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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Wednesday, 8:45 P.M.
August 16, 1967

Mr. President:

Here is Win Brown's report on his recent meetings with seven Governors in addition to his session with the recent Democratic Governor's Caucus in St. Louis.

Brown reports that all of these Governors express support for your Vietnam policy.

Bromley Smith

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Report on Visits to Governors

Since assuming my duties in late June as Special Assistant to the Secretary for liaison with the Governors of the several states, I have met with the Democratic Governors caucus in St. Louis to brief them on the Far East, and have met individually in Washington or in their capitols with the Governors of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Washington, Oregon, Kansas and Kentucky.

The occasion for these meetings was varied. Governor Shafer of Pennsylvania, for example, asked me to come to Harrisburg to brief him and senior state legislators on the reasons for the Administration's opposition to a bill pending in the State legislature which would prohibit state purchases of imported steel.

Governor Breathitt of Kentucky wanted a briefing on Vietnam for a group of outstanding young people whom he was convening in Frankfort to interest them in Federal-State problems of concern to the State government.

Governors Smith of West Virginia and Docking of Kansas came to the Department to be briefed on trips they were taking to Brazil and Vietnam.

The other meetings, in late July, were at my initiative, in Olympia, Portland and New York.

All of the Governors welcomed the establishment of this new office and the opportunity for closer contact and more effective working relationships with the Secretary and the Department of State.

Governor Evans of Washington and Governor McCall of Oregon had present the heads of their principal government departments to discuss problems of interest, mainly in the field of trade.

In addition to such meetings, I have corresponded with several Governors, with respect to specific problems, for instance, Governor Hickel's continuing interest in a straight-baseline approach to Alaska's coastal boundaries. Another example concerns Governor Reagan's recent decision

to terminate AID funds for the Chile-California project. My office is also in close touch with the Governors' Washington Office of Federal-State Relations.

All of the Governors expressed support for the Administration's policy in Vietnam. Governor Rockefeller, for example, stated that he could not think of any valid alternative to the course being followed, and accordingly he felt the President was entitled to his support. Governor Smith has made several eloquent speeches of support in West Virginia.

Private groups of business and professional men and young people with whom I met in Seattle and Frankfort, however, while not expressing outright opposition to our Vietnam policy, were clearly very troubled. Their main questions were what real difference it would make to us if Southeast Asia did go communist, and if it did make a difference, was it serious enough to justify the cost in blood and treasure of our effort in Vietnam, especially in view of critical problems at home.

A number of the Governors spoke very highly of the briefings provided for them in recent months at the White House and expressed appreciation for the President's personal participation. All of the Governors feel greatly encouraged by the President's important new initiatives, since last December, to improve Federal-State relationships.

Next week I shall be in New England to visit Governors Hoff, Curtis and King.

Win Brown