

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Senator Strom Thurmond (R. -S. C.)
Senator William L. Scott (R. -Va.)

President Ford
John O. Marsh, Jr., Counsellor to the President
Max Friedersdorf, Assistant to the President
William T. Kendall, Deputy Assistant to the President
Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy
Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME: Monday - January 27, 1975
12:42 - 1:20 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

SUBJECT: Report on the Senators' Trip to Asia

Senator Thurmond: We want to talk principally about our trip, but there are a couple of other items.

First. This black man, Johnson. He is a great speaker and wants to help. I pass it on to you for whatever it is worth.

Next, the Voter Registration Act. We are against it. But if you are going to do it, it should be based on the 1972, not the 1974, figures.

Senator Scott: It seems unreasonable to us to continue to punish -- for punish is what it really is -- jurisdictions like Virginia and Maryland.

The President: I remember we tried to modify it earlier. Is there any better chance with the present complexion of Congress?

Senator Thurmond: I think so. I think we could get extended debate on it.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines
By Ut, NARA, Date 1/18/00



CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

Senator Scott: I have mixed feelings because it helped get me elected. But if you could get the '64 figures knocked out...

The President: Why doesn't the Congress do it? I will consider it.

Senator Thurmond: This is confidential. Make Jim Mann an Assistant Secretary of our office services. I will give you another report.

The President: How about [Ed] Young?

Senator Scott: Stan Parrish would like an Assistant Secretaryship.

Senator Thurmond: There's Palmer Gaylord(?), Mayor of Charleston -- he would like an Assistant or Deputy also. He's a good supporter. I am a senior Republican, and no assistants are my recommendation. I would like one.

The textile industry is in trouble. Just keep it in mind.

Now on the trip -- I think South Vietnam can be saved if they can get the ammo. If we could get \$1 billion a year for three years, South Vietnam could take care of itself. It would be best if they could get it on a multi-year basis -- then they could plan. Just ask for three years and that's all. Our sacrifice there is bad enough, but we would lose tremendous face in Asia. Also, it would be followed by many others. You need a good leader for the fight -- I suggest Humphrey.

There is nothing more important than for you to get these people down here and talk to them. It might save it -- it would break my heart to lose it and it would hurt our nation badly. It would damage our position throughout Asia. They are waiting to see what we are doing in South Vietnam. If South Vietnam goes down, they will think the U.S. doesn't stand by its friends. They will turn to the Communists. We will have to spend much more in that case.

Senator Scott: I won't support it because I took a poll and the people of Virginia are overwhelmingly against it.

The President: I agree with Strom. If we don't vote the money, South Vietnam is lost.

Senator Scott: I agree.

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

The President: And if that happens, the ultimate cost to us will be much higher.

I used to get polls just like this. I was convinced it is in our national interest to do what we did, and I am convinced now.

In the long run, I think the people of Virginia will support you on this.

Senator Scott: I am for strong defense. But we are talking out of both sides of our mouth. We talk detente but the Soviets are pouring supplies in. The Viet Cong have quit; it is the North Vietnamese, backed by the Soviets and China. Isn't it as important to other countries?

Senator Thurmond: Martin says the stories about political prisoners are wrong -- there are not 25,000. And corruption there is no worse than elsewhere.

Senator Scott: The same with Korea.

Senator Thurmond: That's right. Park showed us a map of the tunnels which the North Koreans dug.

The President: We saw that.

Senator Thurmond: Park is going to have a referendum. If the people don't support him, he will resign. This will prove what the people want.

I don't know what your policy is about recognizing Peking. But if you do, you will disappoint your friends in Asia. Taiwan is a good friend. If you could put pressure on Peking and the Soviets to stop putting equipment into North Vietnam, South Vietnam could whip North Vietnam without the outside help.

Japan and Indonesia can help more. Indonesia has oil and has discovered materials like copper. They are moving along.

Nothing would help more than bringing foreign military officers here for training. Everywhere I go, these people are strong supporters of the U. S.

The President: I will look into it.

Senator Scott: I want to support you wherever I can. It will be a rare occasion that I do otherwise. I would not have selected Levi [for Attorney General] but I will support you.

CONFIDENTIAL



Senator Thurmond: I feel the same.

The President: He has a good record and he handled the student problems very well.

Senator Scott: Most of the nations in Southeast Asia are our friends. But should we recognize Peking, it would affect them. It would be a shame if we would desert the Taiwanese. It would be good if you, the Vice President, or Kissinger would visit there.

The Japanese really appreciated your visit there.

I agree with Strom's analysis on South Vietnam, but others should help, and I don't think they can take care of themselves in three years. Whenever we get out, I think they will fall. We can't be the world's policeman.

Last, let me raise a local item -- to hurry Route 66. I feel strongly it must be built. With a new Transportation Secretary coming it, I don't know how he would feel.

The President: I see no evidence which would change my mind on I-66. Jack, let's check.

Marsh: You have a paper coming in on it.

Senator Scott: All Virginia officials are for it except the new man in the 10th District.

The President: It's gone on too long now, and I'm in favor of it.

Senator Scott: Excessive government controls, spending, and environmental controls have contributed to the recession. The Congress will reduce taxes but not spending. They will spend and spend.

The President: We are trying to do what we can -- we have legislation on the Hill on all these things.

Senator Scott: We need your people up there working with us.

The President: They will be.

Senator Scott: We need to stimulate business, not the government. We should use taxes to get more energy and keep the oil coming in until we get it.



CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

The President: We are trying to modify the environmental controls.

[The conversation ended.]

CONFIDENTIAL



January 27, 1975

THURMOND CONCLUSIONS FROM VISITS
TO SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *h.g.*

I. Key Findings:

A. Military advances by Communists will continue so long as we fail to make it clear that we will support both countries with sufficient military aid to insure their ability to successfully defend themselves. Aid request should cover two-year program.

B. U.S. should adopt policy certain of extricating ourselves from Vietnam, over a 3 to 5 year period. Ambassador Martin feels that aid level of \$1 billion annually for three years would put South Vietnam in position where U.S. could probably end military grants.

C. North Vietnam's policy is to seize more province capitals and land to further weaken Thieu government. All-out attack unlikely as Hanoi fearful of U.S. airpower being used again.

D. Viet Cong no longer sizeable military threat, North Viet regiments leading fight now. Many new weapons, men and ammo stocks introduced in violation of Paris Agreement.

II. Other Initiatives Needed:

A. Detente should permit us to put more pressure on Soviets and Chinese to reduce aid to North Vietnam.

B. We should call on other nations in Asia to help more as they have more to lose if Communists gain in Indochina.



C. Suggest President call Ambassadors Martin and Dean to appear before Appropriations Committees.

D. U.S. needs to think about possible consequences of loss of Indochina:

1. Rice Bowl of Asia in Communist hands will mean U.S. may have to feed the free countries of that area.

2. Pressure on Thailand and South Korea would be great; other countries may fall under domino theory.

3. Japan, trading with Red China, may shift policy to keep trade markets open.

4. Foreign policy defeat would weaken U.S. around world.

5. Other allies would question our will to help.

6. If Cambodia falls, South Vietnam would be under even greater pressure.

III. Justification for Aid:

A. Military setbacks not due to lack of will to fight or government corruption but rather to lack of ammo and fuel.

B. 50,000 lives lost, 300,000 wounded, spent \$150 billion. These sacrifices would be lost if South Vietnam falls.

C. Less aid means more killing of the people of South Vietnam.

D. If U.S. commitment at Paris not met, U.S. would lose face with other nations.

E. Soviets & Red China are supporting attack by Hanoi on people of another government.

F. Oil exploration could make Vietnam self-sufficient for 5-10 yrs.



P/T Thurmond / Scott / Marsh

27 June 75
12:42-1:20

T want to talk primarily about one thing, but there are a couple of other items.

First, this black man Johnson. He is a good quiet speaker & wants to help. I pass it for whatever it worth.

Next, water legis. act. was against, but if you going to do it, should be based on 72, not 64 figures.

S Seems unnecessary to continue to persist in what it really is - juries. like Va & Maryland.

P I remember we tried to modify it earlier. Any better chance w/ present complexion of Cong.

T I think so. I think we could get standstill debate on it.

S I have mixed feeling because it helped get me elected. But if you could get 64 punched out

W why doesn't Congress do it? I will consider it.

T Confidential: Make Jim Mann an asst Secy of our

P → JC services. What give you another upst.

S Stan Paris would like on asst Secy.

T Palmer Gaylord(?) Mayor of Charleston. He would like an asst or deputy also. He a good supporter.

I know upst & no assts are my recom I would like one.

Teptile industry in trouble - just buy in mid
War on top -

I think SOIL can be saved if can get a arms.
Fund could get 1 bil/yr for 3 yrs, SOIL could
~~help~~ take care of itself. Be best if they could get
it on a multi-year basis - then they could plan.

Just ask for 3 yrs + that's all. One scientific
task is not enough, but we would lose tremendous
face in Asia. Also would be followed by Charleston



many others. You need a good leader for
a fight - I suggest Humphrey. ~~You~~
Nothing more important than for you to get
those people down here & talk to them. If might
save it - it would break my heart to lose
it & would hurt our entire body. It
would damage our position throughout Asia.
They want to see what we are doing in SVN.
If SVN goes down they will think US don't
stand by its friends - they will turn to China.
We will have to spend much more in that
area

S I don't support it because I talk a poll of
people of Va are overwhelmingly against it

P I agree w/ Strom. If we don't vote a majority, SVK
is lost

S Japan

P And if that happens, a alternate cost & we will
be much ~~to~~ higher

I used to get polls just like this. I was convinced
it in our own interest to do what we did, &
I convinced some.

I'm a long ~~senior~~ man, I think a people of
Va will support you on this.

S I'm for strong defense. But we talking out of both
sides of mouth. We talk detente but ~~the~~ the
Sovs pressing supplies in. Vietnam has quit,
it is a NVA, backed by Sovs & PRC. But
don't it as important to other countries?

T Martin says the strike about pol prisoners is
wrong - cost 25,000. Corruption no worse
than elsewhere



S Same w/ Korea

T That's right. Park showed us way of tunnels

P We saw that.

T Park going to have referendum. If people don't support him, he will resign. This will prove what people want.

Don't know how you feeling about using PRC. But if you do, you will disappoint your friends in Asia. Taiwan is a good friend.

If you could put pressure on PRC + SU to stop putting equip in NUK. SUN could ask NUK w/o outside help.

Japan + Indonesia can help more. Indonesia has oil + has discovered minerals like copper.

They are coming along.

Nothing would help more than bringing foreign military officers for training. Everywhere I go, for those people are strong supporters of US.

* P Decide look into it

T We should leave some air power in Asia for a while. Esp a bomber in Thailand.

* best, if K could see Arab show it would be appreciated.

S I want to support you whenever I can. It will be rare occasion otherwise. I would not have selected him but I will support you.

T I feel same

P He has a good record + he handled student protests very well

S Most of nations in SEA are one party. But should we use PRC it would (oppose) the



It would be a shame if we would desert
a Tennessee. Would be good if you, CVP, or
HAK would visit there.

Japanese really appreciated your visit there.
I agree w/ Strom analysis on SOX, but others
should help & I don't think they can take care of
themselves in 3 yrs. Whenever we get out I
think they will fall. We can't be a world's
police man.

Lost a local item - Henry Co. I feel strongly
it must be built. W/a new say coming in, I
don't know how he would fall

P I see no solution which would change my mind
on I-66. Jack, let's check

M You have a paper coming in on it.

S All the officials are for it except a new man in a
10th district

P Good on the long term & I'm for it.

S The Executive govt controls, spending, investment controls
have contributed to a recession. Copy will reduce
taxes but not spending. They will spend & spend.

P We are trying to do what we can - we have legs on
a stall on all these things.

S We need your people by there working w/us.

P They will be.

S We need to stimulate business, not the govt. We should
use taxes to get ^{more energy} ~~alt sources~~ & keep oil coming in till
we get it.

P We are trying to modify investment controls.

