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TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SUMMARY NOTES OF 537th NSC MEETING
August 4, 1964; 12:35 P.M.

Attack in Gulf of Tonkin -- Cyprus

Secretary McNamara: North Vietnamese PT boats have attacked the DeSota Patrol consisting of two U.S. destroyers, the Maddox and the C. Turner Joy, approximately 65 miles off North Vietnam in the Gulf of Tonkin. Presently we believe 9 or 10 torpedoes were fired at the Patrol. Two of the PT boats were reportedly sunk and three to six were fired on. So far, we have no casualties. Nearby U.S. aircraft carriers are providing continuous air cover.

Secretary Rusk: Secretary McNamara and I and the Chiefs of Staff are preparing recommendations but these are not yet ready.

Mac Bundy: In addition to these recommendations we should have an estimate of the reaction to various courses of action we might take.

Under Secretary Ball: The situation in Cyprus has reached the crisis stage. Even though someone leaked to the press the "Acheson Plan", negotiations can probably continue in Geneva. The Greeks may be ready to get Makarios out of the picture by "instant Enosis", which would be agreed upon secretly by Greece and Turkey.

The situation on the island itself is not good. U Thant will be here Thursday and we will discuss with him contingencies if there is a blow-up. We are thinking of a UN Security Council meeting and a NATO Foreign Ministers meeting. The chances are better that we may get by without serious trouble, but it is a day-to-day problem. The Greek Cypriots are trying to delay progress in order to throw the entire problem into the General Assembly. Turkish military intervention becomes more difficult with the passage of time.

Secretary Rusk: Dean Acheson has done an extraordinary job keeping the door open during the long and difficult discussions in Geneva.

The President: Turning again to the attack in the Gulf of Tonkin, he asked that nothing be made public for the time being.

Secretary Dillon: There is a limit on the number of times we can be attacked by the North Vietnamese without hitting their naval bases.

NSC Letter 10-24-64
DLH

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

Bromley Smith

ATTENDANCE LIST FOR THE 537th NSC MEETING
AUGUST 4, 1964, AT 12:30 IN THE CABINET ROOM
OF THE WHITE HOUSE

The President of the United States, Presiding

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Robert F. Kennedy

CIA

John A. McCone, Director

DEFENSE

Robert S. McNamara, Secretary
Cyrus Vance, Deputy Secretary

OEP

Edward A. McDermott, Director

STATE

Dean Rusk, Secretary
George W. Ball, Under Secretary
Phillips Talbot, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern
and South Asian Affairs

TREASURY

C. Douglas Dillon, Secretary

USIA

Carl T. Rowan, Director

WHITE HOUSE

George Reedy
McGeorge Bundy
Jack Valenti
General Clifton
Bromley Smith
Robert W. Komer