

September 17, 2007

Reference No. 12514

Processing Note

This is the transcript of an office conversation between President Johnson and Arthur Goldberg which includes a note from Marvin Watson to the President. There is no recording of this meeting. This transcript begins with Marvin Watson entering the President's Office at 2:35 PM, but according to the President's Daily Diary, Goldberg's meeting with the President was from 1:24-2:30 PM.

DATE: 12/6/67

TIME: 2:35 PM

CALLER: Arthur Goldberg

Pages of transcript: 2 pages plus 1-page note

Barbara Cline
Archivist

12514

M. Marks

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

6:17 p.m. - Dec. 6

Mr. President:

Leonard Marks called and said that Ambassador Goldberg's press secretary has just told him that their instructions from the Ambassador are to answer all press inquiries with "No comment". On background basis, they are to say when the Ambassador resigns, if he resigns, he will resign to the President and not to the press. Goldberg's press secretary told Leonard that the Ambassador knows the New York Times has a story for tomorrow's paper stating that Goldberg's resignation was discussed with the President today.

Marvin

SERVICE SET

MARVIN WATSON ENTERED THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE AT 2:35 P.M., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1967, FOR MEETING BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND AMBASSADOR ARTHUR GOLDBERG.

P If you want to leave, then I am ready to accept your resignation. I want you to know that I want you to do whatever you and Dorothy want to do. The easiest thing for me to do is accept your resignation and the hardest thing is to read in the papers about your wanting to leave.

G I want to emphasize my reasons for leaving. I do not think the UN job can any longer be effective.

P I am impressed with your ability, your dedication and your loyalty. If you want to stay, I will be happy for you to stay. It would be my idea, if you decide to leave, that you possibly should not leave before Congress gets back in session, but do it as far away from November of 1968 as possible. When the time comes, you might say the President asked me to take this job. Two years were up last July and I discussed leaving with the President, but because of the Mid-East problem and others, I decided to stay on.

G As far as the UN is concerned, you have given me 100% support. I understand that there are other advisers for other subjects, such as Vietnam. You are the President and you are the one who must make the decisions.

P You're not trying to build a case here today about differences on Vietnam because there have not been any differences.

G I wrote you a memorandum last March with suggestions, but I understand you have other advisers.

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- P I'll get the memo from Secretary Rusk and go over it, but I do not remember any differences.
- G If it is agreeable with you, Mr. President, I hope nothing will be said until after the United Nations General Assembly is over, which should be about December 20th.
- P That's fine. When the Assembly is over, you call Marvin and make an appointment to come down and see me.
- G Two: I would like to talk with Dorothy about it.
Three: I have made no arrangements with anyone.
Four: I understand what you have said and I agree with you.
Five: February first would be a convenient time.

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