

102
APRIL 4, 1968 - 3:47 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH U THANT,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN

The President
U Thant
Ambassador Goldberg

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 7, 1968

~~TOP SECRET~~

FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your meeting with U Thant
at the United Nations Building in New York City, April 4, 1968.

Those attending the meeting were:

The President
U Thant - Secretary General of the United Nations
Ambassador Goldberg
Tom Johnson
Ralph Bunche
Jim Jones

The meeting began at 3:47 p.m. The meeting ended at 4:30 p.m.

~~TOP SECRET~~

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~~TOP SECRET~~

Meeting began: 3:47 p. m.

Meeting ended: 4:30 p. m.

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NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING
WITH
U THANT - SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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Holder: W. Thomas Johnson

April 4, 1968
At the United Nations
New York City

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 87-31
By ing NARA. Date 6-20-89

U THANT: Thanks for your helpfulness. You were very magnanimous in the process for peace. I congratulate you. I regret your decision. Your speech will generate a process for peace in Vietnam.

THE PRESIDENT: That is encouraging. We tried to convince our people some move had to be made. We felt this was a step. I hope conditions will permit it to be a big step. If there is any recognition of it we will take another one. I will not do anything to endanger my men. We are hopeful it will permit initiation of some exchange. That will be encouraging.

I have asked Ambassador Goldberg to brief you on the speech.

U THANT: Thank you for that. As I indicated to you it is important that Peking has not broadcast Hanoi's statement up to 1 a.m. today. Hanoi ignored Peking.

Peking Radio never broadcast some statements. Hanoi doesn't care about Peking's attitude. These are factors that indicate Hanoi is somewhat independent of Peking. This indicates relative independence of Hanoi from Peking. You should keep this in mind. It is difficult for even doves in Hanoi to come in with a statement like they did yesterday.

On Monday I transmitted a message to Hanoi:

- . Not to react negatively immediately to the President's speech.
- . Please consider it carefully and react after very carefully reading it.
- . Also told General DeGaulle not to react negatively.

I have nothing to advise on the next step. But this is a very important step. Hanoi really wants to talk to you.

There are some procedural questions. I think Geneva would be the best place since Geneva has historically been involved. When I was in New Delhi, if parties agree to talks, she will be privileged to have them in New Delhi as Chairman of the ICC. The French also said, not officially, the French Government would be privileged to host talks in Paris.

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I am at your disposal. My sole concern is to contribute as best I can to bringing about peace. Coming from the country I do, our experience in Burma in World War II -- 95% of our people were elated - we worked for them. The more they stayed, the more Japanese stayed on, the more bitter the feelings were. We began to regard the Japanese as foreigners - just as the British. Now our relations with the Japanese are excellent. Now all my people are very anti-Communist. The Communist backbone was broken in Burma with advisers.

I think you should test Hanoi. Hanoi is very independent of the Communists. In the final analysis, they will come with non-aligned constitution. It is necessary that U. S. has a long and difficult task. I have a high regard for Thompson and Harriman. I hope Goldberg can be involved. I am at your disposal. I leave this evening for Geneva. If possible, I may talk with Bo.

There is no immediate prospect for a resolution. I may talk to Bo.

THE PRESIDENT: That would be very desirable. Your evaluation and assessment is a reasonable one. You demonstrate a very constructive attitude. I appreciate your statement and your doing what you did Sunday. I do not hold out much hope from this message, but I do have hope. I wanted to appeal to the UN and ICC and others who could be in a position to help. I asked the Soviet Ambassador to come down. I spent some time with him.

The Soviets thought we would never get out of Vietnam because of investment and bases there. Rusk and Clifford and I put in a plan - a modification of the Goldberg plan. We would help both of them if we could, if they would let us.

From the Kosygin talks in Glassboro, I don't think they understand Americans. We want to communicate the hope of tomorrow.

I have tried in this effort to stop the bombing against most of the people, and it continues only where these efforts directly threaten our men.

I stretched this as far as I could. Goldberg wanted to stop it all. But I could not endanger our men. If they would not have a crash program, O. K. But now they are desperately rushing in supplies. Ninety percent of the population is above the 20th parallel.

Secretary Clifford feels we have 9 - 10 months to do what we can for this world. We have to take some chances.

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U Thant - Thanks for helpfulness

You were very magnanimous in process for peace. I congratulate you. I regret your decision. Your speech will generate a process for peace in U.S.

Pres - That is encouraging. We tried to convince our people some moves had to be made. Felt this was a step - hope conditions I permitted to be a big step - If there is any recognition of it we will take another one. I will not do anything to endanger my men. We are hopeful if will permit initiation of some exchange. That will be encouraging. I asked to have Goldhamer brief you on speech.

U Thant - Thank you for that. As I indicated to you it is up to Peking has not broadcast Harro's statement up to I am today. Harro agreed Peking. There are many messages on W.F. prog.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NJ 87-31

By Dec NARA Date 3-1-91

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French also said not officially the French
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And pt- I am at your disposal.
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We would help both of them if we could if they let us.

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(mint)

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I trust you. I like you.

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Abrams feels strong about

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Secretary General met
Privately to discuss peace
in Vietnam and Southeast
Asia. [REDACTED] AMBASSADOR
Goldberg and Undersecretary
Ralph Bunche also took
part in the discussions.

MR President—

MR. AMBASSOR—

For press purposes I
Propose:

"The President and the
Secretary-General met
privately to discuss peace in
Vietnam and Southeast
Asia. Undersecretary Ralph
Bunche and AMBASSADOR
Arthur Goldberg took part
in the discussions."

FOR THE PRESS

FROM TOM JOHNSON

The President does plan to attend the dinner tonight. After the dinner, he will depart for March AFB in California.

The President will have breakfast aboard Air Force One tomorrow morning with former President Eisenhower (on the ground at March AFB).

The President will depart March AFB about 8 a.m. for Honolulu, arriving 11:30 a.m. local time.

The meetings will discuss high-level military appointments now pending and military developments. Appointments which will be discussed will include a replacement for General Westmoreland and Admiral Sharp of CINCPAC. (I do not know if decisions will be made; they will be discussed).

The Honolulu meeting was tentatively scheduled some days ago, but was not definitely set up until it was determined the best time for General Westmoreland to come to Honolulu. (This meeting was set up prior to the events of this week).

As previously announced, the President has asked Admiral Sharp to remain in his assignment two months past his normal retirement in May.

Since the visit to Korea by Cyrus Vance, the President has wanted to hold bilateral discussions with President Park of Korea on Korean-U.S. matters. They will review all of the subjects discussed by Korean officials and Mr. Vance, including the new program of aid. This meeting will be on Sunday.

Secretary Rusk will arrive from Wellington for these discussions.

Secretary Clifford, General Wheeler, and Assistant Secretary William Bundy will accompany the President---along with appropriate White House staff and Mr. Walt Rostow.

8:00 Departure
Press
12:00 Press Leave

AFB

March

10-arr

2 Motels

Ramada

Caravan

Items



Jones

Johnson

Coke - Pres -

White Rock Gingerale - Goldberg

Bunche - taking notes

UThant talking w/ pencil

Pres. listened - I have to check
dotted notes