

# WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#18a notes	<p>Notes from 1/25/68 - 1:26 p.m. Pueblo 5 luncheon meeting with Rusk, McNamara, Katzenbach, Wheeler, etc.            [Sanitized NLJ 83-13] <i>open NLS 92-142 10-5-99</i>            Secret 11 pp.</p>	1/25/68	A

## FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings

## RESTRICTION CODES

- A) Closed by Executive Order 12356 governing access to national security information.
- B) Closed by statute or by the agency which originated the document.
- C) Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in the donor's deed of gift.

PUEBLO V

January 25, 1968  
1:26 p.m.

Luncheon meeting

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 25, 1968

9:30 p.m.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your luncheon meeting on January 25, 1968, in the Family Dining Room.

Attending the meeting were:

The President  
Secretary Rusk  
Secretary McNamara  
Under Secretary Katzenbach  
General Wheeler  
Walt Rostow  
Ambassador Goldberg  
Samuel Berger - State Department  
Clark Clifford  
Richard Helms  
George Christian  
Tom Johnson

The meeting started at 1:26 p.m. The meeting ended at

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

66

22741

Meeting began:  
Meeting ended:

~~TOP SECRET~~

18a

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S  
LUNCHEON MEETING  
WITH  
SECRETARY RUSK  
SECRETARY McNAMARA  
UNDERSECRETARY KATZENBACH  
GENERAL WHEELER  
WALT ROSTOW  
U.N. REPRESENTATIVE GOLDBERG  
MR. SAMUEL BERGER - STATE DEPARTMENT  
CLARK CLIFFORD  
RICHARD HELMS  
GEORGE CHRISTIAN  
TOM JOHNSON

In the Family Dining Room  
January 25, 1968

The President discussed the draft letter to President Park of Korea.  
That letter is attached as appendix A.

Walt Rostow: I would like to ask a few "devil's advocate" questions:

- How much time do we use up by our actions at the U.N.?
- Do we have control of the time situation if we get involved in U.N. debate?
- What is the danger if we go to the U.N. for some sort of humiliation? (What is the possibility of the resolution resulting in some humiliating statements?)
- How much danger is there in a resolution for us?

Ambassador Goldberg: We are not in control at the time completely. We can say this is a matter of utmost urgency. We can say that we will have 24 hours and that time is of the essence. We can control the time within reasonable limits.

In addition, we can wind up the Security Council exercise on Monday or Tuesday. Then we can knock it off or extend it according to our wishes.

Walt Rostow: There are less fish hooks in this if we do not go for a resolution.

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6  
NLJ 92-142  
By Cb, NARA Date 9-10-99

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

SERVICE SET



~~TOP SECRET~~

- 2 -

Secretary Rusk: We ourselves need time to get our aircraft and other forces to the area, to talk with Congress, and to give the Soviets an opportunity to bring their influence to bear on the North Koreans.

Secretary Katzenbach: I do not think the Security Council will tie the Korean incident to Vietnam. The non-communists will not want to discuss it.

Ambassador Goldberg: We will not be able to keep Vietnam out entirely.

Walt Rostow: We just received information that a North Korean aircraft is flying to Moscow with two men and 792 pounds of cargo aboard. This could be equipment taken from the Pueblo. It is suggestive that the Soviets were in on this.

Secretary Katzenbach: Could CIA pick up on film the area where the boat is, via satellite photography?

CIA Director Helms: We are programed for that area.

Secretary McNamara: Shouldn't we send a vessel to the area where the Pueblo dumped overboard its equipment to dive for it?

General Wheeler: Based on radio messages, we have information that the North Koreans are diving for it at this time.

Secretary Katzenbach: Couldn't we get photographic evidence showing the spot where the divers are located and also the coast line. This would be absolute proof of the ship's position and the fact that the ship was also outside territorial waters.

Richard Helms: If we send a plane up there he had better be ready for a fight. They have MIGs flying cover for the divers, I am sure.

Secretary McNamara: The particular plane that we will fly over they will not be able to fight because of the nature of the aircraft. Of course, if there were other aircraft sent, there likely would be aerial interception.

Richard Helms: We will send the plane tonight our time, which is early morning there. What we get will depend on the climatic conditions.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

- 3 -

Secretary Katzenbach: Do you think the stuff that was thrown overboard was damaged sufficiently to make it of no value?

Secretary McNamara: I doubt it. We just do not know.

The President: What is the answer why the Air Force cancelled the orders?

Secretary McNamara: It was because of darkness and the time before darkness made the effort marginal. Also, there was a substantial enemy force there. So the commander felt he should not do it and cancelled the order.

The President: Dean and Bob, what should we do?

Secretary Rusk: I would recommend going ahead to the Security Council.

Ambassador Goldberg: I could go to the Security Council tonight and ask for an emergency session. I would call on the President of the Security Council, give him a letter, and release the letter.

The President: What do we do from there?

Secretary Rusk: We've gone to Kosygin. We've gone to Sato. This will get the Secretary General in it. Indonesia, also, has been contacted. The ambassadors of the 16 countries which had troops in Korea are being contacted.

The President: How do we get the ship and the boys back?

Secretary McNamara: 1. We need authorization to extend duty.  
2. We need authorization to call up individual reservists.

This would give us something to get a vote on in the Congress. We could ask for special authority to increase aid to the Republic of Korea. I would ask Congress to validate authority to call up civilian aircraft if we are short on transport.

The President: Clark, how did your testimony go this morning? (Mr. Clifford was called to testify on his nomination to the Senate as Secretary of Defense.)

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

-4-

Clark Clifford: I think I got through the testimony all right this morning.

Secretary McNamara: The request to extend tours and call people from the reserves is a good one. We could use this legislation.

Secretary Katzenbach: Would this legislation give authority or would it actually activate units?

Secretary McNamara: It would give the President authority. I would request authority to call up about 150,000 reservists.

Secretary Katzenbach: A request for \$100 million in aid does not serve the purpose at all.

The President: Now that all of you have said that, what I want to know is how we are going to get that ship out.

Secretary McNamara: What I recommend immediately is that we ask for authority to call up individual reservists, not units.

Secretary Rusk: We also must face the situation of infiltration.

General Wheeler: We must be in a position to cope with any eventuality.

Secretary Rusk: Remember that North Korea has a 1961 alliance with the Soviet Union and China.

Secretary McNamara: The Joint Chiefs want an extension of the terms of service. The Marines lose 1600 trained men per month. Mr. President, you improve quicker the quality of our armed forces by extension of tours than by any other method. 2,500 men a day leave the service.

The President: When we get all our men out there and all these planes out there and all these extensions, what do we do then?

Secretary McNamara: Mr. President, we are not prepared to make a recommendation on that today.

Secretary Rusk: I have reservations about the Tonkin Gulf resolution unless the other side forces our hand.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder. W. Thomas Johnson

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

- 5 -

Ambassador Goldberg: As a layman I would like to give you one reaction you may want to consider. I think we want to avoid taking steps which would make it look as if we are seizing on this incident to plug up all the loopholes that are existing in our current military posture. We do not want it to appear through any of our actions that we are using this to fill the gaps in our military program.

Secretary McNamara: Arthur, the facts just will not support that view. If I do not need these men I will not ask for them. We do not have gaps in our forces we have to fill.

Secretary Katzenbach: Won't they relate this to Vietnam (the extension of military tours.)

General Wheeler: We could carry on with our rotation in Vietnam at the same time we do what is necessary in Korea.

Secretary McNamara: I can assure you that we have no plans whatever to extend tours in Vietnam absent Korea. In fact, we think that one of the reasons why morale is so high in Vietnam is because of the limited tour of duty. We think it is a good system.

Director Helms: Isn't there a shortage of U.S. officers in Korea?

General Wheeler: There is a world-wide shortage of Captains and Majors throughout the army.

(The President was interrupted by the telephone. He talked for several minutes with Senator Dirksen. After the conversation ended the President reported that he had told Senator Dirksen that we will take whatever diplomatic moves that are available, that we will meet whatever needs the military has, and then we will make decisions about our courses of action. I told him our principal interests were in getting the ship back and in getting the boys back. We must come up with a way to get that ship back.)

Secretary Katzenbach: Mr. President, the only way to get that ship out with the crew is talking through diplomatic channels. We must make it clear that this is the wiser course for North Korea. It is only through diplomatic channels that we will get them out. We must show them that this matter is sufficiently serious to release the ship and the crew.

I think we should take our steps fairly slowly. We should see how we are doing in the United Nations before we ask for broader authority in Korea.

MEETING NOTES  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

~~TOP SECRET~~  
SERVICE SET

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

~~TOP SECRET~~

- 6 -

Secretary Rusk: We cannot shoot the men out of there. The North Koreans do not have vessels on the high seas that we can seize.

Director Helms: The only North Korean we have in our possession is the number two man in the North Korean news agency who defected. His point of view is that they will exploit the incident and then turn the ship loose for humanitarian reasons.

The President: That is about the same thing the Ambassador to Korea said.

Ambassador Goldberg: They do have territorial shipping. Assuming they have ships plying at coastal waters, couldn't we seize one of these?

Secretary McNamara: They have only four, and they are of very little importance.

Ambassador Goldberg: Grabbing anything of theirs is permitted by law in limited retaliation of this act. However, sowing mines is an act of war. This would not be considered retaliatory.

Secretary Katzenbach: Military action alone does not get them back. Seizing a couple of ships does not get them back. I think they are more concerned about what we may do. This is more important than taking some limited action so that they know what our response is. You are worse off when they do not know what you might do.

Secretary McNamara: We would like to move certain forces to the area. We need to pace ourselves. The Chiefs would like to move 26 B-52s, 15 to Okinawa and 11 to Guam.

The President: Go ahead and send the B-52s.

Secretary Rusk: We should touch base with Sato before we do this.

Walt Rostow: Ambassador Goldberg called this an incident. What is important is the North Korean policy and what is behind that policy. We know this is new pressure against South Korea and ourselves. If we are to act we must be prepared for any action they may take.

The President: What else do you have in mind, Bob?

Secretary McNamara: I would move other aircraft to the area.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder W. Thomas Johnson

~~TOP SECRET~~

-7-

The President: Why not move them out?

Secretary McNamara: I think for two reasons we should delay in moving the aircraft. It reduces your effectiveness of approach at the U.N. We are not contemplating any action right away.

Dick Helms: We do not see any signs of a major offensive action by the North Koreans into South Korea.

Ambassador Goldberg: I would like to address myself to the points raised by Bob McNamara. He is the man who will be responsible if our diplomatic efforts at the U.N. fail. I think to make military moves would not bother me. As the letter to Ayub Khan said, we do want to settle this matter by diplomatic means if possible.

I see some positive signs that would be provided by the military action (of sending air units to South Korea.)

Secretary McNamara: Let's get Sato's permission first. We'll then move the B 52s.

Secretary Rusk: Let's do not call it permission. It is notification.

The President: We must move up our forces to awaken the people to the danger. I would move our forces to the bases we already have. I would move them without saying much. I would be guided by the views of the military. Let's get our defenses in position.

The intercepts show North Korea is going into full mobilization. I would not send the B 52s out to bomb North Korea but I would put them into position. The Chiefs think they should be moved. We have got to have our hand out and our guard up.

Secretary Rusk: I am inclined to agree with Arthur that the military moves will support our diplomatic efforts at the U.N. It will show the urgency and the seriousness of the matter.

Secretary McNamara: It is easy then, We will move the B 52s this afternoon.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

-8-

Secretary Rusk: I do not see why you have to announce these units squadron by squadron, and give our battle plan.

Secretary McNamara: It will leak all over the place if we don't.

George Christian: I always feel like we should give all the information we can on a matter like this. Our position looks rather weak when we fail to give the units and later it leaks out all over.

The President: Clark, what is your judgment on this whole situation?

Clark Clifford: It has been my experience that when a situation of this type arises the public is first outraged. Later they change their mind.

If anything, I have a feeling that we need to proceed with caution. The situation about the ship is rather fuzzy in my mind. I have great concern about us getting out word of mobilization in this country. Suppose tomorrow that the North Koreans announce that they are mobilizing. Then we really build this situation up. Then, what if we do nothing? I am not comfortable with this large military build-up.

We may find that the matter will simmer down a lot during the U.N. discussion. I feel I should urge great caution in this matter and that we should proceed accordingly. If it appears we poise a threat to North Korea and do nothing, we are in a very difficult situation.

Secretary Rusk: If North Korea goes crazy and launches an attack we couldn't do very much.

General Wheeler: I would agree with that. The South Korean airforce is very weak compared with North Korea.

Secretary McNamara: But we must remember that we have the Enterprise and that it could retaliate with substantial force. There is a place where you get into a very critical position with this build-up.

The President: Then it becomes do we do something or nothing. What is your judgment, General Wheeler?

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPY SENT

Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

SERVICE SFT



~~TOP SECRET~~

-9-

General Wheeler: I would like to proceed with positioning our force in South Korea as recommended. I would place 170 land-based aircraft in the area. I would proceed to station the U.S.S. Kittyhawk off North Korea.

I would put her on the coast available to us. This would give us 300 carrier aircraft and 150 land-based aircraft. This would give us ample aircraft to protect us against any eventuality.

The President: Why now?

General Wheeler: We can move the aircraft quickly, but we have to have at least 18 hours to give the pilots a night's sleep and to provide some time to shake down on the bases. We must move maintenance units and spare parts. It would be four to five days before all of the units are operationally ready. The 26 B 52s will give us heavy strike capability if preemptive strikes begin.

The President: General Wheeler, how do you appraise our actions in light of what effect they will have on North Korea? What I am saying is, is it worth it to have your extra assurance when it may be viewed as a great provocation?

General Wheeler: First I do not think we can take the B 52s away from Vietnam. General Westmoreland faces a very serious situation. In recent cables he has asked for 120 B 52 mission capability per month. We are doing that. We should reach that level by February 1.

It would be imprudent to draw down on Westmoreland's supply of B 52s. He is about to have the most vicious battle of the Vietnam war.

B 52s have an all-weather capability. If other aircraft are unable to fly, the B 52s become very vital in support of our ground forces.

To the larger question, all military schools teach us that military power is in existence to enhance our foreign policy capabilities and to preserve the internal security of the United States.

I think that more military moves would support our diplomatic efforts that are our first order of business. But we should be prepared to move

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

-10-

on the other front if the need arises. Some would regard this as a provocation, I am sure. I know the Soviets would. I believe that it will prove to friend and enemy alike that there is determination on the part of the United States to do everything it can on both the diplomatic and the military front if necessary.

Public sentiment does change, but while we are moving on the diplomatic front we must be prepared to do something else if necessary.

Secretary McNamara: We will alert our B 52s. We can get by with not announcing this. By alerting them tonight, we can reduce the lead time.

The President: Buzz, what you are saying is that you do not know what you will be called upon to do but you do know that if we take the B 52s away from Westmoreland that this would be inappropriate. You believe we should put in the others to be ready in the event of an attack.

General Wheeler: That is correct, sir. You will recall that in 1950 the North Koreans moved in artillery and moved across the DMZ. I would not discount the possibility of this happening again.

I would want the B 52s and the fighter bombers to back up the ground forces.

The President: What you would do is have them so they could pulverize the enemy before they got across the DMZ if necessary.

General Wheeler: That is correct, sir. Also they are continuing their infiltration across the DMZ. The most symbolic act of the infiltrators was the attack on Blue House.

President Park said he would stand still for a reasonable time. But I think Park will retaliate if there is another Blue House incident or something of that type. I would like to have my units there in case they are needed. If diplomatic efforts fail there will be pressure to take retaliatory actions against North Koreans. We must be ready to react to what they might do. Although we don't like to imagine it, there could be a restart of the Korean War.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET~~

- 11 -

I asked the President to approve moving the units in the soonest possible time.

- We should place the Kittyhawk in the Japan area in the next four days.
- I would deploy the 26 B 52s.
- I would issue instructions covertly for the movement of the 173 aircraft.

Ambassador Goldberg: These military actions will create a sense of urgency for the U.N. to act. The only time those guys (the representatives to the United Nations) will do anything is when they have to.

Clark Clifford: Buzz Wheeler makes a very logical case. But it disturbs me deeply. I think the President must proceed on the basis of probabilities and not possibilities. I think the North Koreans are not able to mount a massive military activity. They are engaged in harassments.

We should not send fleets of our aircraft to Korea. I think that is wrong. I think this heightens tension and builds it up.

If North Korea is planning something important that could then begin the provocation for us moving. I would get the planes and crews ready here at home. But our moral posture will be better if the North Koreans move first.

I am deeply sorry about the ship and the 83 men but I do not think it is worth a resumption of the Korean War.

The President: We know what we will do if we had these planes out there and if North Korea attacked. What do we do if we get the planes out there and North Korea does not attack? That is something we must consider.

We should go to Sato and get his approval for moving the B 52s to Okinawa.

I want to get some of the Joint Chiefs of Staff opinion as to why they believe they need the aircraft there now if we do not expect an attack.

Of course we should authorize Ambassador Goldberg to go to the U.N. and present our case.

Let's meet again tonight at 6:30.

# # #

MEETING NOTES COPYRIGHTED  
Publication Requires  
Permission of Copyright  
Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

~~TOP SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

Jorden

~~SECRET~~RECEIVED  
WHICA

1968 JAN 25 21 22

EXDIS

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NLS 83-24By ica, NARS, Date 11-4-83~~SECRET~~

HCE244

APPENDIX A

PAGE 01 STATE 104475

81  
ORIGIN SS 25

INFO SSO 00, MM 01, NSCE 00, CCO 00, /026 R

DRAFTED BY: IO:JJSISCO  
APPROVED BY: THE SECRETARY  
AMB. GOLDBERG  
S/S:MR. WALSH  
WHITE HOUSE:MR. ROSTOW

Rostow

Z 252100Z JAN 68 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY RAWALPINDI FLASH 0597  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1857~~SECRET~~ STATE 104475

EXDIS

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

1. YOU SHOULD SEEK IMMEDIATE APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT  
AYUB AND PASS FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT:

"DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION IN KOREA IS  
ONE OF THE UTMOST GRAVITY. CONTINUING NORTH KOREAN  
AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 STATE 104475

ARE ACTIONS WHICH ARE INTOLERABLE AND CANNOT BE CONDONED.

IT IS MY EARNEST DESIRE TO SETTLE THIS MATTER PROMPTLY AND, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, BY DIPLOMATIC MEANS, INCLUDING TAKING THIS MATTER TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

I KNOW THAT YOU SHARE MY DESIRE FOR PEACE AND I AM COUNTING ON YOUR FULL SUPPORT OF OUR EFFORTS AT THE UN AND ELSEWHERE TO PREVENT THIS SITUATION FROM FURTHER DETERIORATING.

I THEREFORE, MR. PRESIDENT, EARNESTLY REQUEST YOUR COOPERATION AND TRUST THAT YOU WILL INSTRUCT YOUR DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UNITED NATIONS, AMBASSADOR SHAHI, WHO IS PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL FOR THIS MONTH, TO COOPERATE WITH MY REPRESENTATIVE IN SUPPORTING A SIMPLE RESOLUTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THE GRAVE SITUATION, CALLING FOR STRICT OBSERVANCE OF THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, AND REQUESTING THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE UNITED STATES CREW AND VESSEL. IN THIS CONNECTION, MR. PRESIDENT, I WISH TO

PAGE 3 RUEHC 104475 ~~SECRET~~

ASSURE YOU THAT THE SHIP WAS SEIZED IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS WELL BEYOND EVEN NORTH KOREA'S CONCEPTION OF A TWELVE MILE LIMIT.

I HAVE TAKEN THE LIBERTY TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU IN THIS DIRECT AND URGENT FASHION BECAUSE OF OUR FRIENDSHIP AND MY CONFIDENCE THAT WE SHARE BASIC CONVICTIONS ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY FOR STABILITY IN YOUR AREA. SINCERELY YOURS,  
LYNDON B. JOHNSON

HIS EXCELLENCY  
MOHAMMAD AYUB KHAN, H.P.K., H.J.,  
PRESIDENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC  
OF PAKISTAN, RAWALPINDI.  
RUEK

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

EXDIS