

Wayne Morse meeting with JFK November 12, 1963

from *JFK and the Unspeakable:
Why he died and why it matters*
by James Douglass

reviews: www.jfkmoon.org/unspeakable.html

Senator Wayne Morse came to the White House to see the president about his education bills. Kennedy wanted to talk instead about Vietnam -- to his most vehement war critic. Morse had been making two to five speeches a week in the Senate against Kennedy on Vietnam. JFK took Morse out into the White House Rose Garden to avoid being overheard or bugged by the CIA.

The president startled Morse by saying: "Wayne, I want you to know you're absolutely right in your criticism of my Vietnam policy. Keep this in mind. I'm in the midst of an intensive study which substantiates your position on Vietnam. When I'm finished, I want you to give me half a day and come over and analyze it point by point."

Taken aback, Morse asked the president if he understood his objections.

Kennedy said, "If I don't understand your objections by now, I never will."

JFK made sure Morse understood what he was saying. He added, "Wayne, I've decided to get out. Definitely!"

Yet a mind needs hands to carry out its intentions. A president's hands are his staff and extended government bureaucracy. As Kennedy knew, when it came down to the nitty-gritty of carrying out his decision to end the Vietnam War, his administrative hands were resistant to doing what he wanted them to do, especially his Pentagon hands. He also knew that to withdraw from Vietnam "after I win the election" in the fall of 1964, he now had to inspire his aides to continue moving the machinery for withdrawal that he activated on October 11 with National Security Action Memorandum 263.

note: JFK called for the first thousand to be out by the end of 1963 and the rest by 1965. NSAM 263 was reversed by LBJ immediately after he became President.

Kennedy's October 11, 1963 Viet Nam withdrawal order

National Security Action Memorandum
No. 263
Washington, October 11, 1963.

TO
Secretary of State
Secretary of Defense
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
SUBJECT
South Vietnam

At a meeting on October 5, 1963, the President considered the recommendations contained in the report of Secretary McNamara and General Taylor on their mission to South Vietnam.

The President approved the military recommendations contained in Section I B (1-3) of the report, but directed that no formal announcement be made of the implementation of plans to withdraw 1,000 U.S. military personnel by the end of 1963.

After discussion of the remaining recommendations of the report, the President approved an instruction to Ambassador Lodge which is set forth in State Department telegram No. 534 to Saigon.
McGeorge Bundy

JFK's final press conference November 14, 1963

www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Ready-Reference/Press-Conferences/News-Conference-64.aspx

QUESTION: Mr. President, in view of the changed situation in South Viet Nam, do you still expect to bring back 1,000 troops before the end of the year, or has that figure been raised or lowered?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we are going to bring back several hundred before the end of the year, but I think on the question of the exact number I thought we would wait until the meeting of November 20th.

details:
www.jfklancer.com/NSAM263.html
www.jfklancer.com/NSAM273.html

www.jfkmoon.org/vietnam.html

www.maryferrell.org/wiki/index.php/1963_Vietnam_Withdrawal_Plans