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#12a notes	Notes from 4/7/68 - 3:05 p.m. President's meeting with Gen. William Westmoreland - Cabinet Room [Sanitized NLJ 87-31] Secret 4 pp. <i>one NLJ 047-003-1-1 2-19-03</i>	4/7/68	A

FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings, Box 3

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APRIL 7, 1968 - 3:05 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH GENERAL
WILLIAM WESTMORELAND

The President	General Westmoreland
The Vice President	Walt Rostow
Secretary Rusk	George Christian
Secretary Clifford	Tom Johnson
Under Secretary Katzenbach	

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 8, 1968

~~TOP SECRET~~

FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of your meeting with General Westmoreland April 7, 1968, in the Cabinet Room.

Those attending the meeting were:

The President
The Vice President
Secretary Rusk
Secretary Clifford
Under Secretary Katzenbach
General Westmoreland
Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

The meeting began at 3:05 p.m. The meeting ended at 4 p.m.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)

White House Guidelines, Feb. 1991

By Dust, MADA, Date 3-1-91

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12a
April 8, 1968

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING
WITH GENERAL WESTMORELAND

Sunday, April 7, 1968
In the Cabinet Room

The President: General Westmoreland will visit with General Eisenhower. Let's not make him late.

Walt Rostow: General Westmoreland will discuss future deployment at the DMZ.

General Westmoreland: We want to move ahead on strong-point obstacle system. The enemy artillery and rockets forced a deferment in this program. Khesanh has been relieved.

The President: Can we replace U. S. troops there with Vietnamese?

General Westmoreland: Yes, sir. First link-up of troops at Khesanh was a Vietnamese battalion.

Clark Clifford: We must look into the M-14 utilization.

Secretary Rusk: You may want to give them to RF and PF.

The President: Get the answer on M-14's as soon as you can.

Walt Rostow: Point 2 is a discussion of operational plans under conditions of a total bombing cessation.

General Westmoreland: We need a better company level- battalion level radio. Want recommendations on this.

On general offensive operations, I have talked to Thieu and Vien to get South Vietnamese moving on all intelligence.

I will have another meeting to give South Vietnamese another spur. Intelligence must be sharpened. We must have a psychological war campaign.

Operational plans under conditions of total bombing cessation would be no different than those we now have.

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Secretary Rusk: We must make sure assumption of not taking advantage holds during bombing stand-down.

The President: Should we give the message we sent to Hanoi.

Nick Katzenbach: No, we gave a digest of it yesterday. Let's get rid of Baggs and Ashmore.

The President: We will name Abrams as Westmoreland's successor.

Have Cy Vance and General Goodpaster drop in and out of negotiations as military.

Send Goodpaster as Abrams' successor temporarily.

General Wheeler: Let Services nominate the Deputy.

The President: Talk to Averill about this. I will talk to Cy. Get Vance to replace Thompson.

The President: I am ready to announce Abrams now.

General Wheeler: I am ready.

Clark Clifford: I am ready.

The President: We talked about morale of troops. You keep a constant check on that.

General Westmoreland: I will.

The President: Resumption of reconnaissance flights.

Clark Clifford: We stopped reconnaissance north of 20th parallel during delicate period.

When do you want us to resume it?

General Westmoreland: My opinion is that we need good intelligence

-- MIGs

-- SAMs

-- New roads

-- Traffic into Haiphong

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We must resupply agent ^{teams?} trans in North by air.

Clark Clifford: We need to keep our reconniassance going. Unless we do we are working from blind hand.

Secretary Rusk: We must have occasional reconnaissane flights up there.

Clark Clifford: We will start an occasional reconnaissane program.

The President: What have we agreed to do that we haven't done?

Clark Clifford: Callup 24,000 reserves. We are all in agreement on this callup. We will proceed on that basis.

The President: I am ready. I want them to have something to do.

Clark Clifford: We will be ready to assure you they have guns, equipment, training program.

General Wheeler: I am going to see General Johnson and check on this today.

The President: You want extra men and fighter squadrons.

General Westmoreland: I would like to have 3 ^{battalions (?)} squadrons and 2 squadrons as part of 13,500 program.

General Wheeler: We need to get these carriers rehabilitated.

Clark Clifford: I have got to cut \$3 billion to cut out of DOD budget.

Clark Clifford: We will have last report on question of bombing by 7:00 a.m. tomorrow. I am willing to make a flat, categorical statement that no U. S. planes hit N. W. North Vietnam.

The President: What else do we need to do?

General Westmoreland: I like the idea of stationing men in Hawaii.

The President: What do you plan to put in Hawaii?

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General Wheeler: If callup is limited to 24,000 we can't put troops in Hawaii.

The President: Any SAMs around Khesanh or in DMZ?

General Westmoreland: No, I put no credence in that report.

General Wheeler: There are two just above DMZ.

The President : When is Bunker coming in?

Nick Katzenbach: Wednesday, 10:00 a.m.

General Westmoreland: We will either meet in Hawaii or not.

Attending this meeting were:

The President
The Vice President
Secretary Rusk
Clark Clifford
Nick Katzenbach
General Westmoreland
General Wheeler
Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

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Extracted from April 7 meeting

The Cabinet Room

Attending:

President
Vice President
Rusk
Clifford
Katzenbach
Rostow
Christian
Johnson
General Westmoreland

President: I want you to go back again and get me exactly what you all have in mind on reserves. We have been messing around with different figures and different dollar amounts for far too long.

And I don't want it all over the newspapers either. Clark (Clifford), I hope you can do it without telling every leak in your department. Work it out yourself.

Clifford: That's just not possible, sir. I will have to talk with my people. Papers will have to be prepared. Memos have to be written.

This was double-checked with George Christian, who was at the meeting.

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