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#31 meeting notes	meeting with foreign policy advisors on bombing pause 1/3/66 possible classified information 6 p. <i>sawtze</i>	1/3/66	A

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Meeting of January 3, 1966

Cabinet Room

Present: President, Rusk, Bundy, McNamara, Ball, Moyers, Valenti

Rusk: Been in touch with all 113 nations/resp. from 40. Gen. reaction good. DeGaulle unsatis. Question:

President: Did DeG. exp. this to Goldb.

Rusk: Yes, in substance. He says we underestimate Hanoi. They won't give up. FMin of Fr. has not seen Chaval -- and won't let our people see Chaval.

President: Chaval made some statements, didn't he.

Rusk: Yes, but it was out of context.

Rusk: In Korea, Formosa, Thailand, there was some worry about their security.

President: How did Ky take it.

Rusk: He took it well when Lodge told him.

President: How about Lodge, any roadblock

Rusk: Not yet, perhaps later. We got a telegr. from Symington.

President: That prob. comes from Air Force people.

President: You see anything from any of these conversations that would be encouraging ?

Rusk: Not yet. But \ say we have put Hanoi under tremendous pressure. I take a little encouragement that Hanoi and Peking have not commented directly on the peace offensive. Little too early. Need to wait to see effects of Shelepin trip. Thompson says ought to see Dobrynin about time Shelepin leaves.

President: |

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Rusk: |

Next prob. is whether we send Harriman to Japan.

Bundy: We've been playing it that VP was doing this. Perhaps we could say VP wanted him to go.

Rusk: Shall we continue the pause. Do you see any prob.

President: I see lots of problems, but we should continue.

Rusk: Don't think we should resume it while Shelepin is in Hanoi.

McNamara: I told Chiefs I would advise to resume the bombings if Chiefs could show me how we were being hurt in the So. No answer from them, which is very encouraging.

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Rusk: The Speaker, Hickenlooper seem relaxed. Mrs. Bolton likewise. Ball talked to Mansfield, Dirksen and Fulbright.

McNamara: Talked to Rivers, he is ready to resume bombing. He is in foul mood with me because we have cut back a const. project in S. C.

President: Orig. intended to go to New Yr. After a couple of weeks, intended to go back now, what do you advise we do -- wait until we hear --

Rusk: So far as other side, they've had reasonable assurance, the pause will go to middle of next week.

President: Any significance that on the first pause, they said NUTS. Now they haven't said anything.

Rusk: Yes, that is good.

President: Are all your senior officials asking?

Rusk: Yes.

Bundy: Pres. recollection is precise and right. (reads P. telegram to Lodge which pinpoints the pause continues til middle of this week.)

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Rusk: Perhaps we ought to give Lodge a country-by-country rundown on resp. to peace offensive.

President: Anything to be gained by Lodge talking to Harriman. Maybe Harriman can tell him exactly what he has learned. It would give us time.

President: Think we might want to think about it. Though it would appeal to Lodge to want to find out what H. found out.

(Rusk, Ball, McN and B. all agreed this was good idea to send Harriman.)

, (Vice Pres. entered the room at this time.)

President: Been talking about how to keep Saigon in with us -- before hard liners move in on us. Thinking to send Harriman to Japan, then on to Saigon with Lodge and Westmoreland.

How long will Shelepin stay in Hanoi -- (to Rusk)

Answer: 5 days

Could it be Hanoi's gaining any substantial military adv. while we are pausing.

McNamara: No. We can knock out any bridges they repair. Bombing them has not reduced infiltration.

Bundy: When we will resume bombings and when we lose planes (?) some will blame the pause.

President: Any question that we have to go back to bombings after a pause.

(No objections)

McNamara: I am very encouraged by resp. political leaders Goldb. and H. talked. You will lose this if you resume bombing on Wednesday.

If we resume, people will say it's a fraud.

President: What do the pause advocates say?

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Bundy: For the first time we have made headway with NYTimes.

Rusk: I told Reston that no matter how long we stopped bombing it will never be long enough for TIMES.

Ball: I think this will disarm our critics in the Congress.

President: I believe we'll have to go on over for several days. See no real reasons for starting it now. Conversations with others give me hope and we'll continue. Our big problem will be they'll let us stew in our own juice. Then we'll stew in theirs.

This will be a bad week, a bad month.

What do you do with Goldberg?

I think the "I told you so" boys will say it wasn't handled right. I brought in VP, H., G. and Williams. Think they will say it wasn't handled properly in the beginning.

Rusk: The resp. from all over the world has converted everyone.

President: I think Alsop and Reston are unhappy because they weren't consulted.

Rusk: 50/50 chance we'll get something back from some Comm. country by Wed.

President: How to get Goldberg to report -- without being dramatic, or building up hope. You know how I feel about keeping this at low key.

See nothing wrong with saying they told all the people they saw we were ready to talk instead of fight.

Bundy: I think the resp. from Poland and the Vatican is worth entire expedition.

Rusk: Tomorrow, suggest Goldberg report to you tomorrow, and then report to U Thant. Perhaps later, a letter from Goldberg to U Thant.

Moyers: Goldberg thinks it is time to get out Pope's letter -

President: Does that pump (primp?) up things -- like we are dramatizing it all.

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Moyers: No.

Rusk: Another element is timing. Harriman is H. He needs a day's rest.

President: I agree.

Rusk: Question of OAS resolution -- can probably get a resolution. But worried that some like Frei would feel constrained about saying the pause shouldn't be resumed.

President: Counter the suggestion -- compliment them -- and suggest they talk to other countries on their own. Better way to serve the cause of peace.

Then you will take steps to get in Goldberg tomorrow.

Rusk: Releasing Pope's letter tomorrow will give good cause for not resuming bombing.

President: Do we want to release Pope's letter?

Rusk: Might put pressures on you to release other messages. I gather the Pope is already putting out this kind of message.

Rusk: Then we'll meet with Goldberg tomorrow (to B McN) What do you think Hanoi is doing now?

McNamara: Possibly daylight traffic on the roads, and rebuilding bridges. I am concerned over inc. infiltration into SVN. This is not a result of cessation of bombing.

Ball: Also a situation of MIG 21 coming in.

McNamara: I believe that when we resume bombing -- in six mo. we'll be in air battles with Hanoi aircraft -- next year we'll battle Chinese aircraft.

Ball:

(Pres. asked HH to give any views he had on trip)

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President: What else can we do -- we have dispatched people all over the world. What can we do further?

We know that our bombing resp. has not done the job.

Valenti: Why not direct contact -- possibly thru the Frei types?

Bundy: We are doing a great deal of this. We need to do more.

President: If we try to hold too long without backgrounding, to let everyone we are (genuine?), they're going to hammer at us that we over-dramatize.

Let the press know about the shape of responses.

Bundy: Could tell press to go after the Ambassadors and it would be more persuasive to let them say it, not us.

President: Alright, we wait to see Goldberg.