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E.O. 12856, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 95-177

By CL, NARA, Date 9-5-95

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM JONES

SUBJECT: Meeting with Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, Leonard Unger and Walt Rostow

DATE: Friday, September 15, 1967

Meeting convened: 7:27 PM

Meeting adjourned: 8:05 PM

Secretary Rusk opened the meeting by noting that Leonard Unger has been given the job of determining the situation in Thailand concerning a potential coup by

1.3(a)(5)

[REDACTED]

The President asked what our chances are in light of the prediction.

Rusk said

1.3(a)(5)

[REDACTED]

Unger said

1.3(a)(5)

[REDACTED]

McNamara said

1.3(a)(5)

[REDACTED]

The President said do you have influence with the military aide...."check and see what we need to do and I will do what any prudent diplomat like Rusk would recommend."

SERVICE SET

Rusk said "we will proceed on that recommendation."

1.3(a)(5)

Rusk pointed out [REDACTED]

The President asked what is happening in Vietnam.

Rusk replied "we are getting Thieu and Ky working together now, and that is the primary concern."

The President said "we should get Bunker to get them to put out an announcement every week that would appeal to the longhairs here and around the world that would show the transition between the military and civilian government."

At 7:35 p.m. Unger departed the meeting.

The President then urged Rusk and McNamara to quietly put their best men to thinking how we can take some of the surplus food we have and survey the 19 Latin nations and the African or Asian nations and see what their needs are. Then we can say to them that we are not able to give them a grant or a loan, a steel mill or the like, but that we can give them food. The President also said "we may have to get Bob (McNamara) back on economic matters."

McNamara laughed "we did so well on pork."

The President relayed that he had met with a group of labor leaders today. "George Meany and the labor people were just wonderful. I wanted to get two of you (Rusk and McNamara) here to hear the good things they were saying. I told them that we have 5 million more working now since I have been President" and pointed out other gains to them. "We had a good meeting and they had fire in their eyes."

McNamara said "I wish I would have been there to hear the things. I'm so mad since the doves tried to burn down my house in Aspen, Colorado yesterday."

The President then turned to the subject of what we have to be thankful for and pointed out the recent August and September polls showing the President's performance in relation to the four leading Republican Presidential candidates. He noted that he led Nixon 49-41 in a September poll; led Romney 52-48 in August and 45-41 in September; led Rockefeller 59-41; and led Reagan 55-45. The President pointed out "there are three groups hitting us: 1.) Bobby and his crowd; 2.) all of the Republicans; 3.) the ADA and the other liberal groups. What will they do if Nixon or Reagan or Romney runs against me. If I get a hawk running against me, then I'll get all the doves votes. If I get a dove, then I'll get the hawks vote. So, these things are just relative."

Rusk said he met with Edward P. Morgan today and Morgan said what the Republicans know is that the President is building up another landslide victory for next year.

The President said "I have given serious thought that if I cannot get the tax bill that I will send a message to the Congress saying that I just cannot have a \$30 billion deficit and I will ask the Congress to review all appropriation bills and cut them 10 per cent."

McNamara interjected, "including defense." McNamara said "I'd stick it to Mills, and not let him get away with what he's done in the last three or four days." McNamara said "Defense could postpone procurement of seven mine sweepers."

At this point, Jones left the meeting to get a proposed budget message for the President.

Rusk said "there is a problem of cutting the total budget because they are liable to take all the money away from one area such as foreign aid." He recommended "that they should be told that they should reduce each budget item 10%."

The President pointed out "we only have \$20 billion to cut and 10 per cent of that is only \$2 billion in budget cuts."

McNamara pointed out that Congress wanted to cut the space budget even further. He said Chet Holifield had brought this up in relation to the ABM question that morning.

The President read a proposed message to the Congress which Charlie Schultze prepared for Secretary McNamara and the President's signatures. He pointed out that perhaps it is not strong enough.

The President then asked "is it too much to ask (Ambassador) Bunker and (General) Westmoreland to make a report to the nation once a month, on a "Meet the Press" type of program?"

McNamara said "perhaps Bunker can do it one month and Westmoreland the next, rather than both together."

Rusk said they are getting more invitations than they are accepting now and asked what the President thought of Bunker's performance on "Meet the Press."

The President said "I have not heard anything about it except from Rusk and McNamara."

The President then asked "what's happening in the Mekong. I turned on the radio today and heard that so many were being killed that they cannot count them."

McNamara said "there is nothing serious going on there - it's a good scrap but not a major event in the war." Although McNamara said he has not checked the data in the last three or four hours and he may be giving false information.

Walt Rostow returned to the idea of a Bunker - Westmoreland report to the nation. He said "we might try a format not like 'Meet the Press' and have Bunker and Westmoreland give a factual report to the nation similar to the cables they send in to the President. Both have poise and credibility. We might experiment with a format and we should not commit ourselves to a series the first time. We should not have an adversary approach to the report like on 'Meet the Press'."

At this point Jones departed the meeting again to get a letter the President was to send to Congressman Joe Karth.

The President read from the letter to Congressman Karth, particularly the last paragraph concerning the President saying he fully supports President Thieu. The President questioned this passage saying "I don't know him well enough to fully support."

Rusk said that he might "put 'would' instead of 'will' and 'bring the fighting to an end' is a phrase that causes me no problem."

McNamara agreed that this "would be okay to send, and would not come back to haunt the President."

Rusk pointed out that he saw Ambassador Dobryn today.

The President asked what he said about the ABM.

Rusk said "he was not authorized to tell us anything. He did say he met with the leadership of the Kremlin and they agreed to meeting with us. So get ready to set the date."

Rusk said he is talking to the Economic Club in Detroit on Monday. Rusk said he "is going to remind them that 1967 was a helluva year for international agreements and he is going to point out the progress in the Kennedy Round, the Latin solidarity, the Asian Development Bank beginning, the Space Treaty being signed, the Russians and the United States jointly tabling the Nonproliferation Treaty, Water for Peace Conference and a few of the others."

The meeting then adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SANITIZED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NLJ 95-177
By C6, NARA Date 8-6-96 14a

Friday, September 15, 1967
5:00 p. m.

~~SECRET~~

MR. PRESIDENT:

SUBJECT: Meeting at 7 P. M. with Secretary Rusk and
Secretary McNamara

1. Thailand (paper at Tab A)

- an October invitation to Thanom to pay a state visit in the spring of 1968;
- red carpet treatment for Pote Sarasin on October visit to Washington;
- attitude towards military assistance;
Note: With respect to military aid, Sect. McNamara believes that we should wait until our new Ambassador, Leonard Unger, gets out to Bangkok and make a fresh assessment.

- 1.5(d)
3.4(b)(6)
- continuity of a program which Sect. Rusk will raise with you.

2. PL 480 package -- you have the papers.

WaeR.

1412

A

SCIENCE SET