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APRIL 5, 1968 - 11:10 a.m.

PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH NEGRO LEADERS

Roy Wilkins	Judge Leon Higgenbotham, Phil.
Whitney Young	Richard Hatcher, Mayor of
Bayard Rustin	Gary, Indiana
Walter Fauntroy	Walter Washington
Dorothy Height	Reverend Leon Sullivan, Phil.
Clarence Mitchell, Jr.	Bishop George Baber
Clarence Mitchell, III	

Warren Christopher	Senator Mansfield
Thurgood Marshall	Senator Kuchel
Robert Weaver	Speaker McCormack
Steve Pollak	Congressman Albert
	Congressman McCulloch

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 7, 1968

FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your meeting with Negro Leaders on April 5, 1968 in the Cabinet Room.

Those who attended were:

The President
Roy Wilkins
Whitney Young
Bayard Rustin
Walter Fauntroy
Dorothy Height
Clarence Mitchell, Jr.
Clarence Mitchell, III
Judge Leon Higgenbotham of Philadelphia
Richard Hatcher - Mayor of Gary, Indiana
Walter Washington
Reverend Leon Sullivan, Philadelphia
Bishop George Baber

Warren Christopher
Thurgood Marshall
Robert Weaver
Steve Pollak
Senator Mansfield
Senator Kuchel
Speaker McCormack
Congressman Albert
Congressman McCulloch

The meeting began at 11:10 a.m. The meeting ended at 11:57 a.m.

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S

MEETING WITH NEGRO

LEADERS

THE PRESIDENT: I asked you here to ask for your support as responsible Negro leaders. (The President read Associated Press item on Stokely Carmichael.)

UNDER SECRETARY KATZENBACH: The loss of this leader is so tragic. We must see what we can do to further Dr. King's objective.

SECRETARY CLIFFORD: I hope my Department will not be required to enter this situation. We will not unless called upon. We will see to it that law and order will be maintained. I knew Dr. King. I had deep respect for him. White leaders respected Dr. King. This was the act of a demented maniac. It does not reflect the attitude of white people in this country. The act of one insane man should not bring us to this type of situation.

JUSTICE MARSHALL: We must get the country out of this mood of depression. It is the responsibility to all. The important thing is to keep people out of the streets and change the mood in the country.

WHITNEY YOUNG: We need a dramatic demonstration of what Secretary Clifford said. We need funds for the cities. We need more than patience and non-violence. We need funds for the cities.

BAYARD RUSTIN: Mr. Young has stated the problem clearly. People will not behave in a vacuum. We must carry something to the people. People do not have hope that conditions will be relieved in short range. We must speak out against violence.

DOROTHY HEIGHT: We will support efforts for non-violence. There is a bad climate of warfare and hostile beliefs. The Mace being used by Negroes has never been tested to see if it is harmful. There is a bad mystique about weapons.

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WALTER FAUNTROY: Dr. King would be pleased with what this country represents. I hope this will be matched by practical leadership between now and Monday and Tuesday.

CLARENCE MITCHELL: I am leaving a statement thanking you for what you have done. Your devotion to us and to our people has meant much. The Civil Rights Bill is due to you and many others. We must say to the country: "We must work together. But Martin Luther King and others who have died -- they cannot benefit from the grief."

THE PRESIDENT: The President read the wire from Martin Luther King, Sr. and the others who couldn't attend the meeting.

REVEREND LEON SULLIVAN: The large majority of Negroes are not in favor of violence, but we need something to fight back with. Otherwise we will be caught with nothing.

THE PRESIDENT: I have sent letters to the Speaker of the House and Congressman Ford urging action. Another letter has been prepared -- this is not public. You may be sure that this leader will do all he can to make this a reality and get it on the Statute books.

MAYOR WASHINGTON: I agree with what has been said. I have been in the streets in our own city. We must have some concrete and meaningful action to counter dialogue in the streets. We must not over-react. We personally approve your action.

MAYOR HATCHER: I appreciate being called into this meeting. I have two possible observations:

It would be a mistake for black leaders to over-react.

We must be clear and definitive declaration on part of black community that there will be a reversal and regrouping in our country. Congress must act so people can see something tangible.

BISHOP GEORGE BABER: John Dunn said that in the worst times you can do the best things. The fine things we do the more impressive our position will be. Should go on the air to the people. Negroes will respect it. Your observations were very effective.

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JUDGE LEON HIGGENBOTHAM: This is a dark hour. If we work, we can have our finest hour. This can be America's finest hour.

CLARENCE MITCHELL, III: In the gap, the incumbent will be calm. Nothing will be done if violence begets violence.

SECRETARY WEAVER: We all recognize the seriousness of the situation. We need long-range approach. The time is now -- it is not time to face up to the facts of life.

THE PRESIDENT: The President gave the following figures on:

1960	36	for training
JFK '64	46	for training
Now '69	126	for training

Poor		Health, Education, Welfare, Social Security	
60	9-1/2	60	19
64	12	64	24
69	28	69	48

Accommodation Act -- We moved Voting Rights, Housing. I recommended Open Housing. I appealed and have appealed.

I am moving. We will continue to move.

Now, we will have marches and protests. Let's bring minimum danger. We must organize in Committee rooms to get those things through. We need 48b for budget. We need money for poverty -- we need more money for housing.

They are yet to be moved.

I have taken every opportunity to try to get through to the young people. How well I have gotten through remains to be seen. But also -- how well have you gotten through?