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July 31, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Labor Relations Problem on the HEXAGON Program

During the latter part of the week of July 15, Mr. Mazza asked if I could furnish him a contact on the Air Staff to assist on a strike problem that was affecting a facility construction for the HEXAGON program, in Danbury, Connecticut. I provided Mr. Mazza the names of [] and [] both Labor Relations staffers in DCS/S&L, Air Staff, Hq USAF. On Monday, July 29, Mr. Mazza asked if I would provide again the name of the Labor Relations expert in order that he could be contacted for some assistance on the Danbury problem. I asked Mr. Mazza his plan and suggested that rather than have any "outsider" contact the Air Staff, I would prefer to do that from here. Mr. Mazza agreed. I called [] and stated the problem as I had received it from Mr. Mazza.

The statement was as follows: We have been advised that the Turner Construction Company in Danbury, Connecticut, involved under subcontract with Perkin-Elmer for a facility construction, is experiencing difficulties as a result of a "sympathy walk out" by Local 39 of the Sheet Metal Workers Union. We have been further advised that the Sheet Metal Workers have no particular grievance with the company but are out "in sympathy" with some other local union's negotiations. We have been provided the name of a Mr. Clarey, said to be the National Chairman of the Sheet Metal Workers Union, located here in Washington at 296-5880.

I asked [] to first check the validity of this information and the situation as it existed in Danbury and to provide this information to me in order that we might determine what could or could not be done.

On July 31, 1968, I was called by [] who had the report on his investigation of this problem through an Air Force team in the Danbury area. The facts of the situation turned out as follows:

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1. Local 39 of the Sheet Metal Workers Union was not out on a "sympathy strike" but rather had walked out as a result of an unsettled labor agreement which had expired on June 30.

2. Negotiations between the union and the Sheet Metal Employers Association (management) had been underway since some date prior to June 30 and had not even approached resolution.

3. The present status of negotiations on wage increases stood at \$3.00 per hour being asked by the union and \$1.90 per hour being offered by management.

4. In addition to the hard negotiations on the wage increase, the problem was being made even more difficult in that the union laborers had found it very easy to simply cross the state line into New York to find plentiful work and very high salaries.

5. The sheet metal workers employed by the Turner Construction Company were involved only in air conditioning installation for the facility. Both Perkin-Elmer and Turner Company officials had stated the sheet metal work stoppage was not holding up in any critical way the progress of the project.

[] emphasized the difficulty anticipated in efforts toward resolution of the labor agreement since there was such a disparity in the wage figures and since the workers had found it very easy to obtain employment nearby. [] explained that since the company officials in Danbury had indicated that progress of this project was not being held up by the strike of the sheet metal workers, the Air Force could not really justify pressing for a settlement; however, he explained that if the air conditioning installation became the bottleneck in project progress that we could insist then, in light of the urgency and importance of the program, that pressure be applied to this situation. I asked [] to keep me advised of developments.

I presented this information in an oral report to General Berg on July 31. General Berg indicated that he would call Mr. Crowley and

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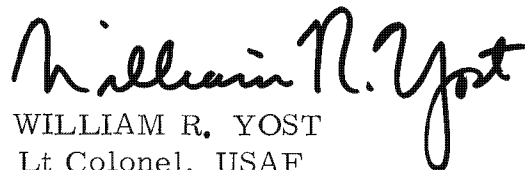
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asked that I call Mr. McDonald to relate the status of this matter.

On July 31, I called Mr. McDonald to report on the situation. Mr. McDonald was surprised to learn that company officials had indicated there was no hold up on project progress as a result of this strike since Perkin-Elmer program people had insisted they were slipping day for day as a result of this situation. I asked Mr. McDonald to keep me currently apprised of the situation and most specifically of the time it reached the point of inhibiting progress in construction of the facility so that we might act.



WILLIAM R. YOST
Lt Colonel, USAF
Asst Deputy Director for
Plans & Policy

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