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# KEY TEXTS FROM

## New York Times

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# PENTAGON'S VIETNAM STUDY

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*Following are texts of key documents accompanying the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war, covering the period late 1965 to the summer of 1966. Except where excerpting is specified, the documents are printed verbatim, with only unmistakable typographical errors corrected.*

### State Department Memorandum In November on Bombing Pause

*Excerpts from memorandum, "Courses of Action in Vietnam," from the State Department, Nov. 9, 1965, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. According to the study, the memorandum was speaking for Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and "a penciled note by [Assistant Secretary of Defense John T.] McNaughton indicates that Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson was the author."*

. . . The purpose of—and Secretary McNamara's arguments for — such a pause are four:

(a) It would offer Hanoi and the Viet Cong a chance to move toward a solution if they should be so inclined, removing the psychological barrier of continued bombing and permitting the Soviets and others to bring moderating arguments to bear:

(b) It would demonstrate to domestic and international critics that we had indeed made every effort for a peaceful settlement before proceeding to intensified actions, notably the latter stages of the extrapolated Rolling Thunder program;

(c) It would probably tend to reduce the dangers of escalation after we had resumed the bombing, at least insofar as the Soviets were concerned;

(d) It would set the stage for another pause, perhaps in late 1966, which might produce a settlement.

Against these propositions, there are the following considerations arguing against a pause:

(a) In the absence of any indication from Hanoi as to what reciprocal action it might take, we could well find ourselves in the position of having played this very important card without receiving anything substantial in return. There are no indications that Hanoi is yet in a mood to agree to a settlement acceptable to us. The chance is, therefore, very slight that a pause at this time could lead to an acceptable settlement.

(b) A unilateral pause at this time would offer an excellent opportunity for Hanoi to interpose obstacles to our resumption of bombing and to demoralize South Vietnam by indefinitely dangling before us (and the world) the prospect of negotiations with no intent of reaching an acceptable settlement. It might

also tempt the Soviet Union to make threats that would render very difficult a decision to resume bombing.

(c) In Saigon, obtaining South Vietnamese acquiescence to a pause would be difficult. It could adversely affect the Government's solidity. Any major falling out between the Government and the United States or any overturn in the Government's political structure could set us back very severely (sic).

(d) An additional factor is that undertaking the second course of action following a pause [i.e., "extrapolation" of ROLLING THUNDER] would give this course a much more dramatic character, both internationally and domestically, and would, in particular, present the Soviets with those difficult choices that we have heretofore been successful in avoiding.

On balance, the arguments against the pause are convincing to the Secretary of State, who recommends that it not be undertaken at the present time. The Secretary of State believes that a pause should be undertaken only when and if the chances were significantly greater than they now appear that Hanoi would respond by reciprocal actions leading in the direction of a peaceful settlement. He further believes that, from the standpoint of international and domestic opinion, a pause might become an overriding requirement only if we were about to reach the advanced stages of an extrapolated Rolling Thunder program involving extensive air operations in the Hanoi/Haiphong area. Since the Secretary of State believes that such advanced stages are not in themselves desirable until the tide in the South is more favorable, he does not feel that, even accepting the point of view of the Secretary of Defense, there is now any international requirement to consider a "Pause." . . .