**Memorandum from Secretary of Defense McNamara to President Johnson**

Washington, June 21, 1967.

You have asked whether I believe a meeting between you and Kosygin would be desirable. I favor such a meeting for the following reasons:

**a.**

Assuming that Kosygin meets you at least half way in making the arrangements, I cannot conceive of circumstances in which the personal, political, or diplomatic cost to you or to our nation would be significant.

**b.**

The American public expects that you will meet with Kosygin, and unless the failure to meet is clearly his, the domestic and international price to you of a failure to meet could be substantial.

**c.**

At a minimum you would take from the meeting an appraisal of Kosygin which should enable you to better predict his behavior and he, in turn, would better understand your character and the resolve with which you approach our commitments in Vietnam.

**d.**

There is a possibility, although I think the chances are less than even, that a meeting with Kosygin would lead to progress toward: secret talks on Vietnam; limitations on the continuing expansion of the Soviet and U.S. strategic nuclear forces; control of arms deliveries to the Middle East.

In summary, assuming the meeting is arranged on the proper basis, I believe the potential costs to be small and the potential gains to be great.

**Robert S. McNamara**