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#49 meeting notes	3/11/66 meeting with foreign policy advisors possible classified information after 10-6-83 NLJ 82-51	7/ 3/11/66	A

FILE LOCATION

Meeting Notes File, Box 1

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42
1

Meeting in Cabinet Room
Date: March 11, 1966
Time: 12:35 to 1:30 p.m.

Present: President, Rusk, McNamara, Vance, Wheeler, Komer, Gardner, Marks, Helms, Raborn, Bell, Ball, Bromley Smith, General Goodpaster, J. Valenti

(From notes by J. Valenti)

Goodpaster: March 4-10 ground operations (briefed group on latest military action).

President: What accounts for substantial difference in KIA (killed in action)?

Wheeler:

1. Heavier fire power -- fighter bombers and artillery.
2. Mobility -- choppers.
3. Good troop leadership and aggressiveness

Killed around 8,000 men since first of year -- close to 30,000 casualties.

Taylor: Fear to reduce casualties from 3 to 1 to 2 to 1 because of seriously wounded.

President: How many casualties before they feel it?

Taylor: When casualties are above infiltration.

McNamara: What parts are coming from main force units? Others are porters, messengers, etc.

Number of battalions are increasing in spite of casualties.

President: If this keeps up for the year?

McNamara: Don't think so. His strength at end of year should be stronger.

They can increase from 105 to 155 (presumably battalions) at this rate.

Rusk: It would require 10,000 a month casualties. Is that right?

McNamara: They are infiltrating at rate of 8,000 a month.

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SERVICE SET

Meeting in Cabinet Room
March 11, 1966

2

Taylor: All our plans are based on road nets in Laos -- and difficult to know about forward supplies.

Marks: (Read report of defectors saying food and material was short -- also malaria (35 per cent catching malaria).

McNamara: But they carry malaria and fight. They will continue to fight hard.

President: What about malaria for our people?

McNamara: Down dramatically. About 25 per cent rate. Meningitis has dropped, too.

President: Spreading out camps do it?

McNamara: No. Medical help mostly.

Goodpaster: (Continued on air operations.)

McNamara: First time we've had attacks by IL-28s. Shows they're more aggressive and are attacking. They have not attacked in South Vietnam. Would not recommend knocking out IL-28's now. They are not that much of a threat.

Goodpaster: As of March 5, strength was:

216,400	(presumably U.S. strength)
690,900	(presumably South Vietnamese)
23,000	(presumably other free world forces)
930,000	TOTAL

225,000	Viet Cong
13,100	North Vietnam

President: Gardiner will be leaving tomorrow.

Rusk: How specific can we put to other governments medical assistance and health? More detail on kinds of personnel needed.

Gardner: Assembled 22 people -- ready to go. Covers all health and education facilities.

Komer: Have General Williamson on hand. Should he brief the Governors?

SERVICE SET

Meeting in Cabinet Room
March 11, 1966

3

President: Yes. Outline agenda and have him speak and answer questions.

McNamara: General Thi has been removed at I Corps commander. Under control, looks as though it's coming out alright. I believe he'll come out.

Helms: GVN paratroopers marched in Saigon in Thi's favor.

McNamara: Some bad taste in mouths of our people. Looks like we're weak in GVN Government.

President: Do our people want him to leave?

McNamara: I do.

Taylor: He's a bad character and good riddance.

Wheeler: General Walt got on well with him. But a conniver. Hard to keep eye on him.

President: How do we get Lodge and Westmoreland to stop giving out Top Secret information? The press is saying they have to go to Saigon (for) Top Secret information and it's available there.

Rusk: Will get a wire off to Lodge.

President: What about inflation problem there?

Bell: They're carrying out some of our ideas, but not enough. New man in charge is (alright?). Has announced one step -- but not enough. Reaction to first step is good and the Minister is encouraged.

IMF to take mission out there. One (unreadable) from IMF. If this mission finds that radical steps are needed, will we back him up?

Fowler and Bell believe log jam may be beginning to break. Some evidence of good chance but still insufficient.

President: What about our China policy?

Rusk: The hearings have put pressure on us to talk more about China. Can't foresee what happens when General Assembly opens. If Red China is still angry and adamant, Red China will be hurt. But we have run out of votes and they may seat Peking in Assembly.

SERVICE SET

Meeting in Cabinet Room
March 11, 1966

4

Security Council is more difficult. Formosa is by charter a member of Security. Red China would not be the one chosen to speak for Asia in Security Council.

Ambassadors of some other country (India, Brazil) asking for charter amendment to allow other nations to sit on Security Council. Reluctant to have any of this discussed for next few weeks.

My guess is if we offer to recognize Red China without renouncing Formosa, Red China would say no. China problem keeps coming back to Formosa. There is no flexibility in Red China's policy.

Think it impossible for administration not to put witnesses on the stand. Let us say we are studying results.

President: What about NATO?

Ball: All NATO members are receiving letters from France -- France regains sovereignty.

All French forces withdraw from NATO command.

A declaration in the making -- on British initiative -- in which integrated command is endorsed.

Seeing now how many will go with us.

De Gaulle wants to go to Moscow and freewheel with freedom.

END OF NOTES

NO VICE SET