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12 October 1967

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The President

1. You raised with me an allegation in the 30 September Boston Globe which suggested that Congressman O'Neill had received information on Vietnam from this Agency. According to the Globe column, "The Washington Circuit" by Richard H. Stewart, O'Neill had sent a newsletter to his constituents, espousing a divergent policy on Vietnam and basing his conclusions on ". . . his own sources for information in State, Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency."

2. I have reviewed the O'Neill newsletter in question and find no reference to the Agency being involved.

3. According to our records, Mr. O'Neill has never received a substantive briefing from this Agency. Throughout the years our contacts with the Congressman and his office have been limited to routine constituent matters, the last occurring in December 1966. I have personally assured myself that there have since been no contacts whatsoever between O'Neill and any of this Agency's senior officers. I can find no evidence of contact between O'Neill and any member of the Central Intelligence Agency.

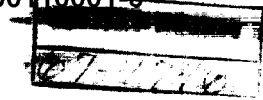
RHelms/ecd - 12/10/67  
Approved For Release 2002/07/29 : CIA-RDP80B01676R000500110001-6  
Original - addressee

1 - Mr. Warner  
1 - [unclear]

Richard Helms

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SUMMARY

The attached report on the Representative O'Neill matter is essentially negative on Agency contacts. We have no record of any official briefing of O'Neill and no evidence of recent contact. Those contacts in the past (less than ten) have been limited largely to routine constituent and personnel matters.

The report states that Representative O'Neill's newsletter on his Vietnam policy shift did not mention CIA. The Agency was mentioned in an article by Richard H. Stewart, which appeared in the Boston Globe of 30 September 1967, explaining the apparent reasons for O'Neill's shift. Stewart states in his article that the usual congressional briefings by State and Defense left O'Neill confused and angry and, therefore, he turned to "his own sources" in State, Defense and CIA. Stewart does not purport to quote O'Neill concerning sources in CIA--it is solely Stewart's assertion.

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Executive Registry
67-4746

OLC 67-0226

5 OCT 1967

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Director of Central Intelligence

**SUBJECT:** Representative Thomas P. O'Neill (D., Mass.)

1. This memorandum is for the information of the Director of Central Intelligence.
2. In response to your request, I have looked into the matter of possible press and newsletter statements to the effect that Representative Thomas P. O'Neill discussed Vietnam matters with sources in CIA. We have obtained a copy of Representative O'Neill's September 1967 newsletter (Attachment A) in which he discusses his position on Vietnam. There is no mention in that newsletter of any contacts with CIA sources.
3. The only reference to the Agency which we have discovered was in an article by Richard H. Stewart entitled "The Washington Circuit" which appeared in the Boston Globe on Saturday, 30 September 1967 (Attachment B). This article does not quote Mr. O'Neill, but, in attempting to explain Mr. O'Neill's shift away from the Administration's Vietnam policy, Stewart says that having become confused and then angry, Mr. O'Neill "...turned to his own sources for information, sources in State, Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency he had developed during his tenure here." Articles on Mr. O'Neill's shift which appeared in the Boston Globe on 13, 14 and 19 September 1967 make no mention of the Agency, nor does the Washington Post item of 14 September 1967.
4. Representative O'Neill has been a staunch supporter of the Administration over the years. In his September newsletter, Mr. O'Neill re-examined his position on Vietnam and concluded that the United States must avoid further escalation of the war and attempt to bring the peace-keeping mechanisms of the United Nations to bear. Therefore, with 67

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Democratic congressman, he signed a letter to the President urging that the Vietnam problem be brought before the Security Council. Stewart's article was an attempt to explain Mr. O'Neill's shift away from the Administration's policy and his support of the position advocated by General Gavin. General Gavin is the president of the Arthur D. Little Company which is located in Mr. O'Neill's district. According to one of the Globe articles, Mr. O'Neill stated that this had nothing to do with his shift.

5. The files of this Office were reviewed in an effort to locate any record of an official or unofficial contact with Representative O'Neill in recent months. Our contacts with the Congressman and his office have been limited to relatively routine constituent matters of a personnel nature. The last contact with his office was in December 1966 on such an inquiry. Aside from the referral of personnel applicants, the only other contact of any substance with Mr. O'Neill was one made by [redacted] WE Division, on 28 September 1966 upon his return from [redacted] This contact was made at the request of [redacted] The main purpose of his visit was to express to Mr. O'Neill and Speaker McCormack the difficulty in arranging, through normal channels, for a meeting between the President and the head of state [redacted] during the latter's planned visit to this country. I am advised that [redacted] has discussed this matter with you. According to our records, Mr. O'Neill has never received a substantive briefing from this Agency.

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6. In an attempt to trace the statement in the Stewart article, each Deputy Director, and all other heads of independent components, were asked to discreetly inquire within their offices whether there had been any contact with Representative O'Neill. I have been advised in each instance in the negative. The Director of Security has provided such assistance as is within his capabilities. He has been unable to locate any record or other evidence of contact or possible contact with Mr. O'Neill by Agency employees on this subject. He is continuing to make discreet inquiries.

7. Basic biographic information on Representative O'Neill is contained in Attachment C. Discreet inquiries have been made with Representatives William Bates and Philip Philbin of the Massachusetts delegation. Mr. O'Neill has many friends on the Hill. He is highly regarded and considered an astute politician.

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8. Richard Stewart is a former Night City Editor of the Globe. He is now a Washington correspondent for the Globe and resides in Silver Spring, Maryland. I am informed he was a Newman Fellow at Harvard and is highly regarded by his colleagues.

9. As a result of our efforts, we have found no significant official contact with Representative O'Neill by any employee of the Agency, nor have we discovered any employee who could be considered more than an acquaintance. In addition, we have found no direct statement from Mr. O'Neill to the effect that he discussed the Vietnam situation with a representative of the Agency. While Stewart's statement cannot be brushed aside, it is possible that it was based on misinformation, misunderstanding or an assumption on the part of Stewart himself.

**JOHN S. WARNER**  
Legislative Counsel

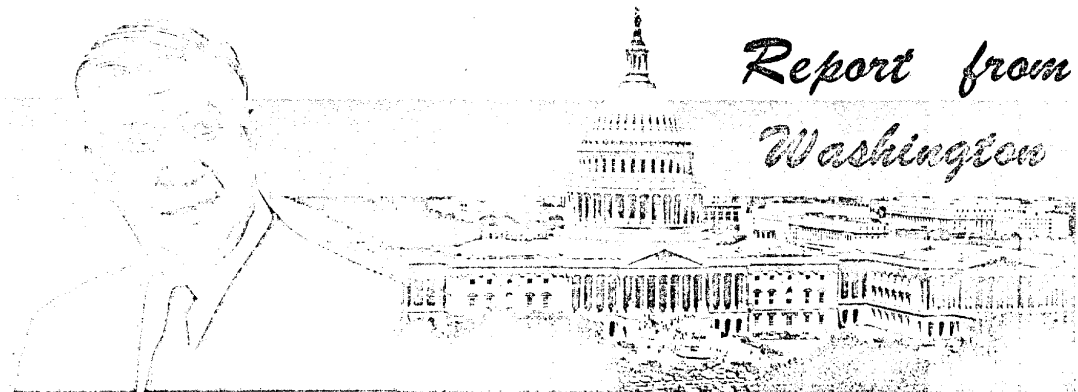
**Attachments:**  
A, B and C

**Distribution:**  
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# Report from Washington

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS P. O'NEILL, JR.

(NOT PRINTED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE)

8TH DISTRICT, MASS.

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Dear Friends:

**Vietnam: Solution Or Stalemate?**

September, 1967

The prospects of peace, like the objectives of the war, are constantly debated here in Washington, as well as in cities and towns throughout the Nation and the world. The discussion ranges between those who see Vietnam as a "triumph of the politics of inadvertence" and those who proclaim that our efforts there represent an attempt "to protect the South Vietnamese from forcible conquest". As in most public disputes, the truth probably lies somewhere in between, buried beneath the downpour of contradictory statements and misinformation.

One statistic we must not lose sight of, however, is the frightening cost of this, the most frustrating conflict in American history. It can readily be seen in the growing list of casualties. By August of this year, more than 12,000 young Americans had been killed and 75,000 had been wounded in an exotic land 8,000 miles from home. In economic terms the war presently costs the taxpayers of this country \$66 million a day, or more than \$2 billion each month. All this at a time when our nation's cities are racked with riots and are faced with a growing shortage of the funds so necessary to meet the problems of a complex, urban society.

As a citizen, Congressman, and father, I cannot help but wonder whether this may not be too high a price to pay for an obscure and limited objective. Nor am I alone in my doubts over the growing U.S. involvement in an inherently civil conflict. Judging from the thousands of letters I have received in the past few months, the great majority of you are also upset by the specter of further escalation and an ever widening war. The problem remains, however, as to what can be done to stop the fighting and bring about an honorable peace. After weighing the arguments of men considered as experts in military and foreign affairs, men like Robert McNamara, Dean Rusk, General Gavin, and Edwin Reischauer, I have reached the following conclusions.

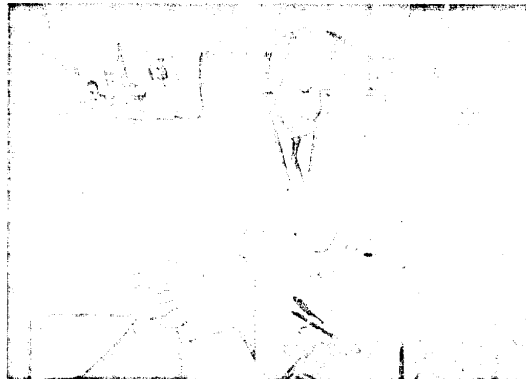
First, because peace is so crucial and the war so severe, we must avoid further escalation and at-

tempt to bring the peace-keeping mechanisms of the United Nations into the conflict. Together with 67 Democratic Congressmen, I have signed a letter to the President urging that the Vietnam problem be brought before the Security Council immediately.

Second, in order to promote meaningful negotiation, we must stop the bombing of the North, and rely on explanations, not explosions, to bring our adversaries to the conference table.

Third, in order to promote an Asian solution to what is essentially an Asian problem, we should deploy our troops in strategic enclaves throughout the South and encourage an expansion of democratic institutions within the government. In this regard I recently signed a statement deploring the developments in the South Vietnamese election which threaten to make the entire exercise a sham.

These, of course, are not the only paths to peace in Vietnam. But something must be done to end the growing carnage and destruction which are eroding our manpower and our national resources, and destroying our image as a world peacemaker. You may be assured that I will continue to search for a peaceful and honorable settlement to the war.



READING TESTIMONY BY SECRETARY RUSK  
ON VIETNAM...

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The Washington Circuit

RICHARD H. STEWART

# Capitol Hill Ponders: Why Did 'Tip' O'Neill Do It?

WASHINGTON—Aside from trying to psychoanalyze Lyndon Johnson, one of the favorite pastimes on Capitol Hill lately has been a game called "Why Did 'Tip' Do It?"

It involves trying to figure out why Cong. Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill of Cambridge diverged from President Johnson's policies in Vietnam.

Why so much attention to one member of the House?

O'Neill always has been a strong party man during his 32 years in politics. He has been a rock-like supporter of every Democratic administration since he entered Congress in 1953.

He has influence and power with fellow House members and long has been friendly with President Johnson.

In the Spring of 1966, when O'Neill was running in a primary election against two other Democrats, friends in Washington held a dinner for him at the Shoreham Hotel.

To everyone's amazement, President Johnson made a surprise appearance at the dinner and spoke kind words about his friend "Tip."

Mr. Johnson had previously avoided taking sides in any Democratic primary fights. For O'Neill he made an exception.

These are the reasons that O'Neill's shift on Vietnam has offered so much intrigue for politicians and politician watchers in the Capitol.

For the same reasons, Mr. Johnson told one confidant that he was "shocked" when he learned O'Neill had distributed a news letter to constituents announcing a shift in position in favor of ending the bombing in North Vietnam and withdrawal to enclaves as advocated by Gen James Gavin.

In his news letter, O'Neill wrote: "I cannot help but wonder whether this may not be too high a price to pay for an obscure and limited objective."

On Sept. 22, speaking to a group at the White House, President Johnson remarked:

"The question is always whether it is worth paying the price. I say it is."

The President was answering O'Neill. O'Neill's defection was a severe blow to the

administration. The White House was concerned that O'Neill's action might cause others in the House to follow his lead.

O'Neill may have underestimated his influence in the Congress, but the White House did not.

The national attention visited on O'Neill's shift seemed to surprise the congressman.

He scrupulously avoided publicizing his change in thinking. His news letter was discovered by a reporter by chance. Even after it reached public print O'Neill declined to discuss in detail the reasons for his shift.

O'Neill reportedly has been contacted by administration officials and made aware that he has increased the pressure on the President.

This is the main reason O'Neill refuses to discuss the background for his divergence from the President's policies. He will not recant on his position, but he does not intend to make things any tougher for the President.

People who have talked to O'Neill give this explanation for his change of thinking:

For some time he has been receiving mail

critical of the war, much of it from the Harvard sector of Cambridge. But these letters did not budge him.

O'Neill had been attending the usual congressional briefings on Vietnam by the State and Defense Departments.

The more briefings he attended the more conflicting statements he noted.

He became confused and then angry. He turned to his own sources for information, sources in State, Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency he had developed during his tenure here.

Several of these people were ranking members of the administration. They were critical of the war and several reportedly told O'Neill that an end to the bombing was the only avenue to the peace table.

These were private, candid discussions with people who were well informed and whose opinion O'Neill respected.

Ironically, it was Lyndon Johnson's own people who caused him to lose one of his most avid followers.

TAB

THOMAS P. O'NEILL, JR.

Eighth District - Massachusetts

Democrat, of Cambridge, Mass.; born December 9, 1912; son of Thomas P. O'Neill and Rose Anne (Tolan) O'Neill; educated St. John's High School and Boston College, A. B. 1936; engaged in the insurance business; married Mildred Anne Miller June 17, 1941; five children: Rosemary, Thomas 3d, Susan, Christopher, and Michael Tolan; member Cambridge School Committee 1946 and 1947; member of Massachusetts Legislature 1936-52, serving as minority leader 1947 and 1948 and as speaker of the house 1948-52; elected to the 83d Congress November 4, 1952; reelected to 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, and 90th Congresses.

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