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| #98 notes | NSC Meeting, 11/25/68 Possible Classified Information 5 p. <i>open 5-19-87 NLS 86-154</i> | 11/25/68 | A |
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FILE LOCATION

Tom Johnson's Notes of Meetings, Box 4

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SERVICE SET

NOTES ON THE NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

November 25, 1968

THOSE PRESENT:

The President
Secretary Rusk
Secretary Clifford
General Wheeler
CIA Director Helms
Ambassador Wiggins
Secretary Fowler
Walt Rostow
Ed Fried
Joe Sisco
George Christian
Tom Johnson

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Secretary Clifford: We lost three planes in 48 hours in North Vietnam. It is getting serious.

The President: Joe (Secretary Fowler) you're first on the schedule.

Secretary Fowler: The letter and the response to DeGaulle is very significant to the market.

As of 11:00 a.m., markets were as follows:

The exchange rate movement is favorable.
The franc rate is favorable.
The pound rate is favorable.
The dollar is strong.
The gold market is stable at \$40.00.

The French exchange control measures have the marking of being very tough.

Tourism -- only \$40 french francs can be taken abroad and \$100 of other currencies -- one a year.

Export tax incentives -- not clear. They may be a tax credit.

Imports -- Nothing special expected.

Wages and Prices -- hold the line policies.

Overall -- the impact is that the U. S., U.K., France, and Germany are cutting back.

The President: How much feeling between the Germans and the French?

Secretary Fowler: Considerable. The Germans feel the French put them on a tough basis. The French feel the Germans haven't done as much as they should.

The President: What else could we be asked to do?

Secretary Fowler: \$300, \$400. million more. They want some recycling of it. The British Treasury may make some good sounds.

The President: After reading DeGaulle's speech and seeing market performance, would you say it is likely to be successful?

Secretary Fowler: I would say so for now. It could hold.

The President: Will it adversely affect us?

Secretary Fowler: I don't think so.

The President: Is there anything more we should do?

Secretary Fowler: No. We and Central Bank Governors have done all that could be conjured up.

The President: Let's not speculate. Let's wait until we have all the facts in.

Secretary Rusk: You don't have any estimate of what might happen.

Secretary Fowler: There have been some money flow.

The President: We have three messages:

- Economic
- State of the Union
- Budget Message

Don't tie me to a situation. I don't know what I might do. I notice Rusk and Clifford are in disagreement.

Secretary Rusk: What are we in disagreement about?

The President: About the basic Vietnam policy, so the press says. It's imaginary, but we must watch it.

I do not want to submit a reform message.

Mills seems reconciled at our not doing it.

Military:

General Wheeler: Situation is good. 230 violations of the DMZ since November 1. (Indications of enemy presence). We fired 66 times into DMZ.

There have been 60 attacks of population centers. Nine in the last 24 hours. Three major attacks.

There have been 80 hostile reactions to reconnaissance planes. Two reconnaissance planes and one escort plane have been shot down. These were south of the 19th. No manned aircraft north of the 19th except at very high levels.

In route package one, there is much activity. Tactical reconnaissance in Laos.

General Abrams says pacification has stepped up. 3% population gain in the last month.

69.8 percent under GVN control.

14 contested.

15.3 under Viet Cong control.

Chien Hoi Program is up. The best month in attacking Viet Cong infrastructure.

General Abrams has a good assessment.

1. The enemy shifted from military to political.
2. The enemy recognizes our strategy. 69% of attacks on hamlets this month by the Viet Cong.

The tone is optimistic and driving.

The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese lost 2900 last week.

The President: Are there any second thoughts on the bombing halt.

General Wheeler: No second thoughts, but he said reconnaissance up to the 19th was essential.

The President: Anything to cause you to reassess the decision to halt bombing.

General Wheeler: No.

The President: Any second thoughts by General Abrams?

General Wheeler: None as of this time.

Secretary Clifford: Late Friday we lost a reconnaissance plane with an armed escort.

You authorized armed escort to shoot back at facilities shooting at our aircraft. We decided to stand down reconnaissance until we had time to tell Hanoi. Cy told the North Vietnamese. At 7:00 p.m. Bus resissued reconnaissance. Three and one-half hours later we lost it.

We lost a Navy reconnaissance plane and AF-F4D escort craft.

The Problem is ahead. There may be a buildup. We could bomb a village accidentally. We may be able to get out information with less provocation.

United Nations

Secretary Rusk: Ambassador Wiggins has been doing a beautiful job up there.

Ambassador Wiggins: The conscientiousness of the Czech invasion by the USSR has pervaded the entire session. Senator Cooper had a long session of definition of "aggression."

The Chinese representation arose on three separate occasions. They were voted down by larger margins than ever before.

The Mideast has engaged much attention. The efforts of the missions has been on Jarring mission. He is now going to meet on Cyprus with UAR and Israeli representatives.

I do not know if the UAR wants peace or if the Israelis will give back any territory.

Disarmament -- will be an issue.

The President: The President-elect thinks we should let Czech thing cool down before we meet with the Soviets.

Ambassador Wiggins: They are embarrassed by the Czech situation. I would meet with them anyway. I would reprimand them on the Czech situation and also talk with them about missiles.

The President: Would you call the Senate into a special session on the NPT?

Ambassador Wiggins: No, sir.

The President: The composition of the Senate will be different after January.

The key disarmament people in the Senate have lost some strength -- Joe Clark, Wayne Morse, Senator Carlson.

Ambassador Wiggins: Ratification of the NPT is an embarrassment. All ask if we are going to ratify it. The non-nuclear group wonders too.

The President: Should we get missile talks started?

I would like Clark Clifford to give me a paper on that.

Secretary Fowler: You give your successor an option by going ahead with the talks.

Secretary Clifford: One of the NATO concerns was a return to the cold war.

They want detente. We almost waited too long for the NATO meeting.

Earlier, the Soviets had 23 divisions in Czechoslovakia. Now they have seven. All know they will go to three. I judge they would favor our talking with the Soviets.

The President: There are two basic problems:

1. Position of allies.
2. Nixon doesn't want it done too close to the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Secretary Clifford: The Germans and the British want to go ahead with talks with the Soviets.

The President: Tell Murphy that.

Secretary Clifford: The others feel if they go ahead with his okay. Don't ask a girl if you should kiss her--go ahead and it's all right.

The President: A meeting might help: 1. Vietnam. 2. Mideast. 3. Missile talks.