

## ARCHIVES PROCESSING NOTE

The folder containing these notes was originally incorrectly entitled “October 16, 1967 – 1:05 p.m, Rusk, McNamara, Rostow, Helms, Christian.”

On this date, Archives staff corrected the folder title to “**October 11, 1967** – 1:05 p.m., Rusk, McNamara, Rostow, Helms, Christian,” which is the correct date of the meeting.

Regina Greenwell  
Senior Archivist  
November 12, 2014

# WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#111a notes	Notes from 10/16/67 - 1:05 p.m. meeting with Rusk, McNamara, Rostow, Helms, Christian [Sanitized NLJ 82-60] Top Secret 5 pp. <i>More info released 7.13.06 NLJ/KAL 99-154</i> <i>(dup. #1, President Appointment File (Diary Backup) "October 11, 1967" Box 79)</i>	10/16/67	A

## FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings, Box 1

## RESTRICTION CODES

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OCTOBER 11, 1967 - 1:05 p.m.

TUESDAY LUNCHEON GROUP

Secretary Rusk

CIA Director Helms

Secretary McNamara

George Christian

Walt Rostow

MEMORANDUM

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

OCTOBER 16, 1967

6:00 p.m.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: <sup>Tom</sup> Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your meeting with Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, Walt Rostow, CIA Director Helms and George Christian in the Mansion on October 11, 1967.

The meeting began at 1:05 p.m. The meeting ended at 2:24 p.m.

Attachment

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DETERMINED TO BE AN  
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING.

BY DCH ON 12-11-81

SERVICE SET

October 16, 1967

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY  
RUSK, SECRETARY MC NAMARA, WALT ROSTOW, CIA  
DIRECTOR HELMS AND GEORGE CHRISTIAN

The President: Dean, I want to know all you know and think about Pennsylvania.

Secretary Rusk: We haven't seen any serious response from Hanoi. They are not in the business of talking about negotiations at this stage. It has been a one way conversation.

Bo does want contacts to continue. I do not think this is just because of the ten mile radius around Hanoi.

There is little danger now that talks will break off. M and A and Kissinger see we are not getting anything back from Hanoi.

The President: Did the State Department insist on a letter from Ashmore when he got into his discussions over there?

Secretary Rusk: They (Ashmore and Baggs) were itching to win a Nobel peace prize and wanted it.

Secretary McNamara: I agree with Dean. I do not believe Bo's interest in continuing the talks is related to the ten mile bombing restriction. There has been no proposition to talk in any way about settling the conflict.

It now becomes a question of what we do next year in relation to Pennsylvania. I expect nothing in the next two weeks. What does matter is what we do in the next 3 to 4 months.

If the President does want a pause, I would suggest that we do it through the Pennsylvania channel.

If we do not want a pause, the President may want to draw this channel to a close. Renewing the bombing will, in my opinion, bring it to a close.

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SANITIZED  
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Walt Rostow: I believe they will say they are prepared to talk if we unconditionally stop the bombing. As I see it, there are three alternatives:

- 1) Play the string out
- 2) Have a pause and see what happens.
- 3) Go to ICC countries and tell them that we have made this offer. See if we can get assurances of the kind required.

The President: What was General Wheeler's reaction to all of this?

Secretary McNamara: General Wheeler's reaction was one of concern if we pause and the North Vietnamese take advantage of it. He is not concerned if they do not take military advantage, although he does<sup>he</sup> believe it will bring about negotiations. General Wheeler was tolerant of our views given the domestic situation we have.

The President: What damage would we suffer with a pause?

Secretary McNamara: There is a possibility we will suffer no damage. We could develop our own talk-and-fight strategy.

I would recommend a pause because of the domestic plus it would be.

Secretary Rusk: How long a pause?

Secretary McNamara: You will never have a long enough pause to satisfy Fulbright and others. A pause of at least a month would be necessary.

Secretary Rusk: I talked with Hedley Donovan of Time-Life. As you know, they are coming out with an editorial next week in Life which calls for a halt in the bombing.

Donovan thinks a lot of people will have their minds changed with a pause. We would not get much out of a short pause with international public opinion.

The President: What if they resume military operations?

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Secretary McNamara: We would resume military operations if they did.

Director Helms: I do not think anything will come out of the Pennsylvania channel. It will get information back to Hanoi. But I do not expect to get anything out of it.

Secretary Rusk: The proposal we made to them was almost too reasonable.

The President: How are we ever going to win?

Secretary McNamara: We are making progress. But it is slow. I have no idea how we can win it in the next 12 months.

We have to do something to increase the support for the war in this country. I know of no better way to do it except by a pause.

The President: We may lose if we have a pause. I do not think it would change any of these folks.

Secretary Rusk: Donovan says that it would change a lot of minds.

George Christian: A short pause which failed would lead to considerably more discouragement in this country than we now have.

Secretary Rusk: What effect would it have on the morale of the men?

Secretary McNamara: The effects would be bad if supplies were brought in and infiltration continued.

Director Helms: There is no question about the domestic political reaction. You win a war by doing what you are doing. A short pause will do no good. It will be very difficult to get started back again. If we have a pause, it must be a very long, deep breath.

The President: I do not see how we can get into a long one.

Secretary McNamara: We have got to be much tougher. If they do not take advantage of the pause, it would be a plus.

Secretary Rusk: I would trade the bombing for sealing off the DMZ and some of the action in the south.

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Secretary Rusk: A pause ought to be connected with a promise to do something.

The President: Can't we do something to get these troop contributions wrapped up?

Secretary McNamara: We have a crash program going to get them out there.

Secretary Rusk: We will get 15,000 more men from Korea.

We need a meeting with Ambassador Goldberg on the Middle East. We are getting into a deadlock at the United Nations. We need to be fully briefed.

Director Helms: Ambassador Goldberg asked for a whole set of facts on arm shipments into the Middle East.

The President: What about their plans for an Asian summit?

Secretary Rusk: I do not know if anything good would come of it. Perhaps a meeting of the Foreign Ministers in Seoul would set the ground work.

Walt Rostow: Australia wants the last two weeks in November or the first two weeks in December.

Secretary McNamara: I don't recommend an Asian summit at this time. What is there to accomplish?

Walt Rostow: In wake of the troop contributions, you can dramatize that the other allies are doing more of their share of the work in Vietnam. We can dramatize that the rest of them are not only talking but are doing something out there. We also could put the heat on the South Vietnamese government to get them to do more. This would unify the allies on our basic negotiating stance.

The President: Let's send everything we have on to Mr. Bunker and get his recommendations. I said to the Thais and to the Australians that we are there with you and we will stay with you, but I do not know how long I can stay with that few men in the pot. It is good for them to think that so they want to contribute more troops. Let's leave it that way from now on.

Secretary Rusk: It is good to see the allies with troops in battle getting together to talk about their mutual problems.

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The President: All of our past meetings produced more than we expected.

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Secretary McNamara:

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A discussion of trade hearings followed.

Secretary Rusk: There have been several assaults on the Hill concerning the Kennedy Round. We need to see all of these proposed changes rather than looking at it on an item-by-item basis.

The President: Let's put Katzenbach up there with Dirksen to discuss these matters.

I am not going to give in on this carpet business.

Secretary Rusk: We have got to worry about the effects of this, and the possibility of a chain~~ed~~-reaction.

There followed a discussion of Radio Free Europe and the means of continuing its operation. It was agreed it was important to keep it going.

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