

MARCH 12, 1968 - 1:29 p.m.

84

TUESDAY LUNCH WITH FOREIGN POLICY ADVRS

The President
Secretary Clifford
General Wheeler
Director Helms

Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 13, 1968

9:45 a.m.

~~TOP SECRET~~

FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your Tuesday luncheon meeting with foreign policy advisors, which was held in the Mansion.

Those who attended were:

The President
Secretary Clifford
General Wheeler
Director Helms
Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

The meeting started at 1:29 p.m. The meeting ended at 2:32 p.m.

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Meeting began: 1:29 p.m.

Meeting ended: 2:32 p.m.

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NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING
WITH HIS
FOREIGN POLICY ADVISORS
AT THE
TUESDAY LUNCH

March 12, 1967
In the Mansion

The President watched portions of the Senate Foreign Relations hearings on television. He saw questions and answers given to Senator Dodd, Senator Pell, Senator Gore, and Senator Fulbright.

General Wheeler gave to the President two cables which he had drafted to be sent to General Westmoreland. Those cables are attached as appendixes A and B.

General Wheeler said that the weather was so bad that there was no need to consider targeting.

The President asked the group to look at the financing of the troop build-up very carefully. "We must have a \$1.8 billion without the build-up. With it we will need more than that -- you have to have about \$4 billion. Look into that."

All of you should also consider whether the President should make a statement. Give some thought on what we should say on the matter.

I want Clark and General Wheeler to talk to Congressman Rivers and Senator Russell as well as Congressman Mahon as soon as he returns from Texas. Have Russell get any of the people from the Appropriations Committee for this meeting.

All of you moderated my judgment in that Monday meeting after I returned from Puerto Rico. I was ready then to say that we should call up the reserves to strengthen the strategic reserves; to ask Congress for authority to call up selected reservists; to use this as a basis for a new position on the tax bill; and to ask for authority to extend enlistments. That Monday session did moderate my judgment some. I do think we should evaluate our strategy. It is a good idea from time to time to have a good, sound review. I

SERVICE SECRETARY hope we don't get over-run in the meantime.

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- 2 -

I want to get the judgment of Senator Russell and Congressmen Rivers and Mahon and others about how we deal with Fulbright on this.

Since Secretary Rusk undoubtedly would like a little rest after that hearing, I don't think we really have much more we need to cover here. There is nothing we can do on anything else, is there?

Walt Rostow: No sir, not that I know of.

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Luncheon with the President
Tuesday, March 12, 1968, 1:00 P. M.

Agenda

1. Vietnam: The Senate and Consultation. (Sect. Rusk)
Reflections on hearings.
2. Korean Troops. (Sects. Clifford and Rusk)
Next moves: light division; costs of "extra two divisions."
3. Vietnamese Troops. (Sects. Clifford and Rusk)
Staff work on support for Thieu's proposition: to provide between 100,000 and 125,000 additional men in six months. How to nail it down?
Will there be conflicts between build-up of Vietnamese and U. S. forces?
(See Tab A)
4. Pueblo: Next Steps. (Sect. Rusk)
5. Time Scenario for Troop Decisions. (The President)
Specific matters you wish presented to you for decision and action.
6. Other.

Walt Rostow

~~TOP SECRET~~ attachment (Tab A)

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State 3-13-79; NSC 3-27-80
PC# 11-3-32

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TAB A

(para. 7 from Ambassador Bunker's cable of March 11, 1968)

Re para 6 - Mobilization - I have already reported on President Thieu's decision to accelerate the mobilization process and his desire to provide between 100,000 and 125,000 additional men for the armed forces during the next six months. In this regard, President Thieu envisages the extensive use of units on Fairfax type operations to protect the cities, their environs, and the lines of communication. We are working with the Government of Vietnam to maintain key civilians in their government functions where they cannot be spared or replaced. General Westmoreland informs me that FY 68 program for the expansion of the Vietnamese armed forces involves an increase of 64,000 men. Only approximately 25,000 of this force increase has been realized. The current approved program is therefore short approximately 40,000 men, for which equipment has been programmed. In accordance with this program, these 40,000 men were to be used to fill existing units and to activate the following major elements: approximately 80 Regional Force companies and 250 Popular Force platoons, 1 Artillery Battalion, 1 Engineer Battalion, 1 Separate Infantry Regiment, and 2 Infantry Battalions to flesh out existing regiments. If additional men are mobilized, RF/PF units could be organized and equipped with World War II-type weapons available by virtue of receipt of more modern weapons by ARVN. General Westmoreland's proposed FY 69 program involves an increase of 93,000. A formal request for approval has been submitted through his channel. Therefore, it is General Westmoreland's opinion that the number of men Thieu plans to mobilize can be conscripted, trained and equipped. Assuming that 125,000 men are mobilized during the next six months, this will result in a net increase of approximately 60,000 men in the South Vietnamese Army over current strength in consideration of estimated losses of approximately 10,000 per month through casualties and desertions. There will be shortages of some equipment until FY 68 programmed quantities are delivered and until FY 69 items are programmed and available from production. Individual weapons will again be of the World War II-type and vehicle shortages will have some effect on mobility. However, these problems are believed to be manageable. The major problem is one of leadership, where it is estimated that officer and NCO requirements may be difficult to fill. We feel that we should encourage Thieu and the Joint General Staff to proceed soonest with their mobilization, not only to form additional units that are sorely needed and to fill up their ranks, but to deny this manpower to the Viet Cong, who are, themselves, in desperate need of manpower.

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State letter 5-7-79
DST 11-5-82

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CABLE - EYES ONLY - IMMEDIATE

FM GEN EARLE G. WHEELER, CJCS
TO GEN W. C. WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV
INFO ADM U.S.G. SHARP, CINCPAC

DELIVER DURING WAKING HOURS

REF: _____

1. By referenced message I have informed you of upcoming actions to meet alternative two of the force requirements expressed by you in MAC 3385. This message will provide you further background as to the situation here and its impact on force deployments to SEA. The following factors are important:

a. Leaks to the press have resulted in a rash of stories, reflected in debate in the Congress, that you have asked for an additional 206,000 troop augmentation.

b. There is substantial opposition in the Congress to any further deployment of forces to South Vietnam. Moreover, *is demanding that*
~~there is a move afoot in the Senate to force the President~~ seek Congressional approval before undertaking further deployments of U.S. troops.

c. A great many knowledgeable Congressmen and news media personnel know full well that the CONUS reserve cannot support any substantial additional deployment without a call-up of reserves.

d. It is anticipated that Members of Congress and the news media will criticize the Administration regardless of what is done; i.e., some will criticize because further deployments are

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By DUH LARA, Date 3-1-91

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made while others will criticize on the basis that more was not sent.

2. At a meeting at the White House last night to discuss the augmentation you requested in MAC 3385, the highest authority stated that, in response to questions and criticism, he proposes to say in effect: Westmoreland asked for these forces (30,000) as soon as possible; they were all we could realistically get to him to bolster his combat strength during the next three to four months. We intend to build up the CONUS strategic reserve in order to improve our over-all capabilities. We will look at other requirements if and when the situation necessitates.

3. Furthermore, I was directed to keep you informed of the status of our forces in the United States so that you will not in future be placed in the position of asking for something that does not exist or is not available.

4. I will appreciate as always any comments you may care to offer. Warm regards.

~~SECRET~~

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TO: General Westmoreland, COMUSMACV

INFO: Admiral Sharp, CINCPAC
General Johnson, CSA
General McConnell, CSAF
Admiral Moorer, CNO
General Chapman, CMC
Lt General Spivy, DJS

(Deliver during duty hours)

Reference: MAC 3385

1. As I informed you in earlier messages, the CONUS strategic reserve is below requirements. In response to your earlier request for reinforcements, we managed to deploy the 3d Brigade 82nd Abn Div and the 27th Marine RLT by shaving established and desirable deployment criteria as regards interval between tours in SVN and remaining time before expiration of terms of service.

2. We can meet the request set forth in your message, referenced above, only by a call-up of reserve component units and individuals and a supplemental appropriation for FY '68. The inclination here is to meet your request (second alternative which you opt for) as soon as possible and for the reasons you set forth in referenced message. Hence, we are setting to work to that end; final decision by highest authority still not made. I will inform you soonest of decision when made.

3. You should be aware of following policy points:

a. We plan to meet ASAP your emergency requirements over the next three or four months as set forth in reference.

b. The MACV civilianization program is deferred; however, as and when conditions permit, examination of substitution of contractor effort in lieu of military support effort will be reopened.

c. The 3d Brig 82nd Abn Div and the 27th Marine RLT were deployed to meet an emergency need expressed by you. Retention of these units (or replacement therefor) will depend on your further requests and the situation at the time.

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Authority 6 JCS 17 Aug 83 (Westmoreland) Papers
By OKH, NARA, Date 3-1-81

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d. We are concerned by the state of the CONUS strategic reserve; therefore, we plan to improve its readiness and expand somewhat its size so that we can better meet overall contingency requirements.

e. As we now see it (subject to a reserve call-up and related Congressional actions), we can provide forces as requested in reference as follows:

- a. 23d Marine RLT and related units by about 15 June.
- b. An Army Mechanized brigade by about 25 July.
- c. One MP bn in early July.
- d. One Armored Cavalry squadron by mid-August.
- e. Air Force elements (except for FAC's) as specified.
- f. Naval elements largely as you desire.

In summary, you should have in SVN (if program is approved and call-up of reserves made) the bulk of the combat elements of your request by about 1 August.

5. Moreover, action is underway to deploy at an early date the three tactical fighter squadrons (1 USMC and 2 Air Force) deferred from Program 5.

6. Also, contrary to information I provided to you earlier, it now seems that the ROKG may well go through with the deployment of the ROK light division. Equipment for this unit is on Okinawa; the deployment is being pressed in Seoul. I will keep you informed as to progress.

Warm regards.