare techniques, Bruce suggested ‘drawing a defensive line across Vietnam, announcing our intention to repel any attacks against it, and reduce infiltration through it as far as practicable.’ This was interesting for a number of reasons. First, the idea of an interdiction line is generally associated with McNamara. It appeared as a policy recommendation from him in October 1966, when he calculated its cost as $1 billion and believed it would need up to 20,000 troops to man such a system of fences, wires and censors. But some Americans had been thinking of such a scheme since the late 1950s[64] and Bruce had discussed a plan for ‘sealing off infiltrations from the North over the demarcation line, and mopping up behind it’ with McNamara in March 1965.[65] In the past the Pentagon believed it could not spare the forces necessary for such a scheme but, with rising US troop numbers, Bruce felt it could be investigated once more: ‘If such an accomplishment took place, we could then cease military activities in the North, but be ready to resume them if necessary… [while] behind this barrier the South Vietnamese and ourselves would accelerate pacification efforts and step up movements against the Viet Cong.’ Porter rightly doubted that the military would be interested.[66] But the idea shows that Bruce was again thinking of minimizing the costs of the war and is not the only evidence that he was close to McNamara’s now-sceptical view of the war.

The Defense Secretary was in London on 10 May, soon after Bruce’s conversation with Porter, and handed the Ambassador a copy of a memorandum he had drawn up on Vietnam. This was evidently a copy of that sent to the President on 19 May, which set out the dangers of further escalation of the war, including a ‘serious confrontation’ with the USSR and China, and was weighted in favour of a more

defensive approach. He now wanted to reduce the bombing of the North, put a limit on extra troop deployments and make a renewed effort at negotiation with Hanoi.[67] The contents of the memorandum inspired Bruce to draw up his own sympathetic memorandum, one which may have encouraged McNamara to press on with his case. Bruce spent the evening of 10 May writing it and sent it to the Defense Secretary the following day.[68]

The May 1967 memorandum represents the fullest appreciation Bruce ever wrote on the war, running to four sides of single-spaced type. From the outset his doubts about the war were clear:

> To have our national identity involved in the outcome of an operation on such a comparatively small military scale, in a country unfamiliar to most Americans, in support of a people of whom we know little, would, under ordinary circumstances, be considered… a wild exaggeration of priorities.

Yet, as an experienced diplomat, he was aware that these were not ordinary circumstances and he believed it less profitable to dwell on the causes of the current imbroglio than to consider ‘a practicable solution to it.’ It was not possible simply to walk away from the problem, because ‘in the estimation of our compatriots, and much of the rest of the world, the issue has become an obsession, a touchstone of our wisdom or lack of it.’ Bruce also believed that American credibility as an ally was at stake: ‘We have pledged our honor to the protection of a state, on behalf of which we had contractual obligations under Seato [the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation, formed in 1954], against external aggression.’

Whatever justice lay in the cause however, the ambassador, like President Johnson, believed in treading a careful line between the extremes of surrender and massive escalation. He rejected the idea of 'pulverizing the puny population of North Vietnam' because this risked drawing China and the Soviet Union into the conflict, and he warned against handing the war over to the military chiefs, who were 'usually insensitive… to the political considerations that must be paramount.' As far as Bruce could see, bombing had not 'fatally interdicted the logistical flow of materials from North to South, or… reduced enemy morale to an unbearable degree' and it was 'madness to contemplate achieving our aims by much further escalation in North Vietnam.' Bruce repeated his fear that escalation on these lines – through operations in Cambodia and Laos perhaps, or by mining Haiphong harbor, risking damage to Soviet ships – raised the danger of Chinese and Soviet intervention, 'transforming a small conflict into one of potentially mammoth proportions.' He also pointed out that the Soviets could always react to US actions by creating a crisis elsewhere in the world, perhaps over Berlin, thereby 'engaging our energies on widely separated fronts.' As it was, Bruce still stuck to his view that the Soviets 'would prefer to have this episode terminated.' It was not as if the American military could guarantee that escalation could guarantee victory: 'even so optimistic a warrior as General Westmoreland only offers us, if large reinforcements are furnished him, the indefinite prospects of indefinite attrition.' A further escalation of US involvement seemed pointless. More troops would simply mean 'higher casualties' and an 'already unpopular war will become increasingly unpopular…'

What, then, did Bruce believe was the solution to America's dilemma? He reasserted the 'overriding importance of political over military factors' and wrote of the need for President Johnson to disregard 'transitory pressures' in favor of the 'right' decision 'morally and strategically…' Bruce, like McNamara, believed this solution must be one of retrenchment in Vietnam, while not abandoning America's ally. Washington should declare 'that the objectives of our bombing program have been satisfactorily achieved, and we intend to consolidate our defensive positions.' Thus protected by the US, the Saigon government could focus on a 'pacification' process in the South, designed to root out subversion, undermine support for the Viet Cong and create a stable democracy. Here Bruce played up his own familiarity during the Second World War, with unconventional warfare techniques. He repeated his long-held view that American generals must stop focusing on 'orthodox methods primarily suited to conditions of open warfare' in favor of training South Vietnamese troops 'as night guerrillas', able to take on the Viet Cong, who 'currently seem to possess an overwhelming nocturnal superiority…' Alongside such military pressures on the insurgents, Bruce also believed in offering, 'eventually', an amnesty to them. His program was therefore based, like McNamara's, on avoiding the dangers of escalation, reducing the bombing of the North, putting a cap on US ground forces, who should adopt a defensive posture, and relying on the South Vietnamese themselves, properly trained in guerrilla warfare techniques, to carry the war to the enemy. Yet the Ambassador also realized there was a potential flaw in his scheme. What if the North responded with 'fresh aggression'? In this case, he could only suggest that the US be 'prepared to resume and intensify our former military actions.' This limp ending may have come about because Bruce already felt the memorandum 'overlong', a

problem for which he apologized to McNamara in the next paragraph, before repeating his worries about the crisis brought on by Vietnam and signing off. The same haste may explain why, in a striking omission, he had nothing to say about a diplomatic solution to the war.[69]

There are indications that a new consensus was germinating among those with whom the Ambassador discussed Vietnam at this time, a consensus that it was time to end the escalation of US involvement in the war, while somehow holding on to South Vietnam. For example, Bruce also discussed his ideas with the former National Security Adviser, MacGeorge Bundy, who was sympathetic and encouraged him to put them to the President.[70] Soon afterwards, when Bruce was in Washington again, Averell Harriman 'advanced a theory about ceasing our bombing in Vietnam, except on the infiltration routes, in the hope of reaching in time an agreement with the Soviets to co-operate with us to effect a truce of sorts.'[71] But, apart from the military and Walt Rostow, other voices still talked of continued escalation. One was Bill Stearman, who had just served for eighteen months in the Saigon embassy, who favoured sending more troops and continuing the bombing campaign.[72] For the moment, the war went on. Westmoreland did not get all the troops he requested, but neither did McNamara's alternative strategy triumph. Indeed, his views put him increasingly at odds with Rostow and Johnson, eventually leading the President to decide in late 1967 that his Secretary of Defense must be replaced.[73]

Whatever doubts surrounded McNamara's position, Bruce continued to prefer a policy of retrenchment to escalation. He again set out the logic of such a strategy, in rather optimistic terms, in his diary during September:

> the establishment of the McNamara line on the 17th Parallel will be followed by a cessation of bombing of the North, except for a continuance of attacks on infiltration groups. Then with the new Government established in Saigon, the time might be appropriate for us to insist upon the training of Vietnamese militia units in guerrilla warfare, and institution of land reforms, elimination as far as practicable of governmental graft, and other remedial legislation of a social nature. If Hanoi does not then respond to our overtures, we could resume bombing in the North.

But the same diary entry also betrayed a feeling that time might be running out for such a solution. 'In recent conversations here with Americans and foreigners,' he noted, 'I have sensed a distinct falling off in support for our policy in Vietnam.' The US propaganda campaign was still ineffective.[74] Bruce was further concerned that, in addition to the 'chronic' criticism of the Left, even 'important British mainstream opinion' was turning against the American war.[75] The ambassador was now reduced to slipping out of his embassy by the back door to avoid the persistent demonstrations outside.[76] There was a particularly violent protest on 22 October 1967 when an angry mob managed to throw bricks through the embassy windows and hospitalized a dozen police officers who tried to hold them back.[77] Reports from Washington suggested that divisions there were also growing bitterer.[78] Meanwhile, diplomatic talks seemed as far off as ever. 'I do not believe a really objective observer of the President's attempts to draw the North

Vietnamese officials to a conference table could find any parallel in the history of warfare,' the Ambassador complained. 'The most powerful nation in the world has given its comparatively puny enemy every opportunity to save face, at the loss of its own.'[79]

Tet

In early February 1968 Bruce was again in Washington. His visit once more coincided with key events, this time the so-called 'Tet offensive' launched by the communists. At first, despite the widespread violence across South Vietnam, the offensive did not seem a decisive event. When Bruce saw Johnson in Washington on 6 February 1968, the President appeared untroubled. 'If this vigorous, impressive man is perturbed over his tribulations it was not evident today', wrote the ambassador, adding that 'Johnson is like an elemental force of nature…' In the US capital Bruce found considerable that 'preoccupation with Vietnam is all-pervasive' but there was still optimism. The journalist Joe Alsop was 'exultant over the course of events in Vietnam, saying the flower of the Vietcong cadres has been plucked. I was startled by his excessive praise of General Westmoreland…' At a White House meeting, Walt Rostow 'was hawkishly gratified by how things are going in Vietnam.'[80] But Bruce himself was more sceptical about the situation. During another meeting with the President on the 9th, Johnson read out 'a seven-page telegram he had just received from General Westmoreland, whose confidence in the military outlook I hope but do not believe will prove justified.'[81] Bruce confided his own views in his diary towards the end of that fateful month:

> The more I think about the Vietnam affair, the more convinced I am of my long held theory that the original error was due to the mentality of our Army

> Commanders, who with few exceptions never like to depart from orthodoxy. If when our advisers first went there they had to tried to instruct the South Vietnamese to fight in the manner prescribed by General Giap [the North Vietnamese commander] in his manual for the training of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, the present situation might have been different. The South Vietnamese should have been ready to go out in black pajamas like their hostile countrymen and engage in night – as well as daytime – guerrilla activities, instead of following the rules of conventional warfare.[82]

Bruce also remained doubtful about the prospects for a diplomatic settlement. Since the failure of the Sunflower talks he had come to the conclusion that, contrary to his earlier hopes, the Soviet Union was not interested in ending the war. '[T]hey are reaping many advantages from its continuance,' he now reasoned, 'It is true the provision by them of military supplies, petroleum, and other contributions is costly, but insignificant compared to our own outlays. Moreover, they suffer no military losses and have no domestic political problems connected with it.'[83] He was not alone in his pessimism, though others were less concerned with the chances for diplomacy than with the uncertain future of American politics, as the Presidential primaries got underway against the background of grave popular doubts about the war. The Tet offensive may have decimated the Viet Cong but the very fact that it had occurred, and on such a scale, had stunned the public and led to media talk of an 'unwinnable' struggle. The veteran British commentator on American affairs, Alistair Cooke, feared that Vietnam could prevent Johnson from winning the Democratic nomination and even predicted (with

remarkable prescience) riots at the party's convention in August.[84] The US journalist Drew Middleton told Bruce that the Presidential election would become 'mixed up with issues such as Black Power, violence in the streets, the status of the war in Vietnam, the white backlash, housing, and other hot controversies.'[85] Only days after these conversations, as Bruce set off on another of his visits to Washington, came Johnson's dual announcement of a limitation to the Rolling Thunder bombing campaign and his decision not to run for the Presidency. The ambassador considered the latter news the real 'bombshell' and a 'colossal' one at that. It was 'as if Julius Caesar had not crossed the Rubicon.'[86] The President's speech did at least pave the way for negotiations between the North Vietnamese and a US team, led by Averell Harriman, in Paris. But Bruce was all too aware that progress towards a settlement would be slow[87] and, as Johnson's Presidency drew to a close, he felt it 'ironic that a man who has done so much for his country in coping with its domestic problems should have all his accomplishments obscured by the Vietnam affair.'[88]

Conclusion

Bruce was very much on the periphery of decision-making on the Vietnam War. He was not even informed of certain key decisions being discussed in Washington. At the very end of the Presidency, for example, when Johnson announced an end to bombing of North Vietnam, Bruce recorded that. 'We know nothing about this, except what we have read in the papers, for the secret has been fairly well kept.'[89] As an experienced diplomat he recognised, as he once told Johnson, that, 'Ambassadors are not policy-makers' and he loyally accepted decisions made back home, with no sign that he ever even considered

resigning over the war.[90] A true professional, Bruce carried out his instructions even when he had grave doubts about them, as when he was requested to deter Wilson from commenting on Vietnam during a speech to the UN. 'I am not sure', Bruce confided in his diary, 'if President Johnson were making a speech to the UN he would welcome advice from the British as to what its contents should be.'[91] He had a persistent tendency to support Johnson's policy even though it was clearly not working. In January 1966, for example, the ambassador commented that 'The President has wisely steered a middle course between the rocky cliffs of extremism. But his popularity as a pilot is diminishing.'[92] Bruce remained an admirer of his chief and of his middle-of-the road policies, as America sank ever deeper into the quagmire. His complaint to Washington over the handling of the Sunflower talks was a rare note of protest.[93] The ambassador's belief in civilian control of the war effort, fully revealed in his memorandum of 11 May 1967, would certainly put him at odds with General Westmoreland and revisionist historians, like Harry Summers, who have argued that the military should have been allowed to pursue the war in their own way.[94]

Yet, it would be unjust to see Bruce as a cipher of the President, an official who simply mirrored the consensus at home. His diary reveals that, in private, he had his own outlook. In the mid-1960s, Vietnam loomed so large in his life that he could not avoid taking a view on it, especially when other US leaders, up to the President himself, asked for his opinions. While, in public, Bruce was content to defend US policy, in private he could be much more sceptical about the official line. Most important, he consistently argued that 'our military have almost completely failed to adjust their strategy and tactics

to the requirements of guerrilla warfare.'[95] His experience in the OAS and as Ambassador to Paris during France's war in Indochina helps to explain why his doubts echo those found in the Central Intelligence Agency, including a recognition of communist determination, concern over the fragility of the South Vietnamese regime and the desire to develop a proper anti-guerrilla strategy.[96] Indeed, his concern on such points in 1963-65 makes it difficult to decide why, at the crucial point around November 1964, he backed McNamara's preference for deeper involvement, beginning with Rolling Thunder. Then again, as Fredrik Logevall has argued, many US policy-makers were pessimistic about the prospects for Vietnam, yet opted for war.[97] It was a choice they lived to regret as, over the following two years, they became all too aware of weaknesses in the US position and, in the Spring of 1967, some began to consider a different approach, based on retrenchment. It can be claimed that Bruce had a major impact on the running of the war even then. For the opposition from the military and Rostow ensured that retrenchment was rejected. However, if Bruce did have an influence, it was in helping reinforce McNamara's views, a point that was also evident in their interest in an interdiction line. For, while retrenchment may have been ruled out in May 1967, it became the new consensus a year later, in the wake of the Tet offensive. To his credit Bruce, whatever his loyalty to his President and the anti-communist cause, had been a harbinger of the new consensus that pointed a way out of the quagmire, however slow that course proved to be.

Notes

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[1] For example, in the study of political leadership under Queen Elizabeth I of England: Patrick Collinson, 'Servants and Citizens: Robert Beale and other Elizabethans', *Historical Research*, Vol. 79 (2006), 488-511; Robyn Adams, 'A Spy on the Payroll? William Herle and the mid-Elizabethan polity', *Historical Research*, Vol. 83 (2010), 266-80.
[2] On which see Nelson Lankford, *The Last American Aristocrat: the biography of ambassador David K. E. Bruce* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996), chapter 21.
[3] See, for example, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereinafter *FRUS*), *1964-68, Volume II, Vietnam, January-June 1965* at http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68, documents 96, 114 and 211. Accessed 24 March 2010.
[4] There is no mention of him, for example, in Robert Mann's excellent *A Grand Delusion: America's descent into Vietnam* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).
[5] Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, David Bruce Diary (hereinafter 'Diary'), 6 October 1961.

[6] Anglo-US relations on Vietnam have already been fully discussed: see Jonathan Colman, *A Special Relationship? Harold Wilson, Lyndon Johnson and Anglo-American relations* (Manchester University Press, 2004); Sylvia Ellis, *Britain, America and the Vietnam War* (Westport: Praeger, 2004); and John W. Young, 'Britain and LBJ's War', *Cold War History*, vol. 2, no. 3 (2002), 63-92. See also Colman's 'The London ambassadorship of David Bruce', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 15 (2004), especially 337-43.
[7] See, for example, the very full Diary entry, 3 October 1967, on a conversation with Peter Wilkinson, former British Ambassador to Saigon who was critical of US military tactics, doubted bombing would break the will of the North and felt the corruption in South Vietnam 'the greatest he has seen anywhere.'
[8] Diary, 20 July 1964.
[9] Diary, 23 February 1965.
[10] London to State Department, 3 June 1965, in Diary.
[11] Johnson to Wilson, 26 July, and Diary, 26 July 1965.
[12] Diary, 6 July 1964.
[13] Diary, 28 May 1964.
[14] Diary, 1 September 1964.
[15] Diary, 17 October 1961.
[16] Diary, 17 April and 7 July 1967.
[17] Diary, 17 October 1963.
[18] Diary, 22 May 1964.
[19] Diary, 23 August and 17 October 1963.
[20] Diary, 16 December 1963.
[21] Diary, 30 August and 19 September 1964.
[22] Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: a history* (London: Hutchinson, 1983), 374.
[23] Diary, 22 May 1964 and see 20 July for continuing doubts about the possibility of neutralisation.
[24] Diary, 28 May 1964.
[25] Diary, 11 November 1964.
[26] Diary, 27 November 1964.
[27] Diary, 10 January 1965, supporting such arguments from that week's *Economist*.
[28] Diary, 9 February 1965.
[29] *FRUS, 1964-68, II,* document 96 (10 February 1965).
[30] *FRUS, 1964-68, II,* document 114, (13 February 1965).
[31] For example, during a meeting with Dean Rusk, attended by Bruce: diary, 29 January 1965.
[32] London to State Department, 7 February 1965, in diary.
[33] See, for example, diary, 16-18 and 24 February 1965.

[34] Diary, 9 and 22 March 1965.
[35] *FRUS, 1964-68, II,* document 211 (23 March) and see diary, 24 March 1965.
[36] Diary, 21 February 1965.
[37] Diary, 30 May 1965.
[38] Diary, 10 June 1965.
[39] See especially: diary, 15 and 17 June 1965.
[40] Diary, 22 October 1966.
[41] Diary, 12 November 1965.
[42] Diary, 26 November, and see 17 December 1965 for another conversation in which McNamara said that, even if the communist military threat was contained (as he was confident it would be), 'any real settlement can only be brought about by diplomatic means.'
[43] *FRUS, 1964-68, Volume III*, document 212, 30 November 1965.
[44] Diary, 2 December 1965.
[45] Diary, 17 December 1965. Bruce also suggested that former President Dwight Eisenhower, might make a 'private' visit to Hanoi, to speak directly with the North Vietnamese leader, Ho Chi Minh: diary, 22 July 1966.
[46] Bruce and McNamara also discussed the possible mining of Haiphong harbour: Diary, 21 December 1965.
[47] Diary, 22 December 1965.
[48] Diary, 22 December 1965 (again).
[49] See especially Diary, 29 January 1966.
[50] Diary, 7 February 1966.
[51] Diary, 8 April 1966.
[52] See Diary, 13 April 1966, for a long conversation with Senator Stuart Symington on these and other Vietnam worries.
[53] Diary, 19 May 1966.
[54] See especially diary for 11 and 23 May, 23 and 30 June.
[55] Diary, 19 July 1966.
[56] Diary, 14 December 1966; and see 14 July 1966 for a conversation with Bill Stearman, responsible for subversive operations against North Vietnam, who 'sees no indication from his examination of prisoners and defectors of any desire on the part of the North to bring hostilities to a close.'
[57] Diary, 4 January 1967.
[58] Diary, 6 January 1967.
[59] For a full account see John Dumbrell and Sylvia Ellis, 'British involvement in Vietnam peace initiatives, 1966-67', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 27, no. 1 (January 2003), 113-49; and see Harold Wilosn, 'How a Prime Minister and an ambassador almost stopped the Vietnam War,' *The Diplomatist*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (April 1979).
[60] Diary, 11 February 1967.
[61] Diary, 12 February 1967.
[62] Diary, 1 August 1968.
[63] Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War: the History, 1946-75* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1989), 461-2.
[64] *FRUS, 1964-68, Volume IV, 1966,* Document 268, 14 October. McNamara announced, in September 1967, that an electronic anti-infiltration line would be created but, though it operated down to 1972, it had only a limited impact on the war: see Peter Brush, 'The Story behind the McNamara Line' at http://www.shss.montclair.edu/english/furr/pbmcnamara.html (accessed 18 April 2010).
[65] Diary, 20 March 1965, and see 17 March 1965, for a conversation with former British Foreign Secretary 'Rab' Butler, who also raised the idea.
[66] Diary, 8 May 1967.
[67] Draft memorandum from McNamara to Johnson, 19 May 1967, *FRUS, 1964-68, Volume V, 1967*, document 177.
[68] Diary, 10 and 11 May 1967.
[69] Bruce to McNamara, 11 May 1967, in diary.
[70] Diary, 21 May 1967.

[71] Diary, 1 June 1967. During this visit, McNamara and even President Johnson talked of involving Bruce in a consultation about the administration's Vietnam policy: see Diary, 5 June.
[72] Diary, 17 July 1967.
[73] Bruce heard the news of McNamara's move to head the World Bank in late November, commenting 'I should think Bob would be glad to get out; much of the unpopularity attached to the Vietnamese war has come to rest on his shoulders… He has borne almost intolerable burdens uncomplainingly… I do not know how physically he has survived the strains of his office…' Diary 28 November 1967.
[74] Diary, 21 September 1967.
[75] Bruce to Rusk, 30 August 1967, in diary.
[76] Diary, 17 October 1967.
[77] Diary, 22 and 23 October 1967 and see 14 November regarding violent protests faced by Bruce when he spoke at Cambridge University.
[78] See, for example, the views of Senator Stuart Symington in diary, 28 September 1967.
[79] Diary, 22 September 1967.
[80] Diary, 6 and 8 February 1968.
[81] Diary, 9 February 1968.
[82] Diary, 27 February 1968.
[83] Diary, 20 March 1968.
[84] Diary, 26 March 1968.
[85] Diary, 28 March 1968.
[86] Diary, 1 April 1968.
[87] See for example, Diary, 5 July 1968, for a conversation with Harriman.
[88] Diary, 20 September 1968.
[89] Diary, 1 November 1968.
[90] Bruce to Johnson, 14 December 1964, in Diary. And, on Bruce's loyalty over the war see Lankford, *American Aristocrat*, 333.
[91] Diary, 13 December 1965.
[92] Diary, 29 January 1966.
[93] Telephone conversation between Rostow and Johnson, 12 February: *FRUS, 1964-68, Volume V, Vietnam 1967*, document 72.
[94] William Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (New York: Dell, 1980); Harry Summers, *On Strategy: a critical analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1982).
[95] Diary, 11 October 1968.
[96] See Harold P. Ford, 'Why CIA analysts were so doubtful about Vietnam' at https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications Accessed 24 March 2008.
[97] Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: the last chance for peace and the escalation of war in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), especially 381-2.