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SENSITIVE - CLOSE HOLD

February 22, 1974

J. Marsh
Marsh, BRJ

MEMORANDUM FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Meeting with the Secretary of Defense

FROM: Jack Marsh *m*

This memorandum is limited to your meeting this afternoon with Secretary Schlesinger, and although it develops some thoughts on your efforts in national security matters, it is only preliminary and a first step effort.

Background Thought

For background purposes in your conversation there are indications the legislative session is beginning to move unusually fast. For example, just this week Senator Stennis alerted all subcommittees of his Armed Services Committee to be prepared to report out their Bill not later than May 15. This legislative pace gives some urgency to what you seek to do.

PURPOSES OF MEETING --- THREE

First: Mutual Discussion Major Issues

I believe the Secretary will want to have some exchange of ideas of how you and he might be mutually supporting in reference to statements on major foreign policy and Defense issues, i.e., Southeast Asia, Middle East, NATO, the Defense Budget, etc.

Second: Seek Schlesinger Ideas on Your Task

In reference to defining your Defense role, I would suggest the following:

a. Reiterate your assignment and your deep interest in undertaking and executing that assignment.

b. I recommend you have the Secretary give you his ideas and thoughts as to how he thinks the above can be effectively done in some type of partnership role. You might touch on the following items:



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- (1) Areas where the office of the VP can help DoD.
- (2) The methods whereby this help is offered, i.e., causing meetings with selected groups of Members in the House and Senate, personal contact with individual Members, and finally identification of people who should be targets of attention.
- (3) Perhaps we can get some ideas to areas of responsibility of DoD, State and the Office of the VP.
- (4) Stake out, generally, the role of Marsh (JM). What, if anything, might DoD want JM to continue doing for them, with your permission. Mention some of the things you want JM to do re Defense.

Third: Your Requests and Your Offer of Help

To help establish an effective relationship in what is a new role for the Vice President, it is essential to seek mutual cooperation to include:

a. Easy access by your representative to DoD and its various departments, respecting, of course, DoD's right to be aware and advised of any such contacts. There presently exists a firm procedure that needs to be flexible in its application.

b. Obtaining an easy flow of information in response to your requests. This is especially helpful in some of the major policy sections such as ISA, Comptroller, Legislative and Intelligence.

c. Offer the support of the VP's office and request advice as to how to draw on that support.

d. It is important to remember that as legislation moves to a vote and we are faced with the tremendous crunch to win issues, that you are going to be called on time and time again to exert personal influence on Members who may be wavering or who need to be turned around. Although it is some months away, ultimately this is the ace which you are holding.



Conclusion

Finally, I stress again the uniqueness and precedence of your role which means we must plow new ground and develop gradually a structure for its successful accomplishment. This meeting is a first step to develop that structure, there will have to be high level meetings between yourself and others involved at the White House, State, CIA, as well as Defense and the NSC to implement what you seek to do. Therefore, the meeting today may bring about a follow-up session with broader participation.

