

ARCHIVES PROCESSING NOTE

The folder containing these notes was originally incorrectly entitled “June 21, 1968, 8:45a.m., Meeting with Foreign Policy Advisors.”

On this date, Archives staff corrected the folder title to entitled “**June 22**, 1968, 8:45a.m., Meeting with Foreign Policy Advisors,” which is the correct date of the meeting.

Regina Greenwell
Senior Archivist
November 12, 2014

WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

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#59a notes	Notes from 6/21/68 - 8:45 a.m. meeting with Foreign Policy Advisors [Sanitized NLJ 87-31] Secret 4 pp.	6/21/68	A

FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings, Box 3

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JUNE 22, 1968 --- 8:45 a.m.

MEETING WITH FOREIGN POLICY ADVISERS

The President	Under Secretary Katzen-
Secretary Rusk	bach
Secretary Clifford	William Bundy
Ambassador Harriman	William Jordan
CIA Director Helms	Walt Rostow
Justice Fortas	George Christian
General Taylor	Tom Johnson
General Wheeler	

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 22, 1968

12:05 p.m.

*Rec'd
12:05 p*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Tom

FROM: Tom Johnson

Attached are the notes of the President's meeting with his Foreign Policy Advisers this morning.

Those attending the meeting were:

The President
Secretary Rusk
Secretary Clifford
Ambassador Harriman
CIA Director Helms
Justice Fortas
General Taylor
General Wheeler
Under Secretary Katzenbach
William Bundy
William Jordan
Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

The meeting began at 8:45 a.m. and ended at 9:45 a.m.

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NOTES ON PRESIDENT'S MEETING
OF FOREIGN POLICY ADVISERS

SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 1968

THOSE ATTENDING THE MEETING WERE:

The President
Secretary Rusk
Secretary Clifford
Ambassador Harriman
CIA Director Helms
Justice Fortas
General Taylor
General Wheeler
Under Secretary Katzenbach
William Bundy
William Jordan
Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson

SANITIZED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 87-31
By 1-8, NARA, Date 6-20-89

The President: There are several points I'd like to cover.

1. All of us in the government should give thought to doing everything we should on the psychological front. Things seem to be getting better for them since the bombing stopped.
2. I want every proposal from the best brains in the government for something additional to do that we are not doing.
3. Before Dean (Secretary Rusk) leaves today I wanted to hear from all of you. Give him your views and advice.
4. We were helped by Secretary Clifford's and Secretary Rusk's news conferences this week.
5. I am worried about the situation in Saigon.

Secretary Rusk: The situation in Saigon is more fragile than Bunker thinks it is.

The President: Maybe you or Clark (Secretary Clifford) should go out.

Secretary Clifford: Tentatively plan for General Wheeler and I to go out on July 13.

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Ambassador Harriman: We are interested in what Secretary Rusk has to say. Why are you so worried about Saigon.

The President: There is instability between Ky and Thieu. He doesn't like sitting in the back row after all of the command positions he has held.

CIA Director Helms: He says too many times a week to too many people that he isn't going to mount a coup. That shows it is on his mind.

Secretary Rusk: [REDACTED] A3

We should lay it on the line about these attacks on Saigon. We should use our propaganda line to the fullest.

Secretary Rusk: Indians propose a plan to get Hanoi to re-establish the DMZ in return for a halt in the bombing. They want to send a man to Hanoi. I think we should encourage them to do that.

We need to sort out the political problems at the top in Saigon. We need to get Ky back into the main business.

Key Southern leaders in the Viet Cong should be subject to defection. Each one is worth a squadron of aircraft. Group defections are very important. Let's try to get more. These are contagious.

Assistant Secretary Bundy: We must do some hard thinking about what we say in private conversation.

Walt Rostow: We must probe the proposal that a political solution must precede a military settlement.

We must proceed to get with Thieu on proposals for informal political exchanges, defections and contact with the NLF.

Secretary Rusk: We must talk with Thieu soon so he knows all that is going on.

The President: Should Ambassador Bunker do more to encourage Thieu.

Assistant Secretary Bundy: It is a political hot potato -- a question of dealing with the NLF. They say they can't do this as long as the NLF is doing this or that. There are Southerners in the NLF who dislike how North Vietnamese are taking over Viet Cong units. I doubt that this is a real NLF contact.

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Secretary Rusk: We need to separate the Viet Cong from North Vietnam.

Under Secretary Katzenbach: Total absence of NLF representation in Paris must be troublesome to Southern Communists.

Walt Rostow: Look at the situation on the ground. The Southern NLF is being ground to bits and taken over by North Vietnam. In July and August we could take political and military leadership.

The President: Will they hit Hue and DaNang?

General Wheeler: They may. They have the capability after they put the 320th together to make a good push.

General Abrams is not in any trouble.

Secretary Rusk: Wouldn't they pull units back if they are getting ready for a big offensive.

Under Secretary Katzenbach: Thieu is not expendable under the Constitution. Huong is. He could be a better link.

General Taylor: We are dealing with Southern wing of the Viet Cong in the Antwerp thing.

The President: (Ambassador Harriman) Would you give us a summary of your talks.

Ambassador Harriman: Nothing concrete has been done. The most interesting thing was putting the political settlement before a military settlement.

I don't know if you should attach the importance which Washington analysis did to Bill Jordan's private contact.

They are paying attention to what is being said.

We should try to draw a wedge between Hanoi and the NLF. Only citizens of North Vietnam have been allowed to sit at the conference table.

I told Zoran the Russians have a stake in this. We must get Russians engaged in this.

You have got to go to the top, to members of the Politburo. Top Soviets are involved. Zoran came to see us.

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Ambassador Harriman: The President's position has improved internationally since March 31.

Bill Jordan did a good analysis of editorials. World showed you took initiative. Now they are stepping up attacks on Saigon.

The American people are solidly behind you.

Cyrus Vance ought to go to Saigon. They haven't faced up to the fact they have to negotiate. We must get Saigon to recognize that we aren't their satellite. Behavior of the South Vietnamese Generals must be required.

The President: How do we stand vs. March 31.

General Wheeler: We are stronger militarily. Khe Sanh is relieved. Ashau Valley is cleaned out once more. The enemy lost heavily in two sizable defections. One high-ranking officer defected.

Secretary Rusk: There is some advantage to Cy Vance and Ambassador Bunker talking. Also in keeping South Vietnamese in touch with the situation.

Ambassador Harriman: That's right. We must show that we aren't selling them down the river.

Secretary Rusk: A trip by Cy would be good.

William Jordan: Re the Press in Europe and Asia, our position has never been better. The enemy has lost ground with propaganda movies and brochures.

Ambassador Harriman: The Press has confidence in Bill.

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