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#18 meeting notes	open 9-18-89 NLS 87-235 meeting with foreign policy advisors on Vietnam 5 p. possible classified info. Samuel H. Hays 3-24-82	5/16/65	A
#19 meeting notes	duplicate of #18 open 9-18-89 NLS 87-235		

FILE LOCATION

Meeting Notes File, Box 1

RESTRICTION CODES

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10/81

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Perhaps we should bomb again, then pause, and then bomb again.

THE PRESIDENT I thought we were going to pause only 5 days.

McNAMARA

To achieve proper objective, we should go 7 days. One advantage is we will answer TIMES. They wanted us to take a week. We can hold until Wednesday.

THE PRESIDENT I would do it Monday. Start again then and that would make the pause six full days.

McNAMARA

We could start again on Tuesday evening our time.

RUSK

We can start bombing again -- then get the Acheson-Ball plan all worked out. It will be launched by Quat.

BALL

Essentially the plan is worked out on a local basis -- going from military to political action.

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Gromyko is interested in the Cambodian Conference. Sihanouk is pulling back on his original insistence that Viet Cong be represented at the conference. French and British have talked to Russians and urged them to move forward on Cambodian meeting.

I think we ought to get telegram to Taylor to get his reaction to the Acheson-Ball plan. It will take at least three weeks to get plan launched.

Tonight we don't need any decisions -- except when we start bombing and what we say about the resumption.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

87-235

NARA Date 9-18-89

THE PRESIDENT If there was going to be any interest on part of Hanoi, we ought to have the reaction by now. You gave them notice on Tuesday. Monday will be six days. If you want to start the bombing on Tuesday, that's okay.

We can tell the Congressional leadership -- that we had some adjustments out there. To me it's a pure question of what happens in this country. If we hold off this bombing longer, people are going to say "What in the world is happening." We can inform Mansfield, the NY TIMES, but we will never satisfy the TIMES.

Now, if this is what you all want, we'll go on Tuesday evening our time, but I would go Monday.

McNAMARA What do we say to the press?

THE PRESIDENT We don't need to disclose every piece of strategy to the press. I would say to Mansfield, Kennedy, Fulbright that we notified the other people -- and for six days we have held off bombing. Nothing happened. We had no illusions that anything would happen. But we were willing to be surprised.

We are anxious to pursue every diplomatic adventure, to get peace. But we can't throw our gun away. We have laid off them for six days -- meanwhile we have lost planes at Bien Hoa. No one has even thanked us for the pause.

McNAMARA We ought to give this out on background. Mansfield ought to know Hanoi spit in our face.

THE PRESIDENT I'm afraid if we play along with this group, we will wind up with no one on our side. We tried out their notion and got no results.

My judgement is the public has never wanted us to stop the bombing. We have stopped in deference to Mansfield and Fulbright, but we don't want to do it too long else we lose our base of support.

THE PRESIDENT We will go Tuesday to satisfy you here tonight. I'd go Monday night myself. However, if you have good reasons, we'll go when you say.

We ought to talk to the leadership and tell them what we did. We can tell them we used the time for reconnaissance--and in deference to Buddha's birthday. We gave them all week. We told Dobrynin and we told Gromyko.

I'd call them in and tell them we are starting Monday night. And then you'll be requested to delay again -- by the NY TIMES.

McNAMARA Let's talk to the leaders on Monday and tell them we are starting again to bomb on Monday night.

THE PRESIDENT Rusk, do you buy that?

McNAMARA Target #29 is military barracks 10 miles further north than we have ever gone. I urge to leave this target in. Our own military will say we have gone soft if we take it out again. Also it can be our message to Hanoi and Peking.

THE PRESIDENT What do you think about the threats from Russia about coming in?

RUSK There is a flash point in the Hanoi area in how far you can go without bringing the Russians in. Gromyko said he was going to help North Viet Nam and help them decisively.

THE PRESIDENT What about the SAM sites? Question is whether we let the clock tick or whether we take them out now.

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We have to go after MIG airfields first. First,

B-52's to plaster the airfields at night. There may be civilians involved since all bombs won't hit target. Then fighter bombers go in. And then we take out the SAM's.

This is a major operation from the Hanoi point of view.

Fair to say not more than one SAM site will be operational in 4 weeks.

(At this point meeting interrupted by call from Bundy)

THE PRESIDENT Now, Rusk will talk to Fulbright and Mansfield -- talk about your visit with Gromyko.

I think you ought to show the leaders we are open and receptive to ideas--but nothing happened on this particular idea.

For six days we didn't touch them and we told them we weren't going to touch them. And yet Gromyko was tougher than he has been in his talks with you, Dean.

ACHESON Important thing is you haven't bombed in six days and now you are going to bomb again. This is good thing for people to know.

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ACHESON Actually the plan is a series of pauses -- in which we interpret the results each time.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NJ 87-235

WJ NARA. Date 9-18-87

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[mansucrypt notes read: "Advantages (1) answer NY Times - they wanted week (2) take a series of steps leading to other steps we can hold til Wednesday"]

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[manuscript notes say Fulbright, not Mansfield]

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