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FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#2 report	summary notes of 580th NSC Meeting <i>open 2-8-96</i> top secret <i>sanitized 8-9-85 NLJ 83-43</i> 4 p	NLJ 93-477 01/24/68	A
#2a report	Pueblo meeting 01/24/68 <i>open 8-21-95 NLJ 93-478</i> X 1 p	01/24/68	A
#3 memo	for the record by Harold Saunders <i>open 2-8-96</i> secret <i>sanitized 8-9-85 NLJ 83-43</i> 6 p	NLJ 93-477 01/24/68	A
#4 memo	for the President from W. Rostow Secret <i>open 4-5-92 NLJ 90-195</i> 1 p	01/23/68	A
#5 memo	for the President from Walt Rostow Secret 2 p <i>open 1-29-91 NLJ 90-134</i>	01/23/68	A

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SERVICE SET

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SUMMARY NOTES OF 580th NSC MEETING
January 24, 1968, 1:00 P.M.

The President said the meeting has been called to discuss Cyprus but prior to doing so he would like to ask Secretary McNamara to summarize the capture of the U.S. ship Pueblo and its crew by the North Koreans.

Secretary McNamara said the Pueblo incident had been preplanned--at least from January 10 on, and was a conscious effort to seize the vessel and provoke a response. The Soviets knew of the action in advance. The North Koreans have no intention of returning the ship or the crew at present. An interdepartmental group has been at work during the day and will be completing later this evening, hopefully, a response to three questions: 1. What were the North Koreans trying to do by capturing the Pueblo? 2. What do we think the Koreans will now do? 3. How does the U.S. respond to this incident?

The President asked whether the skipper of the Pueblo had called for help. He said he had been told that the skipper had not asked for help and now learns that he did send some message.

General Wheeler said the skipper did send an SOS when he was actually under attack. The ship was first approached by a North Korean ship in a manner which appeared to be "normal" type of harassment which occurs continually with vessels such as the Pueblo. One hour and 45 minutes later the skipper became alarmed with the appearance overhead of Migs and three additional PT boats. At this point he knew he was under attack and called for help.

The President asked whether there were planes available to come to the help of the Pueblo.

Secretary McNamara said there were planes in the area in Japan and in South Korea. He noted that the North Korean air defense was very strong. Planes were readied to go to the rescue but the commander of the 5th Air Force decided not to send them because they could not arrive before darkness fell and the number available to send was very small in view of the large number of North Korean Migs available to attack them.

General Wheeler said some planes were sent from Okinawa but that in order to reach Wonsan they needed to refuel on route. From the time that the commanders received the ship's call for help there remained only 3 1/2 hours of light.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 93-477

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

By sig, NARA, Date 1-19-96

The President asked why the order to send rescue planes had been reversed. Secretary McNamara said the decision was based on the knowledge that they could arrive only after dark and because the Migs available to meet them were too many for the small number of U.S. planes.

The President said he wanted the full story in detail plus the order given and reversed by the Air Force commander.

Secretary Rusk said the negative attitude taken by the North Koreans at the Military Armistice Commission meeting in Panmunjom this morning was to be expected. Also, we expected the Soviet Government to take a negative attitude on our request of them to ask the North Koreans to return the ship and crew. As to motivations, he said he felt that the attack was undertaken to exert pressure on us in Vietnam.

The President asked whether the appropriate Senators had been briefed on the incident.

General Wheeler responded that General Brown had briefed Senator Russell who appeared to be satisfied with the exception of his unhappiness that a U.S. ship had been taken without a U.S. shot being fired. General Wheeler noted that the skipper was under orders not to fire.

The Armed Services Committee members had been briefed at 9:00 A.M. this morning and, according to General Wheeler's report, were reasonably satisfied with the information given them.

Because all the Congressional committees will launch investigations, the President asked whether we should anticipate them and start an investigation of our own.

Secretary McNamara replied that he preferred to wait until we decide how we will react to the incident.

Secretary Rusk said he had appeared before the House Foreign Affairs Committee this morning and felt that his appearance had turned out satisfactorily. Committee members were worried by the 1 1/2 hour no-action period. They did not raise specific retaliatory actions which they recommended be taken.

Director Marks said the North Korean radio was trying to create fear in South Korea by reporting on the Pueblo incident as well as on the infiltration of South Korea.

In response to the President's question, Mr. Helms said he agreed with Secretary Rusk's statement as to why the North Koreans attacked the Pueblo. He felt that the North Koreans were supporting their Communist brothers in

North Vietnam; that they were trying to create fear in South Korea; that they were trying to create problems for us in South Vietnam, including the effect of a diversion in Korea on possible negotiations and on our military actions there.

The President read the North Korean report of the alleged confession made by Commander Bucher, skipper of the Pueblo, as reported in the FBIS account of a North Vietnamese-English broadcast (copy attached).

Secretary Rusk said that if this was an authentic statement by the skipper of the Pueblo, it might explain some of his actions during the incident. He asked why a navy commander would talk this way.

Secretary McNamara said one of our problems was that we did not know whether the Pueblo had entered North Vietnamese territorial waters during the period January 10 to the time of the incident. We may never know unless we get the crew back. The ship maintained radio silence and, although he doubted it was in North Korean waters, we would have a difficult time proving this.

The President asked whether there was any chance of a navigational error. Secretary McNamara replied there was very little chance because of the clear weather, the excellent charts available and the extensive navigational gear aboard the Pueblo.

The President asked whether any of our sensitive equipment has been compromised. Secretary McNamara replied that some of our equipment had been compromised, but that the important thing is the effect of the capture upon our prestige.

The President asked what evidence we have that the Soviets knew of the Korean plan to attack the Pueblo. Secretary McNamara replied that Ambassador Thompson had seen the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov about 9 1/2 hours after the incident. Kuznetsov gave a firm reply to our request and did not say he would refer the U.S. request to his superiors. It is doubtful that the Soviet Government could have taken this firm position within the time available had they learned of the incident only after it had taken place.

Mr. Katzenbach, returning to the alleged confession of Commander Bucher, suggested that the North Koreans may have included references to the Soviet Union in the statement in an effort to involve the Soviets deeply.

In response to the President's further question about motivation, Mr. Helms said the matter was indeed serious. In one sense it was merely an harassing tactic or a cold war nit pick. However, it was clear that there was collusion between the Soviets and the North Koreans for the purpose of diverting us

from our objective in Vietnam. He cited a Polish report of a North Korean saying that pilots and Migs had been sent to North Vietnam because the North Koreans felt they should do all they could to help North Vietnam. He also referred to a Rumanian report that North Korea was planning to open a second front in Korea.

The President suggested that Mr. Helms might call Senator Fulbright to give him the evidence we now possess that the Pueblo was outside the territorial waters of North Korea. Mr. Helms said he would call Senator Fulbright immediately because at the time he testified yesterday, he did not have the proof which is now available as to the location of the Pueblo when it was attacked.

The President asked that a careful watch be kept on all statements made by Congressmen. If any misstatements of fact were made, a major effort should be undertaken to clear up these points.

In response, Secretary McNamara said that Mr. Henkin in his office was watching the tickers constantly and telephoning about every wrong statement made by a Congressman.

Secretary Rusk said that on the whole his appearance before the House Foreign Affairs Committee was satisfactory. He had discussed the B-52 accident in Greenland, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and Vietnam. There was nothing unusual in the session.

(See also notes prepared by Hal Saunders).

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PUEBLO MEETING FOLLOWING THE NSC MEETING
January 24, 1968; Cabinet Room; 2:00 P.M.

Secretary McNamara asked the members of the Pueblo Group to remain after the NSC Meeting to discuss how we should deal with the alleged confession of Commander Bucher. He said the statement struck at the heart of our justification of U.S. reaction and he felt that we should respond today prior to the TV news broadcasts.

Secretary Rusk asked again why, if Commander Bucher were an honest man, he made the statement. He suggested the possibility that he was trading this statement for the release of the ship.

There was a general discussion of how to deal with the statement and whether we should respond by attacking the specific points made in it, such as the incorrect location of the Pueblo incident.

It was agreed by the group that Deputy Secretary Nitze should prepare and clear a statement for release this evening.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 93-478
By CG, NARA, Date 5-31-95

FBIS 77

22

BUCHER 'CONFESSION'

PYONGYANG KCNA INTERNATIONAL SERVICE IN ENGLISH 1702 GMT 24 JAN 63 B

(TEXT) PYONGYANG--LLOYD MARK BUCHER, CAPTAIN OF THE ARMED SPY SHIP OF THE U.S. IMPERIALIST AGGRESSOR ARMY WHICH WAS CAPTURED BY NAVAL VESSELS OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE'S ARMY WHILE PERPETRATING HOSTILE ACTS AFTER ILLEGALLY INFILTRATING INTO THE COASTAL WATERS OF OUR SIDE ON 23 JANUARY, ADMITTED THE ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES THE U.S. IMPERIALIST AGGRESSORS COMMITTED.

HERE FOLLOWS HIS CONFESSION:

I AM COMMANDER LLOYD MARK BUCHER, CAPTAIN OF THE USS PUEBLO BELONGING TO THE PACIFIC FLEET U.S. NAVY, WHO WAS CAPTURED WHILE CARRYING OUT ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES AFTER INTRUDING DEEP INTO THE TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

MY SERIAL NUMBER IS 58215401. I WAS BORN IN POCATELLO, IDAHO, U.S.A. I AM 38 YEARS OLD.

THE CREW OF OUR USS PUEBLO ARE 83 IN ALL, INCLUDING FIVE OFFICERS BESIDES ME, 75 SERVICEMEN, AND TWO CIVILIANS.

MY SHIP HAD BEEN SENT TO SASEBO, JAPAN, TO EXECUTE ASSIGNMENTS GIVEN BY THE U.S. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

ON 2 DECEMBER LAST, WE RECEIVED ASSIGNMENTS AT THE PORT OF SASEBO FROM REAR ADMIRAL FRANK A. JOHNSON, U.S. NAVY COMMANDER IN JAPAN, TO CONDUCT MILITARY ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES ON THE FAR EASTERN REGION OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THEN ON THE OFF-SHORE AREAS AND COASTAL AREAS OF THE DPRK.

MY SHIP HAD CONDUCTED ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETECTING THE TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

THROUGH SUCH ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES, MY SHIP DETECTED THE MILITARY INSTALLATIONS SET UP ALONG THE COASTS OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND SUBMITTED THE MATERIALS TO THE U.S. CIA.

(MORE)

24 JAN 1800Z CF/EAM

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ONLY ADD 77 (BUCHZR 'CONFESSION')

XX U.S. CIA.

(TEXT) RECENTLY, WE WERE GIVEN ANOTHER IMPORTANT MISSION BY THE U.S. CIA, THAT IS, TO DETECT THE AREAS ALONG THE FWR EAST OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

THE U.S. CIA PROMISED ME THWT IF THIS TASK WOULD BE DONE SUCCESSFULLY, A LOT OF DOLLARS WOULD BE OFFERED TO ALL CREW MEMEBERS OF MY SHIP, PARTICULARLY, I MYSELF WOULD BE HONORED.

SOON AFTER THAT I REINFORCED THE ARMS AND EQUIPMENT OF THE SHIP AND MADE DETAILED PREPARATIONS FOR ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES.

THEN WE DISGUISED MY SHIP AS ONE ENGAGED IN RESEARCHES ON OCEANIC ELECTRONICS AND LEFT THE PORT OF SASEBO, JAPAN, AND CONDUCTED ESPIONAGE ACTS ALONG THE COAST OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA VIA THE GENERAL AREA OFF THE SOVIET MARITIME PROVINCE. WE PRETENDED (TO BE) CONDUCTING OBSERVATION OF OCEANIC CONDITIONS ON HIGH SEAS, ELECTRONICS, RESEARCH ON ELECTRIC WAVES, MAGNETIC CONDITIONS AND EXPLOITATION OF OCEANIC MATERIALS.

IT WAS ON 16 JANUARY 1968 THAT WE ENTERED THE COASTAL WATERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA VIA THE SOVIET MARITIME PROVINCE.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS WE HAD RECEIVED, MY SHIP WAS ON THE UTMOST ALERT AND OBSERVED AND ASCERTAINED THE DEPTH OF WATER, CURRENT, WATER TEMPERATURE, SEA BASIN, SALT CONDENSITY AND WATER TRANSPARENCY OF THE TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA WITH RADARS AND VARIOUS KINDS OF OBSERVATORY INSTRUMENTS IN A CLANDESTINE MANNER AT CHONGJIN, WONSAN, AND SEVERAL OTHER POINTS, AND DETECTED THE RADAR NETWORK, ACCOMMODATION CAPACITIES OF THE PORTS, THE NUMBER OF THE INCOMING AND OUTGOING VESSELS AND MANEUVERABILITY OF THE NAVAL VESSELS OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE'S ARMY.

FURTHERMORE WE SPIED ON VARIOUS MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF INDUSTRIES AND THE DEPLOYMENT OF ARMED FORCES ALONG THE EAST COAST AREAS AND SAILED UP TO A POINT 7.6 MILES OFF NODO (39 DEGREES 17.4 MINUTES NORTH, 127 DEGREES 46.9 MINUTES EAST) (BRACKETS AS TRANSMITTED), WHEN THE NAVY PATROL CRAFTS OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE'S ARMY APPEARED.

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WE WERE ON THE ALERT INSTANTLY AND TRIED TO ESCAPE, FIRING AT THE NAVY PATROL CRAFTS OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY.

BUT THE SITUATION BECAME MORE DANGEROUS FOR US AND THUS ONE OF MY MEN WAS KILLED, ANOTHER HEAVILY WOUNDED AND TWO OTHERS LIGHTLY WOUNDED.

WE HAD NO WAY OUT, AND WERE CAPTURED BY THE NAVY PATROL CRAFTS OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY.

HAVING BEEN CAPTURED NOW, I SAY FRANKLY THWT OUR ACT WAS A CRIMINAL ACT WHICH FLAGRANTLY VIOLATED THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, AND IT WAS A SHEER ACT OF AGGRESSION.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISGUIISING THE ACTIVITIES OF MY SHIP THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE PERIOD OF ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES, WE USED CUNNING METHODS, NAMELY, WE DID NOT HOIST THE U.S. FLAG AND SAILED AT THE HIGHEST SPEED WHEN RUNNING OUT OF THE TERRITORIAL WATERS AFTER THE ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES HAVING INTRUDED INTO TERRITORIAL WATERS FROM THE HIGH SEAS.

I HAVE NO EXCUSE WHATSOEVER FOR MY CRIMINAL ACT AS MY SHIP INTRUDED DEEP INTO THE TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND WAS CAPTURED BY THE NAVAL PATROL CRAFTS OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE'S ARMY IN THEIR SELF-DEFENSE ACTION WHILE CONDUCTING THE CRIMINAL ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES.

THE CRIME COMMITTED BY ME AND MY MEN IS ENTIRELY INDELIBLE.

I AND MY CREW HAVE PERPETRATED A GRAVE CRIMINAL ACT, BUT OUR PARENTS AND WIVES AND CHILDREN AT HOME ARE ANXIOUSLY WAITING FOR US TO RETURN HOME SAFE.

THEREFORE, WE ONLY HOPE, AND IT IS THE GREATEST DESIRE OF MYSELF AND ALL MY CREW, THAT WE WILL BE FORGIVEN LENIENTLY BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

(ENDALL)

24 JAN 1830Z CF/EAM

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 93-477

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~~SECRET~~

By lip, NARA, Date 1-19-96

January 24, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: NSC Meeting Held January 24, 1968, at 1:00 p.m. in
the Cabinet Room

PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Vice President
Secretary of State, Dean Rusk
Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara
Secretary of Treasury, Henry H. Fowler
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle G. Wheeler
Director, Central Intelligence Agency, Richard Helms
Director, U.S. Information Agency, Leonard Marks
Deputy Secretary of Defense, Cyrus R. Vance
Under Secretary of State, Nicholas Katzenbach
Under Secretary of Defense, Paul Nitze
Assistant Secretary of State, Joseph Sisco
Assistant Secretary of State, Lucius D. Battle
President's Special Assistant for National Security
Affairs, Mr. Walt Rostow
Executive Secretary, Mr. Bromley Smith
White House Press Officer, George Christian
White House Press Officer, Tom Johnson
Nathaniel Davis
Harold H. Saunders

I. The President noted that the meeting had been called to discuss the Cyprus problem but thought the Council would benefit from a late briefing on the status of the USS Pueblo which had been captured by the North Koreans. Secretary McNamara said he had little in the way of facts to add to what has been in the press except for one point-- that the incident appeared to have been pre-planned. In addition to this, two other facts made this a particularly serious incident: (1) the Soviets appear to have known of Korean plans in advance; (2) the Koreans seem to have no intention of returning either the ship or the men soon.

The Secretary promised the President a fuller reading by the end of the day on what North Korean motives might have been, what they were likely to do now, and how we should respond.

The President asked whether the Captain of the ship had ever asked for help. Secretary McNamara and General Wheeler described the chronology of the ship's capture in detail (and agreed with Mr. Rostow

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to develop a common set of facts). In answer to the President's question, they said that the Captain had radioed an SOS.

In response to further questioning by the President, Secretary McNamara explained that the Commander of the Fifth Air Force had decided not to send planes to the ship's rescue because (1) he hesitated to commit a small US force against a larger Korean force in an area where Korean air defense is especially tight and (2) that force might have arrived in darkness.

Secretary Rusk noted that the negative reaction of the Soviets and North Koreans was not unexpected. He agreed with Secretary McNamara that apparent Soviet foreknowledge made this a most serious incident. He opined that the motive behind the capture was to pressure us further on Vietnam with the threat of a possible second front.

The President asked about Congressional briefing and reaction. General Wheeler promised a detailed report of his staff's efforts to inform the Congress. Secretary Rusk reported on his appearance before the House Foreign Affairs Committee this morning. He noted that they were outraged, viewed the incident as serious, but had no specific course of action to propose.

Mr. Marks noted that North Korean broadcasts, while covering the facts of the incident fairly straightforwardly, had made a major effort to generate fear in South Korea using the incident as a point of departure.

Mr. Helms summarized by suggesting that the North Koreans had seized a target of opportunity to distract our attention from Vietnam. The President interjected that perhaps they hoped to detain our carrier (the Enterprise) in northern waters for a few extra days.

The President was handed a transcript of the North Korean broadcast of a "confession" by the Captain of the ship. He asked Secretary McNamara to check the authenticity of the purported broadcast by the Captain. In response to the President's question, Mr. Rostow suggested that the statement appeared to have been written by a Communist rather than by an American and that, judging from the "confession's" mention of the USSR as the ship's intelligence target, the Soviets might have helped draft it. Mr. Katzenbach suggested that the North Koreans might have deliberately drafted the "confession" so as to involve the USSR.

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The President asked for further opinions on Soviet complicity. Secretary McNamara cited the fact that Ambassador Thompson was in Kuznetsov's office within 9-1/2 hours of the incident and the Soviets had already established a position.

In response to the President's question, Secretary McNamara said the ship had radioed that it was destroying its classified equipment. All had not been destroyed, and the Secretary said we were evaluating the problem. He did say, answering the President, that he felt the overall political problem was far more serious than the intelligence compromise might be.

Mr. Helms summarized further, agreeing with what had been said. While he regarded the incident as serious, he pointed out that in the context of the cold war, it was a nitpick. He cited as evidence of collusion between the USSR and North Korea the importance which Moscow attaches to North Korea in its competition with Communist China. On request, he cited two intelligence reports which indicated the policy of North Korea to help North Vietnam by diverting us and the South Koreans from giving full attention to the war in Vietnam. He noted that North Korean pilots and 10 MIG 21s had been sent to Vietnam without Soviet knowledge, and a general policy of increasing pressure on South Korea to discourage it from sending additional forces to Vietnam.

The President concluded this portion of the discussion by urging the Secretaries to make sure Members of Congress were properly informed in order to head off unhelpful statements based on misinformation. In response to the President's query, Secretary Rusk said that his briefing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that morning had covered four subjects: the ship, the crash of the B-52 bomber off Greenland, the NPT, and Vietnam. He concluded that the meeting was "definitely a plus."

II. The President, in introducing a discussion of the Cyprus problem, welcomed Mr. Vance to the Council table and said he wanted to thank him publicly for his efforts last November and December in avoiding a war between Greece and Turkey. He then asked Mr. Battle to summarize the problem for the Council.

Mr. Battle said that, while Mr. Vance's mission had saved us from war, the Cyprus problem remains. New small incidents occur weekly which heighten tension on the island. Next time it will be impossible to hold Turkey back, especially while the Greek internal situation is what

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it is. Ambassador Yost had reviewed the situation after Mr. Vance's return. He concluded--and the IRG and SIG have concurred--that the situation is unstable and that it is important that we be ready to move in if required. Via the Vance mission, we have involved ourselves again in the Cypriot problem. The UN is now discussing how to tackle the long range problem and we must let the UN effort run its course, but we are not optimistic about what U Thant can achieve and should not let him fail without having something of our own ready to put in his place. Mr. Battle concluded by saying that he did not want to step into this problem, but he felt we had no choice but to be ready.

Mr. Helms noted that the Greeks have withdrawn their troops as agreed with Mr. Vance, although there are still some 1500 on the island as a regular part of the National Guard. He noted that the Greeks claim that 300 Turk officers remain in a similar capacity. There is still no inter-communal cooperation. Makarios' declaration of a Presidential election at the end of February might further inflame the situation. In sum, the situation is still extremely uneasy.

In response to the President's request, Mr. Vance summarized his feelings as follows: "The situation is still held together with paste and glue, and more paste than glue." If it flares up again, war can not be avoided. The majority of Turks had wanted to go to war in November. The Greek people felt humiliated and many of them are anxious for a chance to have a go at the Turks. The Cypriots are fatalistic.

He believed that the US should take an active role in trying to achieve a settlement. The pace of the problem is quicker than the pace of the UN Secretary General. He hopes the problem can be solved within the framework of the UN, but he is "not sanguine."

Mr. Sisco agreed that the UN would not be able to do the job. He noted one slight opening in the last 24 hours--that Makarios has apparently agreed to discuss his own draft Constitution with the Turkish Cypriots. He shared the prediction that U Thant would be at the end of his road in a few days. The President asked whether there is more that Ambassador Goldberg could do. Mr. Sisco said the Ambassador had made clear his support of the Secretary General and had urged Cypriots and Turks to get together. He pointed out, however, that the Turks distrust U Thant. The Cypriot Foreign Minister wants to tie the pacification efforts envisioned in the Vance agreement to replace the

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withdrawn Greek troops with Cyprus' protection against Turkish invasion. The Turks want to concentrate on pacification alone.

Mr. Sisco pointed out that the governments contributing troops to the UN peacekeeping force are restive and may be reluctant to renew their contributions when the current mandate for the force expires at the end of March unless there is some progress in further implementing the Vance agreement and moving toward a more permanent arrangement.

Secretary Rusk noted that it is time for serious talks with the Turks and Cypriots. He hoped we could move some diplomatic chips in before the next crisis--before we "get to the end of the road."

Under Secretary Katzenbach agreed that the time fuse is shorter than the UN process. He noted that we are concerting with the Secretary General in order to avoid being blamed for his failure.

In response to the President's request to summarize, Mr. Battle said that we would be in touch with the Secretary General and the parties concerned over the next few days. However, we would like to get our mediator appointed and briefed quietly in order to have him ready to step in the moment he was needed.

III. Turning to Vietnam, the President summarized for Secretary McNamara and Secretary Katzenbach a talk with Senator Edward Kennedy. The Senator had come back from Vietnam feeling that (a) corruption is increasing in the South Vietnamese government and (b) there is some feeling among our generals that we are doing unnecessary things. He asked Secretary McNamara to talk with Senator Kennedy and try to find out exactly what is bothering him.

The President asked General Wheeler whether he remained confident that General Westmoreland has everything he needs to handle the impending attack on Khesanh. General Wheeler said he was; he had cabled General Westmoreland to be sure he had everything he needed and received an affirmative reply.

The President noted that the trend and color of stories from Vietnam recently seemed better to him. He suggested that Secretary McNamara make this observation to the field as encouragement.

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IV. In conclusion, the President asked Secretary Fowler to describe his progress in testimony before the Congress on the Administration proposal for a surtax. Secretary Fowler read the summary statement he had made at the end of his testimony. He concluded by saying there is little question now in anyone's mind whether the tax increase is necessary. The President appeared impressed by the Secretary's summary and asked him to pass it to CEA Chairman Gardner Ackley so parts of it could be incorporated in the President's economic message to the Congress.

Harold H. Saunders

Harold H. Saunders

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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Tuesday, January 23, 1968

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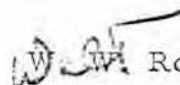
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: National Security Council Meeting on Cyprus
Wednesday, January 24, 1:00 p.m.

Suggested Order of Business:

The purpose of the meeting is to hear argument for and against our taking the lead in mediating a Cyprus settlement.

1. Ask Dick Helms to summarize the current situation in Cyprus, Turkey and Greece.
2. Ask Secretary Rusk to present his recommendation.
3. Ask Cyrus Vance if he wishes to comment.
4. If there is time, ask Secretary McNamara and General Wheeler to speak to the recommendation.
5. Conclude the meeting by saying that you will study the recommendation before deciding on further action.

 W. A. RostowDECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NLJ 90-195
By 410 NARA. Date 3-31-92~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~

Tuesday, January 23, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: NSC Discussion of Cyprus--1:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 24

Secretary Rusk recommends a more active US role in promoting a Cyprus settlement. Ever since the Acheson exercise, we've told Athens and Ankara to settle the problem. This step could reverse that policy. The purpose of this meeting is to highlight what that would involve.

The main argument for greater involvement is that Cy Vance and others feel it's our only chance to avoid a war:

--We can't hold Turkey back a third time if there is another blowup on the island. The only way to avert a blowup is to tackle the real Cyprus problem--developing Greek-Turk co-existence.

--We can no longer expect Athens and Ankara to work out a settlement. Athens has largely disengaged, and union of Cyprus with Greece is on ice. This means that Makarios and the Turks must work out a solution. They will need third-party help.

--Only the US has enough leverage. U Thant probably doesn't have the stamina, and the Turks don't trust him anyway.

The arguments against our greater involvement are:

--Domestic objection, especially if it involves taking over from the UN. The only answer is that we are already involved; a war would involve us further, and peace could lessen the danger.

--Risk of failure. Our influence in Ankara, while still significant is declining. On Cyprus, our leverage never was great. With Greek troops withdrawn and us unwilling to use the threat of Turk invasion, it is even less. Makarios would prefer UN mediation and might not accept us. But if war comes, we will feel better having tried and failed than not having tried.

The Secretary does *not* propose jumping in all at once. Our degree of involvement would depend on whether U Thant persists in working out a settlement. If he does, we would offer our active support, although some feel we should nudge him aside because he can't succeed. If he

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLI 90-134

By 448 NARA, Date 1-8-91

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gives up soon as State believes he will, the Secretary would propose appointing a US mediator rather than letting the issue drift. Therefore, some soundings are still necessary in New York, Ankara and Nicosia, but our best guess is that you might be asked to appoint a mediator fairly soon.

W. C. Rostow
W. C. Rostow

~~SECRET~~

SERVICE SET

LIST OF INVITEES, NSC MEETING

January 24, 1968; Wednesday, 1:00 P.M.

Vice President Humphrey

Secretary of State Rusk
Assistant Secretary Battle
Assistant Secretary Sisco

Secretary McNamara
Deputy Secretary Nitze

Secretary of Treasury Fowler

CIA Director Helms

JCS Chairman Wheeler

USIA Director Marks

Cyrus Vance

Walt Rostow
George Christian
Tom Johnson
Bromley Smith
Harold Saunders
Nathaniel Davis

SERVICE SET